

Barclay in Brief

edited by
Eleanore Price Mather



Pendle Hill Pamphlet 28

Pendle Hill pamphlets are not free since the publication of this series continues and does require resources. Please consider making a small [donation](#) to Pendle Hill. If you enjoy the whole series you may wish to [subscribe](#) to the Pendle Hill pamphlets, ensuring you get the newest releases first.

Requests for permission to quote or to translate should be addressed to:

Pendle Hill Publications
338 Plush Mill Road
Wallingford, PA 19086-6023
Email: publications@pendlehill.org

Copyright © 1942, 2014 by Pendle Hill
ISBN: 978-0-87574-821-4
ebook design by the [Quaker Heron Press](#) – 2014

This edition has been made possible by the Rebecca White Fund of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia.

Preface

George Fox, William Penn, and Robert Barclay were the three great trail-breakers of primitive Quakerism. What Fox accomplished in the field of religious pioneering and church organization and what Penn achieved in political and social action, Barclay attained in the field of thought and scholarship.

This abbreviation of his greatest work, the *Apology*, is timely for two reasons. In the first place it offers to modern Quakers an opportunity to become acquainted with a book of great historical importance which, for more than two centuries, was considered the best and most authoritative exposition of Quaker belief and practice. In the second place, Barclay's conception of the nature and function of the Christian religion is again coming to the fore. His interpretation is in closer accord with religious thinking today than with that of a generation ago. It is no accident that the present pamphlet has been prepared by a young Friend and that it arises out of the interest of young Friends.

Barclay's achievement lies in his extraordinary synthesis of the mystical or inward, that is, the experienced side of religion and the evangelical or outward, that is, the historical side. The atonement he treats both as an historical fact and also as an inward process eternally renewed. Equally noteworthy is the balance which he maintains in distinguishing between the human and the divine, and herein lies his principal message for the present day. Calvinism, against which his book is mainly directed, created so profound and unbridgeable a chasm between

man and God that man could never in this life time hope to be freed from the ruinous effects of inherited sin. When modern theological liberalism attempted to bridge this chasm by blurring the distinction between the divine and the human, religion itself became blurred and eventually lost its power. The religious impulse arises out of man's sense of dependence upon that which is more than human. Without awe and reverence there is no true worship. If man enters the holy of holies only to find himself there he will not come again. As a result of this defect in liberalism which so easily leads to humanism has come the reaction in theology toward a kind of neo-Calvinism. Here man has become as hopeless as in the earlier Calvinism. Christ's teachings present an ideal impossible of attainment. Pacifism is therefore condemned even though acknowledged to be upheld by Christ, sin is inevitable, and the weary pilgrim can find the heavenly city only beyond the dark river death.

Though Barclay shared much of Calvin's pessimism regarding the "natural man," yet he perceived that there is a seed of the divine in him which, if not resisted, will grow and transform him into its own likeness making man one with God, so much so that perfection itself is not altogether unattainable. Here we have a religious faith sorely needed now when the terrible events of our time have destroyed the easy optimism which was built on man's faith in himself and in the inevitability of progress through the growth of scientific knowledge. A new optimism must take its place, a hope based not on the power of man but on the power of God.

The religion which is needed today must recognize man's weakness in the face of overwhelming odds both within him and without, but it must also lay hold upon the belief in man's capacity for victory through that of God revealed within his soul. Such a religion is set forth in the pages of Robert Barclay.

Howard H. Brinton
Upmeads, Pendle Hill

Introduction

R. B. Unto the Friendly Reader Wisheth Salvation

This timeless greeting comes to us from the opening pages of Robert Barclay's *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, the book which more clearly and comprehensively than any other formulates the doctrine held by the Society of Friends. For while George Fox and his early followers testified to the Seed of Light within the soul of every man, and pointed the way to group organization and behavior, it was left to Barclay to round these beliefs into a religious system and present them as such to the world.

For this work he was well qualified. Born 1648 near the shores of the Firth of Moray, he inherited from his native highland soil that talent for theological disputation peculiar to the Scottish people. This gift was sharpened by early training in Presbyterian schools of the neighborhood, and broadened by later study in Paris where he came in contact with the Roman Catholic faith and for a time seriously considered making it his own. At the age of eighteen, however, he joined the Society of Friends, following the

example of his father, David Barclay, the doughty Scottish Laird whom Whittier celebrated in his *Barclay of Ury*.

Like William Penn and Isaac Penington, Robert Barclay was a well-educated aristocrat who showed his freedom of spirit by embracing what was primarily a religion of the poor. To these men fell the task of putting into scholarly terms the principles of the new faith – a faith which, though nominally new, was looked on by its adherents as a reaffirmation of primitive Christianity. And they did more than this. They used their legal knowledge to aid fellow-members who were haled before magistrates for conscience sake, they opened their purses to support the families of those who were fined or imprisoned, they shared the hardships of the dank and filthy dungeons of seventeenth century England and Scotland.

These imprisonments were a self-assumed discipline with Robert Barclay. He could have easily obtained release, for through his mother, Catherine Gordon, he was related to the royal house of Stuart, and also to certain rulers on the European Continent. Among these was Princess Elizabeth of the Palatinate, a woman eager in mind and spirit and a friend of the philosopher Descartes. With this cousin he exchanged a series of letters which reveal his sympathy and spiritual insight. He saw her several times during his religious journeys on the Continent, and on one of these visits was accompanied by George Fox and William Penn. This is the only record we have of the coming together of the three great leaders. Unlike Fox and Penn, Barclay never came in person to the New World, but by his kinsman, James II, with whom he had considerable influence, he was

appointed governor of East Jersey, a position which he filled by deputy from 1682-1688.

His domestic life was tranquil and happy. He married Christian Molleson, a Quakeress of Aberdeen, to whom he wrote in the days of their courtship, “The love of thy converse, the desire of thy friendship, the sympathy of thy way, and the meekness of thy spirit, have often, as thou mayest have observed, occasioned me to take frequent opportunity to have the benefit of thy company . . . but beyond and before all I can say, in the fear of the Lord, that I have received a charge from Him to love thee.” They had seven children. Certain of Robert Barclay’s descendants have been noted for their literary work, but none of them attained his prominence. In 1690, at the comparatively early age of forty-one, he died at the Manor of Ury, his father’s estate near Aberdeen. We know from the testimony of his friends that he was in all things brave and gentle and true, a lover of peace, but never hesitant to take up the weapons of spiritual warfare to defend the faith as it was revealed to him. At the time of his death George Fox consoled Christian Barclay with these words: “Thou and thy family may rejoice that thou hadst such an offering to offer up unto the Lord.”

No picture or likeness of him is known to us. His works are his monument. These were collected after his death and published under the apt title of *Truth Triumphant*. In spite of his many writings he may fitly be said to be a man of one book, and that book the *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*. For though his *Catechism and Confession of Faith* went into numerous European and American editions, and

his *Anarchy of the Ranters* was read extensively by contemporaries, to subsequent generations he has always been known as the “Apologist.”

For the *Apology* holds a place unique in the history of the Society of Friends. It is the supreme declaration of Quaker belief, organized and set forth by a man who, up to the nineteenth century, remained Quakerism’s only theologian. First written in Latin and published in Amsterdam, 1676, it has been translated and published in English, Low Dutch, German, French, Spanish, Danish, and part of it in Arabic, passing into many editions and easily outselling any other book dealing with Quaker thought.

Our grandfathers read it widely and it was universally taught in Friends’ Schools. But in the past generation it has fallen into disuse, and though every Friends’ library contains the *Apology*, scarcely a Quaker under thirty has read it. This is unfortunate, because Barclay has perhaps a greater message for us today than he had for those earlier generations who knew him so well.

For this reason we have prepared this condensation which we hope will appeal to minds trained to the brevity of modern journalism, and by which readers may obtain in capsule form the essence of a timeless spiritual truth.

But in taking Barclay down from the shelf we shall meet with certain difficulties. Probably the most obvious is his use of the term “natural” man to mean sinful man. We find this hard to understand because we are inheritors of Rousseau’s belief in the natural goodness of man, and of

the more recent schools of psychology which emphasize the value of expressing the self by the gratification of natural impulses. Consequently we have come to look on the word "natural" as being almost a synonym for good.

The modern point of view and Barclay have this much in common: they both presuppose a primitive state of happiness and wish to regain it. The philosophers who exalted the natural goodness of man envisioned a physical return to the joyous freedom of woodland glades and a mingling with unspoiled aborigines. The picture of a world-weary sophisticate sporting side by side with the noble savage is pleasant to contemplate, particularly from the safe distance of an eighteenth century Parisian salon. But cold fact has revealed the aborigines to be frequently more savage than noble, and so bound by primitive taboos as to have infinitely less freedom than does the civilized man.

The plain truth of the matter is that it is useless to say, "Let's be primitive." The human race has long since passed from the Garden of Innocence. Try as we may we are not Adam before the Fall, much less the simple animal which some psychologists would have us be.

Though certain benefits have accrued to us through these attitudes toward the problem of human life they do not, in and of themselves, answer that problem. The trouble is that they are hopelessly reactionary; they try to go back.

Barclay knew better. He was the progressive, though he expressed himself in terms of seventeenth century theology. He knew that man can no more turn back than time itself

can turn back. He knew that man is not a simple animal, but a very complex one, blessed – or cursed – with a sense which distinguishes, though often confusedly, between good and evil, and which proves his salvation or damnation. Once man as a race, or man in childhood as an individual has tasted of the tree of knowledge, he is no longer innocent and irresponsible. His eyes are opened, he looks upon himself, and finds himself naked. He has become self-conscious. And the only way by which he can be free of that self which torments him with its loneliness, its fear of death, its frustrated longings, and its appetites which grow with gratification, is to lose it in the Spirit which is so vastly greater than he. He must yield up his self-will to the divine will. Then, after the self is crucified and buried, will come the resurrection of the soul, a rising of the new man or new creature which Barclay calls the “Christ within.”

This is the path taken by the man who chooses the good. For choose he must. Once having partaken of the fruit of knowledge he has no middle ground to stand on. If he merely remains “natural” his course is necessarily evil and he will perish in sin, because sin is a deadness to that Spirit by which alone we may find eternal life.

But Barclay does not speak of nature in its broader aspect as evil. He does not regard animals as evil. He does not consider the natural acts of man’s physical being as evil in themselves; when done in the Spirit of God they are useful and answer our end in the creation. Nor does he count man in his infancy as evil, though his racial inheritance as a man has implanted in him both the Seed of Sin and the Seed of

Light. With Barclay the term “natural” means sinful only when applied to the man who, after his eyes are opened, is content to remain a mere rational animal indifferent to the light of the Spirit. For him it is sinful to be natural because more is expected of him. Only by pushing forward and through the Spirit may we find communion with God and walk with him again in the cool of the evening.

Nor need one be a nominal Christian or have an outward knowledge of the Scriptures to be so blessed. Where goodness is there is God, for good works are the inevitable fruition of a growing spirit.

