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Ἰχνογραφία. Or  
OR  
A MODEL  
OF

The Primitive Congregational way:

Wherein satisfaction is offered, by unfolding (ac-  
ording to the Scriptures) what the right order of the  
Gospel, and way of the Saints <sup>The visible</sup> ~~in these~~ worshipping  
of God is, in the dayes of the New Testament.

And how the Saints in these dayes may walk upto it,  
notwithstanding their present hinderances.

Together with the maine points in controversie, touching  
the right visible Church-state Christ hath instituted un-  
der the Gospel, with the extent of Church-Officers, and  
power of particular visible Churches, and conti-  
nuance of Divine Ordinances <sup>as</sup> Institutions  
under the defections and Apostasie of  
Antichrist.

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By W. Bartlet, Minister of the Gospel, at Wapping.

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(... 14 lines)

London,

Printed by W. E. for H. Overton, at the entrance into  
Popes-head Alley, out of Lombard-street. 1647



To all the Saints, and Servants of *Jesus*  
*Christ*, scattered up and down in the King-  
 dome of *England*, and throughout the world,  
 that hitherto have bene Strangers to the paths of  
*Sion*, and have not worshipped God accor-  
 ding to the right order of the Gospell.

Dearly beloved in the Lord,

**T**ill better provision come, In all humility I here pre-  
 sent you as from *Jesus Christ*, (the Head and \* King  
 of Saints) with this plain Treatise, for whose sakes it  
 is composed, and sent abroad into the world. The subject matter  
 of it, (looking directly to the glory of *Christ*, and the  
 welfare of your soules) is so excellent, that I ingenuously  
 professe, it calls for the richest annoinings from on high, to de-  
 clare and hold forth the beauty and lustre thereof. And had I  
 not proved by experience, that the glorious God ordaineth  
 strength out of the mouthes of Babes, *Plal. 8. 2.* and as the  
 Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 1. 27, 28.* chooseth the foolish, the weak,  
 the base things of the world; and things that are despised, yea  
 things that are not, to be instrumentall for his praise; I should  
 have been altogether discouraged from setting about it. But in  
 regard the \* weaknes of the instrument, exceedingly advanceth  
 the glory, both of the wisdom and power of God; I was the more  
 encouraged to undertake it. Now because of my intending  
 the generall good of believers, and profiting the meanest, in pub-  
 lishing this Treatise: I have propounded to my selfe 3. things  
 in the carrying of it on.

1. The manner and way of ordering and disposing it.
2. The grounds and arguments that divinely moved me to

*1. 2. 3.*  
*Rev. 15. 3.*  
 \* *Josh. 8. 20.*  
 Jericho's walls  
 fall downe at  
 the blowing of  
 Rams horns.  
*1 Sam. 17. Da-*  
*vid conquered*  
*Goliath with a*  
*Sling and a*  
*stone. Esay 41.*  
*14, 15, 16.*  
 the Church a  
 poore worne,  
 thresheth the  
 mountaines to  
 dust.  
 The Disciples  
 of *Christ* taken  
 out of Fisher-  
 boates, by no  
 other meanes  
 then preaching  
 subdue King-  
 domes, & na-  
 tions to *Christ*.

1647?

## The Epistle

it, and were as a fire in my bosome, not suffering me to rest.

3. The end and scope that I had before me, and at which I aimed: of all which I shall briefly give you an account.

As for the first of these, I have endeavoured three things.

1. That the method be plain and easie, by way of Proposition, and Deductions or inferences from them; according to the most usual and ordinary way of preaching observed in the Kingdome, to which people have been accustomed, whereby the truth is not only cleared and defended, but that which is contrary thereunto, and unsound, is discovered, and weakened.

2. That the style be not lofty, with an affected straine, soaring above the capacity and reach of the ignorant, (a distemper that sticks too close the tongues and Pennes of many men, forgetting that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 14. 19. That in the Church he had rather speake five words with understanding, that he might teach others, then ten thousand words in an unknown tongue) but low and familiar, avoiding to the uttermost (according to the same Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 4.) the enticing words of mans wildome, in handling the sacred mysteries of the Gospell: neither can this be any prejudice I suppose to such as are learned, considering that they (especially if they have learned Christ) do judge of Books rather by the matter then the style. That great Oratour (Demosthenes) himselfe could say, that the riches of Greece did not consist in words.

3. That the matter it selfe propounded and discussed in this Treatise, be not so much an argumentative as positive way held forth from the authority of the Scripture chiefly, and sound reason consonant thereunto, which are those spirituall weapons, that are mighty through God, to the casting down those strong holds in the hearts of men, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. As for the judgements of the most eminent, learned, and godly men  
which



## Dedicatory.

Tr. R.  
B 58 E

which I have here and there, throughout the Treatise produced, I have not done it in the least, to disparage the authority of the Scriptures: for without controversie, the word of God is greater \* then all the testimonies of men, but only to satisfy such as are weake, and conceive that those of the Congregationall way, are singular and contrary to all men, both in their judgment and practise.

2. Touching the grounds and reasons that prevailed with me to the setting upon this worke, they were such as these following.

1. The ardent and burning desire of my soule, after the lifting up of Jesus Christs honour, and furthering Sions welfare, both which at this present time, do not a little suffer, from the tongues and Pennes of multitudes in this Kingdome, and other parts of the world.

2. The stopping in some measure (if it be possible) the mouths of opposers, and giving satisfaction to other more moderate, that enquire after the truth of the Congregationall way, according to the Scriptures, and vindicating of it also, from those foule aspersions that have been, and are stil cast upon it, & those that walke in it: many men not fearing in these dayes of iniquities abounding, to speake all manner of evill, of the wayes & servants of Christ, that will not, dare not comply with them, in their sinfull wayes: as was the practise of many in the primitive times, 1 Pet. 4. 4. Wherein they thinke it strange that you runne not with them to the same excesse of ryot, \* βλασφημῶντες, blaspheming, or speaking evill of you.

3. The bleeding condition of the true Churches of Christ, through the violent out-rage of divers men, that of late are prejudiced against them, and that right order of the Gospel they walk in: So that the feet of many weak soules begin so slide, and the feeble Lambes of Christ, that of late have been folded

\* To build up on any Doctors saying, without Scripture, or reason agreeing to Scripture, were to follow Pythagoras, rather then Christ. vid. Crammers continuation of unwritten Verities.

Be a man never so learned after the Apostles, yet his words without Gods word are of none authority: id. ibid. And this he abundantly proveth from ancient Fathers and Schoolmen, as Chrysostome Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Cyril Fulgent. Greg. Theophil. Damasc. Bruno, Beda, Ansel. Tho. Aquin. and others, in the Treatise.

\* Blasphemy is a Greek word, and with the learned in that

tongue, a blasphemer is one that takes away the fame, credit, or good name of another; from βλασφημῶν τὸν σίμωνα. Demost.

and brought in to the beauties of holinesse, are thereby in danger to be turned out of the way.

4. The great danger of Reformatiōns miscarrying, that of late yeeres was so happily begun, there being not onely an obstructing thereof at present, but a great and marvellous appearance also of recidivation, and returning to the old and former wayes of formality, superstition, and tyrannie, in many places of the Kingdome.

\* Its greatly to be desired that this question were thoroughly debated.

Qu. Whether the Church of England as it is National, consisting of so many thousand Parishes, that are as branches and members of the same, and have no power of government in them selves, but stand under an absolute authoritative ecclesiasticall power without them to rule & govern them in the matters of Gods Worship, be a true Church for matter and forme, according to the Scripture, and divide appointment.

3. As for the ends I have proposed to my selfe in the publishing this Treatise, they have been such as these.

1. Not to increase and widen, (the Lord knowes) but to heale and abate the present differences that are now on foot in the Kingdome, about the Sacramentall and Divine Ordinances and Institutions of Christ, touching the right way and order of the Saints in the visible worship of God. The truth is, I have not a little suffered from the tongues of men, as a rent maker, and peace-breaker, for my endeavours to bring the Saints (in the place where Providence cast me) into the order of the Gospell; but whether justly, I doubt not but my Lord and Master will in due time make evident. In the interim, this is my comfort, that my sufferings in this or any other kind, being for righteousnesse sake, shall infinitely advantage my internall and eternall peace and well-fare, however it shall goe with my externall condition in this world.

2. Nor yet to condemne, or contemne in the least, the personall gifts and graces of the servants of Christ; that yet remaine in their present questionable Church-state, but onely (as duty binds me towards Christ and them) to discover, how vain a thing it is for them to expect a right Gospel-Reformation in matters of visible worship throughout the Kingdome; so long as they remaine under a false, visible, Nationall Church-state, and order of worship: because, as long as the right order of the Gospell, instituted by Jesus Christ, for the Saints to walke

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walke, and worship God in, is slighted and rejected, the blessing of Christ on our endeavours, after a sound and thorough Reformation in the Kingdome cannot be expected: the old leaven of a false and Antichristian constitution must first be cast out, as the Apostle reasons with the Corinthians in the point of their Church pollution, 1 Cor. 5. 6, 7. before there can be a new lump, that is, a sound Church state according to divine institution.

We cannot be ignorant, how the whole <sup>reign</sup> or frame of Englands visible Church state, and order of worship and government hath been unsound, from the very first day that the Lord was pleased to beginne the freedome of this Kingdome from Antichristian bondage and thraldome: And though the Reformation in doctrine and matters of faith (as being the principall) was carefully looked after, (for which we and our posterity after us have great cause to blesse God)\* yet in respect of the visible frame and constitution of the Church, and order of worship and government, so there was little or no Reformation, nor separation from Rome: All the separation in England from Antichrist formerly, was more in respect of purity of doctrine, then worship; and the reformation that is now on foote is more in respect of government in the Church of England, then of the Church state of England it selfe: which I desire may be marked, for the same Nationall forme and frame of Church state continues stil, and is allowed of, as it was formerly, before ever: here was a renouncing of the power and authority of the Pope, in H 8. and Ed. 6. dayes. The change hitherto is only in point of government, the constitution stil the same.

And therefore I say one chiefe end I have had in publishing this plaine Treatise, is not to despise the godly that yet remaine in their old Nationall Church-state, or in the least to give a check to the Parliaments proceedings hitherto, who doubtlesse

\* Though matters of faith are the principall parts of Christs will, & so ought to be done, yet matters of externall worship and Church-order are also commanded, & so not to be neglected, as Christ said to the Scribes & Pharisees in a like case, Mat. 23. 23. and so Cal. Pet. Mart. M. Cartwright, & others judge.

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(as charity binds me to believe) have proceeded according to that light they have received, but only to hold forth in a briefe manner, according as it hath been desired, what the true visible Church-state is, of Christs appointment under the New Testament, and how proper it is to him only to institute it, & what necessity lyes upon all those that professe the doctrine of the Gospell to embrace it, and submit unto it, and to come off from all other Church states that are of humane constitution, (as I understand a Nationall politicall Church-state to be) if we will expect Jesus Christ to dwell amongst us, and take pleasure in us for the future.

3. Another end proposed to my selfe in composing this Treatise, was not to discover or lay open before the world, the nakednes of any of my brethren, that either walke contrary to the rule of the word, and besides it, in the matters of worship, or that through the wiles of Sathan, & cunning craftines of men, as the Apostle speakes, Ephes. 4. 13. have been carried away from their former stedfastnes in the use of those pure Gospell ordinances and institutions, and now live and walke up and downe the world, as if Jesus Christ were Church-lesse, & the Saints Christ-lesse; yea, as if the barrel of Christs Meale, and Cruse of his Oyle, (lockt up in his spirituall ordinances and administrations,) were altogether drawn dry and exhausted: but that I might be a poore instrument in the hands of Christ to deliver such from their false wayes, that are yet in Egyptian darknes, & reduce those to the Tents of the Shepherds, that are gone from them, where they may again (as formerly) enjoy their beloved, and be built up to a further enjoyment of his glory.

Cant. 1. 7. 8.

And thus (beloved in the Lord) you have a briefe discovery of what I have propounded to my selfe, touching the method, grounds and ends of this Treatise. I have only a few things

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things to request at your hands, and then I shall dismisſe you to the Treatiſe it ſelfe, and commend both it and you to the bleſſing of Chriſt. Now that which I have to request of you is this.

1. That you would not receive with the left hand, what is offered to you with the right, but endeavour to put a candid and faire conſtruction (as in charity you are bound) on the weak endeavours of him, that had nothing in hiſeye, but Chriſts honour and your and the whole Kingdomes welfare.

2. In the reading of the following Treatiſe, to take with you the helpe of the Spirit of truth, who alone ſearcheth the deepe things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 10. and can enable us to judge of ſpiritually things ſpiritually: If we plough with Chriſts heifer, we ſhall underſtand his Riddles; whereas, if we conſult with fleſh and blood, in the things of God, and meaſure divine myſteries, by the wiſdome of this world, we ſhall be ſo farre from having our expectation answered, as that we ſhall ſtumble, and be offended at them; 1 Cor. 1. 18, to 26. and

2. 14.

3. When you meet with an any Scriptures and Arguments that are brought to cleare and confirme any point, that you would vouchſafe to take in the whole, and conſider them together, and not apart, be cauſe what may be wanting in ſome, may be made up in the reſt. For if there be but one or two, amongſt ſix or ten Texts of Scriptures, or Arguments that are produced to prove the truth of any one point, that are ſubſtantiall and to the purpoſe, its ſufficient, though the reſt are not ſo ſtrong: as if ten men were to liſt a burthen together, though the one halfe of them were but weake in compariſon of the other, yet if the worke be done, tis ſufficient, we looke after no more.

4. Where Scriptures alleadged, do not expreſſly, and in ſo many

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my words speake out the truth of that they are produced for, yet to remember, if they do it by a sound and good consequence, then that is sufficient, as we may see in the practise of our Saviour, when he would prove the truth of the resurrection to the Sadduces, he doth it not by a Scripture that speakes expressly, but only by sound consequence; as Mat. 22, 31, 32. Mark. 12. 26, 27.

5. Not to take offence, at the short & brief passing through particulars, because I undertooke at first to give a draught or plat-forme only, (according to the Title of the Booke) of the visible Church state which Jesus Christ hath instituted for the SAINTS to observe in the dayes of the New Testament. Now in a busines of this nature, understanding men will confesse, that bare pointing at truths is sufficient; and therefore I purposely avoided the transcribing of most of the Scripture proofes that are cited in this Treatise.

6. That wheresoever I have been necessitated to speake (in any of the inferences drawn from the Propositions) against those wayes and practises which do vary from what is laid down as the truth, (whether it be the way of absolute and high classically Presbyterie, over the particular Churches and Congregations of believers; or the way of re-baptizing; or the way which is (only for distinction sake) styled *The rigid Separation*; or way of living altogether without visible Ordinances and worship, because of the defectiveness is in the administrators, or above them in the Spirit, as those that look upon the divine institutions of Christ, but as shadowes, or things indifferent; or the way of fashioning the sacred orders and ordinances of Christs Church, to the government of civill States and Common-wealths, or any other mentioned in the following Treatise) it hath not been in the least, out of a spirit of contention against those that walk in those different wayes; nor to disparage

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or undervalue their gifts & graces with which they are endow-  
ed; or to infringe their christian liberty, by bringing their per-  
sons into trouble; but in the discharge of my duty towards  
Christ, and the giving occasion for a more cleare discovery of  
the truth; professing my selfe ( as in the sight of God ) alwayes  
ready to performe any christian duty or office of love, towards  
any of them, whensoever I shall by providence be called there-  
unto.