Barclay expressed these truths in theological terms because he wrote in an age dominated among the serious minded by theology. It was a theology which seems to the modern mind to have placed more emphasis on man’s falling than on Christ’s raising him up again. Preachers dwelt at length on infant damnation, and across the seas in Salem men and women were hanged, not for being witches (witchcraft being a recognized form of devil worship) but for the greater sin of refusing to believe that such beings existed. The Quaker faith in man’s potential goodness, accepted by us complacently today, was revolutionary heresy to the Puritan clergy of the seventeenth century, and the first section of the *Apology*, dealing with doctrine, is aimed particularly to refute the Calvinistic belief in predestination. This Barclay regarded as a hideous blasphemy against the mercy of God. Accepting Calvin’s Seed of Sin Barclay balanced it with a Seed of Light which, if allowed to take root and flourish, would accomplish man’s salvation.

But Puritanism, though still a potent force in the life of England at the time the *Apology* was written, had lost its political power in 1660 when Charles II returned from exile. Like his Quaker cousin the king was repelled by the extreme Calvinism of his early Scotch training, but unfortunately his reaction took a less spiritual form. Followed by his court he introduced an era which was as licentious as Puritanism had been grim. Grim though it was Puritanism had had a certain purposefulness, whereas the Restoration was utterly decadent. Its dress was ostentatious, its manners insincere, its morals non-existent. The court of Charles II, aping the French court of Louis XIV, tried to be magnificent and succeeded only in being extravagant, an extravagance for which the people of England had to pay in an increased burden of taxes. Courtiers fawned on the king, addressing him with the plural pronoun “you” while using the common “thou” to inferiors, a pattern passed downward through the social scale.

This was the “Way of the World,” to quote the title of a well-known comedy of the period, and it was this worldly way which Barclay protests against in that section of his work devoted to testimonies. Certain of the specific testimonies have grown less significant with changed conditions. Simplicity in dress has become fashionable and in respect to speech every man is now a king, addressed as “you” by all except those of us who cling to the old Quaker way because of its friendly warmth. We can now see plays which, like other forms of art, serve as a medium for truth, and are not of the sort to which Robert Barclay referred when he condemned playgoing.

But if the testimonies are outmoded the spirit behind them is not. We still need to seek simplicity, equality, and the will to peace. Pacifism, of course, is as vital an issue today as it was in the seventeenth century. And in regard to all the testimonies we must keep before us the goal toward which Barclay was working; a way of living whereby we may remain in the world of business and family affection yet maintain a life of the spirit such as is ordinarily possible only in the cloister. This idea, reminiscent of the tertiary orders which were a definite part of medieval monasticism, has found a fuller expression in the writings of Penn.

While in point of doctrine Barclay is refuting Calvinism, and in respect to testimonies protests against the fashionable World, in the middle section of his work, which treats of worship, he challenges both. For the religious sects of his time, whether Roman, Anglican, Puritan, or any of the Nonconformist bodies, however they might vary individually in the amount of ritual or lack of it, were alike in holding religious services dominated by priest or minister. The Society of Friends, on the other hand, sat – and continue to sit – in communal silence, led only by that Spirit from without which works upon the seed within each worshipper.

Many outsiders find this the most outstanding, and to them puzzling, aspect of Quakerism. It is indeed the Society's unique contribution to religion, as Howard Brinton has pointed out in the "Nature of Quakerism," chapter two in his *Quaker Education in Theory and Practice*. From this communal waiting upon the Lord which constitutes the meeting for worship has grown the meeting for business,

wherein the temporal affairs of the group are discussed in the light of spiritual guidance. Though Barclay does not mention the business meeting in the *Apology*, he deals with it in his *Anarchy of the Ranters* (published in 1676).

Barclay objected to the more usual forms of worship with their pre-arranged order of service not only because they allowed the human will to dominate instead of the divine will, but also because they imposed a distinction between laity and clergy whereby the worshippers were divided rather than united, and by which religious ministry, which should be open to all was made a trade. This division was infinitely sharper in his day than in ours. He knew a clergy which was corrupt, bigoted, and endued with a passion for theological hair-splitting beyond anything which we can today imagine. To these he refers contemptuously: “Perhaps my method of writing may seem not only different, but even contrary, to that which is commonly used by the men called divines, with which I am not concerned: inasmuch as I confess myself to be not only no imitator and admirer of the schoolmen, but an opposer and despiser of them as such, by whose labour I judge the Christian religion to be so far from being bettered, that it is rather destroyed.”

For this reason he despised formal learning. He could afford to, because he had so much of it himself. The *Apology* reveals a knowledge of the Greek philosophers, early church fathers, medieval scholastics, and Protestant reformers which is impressive. Throughout the fourteen propositions which compose the book – treated, incidentally, in the same order as are the propositions in the

Westminster Confession – pages are devoted to keen theological argumentation wherein Barclay held his own with highly trained contemporaries. Because this lacks significance today much of it has been omitted, for here we are less interested in what he *did* say than in what he *does* say.

And space is precious for our material is condensed to approximately one tenth of its original wordage. On the whole the space allotted to each major point is proportionate with its treatment in the *Apology*, though more has been given to the peace testimony because of its extreme pertinence in the world of today. Those readers who feel that certain aspects of the subject are presented too meagerly are referred to the *Apology* itself, for which this brief summary is in no way intended as a substitute.

The words are entirely Barclay's own, though cutting has necessarily involved changes in punctuation. They are words which are well worth the reading for their literary style alone, which reflects the vigor and imagery of the mind behind them. For Barclay's approach is fresh and vital, experimental rather than authoritarian, which should endear him to the present age. "What I have heard with the ears of my soul," he tells us, "and seen with my inward eyes, and my hands have handled of the Word of Life, and what hath been inwardly manifested to me of the things of God, that do I declare . . ."

And just how true this is will be discovered by those who read the following pages.

I. Belief

Seeing the height of all happiness is placed in the true knowledge of God (*This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*) the true and right understanding of this foundation and ground of knowledge is that which is most necessary to be known and believed in the first place.

Immediate Revelation

We do distinguish betwixt the certain knowledge of God, and the uncertain; betwixt the spiritual knowledge, and the literal; the saving heart-knowledge, and the soaring, airy head-knowledge. The last, we confess, may be divers ways obtained; but the first, by no other way than the inward immediate manifestation and revelation of God's Spirit, shining in and upon the heart, enlightening and opening the understanding.

The certainty of which truth is such, that it hath been acknowledged by some of the most refined and famous of all sorts of professors of Christianity in all ages; who being truly uprighthearted, and earnest seekers of the Lord, (however stated under the disadvantages and epidemical errors of their several sects or ages) the true seed in them hath been answered by God's love, who hath had regard to the good, and hath had of his elect ones among all; who finding a distaste and disgust in all other outward means, even in the very principles and precepts more particularly relative to their own forms and societies, have at last concluded, with one voice, that there was no true

knowledge of God, but that which is revealed inwardly by his own Spirit.

The apostle bringeth in the comparison, very apt, and answerable to our purpose and doctrine, that as the things of a man are only known by the spirit of man, so the things of God are only known by the Spirit of God; that is, that as nothing below the spirit of man (as the spirit of brutes, or any other creatures) can properly reach unto or comprehend the things of a man, as being of a nobler and higher nature, so neither can the spirit of man, or the natural man receive nor discern the things of God, or the things that are spiritual, as being also of an higher nature.

Knowledge then of Christ, which is not by the revelation of his own Spirit in the heart, is no more properly the knowledge of Christ, than the prattling of a parrot, which has been taught a few words, may be said to be the voice of a man; for as that, or some other bird, may be taught to sound or utter forth a rational sentence, as it hath learned it by the outward ear, and not from any living principle of reason actuating it; so just such is that knowledge of the things of God, which the natural and carnal man hath gathered from the words or writings of spiritual men.

But as the description of the light of the sun, or of curious colors to a blind man, who, though of the largest capacity, cannot so well understand it by the most acute and lively description, as a child can by seeing them; so neither can the natural man, of the largest capacity, by the best words, even scripture-words, so well understand the mysteries of God's kingdom, as the least and weakest child who tasteth

them, by having them revealed inwardly and objectively by the Spirit.

I think it will not be denied, that God's converse with man, all along from Adam to Moses, was by the immediate manifestation of his Spirit: and afterwards, through the whole tract of the law, he spake to his children no otherways; which cannot be denied by such as acknowledge the scriptures of truth to have been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost: for these writings, from Moses to Malachi, do declare, that during all that time God revealed himself to his children by his Spirit. And that God revealed himself to his children under the New Testament, to wit, to the apostles, evangelists, and primitive disciples, is confessed by all.

What is proper in this place to be proved is, That Christians now are to be led inwardly and immediately by the Spirit of God, even in the same manner (though it befall not many to be led in the same measure) as the saints were of old.

I shall prove this first from the promise of Christ in these words, John xiv. 16, 17:

And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

That this Spirit is inward, in my opinion needs no interpretation or commentary. *He dwelleth with you, and*

shall be in you. This indwelling of the Spirit in the saints, as it is a thing most needful to be known and believed, so is it as positively asserted in the scripture as anything else can be.

He then that acknowledges himself ignorant and a stranger to the inward in-being of the Spirit of Christ in his heart, doth thereby acknowledge himself to be yet in the carnal mind, which is enmity to God; and in short, whatever he may otherwise know or believe of Christ, or however much skilled or acquainted with the letter of the holy scripture, not yet to be, notwithstanding all that, attained to the least degree of a Christian; yea, not once to have embraced the Christian religion. For take but away the Spirit, and Christianity remains no more than the dead carcase of a man, when the soul and spirit is departed, remains a man; which the living can no more abide, but do bury out of their sight, as a noisome and useless thing, however acceptable it hath been when actuated and moved by the soul. Lastly, whatsoever is excellent, whatsoever is noble, whatsoever is worthy, whatsoever is desirable in the Christian faith, is ascribed to this Spirit, without which it could no more subsist than the outward world without the sun. Hereunto have all true Christians, in all ages, attributed their strength and life.

And what shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of all those things which the holy men of old have declared, and the saints of this day do themselves enjoy, by the virtue and power of this Spirit dwelling in them. If therefore it be so, why should any be so foolish as to deny, or so unwise as not to seek after this Spirit, which Christ

hath promised shall dwell in his children? They then that do suppose the indwelling and leading of his Spirit to be ceased, must also suppose Christianity to be ceased which cannot subsist without it.

Seeing then that Christ hath promised his Spirit to lead his children, and that every one of them both ought and may be led by it, if any depart from this certain guide in deeds, and yet in words pretend to be led by it, into things that are not good, it will not from thence follow, that the true guidance of the Spirit is uncertain, or ought not to be followed; no more than it will follow that the sun sheweth not light, because a blind man or one who wilfully shuts his eyes, falls into a ditch at noon-day for want of light; or that no words are spoken, because a deaf man hears them not; or that a garden full of fragrant flowers has no sweet smell, because he that has lost his smelling doth not smell it.

All these mistakes therefore are to be ascribed to the weakness or wickedness of men, and not to that Holy Spirit.