7. Lastly, if any shall attempt the answering of it, I shall in the  
Spirit of love request him that he would first of all sit downe and  
consider with himself seriously, that whiles he thinks to strike at  
an error, he may do what in him lyes, to wound the truth, and so  
make worke for repentance: Tis not for me to boast in the least  
of what is published by so weake an instrument as my selfe; but  
so much I have seen and observed from the first day of the  
Lords putting me upon it, to the time of its publishing, ( besides  
what I have found in the practise of it ) that I cannot but expect  
the truth therein held forth, for the substance of it shal stand,  
and take place, notwithstanding all the Batteryes and blasts of  
opposers that shall come against it. I know the age I am cast up-  
on to beare witnes to those truths of Christ I have published,  
cannot easily digest what is set before them; and so I shall be ex-  
posed to the deepest censures that men of evil and perverse spi-  
rits, ( who have only a forme of Godlines, but deny the power  
of it in their walking ) can lay upon me: but ( through infinite  
riches of mercy ) I have learnt in some measure to looke above  
them all, and to cast my selfe and the worke I have published,  
on him, who is that Al sufficient God, and faithfull Creator,  
that is every way able to keepe that is committed to his charge in  
weldoing, and to bring about his glorious ends, by weake and  
contemptible meanes.

1 Pet 4. 19.

Thus having premised these few things, I forbear troubling  
you

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you any further in this place, having reserved a word of exhortation to you, in the end of the Treatise; only desiring the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, to make the following Treatise effectuell, for the bringing over of your hearts to the beautifull wayes of Sion, and accomplishing all those other gracious ends, for which it is intended, which is the constant prayer of him whose greatest ambition is to be instrumentall for Jehovahs glory, and his Saints bappinesse.

WIL. BARTLET.

March 1.

1646.





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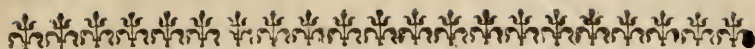
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Page 4. line 11. read *could bring it to passe.* p. 6. l. ult. r. *simply.* p. 10. l. 16. r.  
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*constitution.*





# *A Modell of the Congregationall way :*

O R,

Satisfaction offered and endeavoured,  
by unfolding what the right order of the  
*Gospell*, and way of the *Saints*, in the visible  
worshipping of God, after the CONGRE-  
GATIONALL manner and way,  
(so much opposed,) is.

## CHAP. I.

*That there is under the New Testament, a sacred visible Church-  
state, order, or politie, instituted and appointed by Jesus Christ,  
and him only: to the observation of which believers are every  
where bound willingly to submit and subject themselves.*



His *Proposition*, and the next that followes in the  
second Chapter, are as the two great *Pillars*, or  
*ground worke* and *basis*, upon which the weight  
of the whole discourse (in this small Treatise)  
lyes: And therefore I shall study to be the more  
punctuall, in clearing of them up, and giving satis-  
faction to those that enquire concerning the truth of them.

As for the first of these *Propositions*, (*viz.*) that I have now in  
the first place laid down, I shall do these foure things.

1. Shew that there is such a sacred visible *Church-state, order,*  
and *politie*, under the *New Testament*.
2. That this is instituted and ordained by *Jesus Christ*, and him  
only.
3. That *Believers* every where are bound willingly to submit  
and subject themselves thereunto,

B

4. Take

4. Take occasion to discover and confute the errours of those that are contrary minded.

Touching the first of these particulars; That there is such a sacred visible *Church-state*, &c. before I come to the evincing the truth of it, I shall crave leave to premise thus much.

1. That I do not lay this down by way of *opposition* to, but only in *distinction* from, that which is internall and invisible.

2. Neither as the chiefeft, most excellent and gloricus, but only as that which I find in the number of those *Credenda & facienda*, i. e. those truths of *Christ*, which by his *Word* and *Spirit*, he hath given out to us, to be believed, and practised, and which (I have conceived to be (at this time more especially) *seasonable* and *usefull* to the *Saints* in a way of honouring of *Christ*, and advantaging their own soules.

Now this being briefly premised, I come to the prooffe of the first branch of the former *Proposition*, and this I shall do, these three wayes.

1. From *Scripture*.

2. From *Examples*.

3. From *Reasons* and *Arguments*.

For the first of these. The *Scriptures* that make out this truth, are partly from the old Testament, and partly from the New.

1. The places from the \* old Testament, may be referred to promises, and propheties of this sacred visible *Church-state* under the *Gospell*: now among others, (for the old Testament is rich and plentifull this way) take these few. 1. That of *Psal. 110. 3. Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the \* beauties of holines*: now these beauties of holines can be understood, of no other, then that *visible worship*, or *holy ordinances*, wherein the *Saints* have communion, and fellowship with *Christ* in his *Church*; according to *Esay 33. 17. Hence it is, that we find this title given to the Church, Psal. 29. 2. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holi-*

\* In fr̄ie movendum hic iterum est, de N. Test. actis & cultu, in Ecclesia Christi Deo prestando, non raro allusiones fieri allegoricas, ad ea, que Veteri Testam. propria sunt; & ab his illorum descriptiones sumi.

Glaß. Philo.

Sac. Vol. 3. p. 496. \* In ornatibus sanctitatis, as *Avenar.* renders the word, from *ornavit*, and so *Euxtorph. Pagnine*, and others also, because, as I conceive, the visible worship & ordinances of God, are to his *Church*, as the hangings to the house, the beauty and ornament of the house, not the house it selfe: and so the holy Ordinances of *Worship* in the *Church* are not the *Church*, but a part of the beauty and glory of the *Church*, as *Christ* by his *Spirit* shines forth in them where they are purely administered.

nes; because the besuty and glory of the Lord, shines forth most splendidly in the Churches and Congregations of the Saints, where this worship is visibly performed: As Psal. 27. 4. Psal. 63. 2. as it is noted in the margin.

2. That of the Prophet *Esay*; chap. 2. 2, 3. *And it shall come to passe in the last dayes, that the mountaine of the Lords house shall be established in the top of the mountaines, and shall be exalted above the hills.* Meaning the visible Kingdome and Church of Christ, which should be enlarged by the Preaching of the Gospel; to which the Nations should \*flow, and they shall say, *Come let us go up to the mountaine of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob*; alluding to mount *Sion*, where the visible Church then was: as Psal. 48. 1. 2.

\* *Alto estaminis*  
Oocolampad.

3. That of *Esay* 4. 5. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Sion, and upon her Assemblies a cloud, and smoak by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for upon all the glory shall be a defence:* Which place clearly speaks out to us, not only the truth of this visible Church-state under the Gospell, but the excellent and glorious priviledges also, that attend it; alluding to Gods carefull protection over his Church, in his going before them, and carrying them through the waste and howling wilderness. Deut. 32. 9. 10.

Calv. *Musc.*  
Oocolamp. &  
alii quamplurimi in loc.

4. That of *Esay* 9. 6, 7. *And the government shall be upon his shoulders, &c. of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end: Upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdome, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and justice from henceforth, even forever.* By all which can be meant no other then the power of *Iesus Christ*, extending it selfe both to internals, and externals. By the first he rules internally in the soules of men, by grace and holines: And by the second, he rules externally the outward man, with the inward, in his visible worship and ordinances.

5. That of *Ezech.* \* 43. 10, 11. *And if they be asbamed of all they have done, shew them the forme of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the commings in thereof, and all the formes thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the lawes thereof, and write it in their sight, that they may keepe the whole forme*

\* *Adnuncietur*  
*igitur his, qui*  
*in Babylone sub*  
*Anticristo,*  
*quanta futura*  
*gloria in Christi*  
*templo, & qua*

*nos gloriam expectamus quam caput multitudinis templum, quam illustratum luce, quam fundatum in petra, quam ornatum doctoribus & turribus, quanta varietas auditorum, qui tamen omnes ad cognitionem Dei contendunt.* Oocolamp. in loc.

\* Vid. Glass.  
Philog. Sac.  
vol. 3. P. 563,  
564.

thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and doe them. Which Scripture looks to the times of the \* Gospell, and dayes of *Christ*, by whom the glory of the new Temple or spirituall Church of God, should be erected and set up, as Interpreters for the most part agree.

6. Lastly, (though many more might be added) take only that of the Prophet *Zachary*, chap. 6. 13. *Even he* (speaking of *Jesus Christ*) shall build the Temple of the Lord, and he shall beare the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne: Now it must of necessity be granted, that the Prophet here understands the \* Church-work which the honour of was fit for none, but *Christ* himselfe, because none but *Jesus Christ* could bring to passe, as I shall abundantly prove, from the next particular.

\* Fuit quidem  
Christus ipse  
Templi quoad  
corpus, quia in  
eo habitavit  
plenitudo divi-  
nitatis: sed æ-  
dificatur Tem-  
plum Deo Pa-  
tri, dum erexit  
ubique purum  
cultum, super-  
stitionibus in-  
nihilum vedatis:  
& dum nos con-  
secravit etiam  
in regale sacer-  
dotium. Calv.  
in loc.

2. Come wee in the next place to the new Testament, and there we shall find plentifull testimonies to this purpose.

I shall referre all (for method sake) to two heads.

1. To what we find from *Christ* himselfe.

2. To what we find to this purpose from his Apostles that succeeded him.

1. Those Scriptures that respect *Christ* himselfe, are of two sorts.

1. Before his death, as *Math. 16. 18, 19.* And I say unto thee, that thou art *Peter*, & upon this rock will I build my Church, & the gates of Hell shall not prevaile against it: and I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdome of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven. Now this must be understood of the visible Church-state, and order we are speaking to, which the Saints enjoy here on earth; because *Christ* did not give any power to *Peter* to bind in the world, for the Kingdome of *Christ* is not of the world, *Ioh. 18. 36.* But by binding and loosing on earth, must needs be understood the executing of the censures and ordinances of the visible Church of *Christ* on earth, which is distinct from that Kingdome of glory in heaven.

So that of *Math. 18. 17, 18.* And if he shall neglect to heare them, tell it to the Church: But if he neglect to heare the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen, and a Publican: Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall, &c. Which place, though there be some difference between the *Classicall* and *Congregationall* Divines, whether by *Die Ecclesia*, be meant the *classicall Presbyterie*,

bytery, or the Congregationall, yet they both, and all of all sorts agree in this, that it is meant of the visible Church-state under the New Testament; which is sufficient for us in this place to have granted, because it answers the end for which it is alleadged.

2. After *Christ's* resurrection, when he had made a glorious conquest over all the powers of darknes, and as the true *Sampson*, the mighty one, had carried away the gates, *i. e.* all the powers of death and hell on his shoulders, then (by his own mouth) he declares this truth, as in *Math.* 28. 18. 19. 20. *And Iesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and so I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.* This is so plain to the busines in hand, that there needs no explaining of it. And that of *Act.* 1. 3. speaking to them of the things pertaining to the *Kingdome of God.*

In the next place we come to what we find delivered by the Apostles of *Christ*, to whom he gave order, to see his Will, in this, as well as other things fulfilled, and whom he qualified in an extraordinary manner, for the very purpose, that it might be put into execution.

Now the Scriptures that hold this forth from the Apostles, may be referred to two heads.

1. To their own practise.
2. To their declaring it to others.

1. Their own practise, as will appeare throughout the history of the *Acts* of the Apostles, *chap.* 1. and *chap.* 2. 42. *And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship,* (viz. Church fellowship) *and in breaking of bread, and prayers: and ver.* 46. 47. *see chapters* 4, 5, 6, 11, 14, 15, &c.

2. Their declaring it to others, wheresoever they went to gather and plant Churches, and this I shall make out foure ways.

1. By instructing them in it, *Rom.* 12. 1, 2, 6, 7, 8. *1 Cor.* 12. 28. *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12. *Heb.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 6. and 7. 12. and 10. 1.

2. By pressing them to it, as *1 Cor.* 14. *per totum*, *Col.* 2. 6, 7, 8. and *2 Thes.* 2. 15. and 3. 4, 6.

3. By praising and commending them for it, as *1 Cor.* 11. 2. *Col.* 2. 5.

*A Model of the Congregationall way,*

4. By admonishing them about it, as the Apostle did *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 14. and this he doth two wayes.

1. Partly from feare of their being seduced, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2, 3.
2. Partly that he might prevent their seducing, *Col.* 2. 4, 18, 19. and so much for Scripture.

2. For examples : We may reduce all to three heads.

1. To what hath been.

2. To what now is.

3. To what shall be.

1. To what hath been, and so two wayes.

1. To the Apostles times : As the Churches of *Corinth*, *Rome*, *Ierusalem*, *Antioch*, 7. Churches of *Asia*, the Churches of *Iudea*, *Macedonia*, *Galatia*.

2. Next after the Apostles death, which we find recorded in

\* *Euseb.* Hist. Eccle. 1. 4. c. 22. & 36.

*Socr.* 1. 7. c. 26.

*Tert.* in pluribus suis opusc.

*Cypr.* in Epist.

& lib. de habit.

virg.

*Aug.* Hom. 5. 1.

4. & de morib.

*Eccles.*

*Zozom.* li. 5. c.

15. with many

others that have

beene collected

by *Daneus*

and other Mo-

derne Authors

in their systems

of Divinity.

the works of \* *Eusebium*, and other Ecclesiasticall writers, and were in the dayes of *Ignatius*, *Iustin Martyr*, *Ireneus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, *Cyprian* and others, all which were under this visible Church order, and politie, wee speak of.

2. What now is, not only in this Kingdome, but in *New-England*, and other reformed Churches abroad in the world.

3. What shall be, and cannot be farre of, when the *Iewes* shall be called, and the fullnes of the *Gentiles* brought in, which the Scriptures speake out abundantly.

3. For reason and Argument to cleare this point, I shall referre all to these six heads.

1. Because it is agreeable to the Law of nature and nations : for we find by experience, that there is scarce in the whole world any Nation, whether *Turks*, *Indians*, *Romans*, but they have still had their externall and visible order of worship and government, they have their Temples, Priests, Lawes, Ordinances, Sacrifices, Ceremonies, which they visibly observe, and conforme themselves to the observation of. Now doubtlesse *Iesus Christ* is not behind heathens in his Church and Kingdome.

2. This is no other then is suitable to the practise of the Church of God, in all ages, and conditions before the comming of *Christ*.

1. In Paradise, before the fall of *Adam*, there were two sacramentall trees, the tree of *life*, and the tree of *knowledge* of good and evill : which were not simple trees, but trees set a part by Gods

appoint-

appointment, and divine institution; as water in Baptisme, &c.

2. After the fall, before the Law was given, while the Church of God was in Families, then they had externall worship, sacrifices, Priesthood, first borne, &c.