Moreover, these divine inward revelations, which we make absolutely necessary for the building up of true faith, neither do nor can ever contradict the outward testimony of the scriptures, or right and sound reason. Yet from hence it will not follow, that these divine revelations are to be subjected to the test, either of the outward testimony of the scriptures, or of the natural reason of man, as to a more noble or certain rule and touchstone; for this divine revelation, and inward illumination, is that which is evident

and clear of itself, forcing, by its own evidence and clearness, the well-disposed understanding to assent.

The Scriptures

From these revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints have proceeded the Scriptures of Truth.

Because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners. Yet because they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they have all their excellency and certainty; for as by the inward testimony of the Spirit we do alone truly know them, so they testify, that the Spirit is that Guide by which the saints are led into all Truth; therefore, according to the scriptures, the Spirit is the first and principal leader.

Through and by the clearness which that Spirit gives us it is that we are only best rid of those difficulties that occur to us concerning the scriptures. The real and undoubted experience whereof I myself have been a witness of, with great admiration of the love of God to his children in these latter days: for I have known some of my friends, who profess the same faith with me, faithful servants of the Most High God, and full of divine knowledge of his truth, as it was immediately and inwardly revealed to them by the spirit, from a true and living experience, who not only were ignorant of the Greek and Hebrew, but even some of them

could not read their own language, who being pressed by their adversaries with some citations out of the English translation, and finding them to disagree with the manifestation of truth in their own hearts, have boldly affirmed the Spirit of God never said so, and that it was certainly wrong; for they did not believe that any of the holy prophets or apostles had ever written so; which when I on this account seriously examined, I really found to be errors and corruptions of the translators; who (as in most translations) do not so much give us the genuine signification of the words, as strain them to express that which comes nearest to that opinion and notion they have of truth.

If it be then asked me, Whether I think hereby to render the scriptures altogether uncertain, or useless?

I answer; Not at all, provided that to the Spirit from which they came be but granted that place the scriptures themselves give it, I do freely concede to the scriptures the second place.

For tho' God doth principally and chiefly lead us by his Spirit, yet he sometimes conveys his comfort and consolation to us through his children, whom he raises up and inspires to speak or write a word in season, whereby the saints are made instruments in the hand of the Lord to strengthen and encourage one another, which doth also tend to perfect and make them wise unto salvation; and such as are led by the Spirit cannot neglect, but do naturally love, and are wonderfully cherished by, that which proceedeth from the same Spirit in another; because such mutual

emanations of the heavenly life tend to quicken the mind, when at any time it is overtaken with heaviness.

Secondly, God hath seen meet that herein we should, as in a looking glass, see the conditions and experiences of the saints of old; that finding our experience answer to theirs, we might thereby be the more confirmed and comforted, and our hope of obtaining the same end strengthened; that observing the providences attending them, seeing the snares they were liable to, and beholding their deliverances, we may thereby be made wise unto salvation, and seasonably reprov'd and instructed in righteousness.

This is the great work of the scriptures, and their service to us, that we may witness them fulfilled in us, and so discern the stamp of God's Spirit and ways upon them, by the inward acquaintance we have with the same Spirit and work in our hearts.

The Condition of Man in the Fall

Hitherto we have discours'd how the true knowledge of God is attained and served; also of what use and service the holy scripture is to the saints. We come now to examine the state and condition of man as he stands in the fall; what his capacity and power is; and how far he is able, as of himself, to advance in relation to the things of God.

We confess that a seed of sin is transmitted to all men from Adam, although imputed to none, until by sinning they actually join with it; in which seed he gave occasion to all to sin, and it is the origin of all evil actions and thoughts in

men's hearts, as it is in Rom. v. i.e. *In which death all have sinned*. For this seed of sin is frequently called death in the scripture, and the body of death; seeing indeed it is a death to the life of righteousness and holiness: therefore its seed and its product is called the old man, the old Adam, in which all sin is; for which we use this name to express this sin, and not that of original sin; of which phrase the scripture makes no mention, and under which invented and unscriptural barbarism this notion of imputed sin to infants took place among Christians.

Many of the heathen philosophers were sensible of the loss received by Adam, though they knew not the outward history: hence Plato asserted, That man's soul was fallen into a dark cave, where it only conversed with shadows. Pythagoras saith, Man wandereth in this world as a stranger, banished from the presence of God. And Plotinus compareth man's soul, fallen from God, to a cinder, or dead coal, out of which the fire is extinguished. Some of them said, That the wings of the soul were clipped or fallen off, so that they could not flee unto God. All which, and many more such expressions, that might be gathered out of their writings, shew that they were not without a sense of this loss.

The consequence of this fall is also expressed, Gen. iii. 24. *So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life*. Now whatsoever literal signification this may have, we may safely ascribe to this paradise a mystical signification, and truly account it that spiritual communion and fellowship,

which the saints obtain with God by Jesus Christ; to whom only these cherubims give way, and unto as many as enter by him, who calls himself the Door. For whatsoever real good any man doth, it proceedeth not from his nature, as he is a man, or the son of Adam; but from the seed of God in him, as a new visitation of life.

Universal and Saving Light

We have considered man's fallen, lost, corrupted, and degenerated condition. Now it is fit to enquire, how and by what means he may come to be freed out of this miserable and depraved condition.

As the knowledge thereof has been manifested to us by the revelation of Jesus Christ in us, fortified by our own sensible experience, and sealed by the testimony of the Spirit in our hearts, we can confidently affirm, and clearly evince, according to the testimony of the holy scriptures that: GOD, out of his infinite love, who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that all should live and be saved, hath *so loved the world, that he hath given his only Son a LIGHT, that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved,* John iii. 16. *who enlighteneth EVERY man that cometh into the world,* John i. 9. *and maketh manifest all things that are reprobable,* Ephes. v. 13. and teacheth all temperance, righteousness, and godliness; and this Light enlighteneth the hearts of all for a time, in order to salvation; and this is it which reproves the sin of all individuals, and would work out the salvation of all, if not resisted. Nor is it less universal than the seed of sin, being the purchase of his

death, who tasted death for every man: *for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive*, I Cor. xv. 22.

According to which principle or hypothesis all the objections against the universality of Christ's death are easily solved; neither is it needful to recur to the ministry of angels, and those other miraculous means which they say God useth to manifest the doctrine and history of Christ's passion unto such, who, living in parts of the world where the outward preaching of the gospel is unknown, have well improved the first and common grace.

Hence Justin Martyr stuck not to call Socrates a Christian, saying that all such as lived according to the divine word in them, which was in all men, were Christians, such as Socrates and Heraclitus, and others among the Greeks.

For as hence it well follows that some of the old philosophers might have been saved, so also may some, who by providence are Cast into those remote parts of the world where the knowledge of the history is wanting, be made partakers of the divine mystery, if they suffer his seed and light, enlightening their hearts, to take place, in which light communion with the Father and the Son is enjoyed, so as of wicked men to become holy, and lovers of that power, by whose inward and secret touches they feel themselves turned from the evil to the good, and learn to do to others as they would be done by, in which Christ himself affirms all to be included.

This is that Christ within, which we are heard so much to speak and declare of, everywhere preaching him up, and

exhorting people to believe in the light, and obey it, that they may come to know Christ in them, to deliver them from all sin.

We have said how that a divine, spiritual, and supernatural light is in all men; also how that, as it is received and closed within the heart, Christ comes to be formed and brought forth: but we are far from ever having said, that Christ is thus formed in all men, or in the wicked: for that is a great attainment, which the apostle travailed that it might be brought forth in the Galatians. Neither is Christ in all men by way of union, or indeed, to speak strictly, by way of inhabitation; because this inhabitation, as it is generally taken, imports union, or the manner of Christ's being in the saints. But in regard Christ is in all men as in a seed, yea, and that he never is nor can be separate from that holy pure seed and light which is in all men; in this respect then, as he is in the seed which is in all men, we have said Christ is in all men, and have preached and directed all men to Christ in them, who lies crucified in them by their sins and iniquities, that they may look upon him whom they have pierced, and repent: whereby he that now lies as it were slain and buried in them, may come to be raised, and have dominion in their hearts over all.

Though then this seed be small in its appearance, so that Christ compares it to *a grain of mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds*, Matth. xiii. 31, 32. and that it be hid in the earthly part of man's heart; yet therein is life and salvation towards the sons of men wrapped up, which comes to be revealed as they give way to it. And this seed in the hearts of all men is the kingdom of God, as in

capacity to be produced, or rather exhibited, according as it receives depth, is nourished, and not choaked. And as the whole body of a great tree is wrapped up potentially in the seed of the tree, and so is brought forth in due season, even so the kingdom of Jesus Christ, yea Jesus Christ himself, Christ within, who is the hope of glory, and becometh wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, is in every man's and woman's heart, in that little incorruptible seed, ready to be brought forth.

This leads me to speak concerning the manner of this seed or light's operation in the hearts of all men. To them then that ask us after this manner, If two men have equal sufficient light and grace, and the one be saved by it, the other not? is not then the will of man the cause of the one's salvation beyond the other?

I say, to such we thus answer: That as the grace and light in all is sufficient to save all, and of its own nature would save all; so it strives and wrestles with all in order to save them; he that resists its striving, is the cause of his own condemnation; he that resists it not, it becomes his salvation: for that in him that is saved, the working is of the grace, and not of the man; and it is a passiveness rather than an act; though afterwards, as man is wrought upon, there is a will raised in him, by which he comes to be a co-worker with the grace: for according to that of Augustine, He that made us without us, will not save us without us. So that the first step is not by man's working, but by his not contrary working. And we believe, that at these singular seasons of every man's visitation, as man is wholly unable of himself to work with the grace, neither can he move one

step out of the natural condition, until the grace lay hold upon him; so it is possible for him to be passive, and not to resist it, as it is possible for him to resist it. So we say, the grace of God works in and upon man's nature; which, though of itself wholly corrupted and defiled, and prone to evil, yet is capable to be wrought upon by the grace of God; even as iron, though an hard and cold metal of itself, may be warmed and softened by the heat of the fire, and wax melted by the sun. And as iron or wax, when removed from the fire or sun, returneth to its former condition of coldness and hardness; so man's heart, as it resist or retires from the grace of God, returns to its former condition again.

Reason

It will manifestly appear by what is above said, that we understand not this divine principle to be any part of man's nature, nor yet to be any reliques of any good which Adam lost by his fall. For we certainly know that this light of which we speak is not only distinct but of a different nature from the soul of man, and its faculties. Indeed that man, as he is a rational creature, hath reason as a natural faculty of his soul, by which he can discern things that are rational, we deny not; for this is a property natural and essential to him, by which he can know and learn many arts and sciences, beyond what any other animal can do by the mere animal principle. Neither do we deny but by this rational principle man may apprehend in his brain, and in the notion, a knowledge of God and spiritual things; yet that not being the right organ, it cannot profit him towards salvation, but rather hindereth; and indeed the great cause of the apostasy hath been, that man hath sought to fathom

the things of God in and by this natural and rational principle, and to build up a religion in it, neglecting and overlooking this principle and seed of God in the heart; so that herein, in the most universal and catholick sense, hath AntiChrist in every man set up himself, and sitteth in the temple of God as God, and above every thing that is called God. *For men being the temple of the Holy Ghost*, as saith the apostle, I Cor. iii. 16. when the rational principle sets up itself there above the seed of God, to reign and rule as a prince in spiritual things, while the holy seed is wounded and bruised, there is Anti-Christ in every man, or somewhat exalted above and against Christ.

Nevertheless we do not hereby affirm as if man had received his reason to no purpose, or to be of no service unto him, in no wise; we look upon reason as fit to order and rule man in things natural. For as God gave two great Lights to rule the outward world, the sun and moon, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; so hath he given man the light of his Son, a spiritual divine light, to rule him in things spiritual, and the light of reason to rule him in things natural. And even as the moon borrows her light from the sun, so ought men, if they would be rightly and comfortably ordered in natural things, to have their reason enlightened by this divine and pure light. Which enlightened reason, in those that obey and follow this true light, we confess may be useful to man even in spiritual things, as even as the animal life in man, regulated and ordered by his reason, helps him in going about things that are rational.

Conscience

We do further rightly distinguish this from man's natural conscience; for conscience being that in man which ariseth from the natural faculties of man's soul, may be defiled and corrupted.

Now conscience, to define it truly, comes from *conscire*, and is that knowledge which ariseth in man's heart, from what agreeth, contradicteth, or is contrary to any thing believed by him, whereby he becomes conscious to himself that he transgresseth by doing that which he is persuaded he ought not to do. So that the mind being once blinded or defiled with a wrong belief, there ariseth a conscience from that belief, which troubles him when he goes against it. As for example; A Turk who hath possessed himself with a false belief that it is unlawful for him to drink wine, if he do it, his conscience smites him for it; but though he keep many concubines, his conscience troubles him not, because his judgment is already defiled with a false opinion that it is lawful for him to do the one, and unlawful to do the other.

For conscience followeth judgment, doth not inform it; but this light, as it is received, removes the blindness of the judgment, opens the understanding, and rectifies both the judgment and conscience. So we confess also, that conscience is an excellent thing, where it is rightly informed and enlightened: wherefore some of us have fitly compared it to the lanthorn, and the light of Christ to a candle; a lanthorn is useful when a clear candle burns and shines in it: but otherwise of no use. To the light of Christ

then in the conscience, and not to man's natural conscience, it is that we continually commend men.

Justification by Faith and Works

As many as resist not this light, but receive the same, it becomes in them an holy, pure, and spiritual birth; by which holy birth, to wit, Jesus Christ formed within us, and working his works in us, as we are sanctified, so are we justified in the sight of God.¹

Since good works as naturally follow from this birth as heat from fire, therefore are they of absolute necessity to justification. Wherefore their judgment is false and against the truth that say, that the holiest works of the saints are defiled and sinful in the sight of God: for these good works are not the works of the law, excluded by the apostle from justification.

I say, there is a great difference betwixt the works of the law, and those of grace, or of the gospel. The first are excluded, the second not, but are necessary. The first are those which are performed in man's own will, and by his strength, in a conformity to the outward law and letter; and therefore are man's own imperfect works, or works of the law, which makes nothing perfect: and to this belong all the ceremonies, purifications, washings, and traditions of the Jews. The second are the works of the Spirit of grace in the heart, wrought in conformity to the inward and spiritual law; which works are not wrought in man's will, nor by his power and ability, but in and by the power and Spirit of Christ in us, and therefore are pure and perfect in their kind

(as shall hereafter be proved) and may be called Christ's works, for that he is the immediate author and worker of them: such works we affirm absolutely necessary to justification, so that a man cannot be justified without them; and all faith without them is dead and useless, as the apostle James saith. But faith, which worketh by love, is that which availeth, which is absolutely necessary: for faith, that worketh by love, cannot be without works.

Perfection

Since we have placed justification in the revelation of Jesus Christ formed and brought forth in the heart, there working his works of righteousness, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, the question is, How far he may prevail in us while we are in this life, or we over our souls' enemies, in and by his strength?

We do believe, that to those in whom this pure and holy birth is fully brought forth, the body of death and sin comes to be crucified and removed, and their hearts united and subjected to the truth; so as not to obey any suggestions or temptations of the evil one, but to be free from actual sinning and transgressing of the law of God, and in that respect perfect.

By this we understand not such a perfection as may not daily admit of growth, and consequently mean not as if we were to be as pure, holy, and perfect as God in his divine attributes of wisdom, knowledge, and purity; but only a perfection proportionable and answerable to man's measure, whereby we are kept from transgressing the law

of God, and enabled to answer what he requires of us; even as he that improved his two talents so as to make four of them, perfected his work, and was so accepted of his Lord as to be called a good and faithful servant, nothing less than he that made his five ten.

Though a man may witness this for a season, and therefore all ought to press after it; yet we do not affirm but those that have attained it in a measure may, by the wiles and temptations of the enemy, fall into iniquity, and lose it sometimes, if they be not watchful, and do not diligently attend to that of God in the heart. And we doubt not but many good and holy men, who have arrived to everlasting life, have had divers ebbings and flowings of this kind; for though every sin weakens a man in his spiritual condition, yet it doth not so as to destroy him altogether, or render him incapable of rising again.

Nevertheless, I will not affirm that a state is not attainable in this life, in which to do righteousness may be so natural to the regenerate soul, that in the stability of that condition he cannot sin.

So then, if thou desirest to know this perfection and freedom from sin possible for thee, turn thy mind to the light and spiritual law of Christ in the heart, and suffer the reproofs thereof; so that that life that sometimes was alive in thee to this world, and the love and lusts thereof, may die, and a new life be raised, by which thou mayest live henceforward to God, and not to or for thyself; and with the apostle thou mayest say, Gal. ii. 20. *It is no more I, but*

Christ alive in me: And then thou wilt be a Christian indeed.

II. Worship

The Church

Hitherto I have treated of those things, which relate to the Christian faith and Christians, as they stand each in his private and particular condition, and how and by what means every man may be a Christian indeed and so abide. Now I come in order to speak of those things that relate to Christians, as they are stated in a joint fellowship and communion, and come under a visible and outward society, which society is called the church of God, and in scripture compared to a body, and therefore named the body of Christ.

The Church then, according to the grammatical signification of the word, as it is used in the holy scripture, signifies an assembly or gathering of many into one place; and indeed, as this is the grammatical sense of the word, so also it is the real and proper signification of the thing, the church being no other thing but the society, gathering, or company of such as God hath called out of the world, and worldly spirit, to walk in his LIGHT and LIFE. The church then so defined is to be considered, as it comprehends all that are thus called and gathered truly by God, both such as are yet in this inferior world, and such as having already laid down the earthly tabernacle, are passed into their heavenly mansions, which together do make up the one catholick church, concerning which there is so much

controversy. Out of which church we freely acknowledge there can be no salvation; because under this church and its denomination are comprehended all, and as many, of whatsoever nation, kindred, tongue, or people they be, though outwardly strangers, and remote from those who profess Christ and Christianity in words, and have the benefit of the scriptures, as become obedient to the holy light and testimony of God in their hearts, so as to become sanctified by it, and cleansed from the evils of their ways. There may be members therefore of this catholick church – both among heathens, Turks, Jews, and all the several sorts of Christians, men and women of integrity and simplicity of heart, who though blinded in some things in their understanding, and perhaps burdened with the superstitions and formality of the several sects in which they are ingrossed, yet being upright in their hearts before the Lord, chiefly aiming and labouring to be delivered from iniquity, and loving to follow righteousness, are by the secret touches of this holy light in their souls enlivened and quickened, thereby secretly united to God, and therethrough become true members of this catholick church.

Group Worship

All true and acceptable worship to God is offered in the inward and immediate moving and drawing of his own Spirit, which is neither limited to places, time, nor persons. For tho' we are to worship him always, and continually to fear before him; yet as to the outward signification thereof, in prayers, praises or preachings, we ought not to do it in our own will, where and when we will; but where and when

we are moved thereunto by the stirring and secret inspiration of the Spirit of God in our hearts; which God heareth and accepteth of, and is never wanting to move us thereunto, when need is; of which he himself is the alone proper judge. All other worship then, both praises, prayers, or preachings, which man sets about in his own will, and at his own appointment, which he can both begin and end at his pleasure, do or leave undone as himself seeth meet, whether they be a prescribed form, as a liturgy, &c. or prayers conceived extempore by the natural strength and faculty of the mind, they are all but superstition, will-worship, and abominable idolatry in the sight of God, which are now to be denied and rejected, and separated from, in this day of his spiritual arising.

Yet I would not be understood, as if I intended the putting away of all set times and places to worship: God forbid I should think of such an opinion. Nay, we are none of those that forsake the assembling of ourselves together; but have even certain times and places, in which we carefully meet together (nor can we be driven therefrom by the threats and persecutions of men) to wait upon God, and worship him. To meet together we think necessary for the people of God; because, so long as we are cloathed with this outward tabernacle, there is a necessity to the entertaining of a joint and visible fellowship, and bearing of an outward testimony for God, and seeing of the faces of one another, that we concur with our persons as well as spirits: to be accompanied with that inward love and unity of spirit doth greatly tend to encourage and refresh the saints.

And as every one is thus gathered, and so met together inwardly in their spirits, as well as outwardly in their persons, there the secret power and virtue of life is known to refresh the soul, and the pure motions and breathings of God's Spirit are felt to arise; from which, as words of declaration, prayers or praises arise, the acceptable worship is known, which edifies the church, and is well-pleasing to God. And no man here limits the Spirit of God, nor bringeth forth his own conned and gathered stuff; but every one puts that forth which the Lord puts into their hearts: and it is uttered forth not in man's will and wisdom, but in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. Yea, though there be not a word spoken, yet is the true spiritual worship performed, and the body of Christ edified; yea, it may, and hath often fallen out among us, that divers meetings have passed without one word; and yet our souls have been greatly edified and refreshed, and our hearts wonderfully overcome with the secret sense of God's power and Spirit, which without words hath been ministered from one vessel to another.

Yea, sometimes, when there is not a word in the meeting, but all are silently waiting, if one come in that is rude and wicked, and in whom the power of darkness prevaieth much, perhaps with an intention to mock or do mischief, if the whole meeting be gathered into the life, and it be raised in a good measure, it will strike terror into such an one, and he will feel himself unable to resist; but by the secret strength and virtue thereof, the power of darkness in him will be chained down: and if the day of his visitation be not expired, it will reach to the measure of grace in him, and

raise it up to the redeeming of his soul. For not a few have come to be convinced of the truth after this manner, of which I myself, in part, am a true witness, who not by strength of arguments, or by a particular disquisition of each doctrine, and convincement of my understanding thereby, came to receive and bear witness of the truth, but by being secretly reached by this life; for when I came into the silent assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart, and as I gave way unto it, I found the evil weakening in me, and the good raised up, and so I became thus knit and united unto them, hungering more and more after the increase of this power and life, whereby I might feel myself perfectly redeemed.

Many are the blessed experiences which I could relate of this silence and manner of worship; yet I do not so much commend and speak of silence as if we had bound ourselves by any law to exclude praying or preaching, or tied ourselves thereunto, not at all: for as our worship consisteth not in words, so neither in silence, as silence; but in an holy dependence of the mind upon God: from which dependence silence necessarily follows in the first place, until words can be brought forth, which are from God's Spirit.