3. When the Law was given, in the wildernes, there was an externall forme of worship and Ordinances futeable to their condition, a moving Tabernacle, &c. and after the Israelites came into *Canaan*, there was a fixed Temple at *Ierusalem*, and a compleate forme of Worship in externals, that God had prescribed to *Moses*, and after revealed to *David* by the Spirit, *1 Chron. 28. 11. 12. 19.* Answerable to which, (though in another kind) *Iesus Christ* hath laid downe, and given out to his Saints, a platforme of Church order under the Gospell, as the Apostle holds forth plainly, in his Epistle to the *Hebrewes*, as *Heb. 7. 12.* where he shewes that the old Law, will not serve a new order, but we must have a new one, and he proves that *Moses* and *Aaron* are met together in *Christ*: For *Christ* is not only a Priest, as *Aaron*, but a law-giver, as *Moses*, and he did both their works; a high Priest to succeed *Aaron*, and an Apostle to succeed *Moses*: as *Heb. 3. 1.* *Christ* is *Aaron* in point of offering up sacrifice, and *Moses*, in point of prescribing lawes, for holy worship. With many other places.

3. This Church order, and sacred politie, is most consonant to the Church of *Christ*, as tis his visible Kingdome, City, House, or Temple: Now a visible Kingdome, and House, or City, must have an order, and government equivalent, as all men grant\*.

4. It is requisite in reference to *Christ* himselfe, the master of this house, and King of this Kingdome, in which the glory of his power, wisdom, and goodnes, abundantly shines forth, even to the amuzement of men and Angels.

5. It is necessary in respect of the Saints fellowship and communion together in the worship and service of God:

1. In respect of the exercise of their graces, which cannot so well, nor so conveniently, and with that advantage to one another be performed, as in this order, as the Apostle holds forth in *1 Cor. 14. per totum.* For as it is in Civill society or Politie, so it is in Ecclesiasticall. Now in Civill Government, that Politicall vertue that is in a man, cannot be so wel exercised and managed in a confused multitude alone by himselfe, as in a society: So here, these

\* Ecclesia est domus Dei, ut ait Paulus, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* atque in domo Dei nihil atri-  
ctus & confusus fieri debet, ut docet idē Paulus, *1 Cor. 14. 40. sed omnia ordinata, ergo politia aliqua in ea opus est ut decenter & ordine omnia fiant & gerantur.* Dancus de Eccles.

gifts

gifts and graces which Christ hath bestowed by his Spirit on the Saints, cannot be so well exercised singly by themselves alone, as when they are united together into a Church state and order, as *2 Cor. 12.7.*

2. In respect of their enjoying the ordinances, for its worth our serious knowledge and observation, that the ordinances of Christ are not due to Christians meerly as Christians or Beleevers, but to Beleevers as in a Church State, for a Beleever is to come under a double consideration, as a man is. Now a man is considered two wayes, either as λογικός, or as πολιτικός, that is, as he is rationally, or politicall, that is, as he is a man by himselfe, or as he is joyned to some society, or Corporation: So a believer is to be lookt upon, either as a believer, or member of Christ singly by himselfe, or as a member of some visible Church of Christ: and in this latter sence only is he capable of enjoying fellowship with Christ in his visible ordinances and worship. The reason is this, because the same Christ, that inwardly unites him by the Spirit, and faith to himself, doth outwardly also call him to his body, the Church, to worship, and serve him in the use of his Ordinances.

3. In respect of those many singular helps, and encouragements that in this Church-state they enjoy, as I shall hereafter in particular shew: Which without it they are deprived of; for a man cannot possibly be so happy alone, as he is in company, especially when that society proves a helpe, not a hinderance to him, as this doth we now speake of: We find that in the very state of innocency, God saw, that it was not best for *Adam* to be alone; now if society were good for man in a perfect state, how much more then in an unperfect state, as the Saints are now in, whiles they are here below, and absent from the Lord? And the truth of this is further evident from the many enemies the Saints meet with in their walking with God, where they have all the powers of darknes set against them. Now union together in this Church-state, is a singular remedy against those temptations they thus meet withall; we know by experience, that company in travelling makes the way both sweeter and safer, whereas travelling alone singly by a mans self, is not only the more tedious, but dangerous: so here: and therefore without all controversie, this condition of the Saints in this way of the Gospell was foreseen of *Iesus Christ*, as most necessary and usefull.



6. If we looke to the Ordinances of Christ, we shall find the truth of this particular very cleare; the reason is, because they cannot well subsist but in this Church-state and order, especially since the Apostles times, as I shall speake more fully to, in the following discourse.

1. The office of a Pastor, how can it be executed but in this Church-state and order? A Shepherd we know cannot be a Shepherd, but to a flock, nor a steward be a steward but to a family: So here to be a Minister in office requires a particular society of believers, to which he must stand in relation.

2. The administration of the Seales, how can they take place, where there is no Church-state? I am not of their mind that say they are ordained to make believers, but rather to confirme and build up those that are believers, when they are brought into Church-fellowship, as we find in the Primitive Churches. The word is to plant Churches, and the Seales to build and stablish them.

3. The censures, which are the Keys of Christs Kingdome; we know they reach not any till they be in a Church-state, 1 Cor. 5. 12. for by being without, there, is properly meant of a visible Church-state. And so much for the first branch.

2. In the next place we come to the proof of the 2. branch of the former Proposition, which is this. *That this sacred visible Church-state, order, and politie, under the New Testament, is instituted and appointed by Iesus Christ, and him only.* No created power in heaven or earth is exalted to this dignity besides himselfe, nor hath a hand with him in it.

Now this I shall endeavour, ( being a truth of great importance, especially at this time ) to make out fully.

Much might be said from the Prophets (a) foretelling it: from the Churches (b) acknowledging it: from the Angell Gabriels (c) message to the virgin Mary: from Christs (d) right to it, and publishing of it. (e) But I shall passe by these, and endeavour to cleare it by these six things only.

1. From God the Fathers designing him alone, to this honourable worke and employment, he hath set no other apart to it besides Iesus Christ: David was a glorious type of this, and Solomon, and so was Eliakim, Esay 22. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. and there-

(a) Esay 9 6.  
Zech. 6. 12, 13.  
Micah 5 2.  
(b) Esay 33. 22  
Jams 4. 12.  
Rev. 5. 12, 13.  
& 15. 4  
(c) Luk. 1. 31,  
32, 33.  
(d) Phil. 2. 8, 9  
(e) Mat. 28.  
18, 19, 20.

fore the Father is said to commit all judgement into his hands, *Iob.* 5. 22. and to put all things under his feet, and crowne him with honour and glory, *Heb.* 2. 7, 8. and to make him head over all things to his Church, *Ephes.* 1. 22. *Col.* 2. 10. *1 Pet.* 3. 22. and to give him a name above every name, *Phil.* 2. 9.

2. From God the Fathers qualifying him for it, above all others; Christ was anointed for this worke above all his fellowes, whether Kings, Priests, Prophets, or Saints in common: as we see in *Psal.* 45. 6, 7. *Heb.* 1. 8, 9. Now Christ was qualified with eminency of power from the Spirit for this worke, above all others in a sevenfold respect.

1. In respect of the greatnes, strength, glory, and Majesty of it: No other created power can compare with Christ in this: All the power and dominion of men and Angels, is only a finite power & dominion, the power of a poore creature: but this in Christ, as he is Mediator, Θεωσπᾶνθ, God-man, is above a meer creature, and so infinite; and therefore when the holy Ghost speaks of the power and authority of Christs Kingly office and government, he sets it forth by the titles of *Wonderfull, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlast- ing Father, the Prince of peace, Esay* 9. 6.

And though other created powers, as men and Angels, are sometime in the Scriptures called Gods, yet have they not the nature of God, but shall dye like men, *Psal.* 82. 6, 7. but Christ hath both name and nature also.

2. In respect of the latitude and extant of it, it hath no limits or bounds, all the power and authority of men and Angels, is a limited and confined power and authority: like the proud waves of the Sea, thus farre shalt thou go, saith the Lord, but no further: but now the power of this Monarch is universall, it extends to heaven and earth, not only to the persons and estates of men, but to their hearts and consciences also, *Dan.* 4. 34, 35. *Psal.* 45. 11.

3. In respect of the equity, justice, and integrity of it, all other power and authority is subject to flaws in it, to injustice, and sin, the best Magistrates and Ministers, the best Church and state may possibly be corrupted, *Humanum est errare*, but now, *the Scepter of Christ is a righteous Scepter*, tis not possible for him to be unholly, unjust, &c. *Psal.* 45. 6, 7.

4. In respect of the solenes of it, he is alone of himselfe with-  
out

out the creature in his power: all other powers on earth are mixed powers, they have others joyned with them in commission, as the King and Parliament together, the Lord Major of the City, and Common-councell together; the Pastor and People together: But now Jesus Christ is *Solus in thronum*, he is alone of himselfe, the Father hath put all power into his hands alone, without joyning Angels or men in commission with him, he depends not on any of them, but they all depend upon him: As he is *by himselfe alone*, so he is *of himselfe alone*, without the helpe of others: All other created powers are beholding to him, but he to none of them.

5. In respect of the absolutenes of it, he is exalted to be Lord and King over his Church, to govern it, so that he can do whatsoever he pleaseth: but it is not so with Angels or men, they cannot *pro arbitrio* command and enjoyne to the Saints what they please in matters of Gods worship, they have no absolute jurisdiction, they are only *diacoi*, Ministers, not Lords, servants to Christ and his Church; they can act no further then by vertus of leave from him, and they shall one day be accountable to Christ for what they now doe.

6. In respect of the fulnes, compleatnes and perfection of it; all created power is defective, and full of weakenes and imperfections: But in Christ there are none, for in him there is *παν τὸ πλούσιον*, all fulnes, and in him are hid *παντες οι θησαυροι της σοφιας*, all treasures of wisdom, Col. 2. 3. which cannot be said of the creature; what they have is but a drop, to his Ocean, and that little they have, is from him also.

7. Lastly, in respect of the duration and perpetuity of it: All other power is perishable, uncertaine, and fading. The Monarchs of the world cannot say of their power and authority that it is everlasting, as Jesus Christ can, as Dan. 4. 34, 35. and Esay. 9. 6, 7. *Of the increase of his government there is no end.* Now if Christ be so eminently qualified for this worke, no wonder if it be put altogether into his hands.

3. From Christ undertaking and performing it, as in Mat. 16. and 18. 17, 18. Mat. 28. 19, 20. Ioh. 20. 21. Ephes. 4. 10, 11, 12. I Cor. 11. 23. and 12. 28. In which places we find a Church state appointed by Christ, with officers, officers, gifts, ordinances, and government correspondent.

*A Modell of the Congregational way*

*Saxonia.*

4. From the Apostles their *disclayming* this power and authority, professing their work was *neerely* a \* Ministry; not a Lordship, *Act. 17.* and that they were the *servants* not only of Christ, but of the Churches also, *2 Cor. 4. 5. Rom. 15. 31.* and that they had no power or dominion over the faith or consciences of the people, but helpers of their joy, *2 Cor. 1. ult.*

5. From the insufficiency of all humane abilities to accomplish this worke, which I shall make out *three* wayes :

1. *From want of wit and skill to do it.*

2. *From want of a mind and will to do it.*

3. *From want of power and strength to do it.*

1. Men have no wit nor skill for this worke : all the abilities of the creature are too low to reach such *Mysterics* as these : what could *Moses*, or *David*, or *Solomon* do, towards the building the visible Tabernacle and Temple of old, with the ordinances of worship thereunto appertaining, if God had not first made them acquainted with it *by his Spirit* ? So what could the *Prophets* and *Apostles* have done towards the building the living Temple of Christs Church under the *New Testament*, if Jesus Christ had not acquainted them with the order and manner of it from his owne mouth ? *Who hath known the mind of the Lord* ? *1 Cor. 2. ult.* Doubtlesse if Christ had left this work to the wit and discretion of men, we should have had sorry *Church worke*. Whence is it that there are so many divisions and differences amongst men in the world in the matters of Gods house and worship, but this, that men are darke and ignorant, and not acquainted with the mind of Christ revealed in the word ?

2. As men have no wit nor skill for this busines, so neither have they *a mind and will* to do it. Looke we narrowly into the dispositions of men, and we shall find how *backward* they are this way : As the Apostle spake in his Epistle to the Church at *Philippi, Phil. 2. 21.* *All seeke their owne, but few the things of Iesus Christ*, men are so taken up with the building their owne houses, that they care not what becomes of Gods house, as those in the Prophet *Haggai's* dayes, every man said, *The time is not yet come to build the house of the Lord.* And doubtlesse if Jesus Christ did not carry on the building of his temple *further* then men are disposed thereunto, he might stay long enough for it. We are all of us, even the  
best

*Hag. 1. 2.*

best of the Saints, of *Cranzins* disposition and temper, who answered *Luther*, it were to be wished, that such a work were done he spake to him about. We could wish that Antichrist were down, and *J-esus* Christ exalted on his throne; but where is the man that is of *Luthers* spirit in the things of God? Christ and his Cause may sink for ought that men doe, to put themselves forward in preserving and forwarding of it. And if at any time men doe begin to set upon this worke, doe we not see how soone they are discouraged, and draw back, and are ready to cease and give over, as it was with those Jewes that God brought out of Babylon to Jerusalem: after they had begun to build, how long was it before they finished? neere as many yeeres by computation in building the Temple, as they had been in Babylon from the Temple. There was little heart, little stomach in them to this worke. Yea though many of them were good men as well as great men, every small threat of their adversaries was enough to make them cease building, so that the Lord was faine to send Prophet after Prophet to them, to spurre and excite them forward to their worke they were called unto. And is it not so now in these dayes? how long have we bene building Gods house? what murmuring, what repining, what objections, what excuses, what carnall reasonings? Every man is ready to say, The time is not yet come; and so sad consequences come of it, and sadder yet are like to come I feare; and all this I say for want of a will, of a heart in Gods owne people to this worke. And therefore without controversie this is a truth, that further then *J-esus* Christ acts in us by his Spirit, men have no mind to the work.

3. From want of power and strength to doe it. If men had skill and wit for the work, yet so long as they want power, how should they bring it to passe? Now that men want power and strength for this worke, is evident from hence.

1. In that there are many and mighty enemies to be throwne downe, when this Church-state is to be set up: great and high Mountaines that must be made Plaines. What a great mountaine was there of a Samaritan faction, joyned with the power of the Persian Monarchy, before *Zerubbabel*, when he came in the name of the Lord to build his house that had been laid waste? And what a great mountaine is the Romane Empire, and that Antichristian

State, which now opposeth, and who shall be able to dry up the great river *Euphrates*, *Rev. 16. 12.* that the way of the Kings of the East may be prepared? By which River, some understand the Monarchy on which it borders, which is the Turkish Empire. Now this men cannot doe, the stilling the rage of adversarities is beyond the power of men: He that shakes the Nations when he comes to this worke, *Hag. 2. 7.* he onely can build this house amidst all those commotions and tumults that are made in the world against it. This work is the work of a God, and not a poore silly worme, as Man is: And therefore saith the Lord to *Zerubbabel*, *Zech. 4. 6.* *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit.* And againe, in *Psal. 2. 6.* *Yet have [1] set my King upon my holy hill of Sion.* It is the work therefore of God, and not of men. If the Lord should leave this work to the creature, when would his great name be hallowed? when would his kingdome come? or when would his will be done this way?

2. In that there is much rubbish to be cast out that stands in the way of building and setting up this work of the Lord, as there was at the building of the wall of Jerusalem, *Neh. 4. 10.* a kingdome within us, as well as without us to be subdued, before this worke of the Lord can take place. What *ἀνομιὰς*, what strange holds of carnall imaginations and reasonings are there in the hearts of men against this worke of the Lord, as the Apostle calls them, *2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.* How doe men love the reliques of *Baal*, long after the flesh-pots of *Egypt*, their old superstitious wayes of worship they have been accustomed unto? how doe they to this day mourne for *Tammuz*? Tis no easie matter to prepare the hearts of the people to meet the God of their Fathers, and before this be done, it will be hard to build this house and Church of God, and to doe this, the arme of the eternall God must appeare, or else all is in vaine, as the Psalmist hath it, *Psal. 127. 1.* *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vaine that build it:* So here especially this house of God, that cannot be set up before the hearts of men be prepared. Doe not we see by sad experience to this day, that people look upon the right order of the Gospel, as a light, vaine, novell thing, & those too, that pretend to great knowledge? Now this very opinion of novelty that men have touching this way of Christ, is such a hindrance to this work, that unlesse the Lord put forth his power on the

*ἀνομιὰς* ;  
places of de-  
fence, of *ἀνομιὰς*,  
safe.

the spirits of men, tis not all the men in the world are able to bring them to embrace Reformation, and therefore doubtlesse this is Christs work, and not the creatures; Gods, and not mans.

6. Lastly, to adde no more to what hath been laid down for the clearing of this truth, take this onely, That the Scriptures do wholly exclude and shut out the Creature from having a hand in this businesse, and attribute all to the Lord: and this I shall make out I hope very plainly, and to abundant satisfaction.

1. It is evident, that the Scriptures never speake in the plural number of Heads over the Church, primary and secundary, but onely in the singular number of one Head, *viz.* Christ, who hath absolute and sole power, jurisdiction and authority in the matters of Religion and Worship, as *Ephes. 1. 22. 5. 23. Col. 1. 18. & 2. 10, 19.* and therefore they speak onely of one Law-giver, *James 4. 12.* and the government on his shoulders onely, and not on any other with him, *Esay 9 6. & 22. 21, 22, 23.*

2. It is evident, that the Scriptures deny all headship and Lordship to any other besides Christ in the Church, *1 Pet. 5. 3. Psal. 45. 11.*

3. Our Saviour himselfe forbids it to his Disciples and Apostles that were to follow him, *Mar. 10. 42. Luk. 22. 25. Mat. 23. 8. 10 13. & Mat. 28. 20.*

4. The Apostles themselves after his departure, (who had most right of all other to this power) altogether disclaim it, *2 Cor. 1. ult.* professing their work was meerly a service and ministry, *Act. 1. 17.* not a Lordship, as we have noted before. And therefore when you meet in reading the Scriptures with such places as these, *as I ordaine,* and *as I give order in the Churches,* you are not to understand it of any absolute, but onely a derived power from Christ, to establish in the Churches what Christ commanded, and gave them in commission, nothing of their owne, but as *1 Cor. 11. 23.* that they received from the Lord, that they delivered to the Saints.

5. The Scriptures in an expresse manner forbid Beleevers to be the servants of men in this point, as to bow our consciences to their injunctions in the matters of Worship. *1 Cor. 7. 23.* in Civil things we may and ought, but not in divine and spirituall things, there Christ alone must have active obedience, *Psal. 45. 11.* and hence it

is that the Scriptures doe charge us, not to serve God after the traditions, doctrines, and commandements of men, let them pretend never so much holines and zeale for the glory of God, *Mat. 15. 9. Col. 2. 7, 8, 20, 21.* the reason is, because God will be worshiped after his own mind and will, revealed to us in the Scriptures, and not after the wisdome of men.

6. The Scriptures reprove and sharply rebuke such as stoop and bowe their consciences to the precepts and commands of men, in serving and worshipping of God, as *Hos. 5. 11. Esay 29. 13. Gal. 4. 9, 10.*

7. The Scriptures hold it forth as matter of commendation to the Saints, when they have withstood the authority of men in the matters of Gods worship, and rather suffered their bodies to die, then their consciences to be defiled by yielding to their humane injunctions, as the three Children, *Dan. 3. Revel. 3. 4. & 14. 4.*

8. The Scriptures hold it forth as a property and character of Antichrist, to make Lawes, and impose them on the consciences of men, *2 Thes. 2. 4.* and so *Rev. 13. 16, 17.*

9. The Scriptures take away whatsoever may be thought to be a warrant for us from men to worship God by, besides which, Jesus Christ hath left us a rule to walk by in his written Word.

1. They take away the wisdome of men, as a warrant for us in the worship of God, as *1 Cor. 3. 20. Coloss. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.*

2. They take away whatsoever seemeth good in our own eyes, *Deut. 12. 8. Esay 66. 3.*

3. They take away men traditions and customes, *Mar. 7. 9. Celos. 2. 8. Act. 21. 21. Deut. 18. 9. Levit. 18. ult. Jerem. 10. 3.* and whatsoever inventions of men, as *Psal. 1. 6. 29. 39. Ps. 99. 8. Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 32. Prov. 3. 6.*

4. They take away the very will and commands of men, as *Hos. 5. 11. Amos 4. 4. Mat. 15. 9. Mar. 7. 7. Col. 2. 22. Tit. 1. 14. Esay 29. 13.*

5. They take away whatsoever word or doctrine comes from Ministers, or any other, which cannot be resolved into the written word of Christ, as in *Ezek. 13. 3, 7. Esay 8. 20. Gal. 1. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 4. 6.*

6. They take away all good intentions of men in this businesse, as in *2 Sam. 6. 7. & 1 Sam. 13. 9, 10, 13. 1 Chro. 15. 13. & 2 Chro. 26. 16.*



7. It takes away all examples of men, though never so eminent,  
*Exek. 20. 18. 1 Cor. 11. 1.*

8. It rebukes the counsels of States for their boldness this way, and layes it as a blot on them, shewing that by this means people have been brought to Idolatry, as *1 King. 12. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. & 2 Chron. 25. 16. Jer. 19. 5, 7. Mich. 6. ult.*

9. It takes away from men all power to make Lawes to binde the Consciences of Beleevers, so much as in things that are indifferent.\* For where Christ hath left men free, there they are not to be bound. Now if they deny men power for the lesser, then doubtlesse much more for the greater: but the first is true, therefore the latter. And lest Christians should abuse this liberty of theirs in the use of things indifferent, he himselfe hath provided divers rules for this purpose in the Word. *Rom. 14. 19. & 15. 2. 1 Cor. 6. 12, 23. 1 Cor. 10. 32. 1 Cor. 14. 40. Rom. 14. 13.*

\**Vid. M. Burr. Heart-Divisions, p. 159, 160, 161. where he discourseth excellently to this point.*

10. It takes away from men the very power of tempting and enticing their brother to follow after their wayes and counsels in this businesse of Worship, as *Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.*

10. The Scriptures hold forth, that the greatest Powers on earth are to subject themselves to those very Lawes and Ordinances for Worship that Jesus Christ hath already made and enjoyed, and not to make lawes to themselves or others, as they themselves thinke best, *Psal. 45. 11. Psal. 2. 10, 11, 12. Mat. 28. 20. Phil. 2. 7, 8, 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22.*

11. The Scriptures shew us, that our duty is to heare what the Spirit saith to the Churches, after they are constituted and planted, and not what Angels or men say, as *Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17. & 3. 6, 13, 22.* so that men have nothing at all to doe with these matters, either in the beginning or carrying on of this Church-work, but we are to rest satisfied in what the Spirit by the Word holds forth to us, *Esay 8. 20.*

12. The Scriptures shew that the Saints have a liberty of rejecting and refusing whatsoever they shall find is not agreeable to the revealed mind and will of Christ in the Word; when it is charged on them as matters of faith, and required in conscience to yeeld subjection thereto, as *1 Thes. 5. 22. Col. 2. 20, 21, 22. 1 Ioh. 4. 1, 2. Act. 17. 11. Gal. 5. 1.*

13. The Scriptures forbid us to turne to the right hand or to

the left in matters of Gods worship, *Deut.* 5. 32. & 18. 19. *Iosb.* 1. 7. *Prov.* 4. 27. and there is a promise to prevent it, *Esa.* 30. 21. and a blessing to the observation of it in *Iosb.* 1. 7.

15. The Scriptures charge us, upon paine of death, not so much temporall as eternall, not to adde to, or diminish from what God hath set down in his written Word touching the matter and maner of his worship, *Deut.* 4. 1. & 12. 32. *Prov.* 30. 6. *Revel.* 22. 14, 19. The reason of it may be this, because to adde thereunto; argues Gods word to be defective and insufficient, and to diminish from it, argues it to be superfluous: which for men to doe is abominable, and for which we shall be proceeded against as lyars, *Prov.* 30. 6.

15. The Scriptures shew us that God rejects whatsoever he commandeth not in his Worship, *Levit.* 10. 1. *Ierem.* 7. 31. & 19. 5.

16. Lastly, to adde no more, the Scriptures shew us the honour that attends this worke, is proper onely to Jesus Christ, and fittest for him, who is the builder of his owne house himselve, and not the creature, as *Zech.* 6. 13. and *Psal.* 22. 27, 28, 29, 30. and to speak as the thing is, this honour and glory that attends the forming of this Church-state, and right order of worshipping J E S U S C H R I S T in the dayes of the New Testament, is a Crowne that becomes not the head of Angels or men, but Christs alone. And therefore let them all vaile Bonnet to him, and cry out with those ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, *Rev.* 5. 11, 12. and say, *Worthy is the Lambe that was slaine, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* Ver. 13. *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, honour, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lambe for ever and ever.* Ver. 14. *And the foure beasts said, Amen. And the 24. Elders fell downe and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.* And so let all those doe that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. And so much for the second branch.

3. Now I come to the third branch of the Proposition, which is this: *That Believers are bound every where to observe what Jesus Christ hath done this way, and to submit and subject themselves willingly thereunto.*

This

This I need not be large in the proof of, seeing the Scripture is so cleare for the truth of it.

1. Tis cleere by way of Propheſie, that they ſhall doe ſo, as in *Pſal.* 110. 3. *They ſhall be a willing people in the day of his power, in the beauties of holineſſe:* and \* *Eſay* 2. 2, 3, 4. *Jer.* 50. 4, 5. They

\* *Et hac eſt dignitas Eccleſiæ, quod voluntario con-*

*ſuit non tyrannide coacta. Ibunt dicit, non trahentur vi, neque bellis adigentur, ſed ſua ſponte & voluntarii audito Evangelio ibunt, tracto nimirum occulto illo & paterno tractu, hilares & non metu, ſed amore evocati. Ibunt, non ſubſiſtent ad vocatorem De', non moras trahunt, &c. Oecolampad. in loc.*

2. By way of precept and injunction, *Pſalm.* 45. 11. *Mat.* 28. 20.

3. By way of threatning, *Pſal.* 2. 12. *Kiſſe the Sonne leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way. So Luke* 19. 23. *But thoſe mine enemies which would not that I ſhould raigne over them, bring hiſher, and ſlay them before me.*

4. By way of encouragement, from the many and ſingular priviledges which ſuch ſhall have that thus honour Jeſus Chriſt, as their onely Lord and King: which priviledges I ſhall not here ſet downe, but refer them to their proper place in *Chap.* 5. where I lay downe ſeverall Arguments to work and win over the Saints to the practice of their duty this way. And ſo mach for the 3. branch.

4. Now for the diſcovering and confuting of thoſe that are contrary minded, there are divers ſorts of men that more eſpecially oppoſe this former Truth.

The firſt ſort are thoſe that affirme there is no ſuch externall viſible politicall Church-order, that Chriſt hath inſtituted, to which the Saints ought to conforme and ſubject themſelves: But all the government that Chriſt hath in beleivers, is only internall by the ſpirit. As for externalls (as officers, ordinances and government) either they looke on them as forms & ſhadows that are to vaniſh and have no more being ſince the comming of Chriſt but are ſwallow'd up in the ſubſtance, & ſo deny them altogether: or els as things that are left indifferent to the diſcretion of the Saints which they may uſe; if they ſhall thinke fit, or forbear if they pleaſe. Now how fully is this errour confuted by the truth that hath bene formerly laid downe. For if Chriſt hath inſtituted (as

1. Such as deny Divine Goſpel Inſtitutions appointed by Jeſus Chriſt for his Saints to obſerve in the dayes of the New Teſt.

we have shewed) such an externall Church politye, for his Saints to observe to his comming again, how then dare men deny it? may they not as well deny the scriptures themselves, by placing all in the office and worke of the spirit within us, without the use of any externall rule or meanes to worship God by? And the truth is, that to this at last men come, speaking very basely and unworthily, if not blasphemously of the scriptures. But before I leave those men (if it may please the Lord to shew them the evill of their way) I would faine know of them whether it were not the practice of Jesus Christ himselfe in the dayes of his flesh, and his Apostles after him, (whom he substituted in his roome, and appointed to give out his divine will concerning the ordinances of his kingdome) to live in the use and practice of outward worship and ordinances. Did not Christ himselfe practice preaching, praying, Baptisme, Supper, &c. and so the Apostles after him? and did they not give the Churches this in charge, that they should tread in their steps, and be followers of them, as they were of Christ? and can it be denied, that the Ordinances of God are those sacred things, in and by which the Saints come to have lively fellowship and communion with God? Neither let men think it sufficient to say, that they have fellowship with God without and above ordinances, for then it would follow, that men should live in fellowship with God without worshipping and serving of him in that way he hath prescribed, (*viz.*) by observing those duties and ordinances which Jesus Christ hath instituted and commanded in his Word, as preaching, prayer, singing, receiving the Sacraments, executing the censures, &c. in Church fellowship, as hath been and shall be farther noted in the following discourse. And therefore if these men desire to be found in the number of those that Christ calls his friends, let them labour to doe what he hath commanded them, and not slight the way of his visible worship and ordinances, which he hath instituted for his Churches to walk in, till his comming againe, when he shall deliver up the Kingdome to his Father, and have put downe all rule, and authority, and power, in 1 Cor. 15. 24.

2. The other sort of men, contrary minded to this blessed truth, are those that teach and write for sound doctrine, that Jesus Christ hath not sole power of headship over the Church in appointing and

John 14. 15.

and ordering this visible Church-State, for all Nations to observe and keep, but it is in the power of men also to appoint and set up a frame of Church-Government, and order for men to serve and worship God by, according to the nature and frame of those States and Kingdoms wherein they live: and the foundation they build on, is by distinguishing betweene a *Supream principall headship*, and a *Ministeriall subordinate headship*: They doe not deny, but Christ is the supream Head over all, but then they would faine make the world believe (if it lay in their power) that there is a secondary and subordinate headship, which *Iesus Christ* hath deligated in his room, and hath left power and authority with, to make lawes to his Church: and they say, that this Ministeriall headship may stand wel enough with the Principall and Supream, as a Vice-Roy may stand with a King, but I utterly deny it, affirming it to be a distinction coined in the Popes conclave at Rome, and holy Baines in his Commentary on Col. 1. 19. shews it to be altogether unfound.

1. Because it is contradictory, for it is such an essentiall property of an head, to be principall, and have rule, that what is not this, is not an head.

2. Who ever heard of any secondary ministeriall head in a naturall body without deformity? Now it is a naturall body, with which Christ doth compare himselfe in this respect.