And God is not wanting to move in his children to bring forth words of exhortation and prayer, when it is needful; so that of the many gatherings and meetings of such as are convinced of the truth, there is scarce any in whom God raiseth not up some or other to minister to his brethren; and there are few meetings that are altogether silent. For when many are met together in this one life and name, it doth

most naturally and frequently excite them to pray to and praise God, and stir up one another by mutual exhortation and instructions: yet we judge it needful there be in the first place some time of silence, during which every one may be gathered inward to the word and gift of grace, from which he that ministereth may receive strength to bring forth what he ministereth.

This great duty then of waiting upon God, must needs be exercised in man's denying self, both inwardly and outwardly, in a still and mere dependence upon God, in abstracting from all the workings, imaginations, and speculations of his own mind, that being emptied as it were of himself, and so thoroughly crucified to the natural products thereof, he may be fit to receive the Lord, who will have no co-partner nor co-rival of his glory and power. And man being thus stated, the little seed of righteousness which God hath planted in his soul, and Christ hath purchased for him, even the measure of grace and life, which is burdened and crucified by man's natural thoughts and imaginations, receives a place to arise, and becometh a holy birth and geniture in man; and is that divine air in and by which man's soul and spirit comes to be leavened; and by waiting therein he comes to be accepted in the sight of God, to stand in his presence, hear his voice, and observe the motions of his holy Spirit.

As iron sharpeneth iron, the seeing of the faces one of another, when both are inwardly gathered unto the life, giveth occasion for the life secretly to rise, and pass from vessel to vessel. And as many candles lighted, and put in one place, do greatly augment the light, and make it more

to shine forth, so when many are gathered together into the same life, there is more of the glory of God, and his power appears, to the refreshment of each individual; for that he partakes not only of the light and life raised in himself, but in all the rest.

And therefore the Lord oftentimes, when any turn towards him, and have true desires thus to wait upon him, and find great difficulty through the unstayedness of their minds, doth in condescension and compassion cause his power to break forth in a more strong and powerful manner. And when the mind sinks down, and waits for the appearance of life, and that the power of darkness in the soul wrestles and works against it, then the good seed, as it ariseth, will be found to work as physick in the soul, especially if such a weak one be in the assembly of divers others in whom the life is arisen in greater dominion, and through the contrary workings of the power of darkness there will be found an inward striving in the soul as really in the mystery as ever Esau and Jacob strove in Rebecca's womb.

And from this inward travail, while the darkness seeks to obscure the light, and the light breaks through the darkness, which it always will do, if the soul gives not its strength to the darkness, there will be such a painful travail found in the soul, that will even work upon the outward man, so that oftentimes, through the working thereof, the body will be greatly shaken, and many groans, and sighs, and tears, even as the pangs of a woman in travail, will lay hold upon it; yea, and this not only as to one, but when the enemy, who when the children of God assemble together is not wanting to be present, hath prevailed in any measure in a whole

meeting, and strongly worketh against it by spreading and propagating his dark power, and by drawing out the minds of such as are met from the life in them, as they come to be sensible of this power of his that works against them, and to wrestle with it by the armour of light, sometimes the power of God will break forth into a whole meeting, and there will be such an inward travail, while each is seeking to overcome the evil in themselves, that by the strong contrary workings of these opposite powers, like the going of two contrary tides, every individual will be strongly exercised as in a day of battle, and thereby trembling and a motion of body will be upon most, if not upon all, which, as the power of truth prevails, will from pangs and groans end with a sweet sound of thanksgiving and praise. And from this the name of Quakers, i.e. Tremblers, was first reproachfully cast upon us; which though it be none of our choosing, yet in this respect we are not ashamed of it, but have rather reason to rejoice therefore, even that we are sensible of this power that hath oftentimes laid hold of our adversaries, and made them yield unto us, and join with us, and confess to the truth, before they had any distinct or discursive knowledge of our doctrines, so that sometimes many at one meeting have been thus convinced: and this power would sometimes also reach to and wonderfully work even in little children, to the admiration and astonishment of many.

The great advantage of this true worship of God, which we profess and practise, is, that it consisteth not in man's wisdom, riches nor splendor of this world to beautify it, as being of a spiritual and heavenly nature; and therefore too

simple and contemptible to the natural mind and will of man, that hath no delight to abide in it, because he finds no room there for his imagination and inventions, and hath not the opportunity to gratify his outward and carnal senses: so that this form being observed, is not likely to be long kept pure without the power; for it is of itself so naked without it, that it hath nothing in it to invite and tempt men to dote upon it, further than it is accompanied with the power.

Ministry

And when they assemble together to wait upon God, and to worship and adore him; then such as the Spirit sets apart for the ministry, by its divine power and influence opening their mouths, and giving them to exhort, reprove, and instruct with virtue and power; these are thus ordained of God and admitted into the ministry, and their brethren cannot but hear them, receive them, and also honour them for their work's sake. And so this is not monopolized by a certain kind of men, as the clergy (who are to that purpose educated and brought up as other carnal artists) and the rest to be despised as laicks; but it is left to the free gift of God to choose any whom he seeth meet thereunto, whether rich or poor, servant or master, young or old, yea, male or female.

As by the light or gift of God all true knowledge in things spiritual is received and revealed, so by the same, as it is manifested and received in the heart, by the strength and power thereof, every true minister of the gospel is ordained, prepared, and supplied in the work of the ministry; and by the leading, moving, and drawing hereof ought every

evangelist and Christian pastor to be led and ordered in his labour and work of the gospel, both as to the place where, as to the persons to whom, and as to the time wherein he is to minister. Moreover they who have this authority may and ought to preach the gospel, though without human commission or literature; as on the other hand, they who want the authority of this divine gift, however learned, or authorized by the commission of men and churches, are to be esteemed but as deceivers, and not true ministers of the gospel. Also they who have received this holy and unspotted gift, as they have freely received it, so are they freely to give it, without hire or bargaining, far less to use it as a Trade to get money by.

Of a liberty to speak or prophesy by the Spirit, I say all may do that, when moved thereunto, as above is shewn; but we do believe and affirm that some are more particularly called to the work of the ministry, and therefore are fitted of the Lord for that purpose; whose work is more constantly and particularly to instruct, exhort, admonish, oversee, and watch over their brethren; and that as there is something more incumbent upon them in that respect than upon every common believer, so also, as in that relation, there is due to them from the flock such obedience and subjection as is mentioned in these testimonies of the scripture, Heb. xiii. 17. I Thess. v. 12, 13. I Tim. v. 17. I Pet. v. 5. Also besides these who are thus particularly called to the ministry, and constant labor in the work and doctrine, there are also the elders, who though they be not moved to a frequent testimony by way of declaration in words, yet as such are grown up on the experience of the blessed work of truth in

their hearts, they watch over and privately admonish the young, take care for the widows, the poor, and fatherless, and look that nothing be wanting, but that peace, love, unity, concord, and soundness be preserved in the church of Christ; and this answers to the deacons mentioned Acts vi.

That which we oppose, is the distinction of laity and clergy, which in the scripture is not to be found, whereby none are admitted unto the work of the ministry but such as are educated at schools on purpose, and instructed in logick and philosophy, &c. and so are at their apprenticeship to learn the art and trade of preaching, even as a man learns any other art, whereby all other honest mechanick men, who have not got this heathenish art, are excluded from having this privilege. And so he that is a scholar thus bred up must not have any honest trade whereby to get him a livelihood, if he once intend for the ministry, but he must see to get him a place, and then he hath his set hire for a livelihood to him. He must also be distinguished from the rest by the colour of his cloaths; for he must only wear black, and must be a master of arts.

The ministers we plead for, are such as having freely received, freely give; who covet no man's silver, gold, or garments; who seek no man's goods, but seek them, and the salvation of their souls: whose hands supply their own necessities, working honestly for bread to themselves and their families. And if at any time they be called of God, so as the work of the Lord hinder them from the use of their trades, take what is freely given them by such to whom they have communicated spirituals; and having food and raiment, are therewith content.

For in our day, God hath raised up witnesses for himself, as he did fishermen of old; many, yea, most of whom, are labouring and mechanick men, who, altogether without that learning, have, by the power and Spirit of God, struck at the very root and ground of Babylon; and in the strength and might of this power, have gathered thousands, by reaching their consciences, into the same power and life, who, as to the outward part, have been far more knowing than they, yet not able to resist the virtue that proceeded from them. Of which I myself am a true witness; and can declare from certain experience, because my heart hath been often greatly broken and tendered by that virtuous life that proceeded from the powerful ministry of those illiterate men: so that by their very countenance, as well as words, I have felt the evil in me often chained down, and the good reached to and raised.

What shall I then say to you, who are lovers of learning, and admirers of knowledge? Was not I also a lover and admirer of it, who also sought after it, according to my age and capacity? But it pleased God, in his unutterable love, early to withstand my vain endeavours, while I was yet but eighteen years of age; and made me seriously to consider (which I wish also may befall others) that without holiness and regeneration, no man can see God. If ye consider these things, then will ye say with me, that all this learning, wisdom and knowledge, gathered in this fallen nature, is but as dross and dung, in comparison of the cross of Christ; especially being destitute of that power, life and virtue, which I perceived these excellent (though despised, because illiterate) witnesses of God to be filled with: and

therefore seeing, that in and among them, I, with many others, have found the heavenly food that gives contentment, let my soul seek after this learning, and wait for it forever.

Prayer

Having hitherto spoken of preaching, now it is fit to speak of praying, concerning which the like controversy ariseth. Our adversaries, whose religion is all for the most part outside, and such whose acts are the mere product of man's natural will and abilities, as they can preach, so can they pray when they please, and therefore have their set particular prayers. I meddle not with the controversies among themselves concerning this, some of them being for set prayers, as a liturgy, others for such as are conceived extempore: it suffices me that all of them agree in this, That the motions and influence of the Spirit of God are not necessary to be previous thereunto; and therefore they have set times in their publick worship, as before and after preaching, and in their private devotion, as morning and evening, and before and after meat, and other such occasions, at which they precisely set about the performing of their prayers, by speaking words to God, whether they feel any motion or influence of the Spirit or not.

We freely confess that prayer is both very profitable, and a necessary duty commanded, and fit to be practised frequently by all Christians; but as we can do nothing without Christ, so neither can we pray without the concurrence and assistance of his Spirit. But that the state of the controversy may be the better understood, let it be

considered, first, that prayer is two-fold, inward and outward. Inward prayer is that secret turning of the mind towards God, whereby, being secretly touched and awakened by the light of Christ in the conscience, and so bowed down under the sense of its iniquities, unworthiness, and misery, it looks up to God, and joining with the secret shining of the seed of God, it breathes towards him, and is constantly breathing forth some secret desires and aspirations towards him. It is in this sense that we are so frequently in scripture commanded to pray continually, Luke xviii. 1. I Thess. v. 17. Eph. vi. 18. Luke xxi. 36. which cannot be understood of outward prayer, because it was impossible that men should be always upon their knees, expressing words of prayer; and this would hinder them from the exercise of those duties no less positively commanded. Outward prayer is, when as the spirit, being thus in the exercise of inward retirement, and feeling the breathing of the Spirit of God to arise powerfully in the soul, receives strength and liberty by a superadded motion and influence of the Spirit to bring forth either audible sighs, groans, or words, and that either in public assemblies, or in private, or at meat, &c.