3. That which is a ministeriall head, must doe the work of an head, but that none can doe: the work is double, internall or externall influence, regiment or direction. Of the first it is granted: for the other of Regiment, the Scripture denyeth it to any but Christ the Prince of Pastors, leaving to all other a power ministeriall onely to serve the Churches as superior unto them.

4. No Direction which is dependent is the direction of an Head, as the hand leading and drawing up the foot, directeth it, but is not an head to it, because the direction of the hand commeth from the principality of the head reported unto it. As for those instances that are brought for the upholding of the former distinction, he answers them clearly, and shews, that the union of the Church, the Scripture teacheth to depend on Christ and his Spirit, and not on a visible head. Men may have many names properly attributed to them, but this improperly. Kings may suffer men to be called Noble, Wise, Rich,

The Apostles themselves were not Heads of, but servants to the Churches. Id. ibid.

but to be called Kings within his Dominion, is not permitted, because there is nothing more derogatory from the glory of his Crowne. So here. And what this learned man hath spoken in the former place, is confirmed both by Ancient and Moderne Divines against the Papists, as is easie to prove: And sufficient might be added from the Sermons which have been preached for these severall yeeres before the Honourable Houses of Parliament, by learned men of all sorts: but I suppose it is needles in a busines so cleere and palpable.

Now if Jesus Christ be sole Head, and none joyned in commission with him, for the ordering of these affaires that concerne his own, and his Fathers spirituall and eternall Kingdome, then doubtlesse no Powers on earth, Civill or Ecclesiasticall, can challenge that honour and authority to themselves, which is onely proper to Jesus Christ, and which he hath reserved to himselfe alone, and is communicable to none other besides him. Now there are some things which Christ hath reserved to himselfe: as for example, to erect a spirituall Church and Kingdome to himselfe, like himselfe. 2. To appoint a ministry & worship, order & government, both internall and externall, sutable thereunto. 3. To give out glorious Gospell truths and doctrines of salvation for the Saints to believe, and practise. 4. To reign and rule in and over the hearts and consciences of the Saints, by the mighty Scepter of his Word and Spirit. 5. To forgive sinnes, to heale diseases, to blesse Ordinances, to challenge praises, command homage, duty, service of the whole man from sinners, these and the like things are proper to Jesus Christ, as he is, the great high Priest, Prophet, and King of his Church, and not communicable to Angels or men: and therefore let not humane powers take that to them, which is none of their due but belongs to Christ alone.

*Quest.* What is their due then?

*Ans.* M. Sprig in his *Ancient Bounds* hath spoken so much, and so fully to this particular, that I need not say any thing; however because something will be expected, I shall referre all to these five heads, which I desire may be candidly interpreted, as seriously considered.

1. They are bound by diligent study (in their own proper persons) to enquire after, and acquaint themselves with, what the eternall God by *Jesus Christ* hath already revealed in his word

touching

touching the right order of government in his Church, and manner of his visible worship among the Saints, which he hath given them in charge to observe and practise; and not to take up these sacred things by custome or tradition, or depend altogether upon the judgement and information of others: as is evident from Deut. 17. 19. 20. *And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his Kingdome, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a booke, out of that which is before the Priests, the Levites, and it shall be with him, and he shall read them all the dayes of his life, that he may learn to feare the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law; and these Statutes, to do them, that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turne not aside from the Commandement, to the right hand or to the left, &c.* This indeed must be granted, that the supream Magistrate may crave the helpe and assistance of counsels and Synods, for information and counsell herein, but not wholly depend and rest on them, to neglect his own personall endeavours: and the reason is, because no Councils or Synods can now

say, that they are so immediately and infallibly guided, and assisted from heaven, as that we may build upon their determinations, without further enquiry, but are subject to errors in the matters of Religion as well as others; as Histories abundantly make manifest. \* Vid. *Craumer*, who suffered martyrdom for Jesus Christ in *Qu. Maries* days, in his Treatise, called, *A Confutation of unwritten Verities*, against the Papists, where he proves this abundantly from *Euseb. Greg. Naz. August. Panormian.* &c. So Doctour *Whitak.* sometimes profess. of Di. in *Cambr. de Concil.* p. 12. *concilia generalia posse errare et falsas opiniones amplecti, nam concilium Antiochenum veritatem damnavit, et heresim apertam propugnavit: Similiter Ariminense et Ephestinum secundum, ex quo patet veritatem non esse metiendam ex numero Episcoporum.* And this he proves at large, p. 248. *ad finem*, from Scripture, Reason, Examp. & test. of Fathers. And though he spoke much in the commendations of right gathered Councils, yet in diverse places of the Treatise, he delivers these ten things concerning them.

1. That their calling together, is *quiddam πολιτικόν*, p. 35. *et humanum inventum*, p. 77. that is meerey kallinge.
2. That they cannot frame Articles of faith to bind the conscience, p. 19.
3. That their end in coming together, is not to feed as Pastors, but to consult what is best for the Churches. p. 85.
4. That they are not simply necessary. p. 23.
5. That they do not give authority to the Scripture, p. 242, 243.
6. That their decrees are not *θεόπνευστα*, that is, immediately inspired by the holy Ghost, p. 262, 263.
7. That the ultimate determination and judgement of a *General Council* may be false, p. 231.
8. That there is no judgement of a Council properly in matters of faith, p. *id.*
9. That the truth of things determined in Councils, may afterwards be called into question, and againe disputed, p. 283.
10. That the Churches of Christ have been kept sound in faith without them, for the first three hundred yeares, p. 23. \* And to this agrees *M. Owen*, a moderate and learned *Presbyterian* in his *Country Essay for Church government*, annexed to his Sermon preach.

preached before the honourable House of Commons, p. 72. his words (among others) are these. *No Iudge of heresy since the Apostles dayes, but have been obnoxious to error in that judgement, and those that have been forwardest to assume a Iudicature and power of discerning between truth and error, so as to have others regulated thereby, have erred most foulely: Of old it was generally conceived to be in Councils.* Now I should acknowledge my selfe obliged to any man that would direct me to Councell (since that of *Acts 15.*) which I may not be forced from the Word to asert, that it (in something or other) went astray, and he produceth testimonies to this purpose from *Luther, Beza, Nazian. &c.*

1. *Luther*, (he shewes) did not feare to affirm of the very first and best of generall Synods, that he understood not the holy Ghost to speake in them, and that their Cannons were but plain Hay and Stubble.

2. *Beza*, that such was the folly, ignorance, ambition, wickednes of many *Bishops* in the best times, that you would have supposed the *Devill* to have been President in their Assemblies.

3. *Nazianzene*, That he complained, he never saw good end of any Councell; and affirmed that he was resolved never to come at them more; with much more that he hath in that place to this purpose.

So that although Synods and Councils of learned and godly men, are not wholly to be rejected or despised, yer they are not so to be depended upon, as the Scriptures are, which we are commanded by Christ to search, *Joh. 5. 39.* and which alone in themselves are the rule of faith, and Iudge of controversies, as all Protestant Divines do grant.

2. When God hath so blessed their endeavours, as to reveale and make known his will unto them laid downe in the Scriptures, they are bound to publish and declare the same to their Subjects, and require them for the honour and glory of God, to yeeld willing subjection and obedience thereunto, according to the practise of religious Princes of old, as *Asa*, in *2 Chron. 14. 4.* who commanded *Judah* to seeke the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment: and so *Iehosaphat* after him, *2 Chro. 17. 7, 8, 9.* and *Hezekiah*, and *Iosiah*, and so did *David*, and *Solomon* before them.

3. They are not to rest here, but the better to encourage their Subjects, they are to go before them in exemplary practise, requiring no more of them, then they are forward and willing themselves to doe; according to the famous examples of *Moses*, *Iosuah*, and *Samuel*. And the rather, because that hereby they shall not only publish to men and Angels, that they acknowledge the supremacy and sovereignty of *Iesus Christ* over themselves, though the greatest on earth, but also engage him to the preserving and prospering of them in all their undertakings: as the Prophet told King *Asa*, *2 Chro. 15. 1.*

4. They are bound to countenance and encourage all those, that they



they find the Lord to make a willing people in the wayes of his worship, by granting them their liberty, though they be the fewest and meanest, and never so much contemned and despised in and by the world; and though they also differ and vary, (through their weakenes) in some small circumstantialls about the worship of God, among themselves, yet so long as they hold the head, and strive after the life and power of Godlines, in their walking, and submit to Civill government, they are to be protected, because herein they do well, and so come within the compasse of the Magistrates countenance, encouragement, and protection, as *Rom.* 13. 3. 4. *Esay* 49. 23. whereas on the contrary, if they should be discouraged, by denying them their liberty, and exposing them to the rage and fury of malevolent spirits, they should never enjoy the end of their prayers to God, in the behalfe of the magistrate, which is, *That they may under them, lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlines and honesty, 1 Tim.* 2. 2.

5. Lastly they are bound to the utmost of their strength and authority, to uphold and maintaine those sacred Lawes and Ordinances of Christ given to the Saints, in their purity, power, and liberty, against all such as by force, or fraud, shall endeavour the extirpation and overthrow of them: and this they are to doe, these three wayes.

1. By declaring openly against all such known and manifest errors, that fight against Christ and his truth, and are condemned in the Scripture.

2. By restraining of all such exorbitant and apparant wicked practises, whereby men do openly resist, and make opposition against those precious wayes of the Lord, and his people, that are in the religious practise of them.

3. By inflicting punishment on the persons of such as shall obstinately persist in their opposition, and wil not take notice of the laws either of God or man to subject themselves unto them, \* these are evill doers, *Filii* *βλητοι*, *qui nullius sunt usus, aut frugis*, *χριστιανοι & θεουατοι*, fighters against Christ and God, and so come within the compasse of justice to be executed on them; other wise the Magistrate should beare the Sword in vain, which would be his sinne, because he is appointed for the punishment of evill doers, as well as the praise and encouragement of them that do well,

\* Such as the  
Apostle saies  
1 Tim. 1. 9.  
*ἀνομιαι καὶ ἁνομι-  
αὶ ὀνόματι,*  
*qui jugum omne  
excitant; tan-  
quam scia in-  
domita ad suas  
cupiditates ex-  
plendas curren-  
tes. Nam ex lex  
ille proprie di-  
citur, qui resu-  
git subici re-  
cusatq; parere  
ac repagula  
omnia transilic.*

Anton. Faui  
in loc.

*Rom. 13. 3, 4.* good and evill actions being the proper object of the Magistrates power.

Yet herein I desire I may not be mistaken, as if I would have the civill Magistrate to proceed so farre in the inflicting of corporall punishment on the persons of men, as the late Printed Paper entituled *An Ordinance for the preventing and spreading of heresies, &c.* would have him: for I cannot see how the sentence of blood can be pronounced in the case of spirituall & mentall evils, as simple heresie, or misbelieving any point of Christian faith, where men are otherwise peaceable in the state: And that tis not my judgement or the judgement of those that are called Independents alone, I shall referre the Reader to M. *Owen* mentioned before, in his *Country Essay*, for the practise of Church government, annexed to his excellent Sermon preached before the House of Commons, *Aprill 29. 1646. p. 76. 77. 78.* where he hath much to this purpose, and to the purpose: It would be seriously considered (saith he) upon a view of the state and condition of Christians, since their name was known in the world, whether this doctrine of punishing erring persons with death, imprisonment, banishment, and the like, under the name of heretiques, hath not been as usefull and advantagious for error as truth? Nay, whether it hath not appeared the most pernicious invention that ever was broached. In the first, second, and third Ages, we heare little of it, nothing for it, something against it; much afterwards against it in *Austin*, and others: *Amarlinus* that famous French Bishop (he shewes) rejected the communion of a company of his associated Bishops, because they had consented with *Maximus* the Emperour, unto the death of the *Priscilianists*, as vile heretiques as ever breathed. I know the usuall pretences, (saith he) such a thing is blasphemy, but search the Scripture, looke upon the definitions of Divines, and by all mens consent, you will find heresy, in what head of Religion so ever it be, and blasphemy properly so called, to be exceedingly distant: Let a blasphemer undergo the law of blasphemy: but yet I thinke we cannot be too cautious how we place men in that damnable series, calling heaven and earth to witnes the contrary.

*Obj. To spread such errors will be destructive to soules.*

*Ans.* So are many things, which yet are not punishable with forcible death, let him that thinks so, go kill Pagans, and Mahometans,

humetans, as such heresy is a canker, but a spirituall one, let it be prevented by spirituall meanes: cutting off mens heads, is no proper remedy for it: if State-physitians thinke otherwise (and I may adde, those that take themselves to be Church-physitians) I say no more, but that I am not of the Colledge: This, and a great deale more, hath that judicious Au<sup>r</sup>hor.

3. A third sort of men that walke contrary to the former truth, are such as not onely refuse to subscribe to the former truth, in lifting up the Lord Jesus Christ, as the sole orderer and instituter of this visible Church-state, order, and politic; but quarrell with those of the *Congregationall way*, for their forwardnes and faithfullnes in so doing, nick-naming them *Independents*, as if *selfe and creature* deniall, and lifting up the name and authority of *Jesus Christ*, in the forementioned things, were blasphemy, and to be numbred among one of the seven deadly sinnes: Indeed if such *false accusers, fierce ones, despisers of them that are good*, as the Apostle calls them, *2.Tim 3 3, having a form of godlines, but denying the power thereof, v. 5.* could justly lay to those of the *Congregational way* this lofty title of *Independency* (proper only to the most high God) as men turned in upon themselves, regarding only themselves, living to themselves, depending on themselves, their own wisdom, understanding, councill, judgement, and strength, sleighting and rejecting him, who is stiled *Jam. 4. 12. ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ δυνάμις ὁ σώων καὶ ἁπολλῶν*, That one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: it were another matter: or else if it could be clearely evinced by any of the *Congregationall mens words or writings, opinions, or practises* in old England, or new: First that they do altogether exclude the advice and counsell of the servants of Christ in neighbour Churches, when there is occasion for it: or, secondly, That they refuse to be accountable for their actions unto those, who shall in a faire and orderly way, according to the rule of the Gospell in the name of Christ desire them. Or thirdly, deny appeales unto men, as they will appeale to Christ in the Scriptures, as the only Umpire and Iudge, in matters controversall and dubious. Or lastly, (scorne to accept from men what they bring to them, with the *Image and Superscription of Christ* upon it, the Lord helping them by his Spirit, with the eyes of their own understanding to see it, I say if these things could be fairly made out against those

Διαβολοὶ, ἀνή-  
μεσι, ἀτίλαζα-  
νοι, ἐχθροὶ τῶν  
μικροῦν ἐσσι.  
θείας, τῆν ὃ  
δυνάμιον αὐτῆς  
ἠρημωθῶσι.

of the Congregationall way, it were something; then I confesse our brethren (as in words they professe themselves) might justly accuse us before heaven and earth, of Pride, and Arrogancy, of presumption, Blasphemy, and impudency, as they are pleased many of them in the heate of their wrath and indignation to do: but (for ever blessed be the Lord) this they cannot do. Wherefore is it then that the furnace of their displeasure is severntimes more heated against those of the Congregationall way, then formerly, and this title of Independency so abusively given them? For my own part, (all unavoidable infirmities incident to man excepted) I know no other reasons then these, either because they will not subject themselves to their high Presbytery, to their Classicall, provinciall, and National Churches, and their absolute power of government, over single Congregations of Saints: or secondly, because they will not say God speed to all such as bring the doctrines of blind obedience, and teach the fear of God by the precepts of men, to them. For as for those foule aspersions which are cast on the prime assertors of the Congregationall way, by the sonnes of the high and lofty Presbytery, viz. of error, heresie, blasphemy, &c. are they not well known to truly ingenuous and sober minded men, to be no other then the fruit that comes from the wombe of envy, hatred, and discontent? Do not they themselves know (what ever they beare the world in hand to the contrary) that neither Antipædobaptisme, Rebaptisme, Antinomianisme, Arminianisme, Arianisme, &c. (that are made the common evils of the times) can justly be laid to the charge of the former persons, in old *England* or *New*? no not all this while they have appeared in this cause of *Christ*: Let the records of the Assembly be searcht, or any other places, and see whether any thing of this nature can be found against the dissenting bretheren, living or dead, or those that are of the same judgement with them, touching the *right order of the Gospel*, and point of visible Church-fellowship and government: What though divers that are erroneou, and hold such Tenets as are destructive to Church and State, do shelter themselves under the name of Congregationalists, shall the way therefore, and those that are the chiefe assertors, and practisers of it, suffer for it? Is this faire and honest dealing? there are many now possibly among the multitude that are for the Classicall way, that are abominable livers,

livers, Drunkards, Swearers, Extortioners, Oppressors, Persecutors, Scoffers, if not exact malignants, and some of them it may be also hold as grosse errors as any of the former, if not grosser: shall we therefore presently condemne those that are the great Champions for it, to be such? Would not the world cry shame of us, as of men wanting both Reason and Religion? And yet thus the precious servants of Jesus Christ must be dealt with, that are asserters of the Congregational way, by those that are Presbyterians, and yet men will not see the unreasonableness and irreligiousness of their proceeding in this manner: But certainly, (if they belong to Christ) he will bring them to see it, and make them ashamed of all their hard Speeches they have uttered this way.