Therefore such as are diligent and watchful in their minds, and much retired in the exercise of this inward prayer, are more capable to be frequent in the use of the outward, because that this holy influence doth more constantly attend them, and they being better acquainted with, and accustomed to, the motions of God's Spirit, can easily perceive and discern them. And indeed, as such who are most diligent have a near access to God, and he taketh most

delight to draw them by his Spirit to approach and call upon him, so when many are gathered together in this watchful mind, God doth frequently pour forth the Spirit of prayer among them and stir them thereunto, to the edifying and building up of one another in love. But because this outward prayer depends upon the inward, as that which must follow it, and cannot be acceptably performed but as attended with a superadded influence and motion of the Spirit, therefore cannot we prefix set times to pray outwardly, so as to lay a necessity to speak words at such and such times, whether we feel this heavenly influence and assistance or no; for that we judge were a tempting of God, and a coming before him without due preparation.

Song

As to the singing of psalms, there will not be need of any long discourse; for that the case is just the same as in the two former of preaching and prayer. We confess this to be a part of God's worship, and very sweet and refreshing, when it proceeds from a true sense of God's love in the heart, and arises from the divine influence of the Spirit, which leads souls to breathe forth either a sweet harmony, or words suitable to the present condition; whether they be words formerly used by the saints, and recorded in scripture, such as the Psalms of David, or other words.

That singing then that pleaseth him must proceed from that which is pure in the heart (even from the Word of Life therein) in and by which, richly dwelling in us, spiritual songs and hymns are returned to the Lord, according to that of the apostle, Col. iii. 16.

But as to their artificial musick, either by organs, or other instruments, or voice, we have neither example nor precept for it in the New Testament.

Baptism

As there is one Lord, and one faith, so there is one baptism; which is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience before God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And this baptism is a pure and spiritual thing, to wit, the baptism of the Spirit and Fire, by which we are buried with him, that being washed and purged from our sins, we may walk in newness of life: of which the baptism of John was a figure, which was commanded for a time, and not to continue for ever. As to the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition, for which neither precept nor practice is to be found in all the scripture.

That the one baptism of Christ is not a washing with water, appears from I Pet. iii. 21. *The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* So plain a definition of baptism is not in all the bible; and therefore, seeing it so plain, it may well be preferred to all the coined definitions of the schoolmen. He saith not that it is the water, or the putting away of the filth of the flesh, as accompanied with the answer of a good conscience, whereof the one, viz., water, is the sacramental element, administered by the minister; and the other, the grace or thing signified, conferred by Christ; but plainly, That it is

not the putting away, &c. than which there can be nothing more manifest to men unprejudicate and judicious. For seeing we are saved by this baptism, as all those that were in the ark were saved by water, it would then follow, that all those that have this baptism are saved by it. Now this consequence would be false, if it were understood of water-baptism; because many, by the confession of all, are baptized with water that are not saved; but this consequence holds most true, if it be understood as we do, of the baptism of the Spirit; since none can have this answer of a good conscience, and, abiding in it, not be saved by it.

For it is not outward washing with water that maketh the heart clean, by which men are fitted for heaven: and as that which goeth into the mouth doth not defile a man, because it is put forth again, and so goeth to the dunghill; neither doth any thing which man eateth purify him, or fit him for heaven.

Communion

The communion of the body and blood of Christ is inward and spiritual, which is the participation of his flesh and blood, by which the inward man is daily nourished in the hearts of those in whom Christ dwells. Of which things the breaking of bread by Christ with his disciples was a figure, which even they who had received the substance used in the church for a time, for the sake of the weak; even as abstaining from things strangled, and from blood, the washing of one another's feet, and the anointing of the sick with oil: all which are commanded with no less authority

and solemnity than the former; yet seeing they are but shadows of better things, they cease in such as have obtained the substance.

Lastly, If any now at this day, from a true tenderness of spirit, and with real conscience towards God, did practise this ceremony in the same way, method, and manner as did the primitive Christians recorded in scripture, I should not doubt to affirm but they might be indulged in it, and the Lord might regard them, and for a season appear to them in the use of these things, as many of us have known him to do to us in the time of our ignorance; providing always they did not seek to obtrude them upon others, nor judge such as found themselves delivered from them, or that they do not pertinaciously adhere to them. For we certainly know that the day is dawned, in which God hath arisen, and hath dismissed all those ceremonies and rites, and is only to be worshipped in Spirit, and that he appears to them who wait upon him; and that to seek God in these things is, with Mary at the sepulchre, to seek the living among the dead: for we know that he is risen, and revealed in Spirit, leading his children out of these rudiments, that they may walk with him in his light; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

III. Testimonies

Having hitherto treated of the principles of religion, both relating to doctrine and worship, I am now to speak of some practices which have been the product of this principle, in those witnesses whom God hath raised up in this day to testify for his truth. It will not a little commend them, I suppose, in the judgment of sober and judicious

men, that taking them generally, even by the confession of their adversaries, they are found to be free of those abominations which abound among other professors, such as are swearing, drunkenness, whoredom, riotousness, &c, and that generally the very coming among those people doth naturally work such a change, so that many vicious and profane persons have been known, by coming to this truth, to become sober and virtuous.

But there are some singular things, which most of all our adversaries plead for the lawfulness of, and allow themselves in, as no ways inconsistent with the Christian religion, which we have found to be no ways lawful unto us, and have been commanded of the Lord to lay them aside; tho' the doing thereof hath occasioned no small sufferings and buffetings, and hath procured us much hatred and malice from the world. And because the nature of these things is such, that they do upon the very sight distinguish us, and make us known, so that we cannot hide ourselves from any, without proving unfaithful to our testimony; our trials and exercises have herethrough proved the more numerous and difficult, as will after appear.

I would not have any judge, that hereby we intend to destroy the mutual relation that either is betwixt prince and people, master and servants, parents and children; nay, not at all: we shall evidence, that our principle in these things hath no such tendency, and that these natural relations are rather better established, than any ways hurt by it. Next, Let not any judge, that from our opinion in these things, any necessity of levelling will follow, or that all men must have things in common. Our principle leaves every man to enjoy

that peaceably, which either his own industry, or his parents, have purchased to him; only he is thereby instructed to use it aright, both for his own good, and that of his brethren; and all to the Glory of God: in which also his acts are to be voluntary, and no ways constrained.

These things premised, I would seriously propose unto all such, as choose to be Christians indeed, and that in nature, and not in name only whether it were not desirable, and would not greatly contribute to the Commendation of Christianity, and to the increase of the life and virtue of Christ, if all superfluous titles of honour, profuseness and prodigality in meat and apparel, gaming, sporting and playing, were laid aside and forborne? And whether such as lay them aside, in so doing, walk not more like the disciples of Christ and his apostles, and are therein nearer their example, than such as use them? Certainly the sober and serious among all sorts will say, Yea. And God hath made it manifest in this age, that by discovering the evil of such things, and leading his witnesses out of them, and to testify against them, he hath produced effectually in many that mortification and abstraction from the love and cares of this world, who daily are conversing in the world (but inwardly redeemed out of it) both in wedlock, and in their lawful employments, which was judged could only be obtained by such as were shut up in cloisters and monasteries. Thus much in general.

Titles

We affirm positively, That it is not lawful for Christians either to give or receive titles of honour, as, Your Holiness, Your Majesty, Your Excellency, Your Eminency, &c.

First, Because these titles are no part of that obedience which is due to magistrates or superiors; neither doth the giving them add to or diminish from that subjection we owe to them, which consists in obeying their just and lawful commands, not in titles and designations.

For if these titles arise either from the office or worth of the persons, it will not be denied, but the apostles deserved them better than any now that call for them. But the case is plain, the apostles had the holiness, the excellency, the grace; and because they were holy, excellent, and gracious, they neither used, nor admitted of such titles.

Lastly, All these titles and stiles of honour are to be rejected by Christians, because they are to seek the honour that comes from above, and not the honour that is from below: but these honours are not that honour that comes from above, but are from below.

It will not be unfit in this place to say something concerning the using of the singular number to one person; of this there is no controversy in the Latin. For when we speak to one, we always use the pronoun TU and he that would do otherwise would break the rules of grammar, concerning which likewise James Howel, in his epistle to the nobility of England, before the French and English

Dictionary, takes notice, that both in France, and in other nations, the word THOU was used in speaking to one; but by succession of time, when the Roman commonwealth grew into an empire, the courtiers began to magnify the emperor, (as being furnished with power to confer dignities and offices) using the word YOU, yea, and deifying him with more remarkable titles. So that the word YOU in the plural number, together with the other titles and compellations of honour, seem to have taken their rise from monarchial government; which afterwards, by degrees, came to be derived to private persons.

Moreover that this way of speaking proceeds from an high and proud mind, hence appears; because that men commonly use the singular number to beggars, and to their servants; yea and in their prayers to God. Thus the superior will speak to his inferior, who yet will not bear that the inferior so speak to him, as judging it a kind of reproach unto him. So hath the pride of men placed God and the beggar in the same category. Seeing therefore it is manifest to us, that this form of speaking to men in the plural number doth proceed from pride, as well as that it is in itself a lie, we found the necessity upon us to testify against this corruption, by using the singular equally unto all.

Hat and Knee

Secondly, Next unto this of titles, the other part of honour used among Christians in the kneeling, bowing, and uncovering of the head to one another.

First, We say, That God, who is the Creator of man, and he to whom he oweth the dedication both of soul and body, is over all to be worshipped and adored, and that not only by the spirit, but also with the prostration of body. Now kneeling, bowing, and uncovering of the head, is the alone outward signification of our adoration towards God, and therefore it is not lawful to give it unto man. He that kneeleth, or prostrates himself to man, what doth he more to God? He that boweth, and uncovereth his head to the creature, what hath he reserved to the Creator?

Secondly, Men being alike by creation (though their being stated under their several relations requires from them mutual services according to those respective relations) owe not worship one to another, but all equally are to return it to God. All men, by an inward instinct, in all nations have been led to prostrate and bow themselves to God. And it is plain that this bowing to men took place from a slavish fear possessing some, which led them to set up others as gods; when also an ambitious proud spirit got up in those others, to usurp the place of God over their brethren.

And forasmuch as they accuse us herein of rudeness and pride, though the testimony of our consciences in the sight of God be a sufficient guard against such calumnies, yet there are of us known to be men of such education, as forbear not these things for want of that they call good breeding; and we should be very void of reason, to purchase that pride at so dear a rate, as many have done the exercise of their conscience in this matter; many of us having been sorely beaten and buffeted, yea, and several months imprisoned, for no other reason but because we

could not so satisfy the proud unreasonable humours of proud men, as to uncover our heads, and bow our bodies. Nor doth our innocent practice, in standing still, though upright, not putting off our hats, any more than our shoes, the one being the covering of our heads, as well as the other of our feet, shew so much rudeness, as their beating and knocking us, &c. because we cannot bow to them, contrary to our consciences: which certainly shews less meekness and humility upon their part, than it doth of rudeness or pride upon ours. And this I can say boldly, in the sight of God, from my own experience, and that of many thousands more, that however small or foolish this may seem, yet we behoved to choose death rather than do it, and that for conscience sake: and that in its being so contrary to our natural spirits, there are many of us, to whom the forsaking of these bowings and ceremonies was as death itself; which we could never have left, if we could have enjoyed our peace with God in the use of them.

Apparel

The third thing to be treated of, is the vanity and superfluity of apparel. In which, first, two things are to be considered, the condition of the person, and country he lives in. We shall not say that all persons are to be clothed alike, because it will perhaps neither suit their bodies nor their estates. And if a man be clothed soberly, and without superfluity, tho' they may be finer than that which his servant is clothed with, we shall not blame him for it: the abstaining from superfluities, which his condition and education have accustomed him to, may be in him a greater act of mortification than the abstaining from finer clothes in

the servant, who never was accustomed to them. As to the country, what it naturally produces may be no vanity to the inhabitants to use, or what is commonly imparted to them by way of exchange, seeing it is without doubt that the creation is for the use of man. So where silk abounds, it may be worn as well as wool; and were we in those countries, or near unto them, where gold or silver were as common as iron or brass, the one might be used as well as the other. The iniquity lies then here, First, When from a lust of vanity, and a desire to adorn themselves, men and women, not content with what their condition can bear, or their country easily affords, do stretch to have things, that from their rarity, and the price that is put upon them, seem to be precious, and so feed their lust the more; and this all sober men of all sorts will readily grant to be evil.

Gaming

Fourthly, Let us consider the use of games, sports, comedies, and other such things, commonly and indifferently used by all the several sorts of Christians, under the notion of divertisement and recreation, and see whether these things can consist with the seriousness, gravity, and Godly fear, which the gospel calls for.

There is no duty more frequently commanded, nor more incumbent upon Christians, than the fear of the Lord, to stand in awe before him, to walk as in his presence; but if such as use these games and sports will speak from their consciences, they can, I doubt not, experimentally declare, that this fear is forgotten in their gaming: and if God by this light secretly touch them, or mind them of the vanity of

their way, they strive to shut it out, and use their gaming as an engine to put away from them that troublesome guest.

But they object, That men's spirits could not subsist, if they were always intent upon serious and spiritual matters, and that therefore there is need of some divertisement to recreate the mind a little, whereby it being refreshed, is able with great vigour to apply itself to these things.

I answer; Though all this were granted, it would no ways militate against us, neither plead the use of these things, which we would have wholly laid aside. For that men should be always in the same intentiveness of mind, we do not plead, knowing how impossible it is, so long as we are clothed with this tabernacle of clay. But this will not allow us at any time to recede from the remembrance of God, and of our souls' chief concern, as not still to retain a certain sense of his fear; which cannot be so much as rationally supposed to be in the use of these things which we condemn. Now the necessary occasions in which all are involved, in order to the care and sustentation of the outward man, are a relaxation of the mind from the more serious duties; and those are performed in the blessing, as the mind is so leavened with the love of God, and the sense of his presence, that even in doing these things the soul carrieth with it that divine influence and spiritual habit, whereby though these acts, as of eating, drinking, sleeping, working, be upon the matter one with what the wicked do, yet they are done in another Spirit; and in doing of them we please the Lord, serve him, and answer our end in the creation, and so feel and are sensible of his blessing. There are innocent divertisements which may sufficiently serve

for relaxation of the mind, such as for friends to visit one another; to hear or read history; to speak soberly of the present or past transactions; to follow after gardening; to use geometrical and mathematical experiments, and such other things of this nature. In all which things we are not to forget God, in whom we both live, and are moved, Acts xvii. 28. as not to have always some secret reserve to him, and sense of his fear and presence; which also frequently exerts itself in the midst of these things by some short aspiration and breathings.

Swearing

Fifthly, The use of swearing is to be considered, which is so frequently practised almost among all Christians; not only profane oaths among the profane, in their common discourses, whereby the Most HOLY NAME of GOD is in a horrible manner daily blasphemed; but also solemn oaths with those that have some shew of piety, whereof the most part do defend swearing before the magistrate with so great zeal, that not only they are ready themselves to do it upon every occasion, but also have stirred up the magistrates to persecute those, who, out of obedience to Christ, their Lord and master, judge it unlawful to swear; upon which account not a few have suffered imprisonment, and the spoiling of their goods.

But considering these clear words of our Saviour, Mat. v. 33, 34. *Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL, neither by heaven, &c. But let your*

communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. As also the words of the apostle James, v. 12. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay lest ye fall into condemnation.

It is no ways lawful for a Christian to swear, whom Christ has called to his essential truth, which was before all oaths, forbidding him to swear; and on the contrary, commanding him to speak the truth in all things; to the honour of Christ who called him; that it may appear that the words of his disciples may be as truly believed as the oaths of all the worldly men. Neither is it lawful for them to be unfaithful in this, that they may please others, or that they may avoid their hurt: for thus the primitive Christians for some ages remained faithful, who being required to swear, did unanimously answer, I am a Christian, I do not swear.

Who then needs further to doubt, but that since Christ would have his disciples attain the highest pitch of perfection, he abrogated oaths, as a rudiment of infirmity, and in place thereof established the use of truth?

Fighting

Sixthly, The last thing to be considered, is revenge and war, an evil as opposite and contrary to the Spirit and doctrine of Christ as light to darkness. For through contempt of Christ's law the whole world is filled with violence, oppression, murders, ravishing of women and virgins, spoilings, depredations, and all manner of lasciviousness

and cruelty: so that it is strange that men, made after the image of God, should have so much degenerated, that they rather bear the image and nature of roaring lions, tearing tigers, devouring wolves, and raging boars, than of rational creatures endued with reason. And is it not yet much more admirable [“to be wondered at”, ed.] that this horrid monster should find place, and be fomented, among those men that profess themselves disciples of our peaceable Lord and master Jesus Christ, who by excellency is called the Prince of Peace, and hath expressly prohibited his children all violence; and on the contrary, commanded them, that, according to his example, they should follow patience, charity, forbearance, and other virtues worthy of a Christian?

Hear then what this great prophet saith, whom every soul is commanded to hear, under the pain of being cut off, Mat. v. from verse 38 to the end of the chapter. For thus he saith: *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right check, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father*

which is in heaven. For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the Publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the Publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

And truly the words are so clear in themselves, that, in my judgment, they need no illustration to explain their sense: for it is as easy to reconcile the greatest contradictions, as these laws of our Lord Jesus Christ with the wicked practices of wars; for they are plainly inconsistent. Whoever can reconcile this, Resist not evil, with resist violence by force: again, Give also thy other cheek, with strike again; also Love thine enemies, with spoil them, make a prey of them, pursue them with fire and sword; or Pray for those that persecute you, and those that calumniate you, with persecute them by fines, imprisonments, and death itself; and not only such as do not persecute you, but who heartily seek and desire your eternal and temporal welfare: whoever, I say, can find a means to reconcile these things, may be supposed also to have found a way to reconcile God with the devil, Christ with Antichrist, light with darkness, and good with evil.

These words, with respect to revenge, as the former in the case of swearing, do forbid some things, which in time past were lawful to the Jews, considering their condition and dispensation; and command unto such as will be the disciples of Christ, a more perfect, eminent, and full signification of charity, as also patience and suffering, than

was required of them in that time, state, and dispensation by the law of Moses. This is not only the judgment of most, if not all, the ancient fathers, so called, of the first three hundred years after Christ, but also of many others.

Two or three ages afterwards Christians altogether rejected war if the emperor Marc. Aurel. Anton. be to be credited, who writes thus: – *I prayed to my country gods; but when I was neglected by them, and observed myself pressed by the enemy, considering the fewness of my forces, I called to one, and intreated those who with us are called Christians, and I found a great number of them.: and I forced them with threats, which ought not to have been, because afterwards I knew their strength and force: therefore they betook themselves neither to the use of darts nor trumpets, for they use not so to do, for the cause and name of their God, which they bear in their consciences: and this was done about an hundred and sixty years after Christ. To this add those words, which in Justin Martyr the Christians answer, *We fight not with our enemies.* And moreover the answer of Martin to Julian the apostate, related by Sulpitius Severus, *I am a soldier of Christ, therefore I cannot fight:* which was three hundred years after Christ.*

And James tells us, that fighting proceeds from the lusts. So that it were fitter for Christians, by the sword of God's Spirit, to fight against their lusts, than by the prevalency of their lusts to destroy one another. Whatever honour any might have attained of old under the Law this way, we find under the Gospel Christians commended for suffering, not for fighting; neither did any of Christ's disciples, save one, offer outward violence by the sword, in cutting off

Malchus's ear; for which he received no title of honour, but a just reproof.

And although this thing be so much known, yet it is as well known that almost all the modern sects live in the neglect and contempt of this law of Christ, and likewise oppress others, who in this agree not with them for conscience sake towards God: even as we have suffered much in our country, because we neither could ourselves bear arms; nor send others in our place, nor give our money for the buying of drums, standards, and other military attire. And lastly, Because we could not hold our doors, windows, and shops close, for conscience sake, upon such days as fasts and prayers were appointed, to desire a blessing upon, and success for, the arms of the kingdom or commonwealth under which we live; neither give thanks for the victories acquired by the effusion of much blood. By which forcing of the conscience, they would have constrained our brethren, living in divers kingdoms at war together, to have implored our God for contrary and contradictory things, and consequentially impossible; for it is impossible that two parties fighting together, should both obtain the victory.

They object, That Christ, Luke xxii. 36. speaking to his disciples, commands them, That he that then had not a sword, should sell his coat, and buy a sword; therefore, say they, arms are lawful.

I answer, Some indeed understand this of the outward sword, nevertheless regarding only that occasion; otherwise judging, that Christians are prohibited wars under the

gospel. Among which is Ambrose, who upon this place speaks thus: *O Lord; why commandest thou me to buy a sword, who forbiddest me to smite with it? Why commandest thou me to have it, whom thou prohibitest to draw it? Unless perhaps a defence be prepared, not a necessary revenge; and that I may seem to have been able to revenge, but that I would not.* Others judge Christ to have spoken here mystically, and not according to the letter. And truly when we consider the answer of the disciples, Master, behold here are two swords; understanding it of outward swords; and again Christ's answer, It is enough; it seems that Christ would not that the rest, who had not swords (for they had only two swords) should sell their coats, and buy an outward sword. Who can think that, matters standing thus, he should have said, Two was enough?

They object, That the scriptures and old fathers, so called, did only prohibit private revenge, not the use of arms for the defence of our country, body, wives, children, and goods, when the magistrate commands it, seeing the magistrate ought to be obeyed; therefore although it be not lawful for private men to do it of themselves, nevertheless they are bound to do it by the command of the magistrate.