It seems those Presbyterians that are now so hot and violent against those that are not of their own tribe, have forgotten the Prelats practice to themselves of late.

Wherefore to close this Chapter, however wee shall be dealt withall by the Tongues and Pennes (or any other wayes) of our opposers, wee shall not be discouraged, but sit down with our afflictions as with our Crown, blessing *Jehovah*, that he will count us worthy to suffer for his Name, and Sonnes sake: Being assured that those that suffer with him, shall also raaign with him, but those that deny him, shall be denyed of him at the last day, 2 Tim.  
2.12.

## C H A P. II.

That this visible Church-state, Order, and Policie, which Iesus Christ onely hath instituted and ordained under the New Testament, to the observation of which, &c. is a free society or communion of visible Saints, embodied and knit together by a voluntary consent, to worship God. according to his Word, making up one ordinary congregation, with power of Government within it selfe onely.

**H**ere lyes the streffe of our businesse, and therefore I shall endeavour to steere my course the more exactly *Christo duce, & auspice Christo.*

Two things I shall, in the strength of Christ, undertake.

1. To cleere and confirme this Proposition.
2. To draw some inferences from it.

Touching the first of these, There are six things to be opened and cleared up to us :

1. The matter.
2. The forme.
3. The end.
4. The rule.
5. The quantity and extent.
6. The priviledge and prerogative of this Church-state.

All which particular Heads hold forth to us a Summary of the Congregationall way ; in the right understanding of which, Christians may abundantly satisfie themselves and their friends about this way of the Lord, so generally cryed down and opposed. I shall open the particulars in order.

1. *Materia.*

*Cænis fidei.*

(a) A visible segregation from the world, and a visible aggregation to Christ, is necessary to Church union & communion. *Vide Noyes Temple measured, in p. 5, 6.*

1. I call this Church-state, a society or fellowship of visible Saints, to note the matter or persons that are both to enjoy and exercise it. For we are not to imagine that the Kingdom of Christ is of this world, but chosen out of the world ; tis in the world, but not of the world. That is, as the world is taken in a morall evill sense, for the wicked of the world, but for those that are called from amongst them to a (a) visible profession of, and subjection to the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ. And this is no more then is evident in the Scripture : For we find that the members

bers of visible Churches, according to their first constitution, were all Saints by calling, as appeares *Rom. 1.7. 1 Cor. 1.2. Philip. 1. 1.7. Col. 3.12. and 1 Thes. 5.27.* *καλησὶς ἁγίου*, which was a calling *separatim & conjunctim*, as *Junius* observes, a \* calling of those Saints to fellowship in a visible Church externally, as well as to Christ invisibly and internally. And hence it is that those Churches which were planted and gathered by the Apostles in the first and Primitive dayes of the Gospel, are styled *The Churches of the Saints*, *1 Cor. 14.33.* The Temple is holy, so are the Keyes, the Tables of the Law, the Seales, Censures, Officers, Ordinances, all holy, as Christ himselfe is, that is the instituter of them. When the Temple under the Law was to be built, the materials of it were all hewne, squared and polished; the Tabernacle was curiously wrought; the Candlestick was of beaten gold; the twelve Tribes were represented upon the High-Priests breast-plate by twelve precious stones; so the visible members are correspondent to the mysticall in outward appearance. And there is great reason for it.

\* And this is agreeable to the signification of the Greek word *ἐκκλησία*, in English, Church, *ἐκκλησιάζειν*, ab *εὐνοκάνδο*. Leigh, Critic. Sac.

*Noyes*, ut sup. P. 6.

1. Because Jesus Christ, the King of his Church, requires that all such as are profane and scandalous, should not be admitted to, but driven from the holy things of his house, *Mat. 7.6. & 18.18. 1 Cor. 5.5,7,13. Revel. 2.20.* and therefore no fit matter for this Church.

2. Because such onely as are Saints, can answer to those ends for which Christ hath instituted this Church.

Now these ends among others are these three.

1. To performe spirituall worship and service to God, and Jesus Christ their King, *1 Pet. 2.9.*
2. For spirituall communion and fellowship, as with Christ, so one with another, *1 Cor. 1.9. & 10.16,17.*
3. For mutuall edification and consolation, as appeares in *1 Cor. 14.26. & 1 Thes. 5.11.*

Now this is no work for drunkards, swearers, blasphemers, ignorant and scandalous persons; these serve to dishonour God, and destroy his house, and therefore not fit matter for his house.

2. I call it a free society of Saints, embodied and knit together in one, by a voluntary consent, to note the forme of this Church-state. Now this uniting and embodying of the Saints together in Church

2. *Forma.*  
In this division let there be in the name of

Christ, and feare of God, a gathering of Professors, (visible Saints, men & women of good knowledge, and upright conversation, so holding forth their communion with Christ) by their owne desire and voluntary consent into one body unite themselves. Vide Owens Countrey Eassly p.60.

Church fellowship, may be cleered and made evident divers waies to us.

1. From the severall Resemblances this Church hath with those things that hold forth neare union. As

1. That of a house, or building, where the materials are not onely knit fast to the foundation, but to one another. *Ephes. 2. 22.*

2. That of a Temple, *1 Cor. 3. 17.* alluding to the Temple under the Law, where the stones were so knit together, that it seemed to the eye of the beholder, as one entire substance.

3. That of a naturall body, *1 Cor. 12. 27. Col. 3. 15.*

4. That of a fraternity or brotherhood, *1 Pet. 2. 17.* compared with *Chap. 5. 2, 13. & Zech. 11. 14.*

5. That of an Army with banners, *Cant. 6. 4.*

6. That of a City compact, *Psal. 122. 3.*

7. That of a golden candlestick, in which the shaft and branches are closely knit together in one, *Rev. 1. 12, 20.*

8. That of the Tent and Tabernacle, which the Lord built for himselfe to dwell among his people, and filled and sanctified with his glorious presence, *Exod. 25. Revel. 21. 3.* Now the materials of the Tabernacle were so coupled and united together with loops and tatches, that they were but one Tabernacle, and so the Saints in Church fellowship.

9. Lastly, that of the joyning together of severall graines of corne into one loafe or bread, *1 Cor. 10. 17.*

Secondly, from the severall words the holy Ghost useth to hold forth this in the Scriptures.

1. That of *Ephes. 4. 12.* *ὡς ἡ κεφαλή τοῦ σώματος*, for the injoynting of the Saints.

2. That of *Gal. 6. 1.* *κεκαταίχθητε ἡ ἀλλήλων*, set such an one in joynt againe.

3. That of *1 Cor. 1. 10.* *ὡς ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος*, which signifies a knitting together in one.

4. That of *Eph. 2. 22.* *συνακοδομηθεὶς*, when materials of a house are put one within another.

5. That of *Col. 2. 2.* *συνβιβασθέντων ἐν ἀγάπῃ*, the word signifies to descend one to another, as men that are knit together in the same judgement, *ver. 19.*

6. That of *Acts 2. 1,* and *5. 13.* and *9. 26,* *ἐπὶ τὸ κολληθεῖν*, &c the word

Vide Leigh in his Critic. Sac. in verbum.



word signifies, to glew things together that are unjoynted, and at a distance one from the other.

7. That of *Ier. 50. 5. Come let us joyne our selves to the Lord, &c.* where the Hebrew word, *to joyne*, signifies mutually to give our selves, that is, with the knowledge and consent one of another, as *Avenarius* and others, *viz. Pagnine, Sheindler, and Buztorph.* observe.

יהל

*Mutuo dedit, accepit, item adhaesit. So Zech. 2. 11.*

Thirdly, from sound reason.

1. Because the godly, without this embodying, are not a Church properly, but a casuall loose company, under great disorder and confusion, as a heap of stones thrown together, without any further distinction,

*Many nations shall be joyned to the Lord, in that day, that is, they shall mutually give themselves to the Lord with the consent of one another. For its the same word with the former*

2. Because without this, there cannot be that beauty shining forth in the Saints and Ordinances, for what are a company of choise materials which are fit for a building, so long as they lie loose one from another? 'Tis with the Saints united, as Philosophers speake of the *Via lactea*, or milky way in the heavens, they yeeld forth a glorious lustre, and precious light, above what they are single by themselves.

3. Because without this, the Saints lose not their beauty onely, but their strength also, both defensive and offensive.

1. Defensive, for by their knitting together, they are able to make far more resistance against the common adverseries of their peace, then when they are single and by themselves. *Vis unita fortior.* A bundle of Arrows together are not easily broken, but taken asunder, and they are easily snapt to pieces. So here.

2. Offensive, for hereby they are the better able to prevail with God, against those that annoy and hurt them: for the Saints thus together wrastring with God, they do offer a kind of holy violence to his sacred Majesty, and obtaine their requests speedily in Christ. As the heat of the Sunne, when the beames thereof meet together in a burning-glasse, is greatly strengthened, so it is with the prayers of the Saints met thus together, they prevaile much with the strong God, *Act. 12. 5.*

4. Because without this knitting together in one, the Saints cannot so well discharge and performe those mutuall duties Christ hath called them unto, as watching over one anothers soules, reproving an offending brother, telling the Church in case of not hearing

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and

and receiving admonition, and such like. For where there is no engagement, there men are subject to neglect duty, as we find by sad experience.

3. *Finis.*

3. I say to worship God, to note one chiefe end for which Jesus Christ hath instituted this Church state, not the whole end, for there are divers ends of this institution, but this is the chief end, that so God may receive honour and glory from his people, which he hath called out of the world, *1 Pet. 2. 9. Heb. 2. 12. Ephes. 3. 21. Prov. 16. 4.*

4. *Regula.*

4. I adde according to his will, revealed to them in his Word, to note the rule, by which the Saints are to walk in all the worship they are to performe to God, both in respect of the matter and manner of worship, according to *Mat. 28. 20. 1 Thes. 4. 2. 1 Tim 6. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 13.* for it is not in the power of men, be they never so wise, learned or godly, to prescribe a rule to the Saints to worship God by, besides what is left us in the Word of God, as we have before shewed at large.

5. *Quantitas  
vel extensio.*

5. I call it one ordinary congregation, consisting of so many beleevers, as can conveniently meet together to worship God in one place, to make it distinct from all other Societies, or Bodies called Churches, of the same kind. So that the Officers and Members of one Church, are not the Officers and Members of another, but as they are knit together among themselves, so they are distinguished from others, being as the *similar parts* of the Catholique, and have the nature of the whole intire, (*viz.*) immediate fellowship with *C H R I S T*, and right to all the Ordinances. Thus the Church of *Corinth* was one in it selfe, and distinct from *Cenchrea*, which is conceived to be no other then *Pagus vel Portus Corinthi*, the Port or Haven Towne of *Corinth*, neere adjoyning to it, and yet two distinct Churches. And so the seven Churches in *Asia*, what were they but so many distinct congregations? So the Church of *Antioch* was but one ordinary congregation, as *Act. 14. 27.* and so the Church at *Jerusalem* was no other then one such Church, if we will credit the holy Ghost, as *Act. 2. 46. & 5. 12. & 6. 1. & 15. 25. & 21. 22.* And hence it is that we find in the first planting of the Gospell, that the Churches were many in number, as we may reade *1 Cor. 4. 17. & 2 Cor. 8. 18, 19, 23, 24.* and therefore frequently in the plural

number,

Number, called the Churches of (a) *Galatia*, of (b) *Macedonia*, of (c) *Asia*, of (d) *Judea*, of (e) *Galile and Samar.* of (f) *Cyria and Cylicia*. So againe, sometimes they are called in the plurall number, the (g) Churches of the Gentiles, the (h) Churches of the Saints, the (i) Churches of God, the (k) Churches of Christ, at least 37. times are they so named in the plurall number, to note that they were distinct bodies, and were no larger then could meet together in one place, to worship God, as the Parish Churches doe \*here in *England*, some of which congregations consist of divers thousands. All which particular distinct bodies or Churches of Christ, though they be many in number, yet they are all of them but one in nature and constitution. To which purpose we shall find the Scripture often speaketh of the visible Church indefinitely, as of onely one, so 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. *Mat.* 22. 2. 1 *Tim.* 3. 5. calling it one body, *Eph.* 4. 4. that is, one in nature and power, though many in number.

6. I adde, having power (under Jesus Christ) of government within it selfe, to note the priviledge and prerogative Christ hath endowed it withall, and to exclude that *superiority* that some claime to themselves over their brethren in the point of Church power. For if every particular Church of Saints (which here we speak of) have received alike the power of binding and loosing, of opening and shutting the Kingdome of heaven, within it selfe, then certainly no Church whatsoever hath power of government over another. But now this we take to be the *very mind of Jesus Christ in the Gospell*, that every such particular visible congregation of Saints, as here we speak of, hath received alike this power of government within it selfe, without standing in subjection and subordination to others.

Now that this is the very mind of Christ, we shall endeavour to cleare, 1. From Scripture, 2. Testimony of the Learned in *England*, 3. Reason and Argument.