I answer, If the magistrate be truly a Christian, or desire to be so, he ought himself, in the first place, to obey the command of his master, saying, Love your enemies, &c. and then he could not command us to kill them; but if he be not a true Christian, then ought we to obey our Lord and King, Jesus Christ, whom he ought also to obey: for in the kingdom of Christ all ought to submit to his laws, from the

highest to the lowest, that is, from the king to the beggar, and from Caesar to the clown.

They object, That defence is of natural right, and that religion destroys not nature.

I answer, Be it so; but to obey God, and commend ourselves to him in faith and patience, is not to destroy nature, but to exalt and perfect it; to wit, to elevate it from the natural to the supernatural life, by Christ living therein, and comforting it, that it may do all things, and be rendered more than conqueror.

But lastly, as to what relates to this thing, since nothing seems more contrary to man's nature, and seeing of all things the defence of one's self seems most tolerable, as it is most hard to men, so it is the most perfect part of the Christian religion, as that wherein the denial of self and entire confidence in God doth most appear; and therefore Christ and his apostles left us hereof a most perfect example. As to what relates to the present magistrates of the Christian world, albeit we deny them not altogether the name of Christians, because of the publick profession they make of Christ's name, yet we may boldly affirm, that they are far from the perfection of the Christian religion; because in the state in which they are (as in many places before I have largely observed) they have not come to the pure dispensation of the gospel. And therefore, while they are in that condition, we shall not say, That war, undertaken upon a just occasion, is altogether unlawful to them. For even as circumcision and the other ceremonies were for a season permitted to the Jews, not because they were either

necessary of themselves, or lawful at that time, after the resurrection of Christ, but because that Spirit was not yet raised up in them, whereby they could be delivered from such rudiments; so the present confessors of the Christian name, who are yet in the mixture, and not in the patient suffering spirit, are not yet fitted for this form of Christianity, and therefore cannot be undefending themselves until they attain that perfection. But for such whom Christ has brought hither, it is not lawful to defend themselves by arms, but they ought over all to trust to the Lord.

Liberty of Conscience

Liberty of conscience from the power of the civil magistrate hath been of late years so largely and learnedly handled, that I shall need to be but brief in it; yet it is to be lamented that few have walked answerably to this principle, each pleading it for themselves, but scarce allowing it to others.

That no man, by virtue of any power or principality he hath in the government of this world, hath power over the consciences of men, is apparent, because the conscience of man is the seat and throne of God in him, of which God is the alone proper and infallible judge, who by his power and Spirit can alone rectify the mistakes of conscience, and therefore hath reserved to himself the power of punishing the errors thereof as he seeth meet.

We understand by matters of conscience such as immediately relate betwixt God and man, or men and men,

that are under the same persuasion, as to meet together and worship God in that way which they judge is most acceptable unto him, and not to encroach upon, or seek to force their neighbours, otherwise than by reason, or such other means as Christ and his apostles used, viz. Preaching and instructing such as will hear and receive it; but not at all for men, under the notion of conscience, to do any thing contrary to the moral and perpetual statutes generally acknowledged by all Christians; in which case the magistrate may very lawfully use his authority; as on those, who, under a pretence of conscience, make it a principle to kill and destroy all the wicked, *id est*, all that differ from them that they, to wit, the saints, may rule.

But the liberty we lay claim to is such as the primitive church justly sought under the heathen emperors, to wit, for men of sobriety, honesty, and a peaceable conversation, to enjoy the liberty and exercise of their conscience towards God and among themselves, and to admit among them such as by their persuasion and influence come to be convinced of the same truth with them, without being therefore molested by the civil magistrate. Though we would not have men hurt in their temporals, nor robbed of their privileges as men and members of the commonwealth, because of their inward persuasion; yet we are far from judging that in the church of God there should not be censures exercised against such as fall into error, as well as such as commit open evils; and therefore we believe it may be very lawful for a Christian church, if she find any of her members fall into any error, after due admonitions and instructions according to gospel order, if she find them

pertinacious, to cut them off from her fellowship by the sword of the Spirit, and deprive them of those privileges which they had as fellow-members; but not to cut them off from the world by the temporal sword, or rob them of their common privileges as men, seeing they enjoy not these as Christians, or under such a fellowship, but as men, and members of the creation. Hence Chrysostom saith well, (de Anath.) *We must condemn and reprove the evil doctrines that proceed from Hereticks; but spare the men, and pray for their salvation.*

And it is observable, that notwithstanding many other superstitions crept into the church very early, yet this of persecution was so inconsistent with the nature of the gospel, and liberty of conscience, as we have asserted it, such an innate and natural part of the Christian religion, that almost all the Christian writers, for the first three hundred years, earnestly contended for it, condemning the contrary opinion.

Now the ground of persecution is an unwillingness to suffer; for no man, that will persecute another for his conscience, would suffer for his own, if he could avoid it, seeing his principle obliges him, if he had power, by force to establish that which he judges is the truth, and so to force others to it. Therefore I judge it meet, for the information of the nations, briefly to add something in this place concerning the nature of true Christian sufferings, whereunto a very faithful testimony hath been borne by God's witnesses.

Of this excellent patience and sufferings, the witnesses of God, in scorn called Quakers, have given a manifest proof: for so soon as God revealed his truth among them, without regard to any opposition whatsoever, or what they might meet with, they went up and down, as they were moved of the Lord, preaching and propagating the truth in market-places, highways, streets, and publick temples, though daily beaten, whipped, bruised, haled, and imprisoned therefore. And when there was any where a church or assembly gathered, they taught them to keep their meetings openly, and not to shut the door, nor do it by stealth, that all might know it, and those who would might enter.

And hereby all just occasion of fear of plotting against the government was fully removed, so this their courage and faithfulness in not giving over their meeting together (but more especially the presence and glory of God manifested in the meeting being terrible to the consciences of the persecutors) did so weary out the malice of their adversaries, that oftentimes they were forced to leave their work undone. For when they came to break up a meeting, they were obliged to take every individual out by force, they not being free to give up their liberty by dissolving at their command: and when they were haled out, unless they were kept forth by violence, they presently returned peaceably to their place. Yea, when sometimes the magistrates have pulled down their meeting houses, they have met the next day openly upon the rubbish, and so by innocency kept their possession and ground, being properly their own, and their right to meet and worship God being not forfeited to any.

The true, faithful and Christian suffering is for men to profess what they are persuaded is right, and so practise and perform their worship towards God, as being their true right so to do; and neither to do more in that, because of outward encouragement from men; nor any whit less, because of the fear of their laws and acts against it. Thus for a Christian man to vindicate his just liberty with so much boldness, and yet innocency, will in due time, though through blood, purchase peace, as this age hath in some measure experienced, and many are witnesses of it; which yet shall be more apparent to the world, as truth takes place on earth. But they greatly sin against this excellent rule, that in time of persecution do not profess their own way so much as they would if it were otherwise; and yet, when they can get the magistrate upon their side, not only stretch their own liberty to the utmost, but seek to establish the same by denying it to others.

Now against our unparalleled yet innocent and Christian cause our malicious enemies have nothing to say, but that if we had power, we would do likewise. This is a piece of mere unreasonable malice, and a privilege they take to judge of things to come, which they have not by immediate revelation; and surely it is the greatest height of harsh judgment to say men would do contrary to their professed principle if they could, who have from their practice hitherto given no ground for it, and wherein they only judge others by themselves: such conjectures cannot militate against us, so long as we are innocent. And if ever we prove guilty of persecution, by forcing other men by corporal punishment to our way, then let us be judged the

greatest of hypocrites, and let not any spare to persecute us. Amen, saith my soul.

The Conclusion

If in God's fear, candid reader, thou appliest thyself to consider this system of religion here delivered, with its consistency and harmony, as well in itself as with the scriptures of truth, I doubt not but thou wilt say with me and many more, that this is the spiritual day of Christ's appearance, wherein he is again revealing the ancient paths of truth and righteousness. For which end he hath called us to be a first fruits of those that serve him, and worship him no more in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. And though we be few in number, in respect of others, and weak as to outward strength, which we also altogether reject, and foolish if compared with the wise ones of this world; yet as God hath prospered us, notwithstanding much opposition, so will he yet do, that neither the art, wisdom, nor violence of men or devils shall be able to quench that little spark that hath appeared; but it shall grow to the consuming of whatsoever shall stand up to oppose it! yea, he that hath arisen in a small remnant shall arise and go on by the same arm of power in his spiritual manifestation, until he hath conquered all his enemies, until all the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

Notes

1. In this section Barclay rejects the then commonly accepted Protestant doctrine that man is justified or

accounted righteous by the sacrifice of Christ, accepted by faith, regardless of whether or not he is actually righteous.

About the Editor

Eleanore Price Mather (1910-1985) was a Quaker writer and editor from Rose Valley, Pennsylvania. The daughter of Walter Ferris and Felicia Thomas Price, she married Robert Worrell Mather and was a member of Providence Monthly Meeting. A collection at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College contains primarily papers concerning Eleanore Price Mather's book, lectures, and articles on the Quaker painter, Edward Hicks.

Pendle Hill

Located on 23 acres in Wallingford, Pennsylvania, Pendle Hill is a Quaker study, retreat, and conference center offering programs open to everyone. Pendle Hill's vision is to create peace with justice in the world by transforming lives. Since Pendle Hill opened in 1930, thousands of people have come from across the United States and throughout the world for Spirit-led learning, retreat, and community.

At the heart of Pendle Hill is a residential study program which encourages a step back from daily life for reflection and discernment in preparation for deeper engagement in the community and wider world. Because spiritual experience is essential to Quakerism, Pendle Hill's education is experiential, or experimental, at its core. Adult students of all ages come for a term or a year of education designed to strengthen the whole person – body, mind, and

spirit. The Resident Program captures the earliest vision for Pendle Hill while responding to the call of the world in which we exist today. Program themes include:

- Quaker faith and practice
- Dismantling oppression
- Spiritual deepening
- Leadership skill development
- Ecological literacy
- Personal discernment
- Arts and crafts
- Gandhian constructive program
- Building capacity for nonviolent social change.

Programs are offered in a variety of formats – including term-long courses, weekend workshops, and evening presentations. Those unable to come for a term or a year are encouraged to take part in a workshop or retreat.

Information on all Pendle Hill programs is available at www.pendlehill.org. Pendle Hill's mission of spiritual education is also furthered through conference services – hosting events for a variety of religious and educational nonprofit organizations, including many Quaker groups.

The Pendle Hill pamphlets have been an integral part of Pendle Hill's educational vision since 1934. Like early Christian and Quaker tracts, the pamphlets articulate perspectives which grow out of the personal experience, insights, and/or special knowledge of the authors, concerning spiritual life, faith, and witness.

A typical pamphlet has characteristics which make it a good vehicle for experimental thought. It is the right length to be read at a single sitting (about 9000 words). It is concerned with a topic of contemporary importance. Like words spoken in a Quaker meeting for worship, it embodies a concern, a sense of obligation to express caring or to act in response to a harmful situation.

To receive each Pendle Hill pamphlet as it is published, order an annual subscription. Please contact:

Pendle Hill Pamphlet Subscriptions
338 Plush Mill Road
Wallingford, PA 19086-6023
610-566-4507 or 800-742-3150
<http://www.pendlehill.org/>