1. Scripture, and so both in the generall and particular :

1. In generall, from whence the truth will appeare, in that we find in those Epistles the Apostle doth write to the severall Churches of *Rome, Cor. Coloss. Thes. &c.* he seldome or never singles out the Officers apart from the rest of the body, but takes in the whole, both Officers and Church together, in the ordering and

(a) Gal. 1. 2.  
 1 Cor. 16. 1.  
 (b) 2 Cor. 8. 1.  
 (c) 1 Cor. 16. 19  
 (d) 1 Thes. 2. 14  
 Gal. 1. 22.  
 (e) Act. 9. 31.  
 (f) Act. 15. 41.  
 (g) Rom. 16. 4.  
 (h) 1 Cor. 14.  
 33.  
 (i) 1 Cor. 11. 16  
 (k) Rom. 16. 15  
 \* Vid. Baynes  
 Dioc. Tryall,  
 and Noyes in  
 his Temple  
 measured, p. 7.  
 of the quantity  
 of the Church;

6. Privilegium.

managing of Church affaires, as appears from *Rom. 16. 1. 1 Cor. 5. 4. 6. 7. 12. 13. & 14. 40. Col. 4. 10, 16, 17. 1 Thes. 5. 14, 27.* and tis no more then what we find the Apostles to doe in that Church businesse they went about, *Act. 15.* where *ver. 22, 23.* we find the Apostles did not single out themselves from the rest of the Church, but took the Brethren in with themselves, both to their debates and resolutions. And so we finde in the severall Epistles that Christ sent by *John* to the Churches in *Asia*, the words are, *Let him that hath an eare, heare what the Spirit saith to the Churches,* not to the Angels and Officers alone, and apart by themselves. And if so, then tis no rotten foundation, as the \* Presbyterians say, the \* Middle-way men take, *viz.* the Independents, in the practise of Church affaires.

\* Vi. Jus Divin. Regim. Eccles. p. 108, 109.

\* What name will the Presbyterians invent next for us? if we goe in the middle way, let them take heed they be not found on the right hand or the left, in the worship of God.

*ἡ ἐκλογή*, sig. *cave per suffragia*. This is confessed by the more godly & moderate Presbyterians, as we may see in a Treatise, called, *Some helps to Church Government*, from *Staffordshire*, for the settling the Presbyterian way, presented to the Parliament, 1644. pag. 29. So *M. Byfield*, in his Treatise, called, *The power of Christ*, pag. 31.

2. In particular, and so first for the calling and choice of their owne officers, as *Deut. 1. 13. & 16. 18. & Act. 1. 15, 26.* where the Apostles call upon the people to nominate those to the office of Apostleship, whom they judged fittest, by their direction. Where we may behold clearly that the Apostles did not choose *Ioseph* and *Matthias* alone, but the whole Church chose them by consent, giving out their lots, *ver. 26.* that is, it was done by the common Suffrage of the Disciples & Brethren, which were members of that body, afterwards expressly called a Church, *Chap. 2. 57.*

So *Act. 6. 2, 3.* where we see the whole Church was called to looke out such as were fit for the Deacons office. The people must choose, and the Apostles appoint, or designe, or set apart such as were chosen. Now if the Apostles themselves would not set apart Deacons to their office without the peoples approbation and free choice, much lesse would they obtrude Pastors on them without their consent.

So that of *Act. 14. 23.* the Originall reads it otherwise then the Translation: the Translation reads it *ordained*, but the Greek word is *ἡ ἐκλογή*, that is, they chose Elders by the lifting up of the hands of the people, which is different from ordination, as Coronation is from the election of a King: and therefore when the holy Ghost speaks of election, he useth this word, *ἡ ἐκλογή*, but when he speaks of Ordination, he useth *ἡ ἐπίθεσις*: which words, though in writing and sound they are neere alike, yet in signification

tion otherwise as much as betweene the lifting up of the hands, and the laying of them on. So that of 2 Cor. 8. 19. abundantly proves this power of the whole Church. And to this agreeth the testimony of the Learned, both Ancient and Moderne, as (if need were) I could abundantly produce. But my labour is saved herein by a late Treatise to this purpose, wherein the judgements of the Reformed Churches, and Protestant Divines, are abundantly declared touching this, and other matters of like nature.

2. For the power of administering the Censures, as excommunicating, &c. this also is in the Church, as appears from Scriptures, *Mat. 18. 17, 18.* which is to be understood of such a particular visible Church we now speak of: because when Christ speaks of binding and loosing, he understands the Brethren, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, &c.* meaning those that complaine. And doubtlesse this is a truth we may not depart from, for although the execution of Censures be in the Elders and Officers of a Church, yet it is still *in ordine ad Ecclesiam*, that is, in reference to the whole Church, whose servants they are. There is no such particular relation betweene the party offending, and the Eldership, as may advantage the Eldership or Presbyterie, of a particular Church, to exercise such an act of power over the party, no more then they may administer the Sacraments to a private person; but to him as a Church member, and with the whole Church, so they are to act, and no otherwise.

Another place is that of 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. where we find the whole Church is concerned in that businesse of excommunicating the incestuous person. And 2 Cor. 2. 6. to 10. there he writes to the whole Church againe, to release, and absolve, or forgive him: The Elders by sentencing his absolution and restitution, the Brethren by consenting thereunto.

Again, is it not evident from the Asian Churches, where we find Jesus Christ to charge the neglect of censuring their guilty members upon some of them, as the Church of *Pergamus*, and *Thyatira*, both in one Chapter, *Rev. 2. 18, 20.* Jesus Christ was displeas'd with them, because they did not put the power in execution he had given unto them, for the purging out of those that offended. And it is worth observation, that Jesus Christ doth not blame the neighbour Churches for the sins of these Churches, but

lays all the blame upon themselves: Which implies clearly they had received power within themselves to cast out those offenders, and reforme those abusers: Or else without question, he would not have blamed them, for the neglect of that he never gave them. And therefore reverent M. *Perkins* in his Exposition on these Chapters saith, that God gave to every one of these Churches, power and authority to Preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, reprove evil men, and exclude all obstinate sinners from all spirituall priviledges among them, as will appeare from his testimony.

2. A second sort of proofes, is from the testimony of our English Divines; for what Master *Perkins* saith of the priviledge of particular visible Churches, is confirmed also by many more of our owne English Worthies, some that are asleepe in Christ with him, and others that are yet living. I will give you a list of some of the chiefest of them, men that have been famous in their generation, not onely for their admirable gifts of learning, judgement, and piety, but also for the service they have done to Jesus Christ in this and other Nations. And the rather, 1. because this equality of power in the Churches of Christ, is looked upon by some as a novell and late upstart opinion, held onely by such as are poore, weak, injudicious, unlearned men at best, men that are of a factious and schismaticall temper. 2. Because others of the moderate sort affirme, that they differ onely in the point of Church rule and government, they approve of a communion of Saints, onely they suppose the power of Government is not in themselves, but in the Classis and Synod. Now that it may appeare to be so, I shall produce these severall testimonies following.

Brightm. Rev.  
c. 12. v. 1. pag.  
392. edit. 4.

I shall beginne with eminent and famous M. *Brightman*, who agrees with the Centur. that the Pastors looked every one to the health of his own Flocke, and that the Primitive purity of Church government, (which as the Centur. observe, was almost like a popular, every Church having equall power in it selfe, to transact her own affaires, *Cent. 2. c. 7.*) was not deflowred with the dregges of mens inventions till *Constantines* time, his wordes are these: *The description doth agree very excellently to the Primitive Church, &c.* It was most glorious with the cloathing that was made of the righteousnes of faith, &c. Neither was it yet deflowred with the dregges

dregges of mans inventions, but in her whole *Worship, Discipline, Life, and manners*, she had the Moon under her feet, following the holy truth, as her *load-star*: There was one forme of government in all Churches, namely, that, *that is delivered in the Acts of the Apostles, and the rest of their writings, &c.* Neither had Sathan brought in Prelaticall Pompe and Pride, into the Sheepfold of the Lord, but the Pastors having *worke enough to do, in looking every one to his own flock, &c.*

2. Reverend M. *Cartwright*, whose workes speak out his eminency, in his first reply to Bishop *Whitgift*, he hath many passages to this purpose; I shall mention only a few: It \* is certaine (saith *Cartw. i. Reply to Whit. p. 184.* he) *S. Paul* did both understand and observe the rule of our Saviour *Christ*, (viz. that of *Mat. 18. 17. tell the Church*) for he communiceth this power of Excommunication to the *Church*: and therefore it must needs be the meaning of our Saviour *Christ*, that the excommunication should be by many, and not by one, and by the *Church* and not by the Minister of the *Church* alone; for he biddeth the *Church of Corinth* twice in the first Epistle, once by a Metaphor, another time in plain words, that they should excommunicate the incestuous person: And in the second Epistle, understanding of the repentance of the man, he entreateth them that they would receive him again: And therefore considering that the abolition of excommunication doth pertaine to the *Churches*, it followeth, that the excommunication doth in like manner appertaine unto them: And so after wards he sheweth, that the Peoples consent was required in things of this nature, and *that the Ministers* did not take upon them, of their own authority to excommunicate, &c. and shews the truth of this from the authorities of *Cyprian*, and *Augustine*, p. 187. and so before p. 35. of his first reply, in the case of a *Churches* neglect to call a Minister, or to consent upon one that is unmeet, he sheweth, that the power of Elders in other *Churches*, is no other then of *Admonition*, or sharply charging them that they forbear such an election, or in case it be done, not to confirme it: and in case these *Churches* neglect their duty, or the *Church* which is admonished, rest not in their admonition, then to bring it to the next Synod, and if it rest not therein, then the Magistrate is to do his duty: and the same he confirmes in his second Reply; *Tract. 7. p. 80, 81, 82. where he maintains the Church of*

of *Corinths* joyning with the Apostle in the excommunication of the incestuous person.

*Fenner de sac.*  
*Theol.* 1. 7. pag.  
277, 278.

Thirdly, Master *Dudly Fenner*, that was contemporary with Master *Cartwright*, and joyned with him in the publique Ministry to the English Company in Antwerp, in his Treatise *De sacra Theolog.* (to which Master *Cartwright* in an Epistle prefixed to it, gives a singular testimony) *Lib.* 7. p. 277, 278, 279. hath much to this purpose. Among other passages, this is not the least for our purpose, that in matters *maximi momenti*, i. e. of the greatest moment, as Censures, elections of Ministers, &c. they are to be done in the Assembly by the authority of the whole Church. And if the people have any thing to counsell or object, they have liberty to bring it in, and afterwards matters are to be concluded, when they have beene heard speake, and have given their consent.

*Parker de Eccl.*  
*Polit.* 1. 3. c. 12.

Fourthly, Master *Parker*, who is so large and full for what we affirme, that it would require a whole volume by it selfe to translate what he hath written to this purpose, In his third booke *De Eccles. pol. Chap.* 12. he hath no lesse then 22. Arguments to prove the superiority of Churches over their owne officers: and he that reads him diligently, shall finde that from the authority of Scriptures, Ancient and Moderne Writers, and other unanswerable reasons, he proves the authority of Churches to be in themselves: and then *Lib.* 3. *Chap.* 22. p. 329. and so onwards, he shews that Synods and Classes have no other power over those Churches, then by way of counsell and admonition, & whosoever reads that 22. Chapter shall finde him to prove it, six wayes; from the ground, from the forme, from the matter, from the object, from the manner of proceeding, and from the end of those Classicall combinations: All which would be too large to translate. Where let the reader take notice, that he doth not simply deny the use of synods and combination of Churches into Classes, as we doe not, but onely their superiority that is challenged to be due to them over the congregations of the Saints; which we cannot see to be any other then an usurpation, not given to them by Jesus Christ.

*Perk. his Expos.*  
*on Revel. c. 2.*  
*ver. 2. and v. 20*

Fifthly, pious and learned M. *Perkins*, in his Exposition on the three first Chapters of the Revelations, affirmeth that Jesus Christ gave



gave to every one of those seven Churches in *Asia*, power and Authority to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, to reprove evill men, and exclude all obstinate sinners from all spirituall priviledges among them. His words are these, *chap. 2. ver. 2. Christ hath given to his Church a power judiciale, to suspende evill men from the Sacrament, and to excommunicate them from the outward fellowship of the Church, for else he would not have commended this Minister with his Church, for the execution of his power. And the reasons (saith he) alledged to the contrary, are of no force. And at ver. 20. of the same Chapter, he saith, We may learne two things, 1. The large power that God gave to his Church, which was besides the power to preach the Word, and administer the Sacraments, a further power to appoint who should preach amongst them, and who should not; and also power to repress evill men and women, and so keep them in order. The like power was given to the \* church of Ephesus, as we have seene (saith he) before, and the like power did God give to all Churches, as we shall see, if we read the Histories of the church. And great cause there is hereof, for without this authority, no church could long stand and be a church.*

Sixtly, Holy Baynes, that eminent light, which succeeded Master Perkins. We affirme, saith he, that no such head Church was ordained either virtually or actually, but that all Churches were singular Congregations, equall, \* INDEPENDENT each of other in regard of subjection. So in pag. 21. touching the Churches of Geneva, he shews by answering to an objection was made from thence, 1. That they have power of governing themselves, but for greater edification voluntarily confederate, not to use or exercise their power, but with mutuall communication, one asking the counsell and consent of the other in the common Presbyterie. 2. He shews that it is one thing for Churches to subject themselves to a Bishop and Consistory, wherein they shall have no power of suffrage: another thing to communicate with such a Presbyterie, wherein themselves are Members and Judges with others. And then afterwards he shews that Geneva made this Confociation, not as if the prime Churches were imperfect, and to make one

\* Now the Church of Ephesus was a particular visible Church, having power of government within it self, as Master Perkins shewes, and is cleare from the Scripture.

Baynes Dioc. Tryall, pag. 13. printed 1621.

\* This godly & learned Author, with others, doe use the word Independent, not simply, but in some respect; not in respect of God, and Christ, & the Spirit, the

scriptures, & principles of reason and equity, for so we acknowledge all Churches to be dependent; but in respect of men onely, and as it refers to other Churches or subordination to them, in point of power and authority, because we know of no such ordained by Christ in the Word.

Church by this union, but because though they were entire Churches, and had the power of Churches, yet they needed this support in exercising of it, and that by this meanes, the Ministers and Seniors or Elders of it, might have communion, (marke that.) Communion (*viz.*) among themselves, not jurisdiction over others. So pag. 81. where after a large discourse touching this power that was in the particular Church of Corinth, he concludes with these words, "Finally, saith he, the Churches of *Asia*, as "it is plaine, had power of government *within themselves*. And a little after, pag. 84. "Hence it is, that the Governours (*sc.* of the Church) are in many things of greater moment; to take the consent of the people with them.

Jacobs Treatise, called, An Attestation of many learned, godly, and famous Divines, &c.

Seventhly, Master *Jacob*, a man that was excellently qualified for the worke of the Ministry, and sometimes Pastor to a gathered Church in London, how many Treatises hath he in print, to prove the point in hand? but above all other, that treatise, called, *An attestation of many learned, godly, and famous Divines*, Lights of Religion, and Pillars of the Gospell, justifying this doctrine, (*viz.*)

1. That the Church Government ought to be alwayes with the peoples consent.
2. That a true Church, under the Gospell, containeth no more ordinary Congregations but one. In which Treatise, he holds forth these two points. First, from Testimonies of many particular late Writers largely set downe, as *Beza*, *Calvin*, *Viret*, *Zwinglius*, *Luther*, *Bucer*, *Pet. Mart. Musculus*, *Bullinger*, *Gualter*, *Ursinus*, *Daneus*, *Tilenus*, *Junius*, *Piscator*, and *Chemnicus*.
2. From the consent of many publique Churches, as the *Bohemian*, *Helvetian*, *Genevian*, *Belgick*, &c.
3. From testimonies and practice of the best Antiquity, as the practice of the Church of *Jerusalem*, immediately after the death of the Apostle *James*, Anno 70. of Christ; from *Ignatius* to the Church of *Philadelphia*, Anno 112. so the practice of the Church of *Rome*, Anno 240. mentioned by *Eusebius*. The practice of the Church of *Carthage*, Anno 250. in *Cyprians* time. So at *Antioch*, An. 273.
4. From Councils, 1. The Council of *Nice*, An. 330. So from the Council of *Carthage*, Anno 420. So the Council of *Constantinople*, An. 682.
5. He sheweth the intollerable inconveniences that follow the denying this truth.
6. He answers the chiefest objections are brought against it.

8. So M. *Robinson* and *Ainsworth*, men without exception for their learning and godlines; what large Treatises have they in print to cleare this point we have in hand? some of which have not to this day been answered, as that of *M Robinsons Reasons discussed*.

*Ainsw. guide to Sion. Robinson Reas. discuss. d*

9. Doctor *Ames*, in his *Medulla Theologiae*, lib. 1. chap. 37. sect. 6. hath these words, *Potestas hujus discipline, quoad jus ipsum pertinet ad Ecclesiam illam in communi, cujus membram est peccator ad illos enim pertinet ejicere, ad quos pertinet primo admittere, &c.* that is, *The power of this Discipline in respect of the rights of it belongs to that Church in common, of which the offender is a member; for it belongs to those to cast out, whom it concernes first to take in, &c.* And so in his *Cases of Conscience* he hath much to this purpose: And M. *Peters* in his last report of the *English Warres*, saith this of him, *That he left his Professorship in Freezland to live with him because of his Churches Independency at Rotterdam, and charged him often even to his death, so to looke to it, saying, if there were a way of publique worship in the world that God would own, it was that.*

*Ames Med. Theol. l. 1. c. 37. sect. 6.*

10. Doctor *Fulke*, against the *Remists*, on 1 Cor. 5. Sect. 3, the authority of *Excommunication* (he saith) pertaineth to the whole Church, although the judgement and execution thereof is to be referred to the Governours of the Church, which exercise that authority, as in the name of Christ, so in the name of the whole Church, whereof they are appointed Governours, to avoid confusion: which is no other then *Pareus*, *Musculus*, *Zanohy*, and *Calvin*, have spoken in their writings, with many others, as can easily be produced.

*Fulkes Notes on Remists test.*

11. Doctor *Whittaker* hath much to this purpose in his learned workes, as *de concil. quest. 5. p. 178, 179.* where he shewes that Ecclesiasticall power and authority belongs principally, primarily, and essentially to the whole Church, to each Bishop, or Minister only accidentally, & secondarily, his words are these; *Hæc quidem auctoritas ecclesiastica singulis episcopis convenit sed accidentaliter, et secundario, et minus principaliter, ecclesia autem primario principaliter et essentialiter competit:* And he illustrates this from a rule in *Phylotophy*, *Cum virtus aliqua duobus inest, uni necessario et essentialiter alteri contingentur, et accidentaliter; principalis inest ei omni necessario & essentialiter inest, quam ei*

*whitak. de concil. q. 5. p. 178, 179.*

*cui continguntur tantum et accidentaliter convenit, ut calor magis principaliter igni, quam aqua inest, quia inest aquae, gratia ignis.* So de Pontif. Rom. 9. q. 1. c. 1. Sect. 1. his words translated are these: *We say plainly, that the Churches in the primitive times were so governed of their own Pastors, that they were not subject to others, either Bishops or Churches without them, the Church of Colosse was not subject to the Church of Ephesus, nor the Church of Philippi, to the Church of Thess. nor these to the Church of Rome, nor the Church of Rome to any of them, Sed pares omnes inter se juris essent, i. e. They were all of equall power among themselves.*

\* See Doctor Sibbs.

12. To these we might adde Doctor Reynolds, in his conference with Hart: Doctor Willet in his Synops. Papis. Doctor Tailor, in his Commentary on Tit. But I shall produce only one\* more, that was famous for his Gospel-anointings, and litle thought by the most men to have been of this judgement: And yet you shall find, in a litle Treatise of his (printed before these troubles brake forth in England) called *A breathing after God*, that he speaks fully to this purpose, his subject leading him to discover himselfe herein, being (as I suppose) a litle before his death; his words are these, p. 91. speaking of Gods house, *House* (saith he) *wee take for the persons that are in it, and persons that are ordered, or else it is a confusion, and not a house; it is a company of those that are voluntary, they come not by chance into our house, that are members of our society; but there is an order, there is a Governour in a house, and some that are under government: and there is a voluntary conjunction, and combination: so the Church is a voluntary company of People, that is orderly: some to teach, and some to be instructed, and thereupon it is called a house.* And a litle after, p. 94. speaking of the Tabernacle in Davids time, before the Temple was built, he saith, *If we apply it to our times, that that answers the Tabernacle now, is particular visible Churches, under particular Pastors, where the meanes of salvation are set up: Particular visible Churches now, are Gods Tabernacle: The Church of the Jewes was a Nationall Church, there was but one Church, but one Place, and one Tabernacle, but now God hath erected particular Tabernacles, every particular Church and Congregation, under one Pastor, their meeting is the Church of God, a severall Church, \*INDEPENDANT.* And as for the Church of England, he saith, *it is called a particular Church from other na-*

\* Vid. the note before in the margin, at the testimony of M. Baynes.

tions,

tions, because it is under a government civill, which is not dependant on any other forraine Prince.

Now what can be spoken more fully for the Congregationall way, then this famous Minister hath in these words? So then put all these together, (besides multitudes of other choice servants of Christ, that are yet living in this Kingdome, and forraine parts, who are many of them in the practise of this truth, with abundance of the rich blessings of Christ on them) and then see whether it becomes men to say, that none but a company of injudicious, weak, simple, idle, and giddy-headed men, are of this opinion, that the power of Church government, is entirely within a particular Church.

But that we may leave men for ever without excuse, let us before we leave this particular, see what our brethren themselves of the Presbyterian way do say for this in their piece called *Jus Divin. Regim. Eccles.* they set forth with all their strength; wherein when I read, me thinks that Scripture of the Apostle is verified, *1. Cor. 3. 19. For the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, for it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftines:* And my reason is, because where they should speake most, there they say least, and where they should be strongest, there they are weakest: For whereas the whole Volume consists of neare about 32. sheets of Paper, there is not much above 6. sheets that speakes to the point of their Presbytery, and not above a sheet and halfe to the principall part of the controversie, p. 231. in laying down of which also they have not dealt fairely and candidly, by expressing themselves in full, plain, and ample termes, but equivocally and ambiguously, \*refer-  
 \*And in laying  
 down the differ-  
 ences between  
 the Presb. and  
 Independ. in  
 their Preface  
 they speake an  
 untruth in the  
 very first par-  
 ticular; for the Independants have left it upon Record, that a particular Church is a similar  
 part of the Catholique, their own expression. *Ames. medulla Theolog. c. 32. De ecclesia in-*  
*stituta, p. 148. Iste enim congregationes sunt quasi partes SIMILARES Ecclesia catholice, at-*  
*que ad eam et nomen et naturam ejus participant:* So M. wil. Sedgwick in his Sermon before di-  
 verse of the Parl. printed by Ralph Smith at the sign of the Bible in Cornhill, hath the same,  
 p. 4. And yet these men in the place before quoted say to the contrary.

1. That particular Churches have within themselves, power of Discipline entirely, to farre forth as any cause in debate, particularly and peculiarly concerneth themselves, and not others.

2. That where there is no consociation, or neighbourhood of single Churches, whereby they may mutually aid one another, there a single Congregation must not be denyed entirenes of jurisdiction.

3. That every single Congregation hath equall power, one as much as another, and that there is no subordination of one to another, according to that trite and known Axiom, *Par in parem non habet imperium: i. e. An equall hath no rule or power over an equall*: Subordination Prelaticall, which is of one or more Parishes, to the Prelate and his Cathedrall is denyed, all particular Churches being collateral, and of the same authority.

4. That Classicall or Synodall authority cannot be by Scripture introduced over a particular Church in a privative or destructive way to the power which God hath bestowed upon it.

5. That the highest ecclesiasticall Assembly in the world, cannot require from the lowest a subordination absolute, and *Pro Arbitrio, i. e.* at their own meer will and pleasure, but only in some respect; subordination-absolute, being only to the law of God laid down in Scripture.

6. They grant *Charitative, consultative, Fraternal* christian advice or direction, either to be desired or bestowed, by neighbouring Churches, either apart, or in their Synodall meetings, for the mutuall benefit of one another, by reason of that holy profession in which they are all conjoynd and knit together: Now what can be more fully to our purpose, then what these men themselves say?

*Obj.* You will say, though they say all this, yet tis not all they say, for they say the Presbyterians have a further power, that particular Congregations have not; which is the power of greater Assemblies, in a Classis or Synod, over a particular Church, to deliver it to Sathan, in case of obstinacy.

*Ans.* But first, where do these men read in all the New Testament, of these greater Assemblies, and lesser Assemblies, that have this authoritative power over one another, to excommunicate and deliver over to Sathan? Let them produce but one plaine Scripture for it, by way of precept for it, or practise of it, and we will say something

something to it; let them not thinke to put off the matter so easily, as if 3. or 4. \* old Arguments that have been at least ten times answered, will serve the turne: Gods people have learnt to be more wise now then formerly.

*Recocta cramb  
be fastidium  
parit et nau-  
seam.*

2. Do not these men know, that its a great question amongst themselves, or their friends in the Assembly, whether *Traditio Sathana, i. e.* The power of delivering over to Sathan, were not Apostolicall? that is, peculiar to the power of Apostles, so as ordinary Elders had it not: and then the utmost power of all those great classicall Presbyteriall Assemblies, over the lesser, as they call them in way of censuring, will be at last the same with the Independants non-communion, which the Independants acknowledge (upon good grounds) to be the last meanes Christ hath appointed in his Church to worke upon the heart, and therefore as forcible and effectually, as that formall and juridicall delivering over of a particular Church to Sathan, which the *Presbyterians* so stilly, though ungroundedly plead for.

3. Let the Assembly of *Presbyters* be never so great, yet I hope there is none of them that will affirm, that such an Assembly can proceed (by all their authority they claime) to the delivering over a particular Church to Sathan, *Clave non errante*, they are not freed from error, no more then a lesser Assembly: and commonly the truth of Christ is with the fewer, not the greater number: one poore despised Saint, may understand more of Gods mind, and see further into some one particular truth, then a whole Synod: And we have examples of it. Indeed if they could, or would claime to themselves an unerring Spirit, *as the Pope doth*, it were something: Or if they had such a presence of the holy Ghost with them, that they might say as the Apostles did, *It seemed good to the holy Ghost, and to us*: then it were to the purpose: but before this be done, they do but *Oleum et operam perdere*, and Jesus Christ will give them but little thanks in the end; and it that those that are champions for these higher Assemblies, as they call them, whereby they would rule the churches of Christ, would but read Doctor *Whitaker De concil.* from p. 248. *ad finem*, without prejudice, and an evill eye, I am confident they would be more humble in their own eyes, and moderate and gentle towards their bretheren they so much scorne. If any desire further satisfaction

in this very particular, let him read M. *Burroughs* his *Heart Divisions*, p. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47.

4. Lastly, if the *divine right* be in the Congregationall Presbytery, as they acknowledge at large, p. 182. 138. of their *7us divinum*: How comes it to passe that they claim such power in higher Assemblies, as the Classicall, Provincial, and National Presbyteries? how can these things stand together? are there two divine rights, especially, when the Classicall divine right, (as they call it) over the Congregationall, is merely humane?

1. In that the preaching Elders of greater Presbytery, were ordaired to their office by a questionable power (by the Bishops) which they have not to this day renounced. 2. In that the ruling Elders are made by a power as questionable, (though not so Antichristian) to wit, an Ordinance of Parl. as M. *Saltmarsh* hath lately observed, in his Reasons discussing the *divine right of Presbytery*, p. 3, 4. And so much for the testimony of the learned.

3. In the last place, we come to those reasons and Arguments the learned do usually give, for the confirming the former truth, and confuting the contrary, I shall name only the heads of some of them.

*Quod omnes at-*  
*singit, ab omni-*  
*bis approbati*  
*debet.* Whit. de  
conc. p. 44.

1. That which concernes all the Church, reason requires should be done by all the Church; but to choose this or that Officer, to communicate this or that member, concernes all the Church, *ergo*.

2. No adjunct in order of Nature, is before the Subject, nor is it capable of receiving any thing, but as it adheres to, and so from the subject; but administration of Ordinances is the adjunct of the Church, and the Church the subject, *ergo*.

3. The Church is the body of Christ, but 'the Presbytery is not so, but a part of the body, *ergo*, the power is in the Church primarily, and not in Presbytery.

4. If the Church hath power to refuse a man, and to cast him out, then she hath power to choose, and put him in: but the first is true, because otherwise she doth not sinne in suffering false Teachers, nor can she decline a vitious Elder, *Invito vel non curante Presbyterio, ergo*.

5. There is no power that any can have from heaven ordinarily, but by some transaction between God and them; but there is no such



such transaction between God, and the Presbytery primarily; the Covenant and Promise was not made with them, but with the Church, *ergo*.

6. If the Church only, and not the Presbyterie, be the Kingly Nation, Royall Priesthood, and Kings and Priests to God, then the power belongs to the Church, and not to the Presbytery: But the Church is the Kingly Nation, and not the Presbytery, *ergo*. The antecedent is without question, the consequent is evident, because else they should be titular Kings only, without power, and they that are not Kings and Priests, as the Presbytery, *Qua tales*, they should have Power.

7. If the Text *Mat. 18. Go tell the Church*, be not meant of the Presbytery only, but of the Church, consisting of Elders and bretheren together, then the power belongs not to the Presbytery alone, but to the whole: But that place, *Go tell the Church*, is not meant of the Presbyterie only, but of the whole, consisting of Elders and bretheren; as those Divines in the margin have fully cleared, answering all the objections that have been brought to the contrary, which would be too large here to set down; only take these few reasons, why this place cannot be meant of the Presbyterie alone.

1. Because in all the New Testament we cannot find the word Church is given to the Presbytery alone, but sometimes for the Members alone, without it, or distinct from the Presbytery: as *Act. 14.23.* and *15.4,22.* *1 Cor. 12.* and frequently, for the whole Flock, Elders and Bretheren together. *1 Cor. 1. 2. Phil. 1. 1. &c.*

2. Because the relation of the party offending is to the Church, not to the Presbytery, for the fellowship is with the Church, as Church, the covenant and brotherhood is with them; and therefore, though the Presbytery orderly exerciseth the power, yet it is *In ordine ad ecclesiam*, there is no particular relation between the party and Presbyterie, as may advantage the Presbytery to exercise such an act of power over him, no more then they may administer the Seales to a private person, but to him as a Church Member, and with the whole Church.

3. The Presbytery consisting of a few Elders, are offended by a brother, that is bound up in fellowship with a hundred private bretheren: now the Presbytery dealing with him, can go no further, if they be the Church, then themselves, &c.

*Vid. Cottons*  
*Keyes, p.40,*  
*41, 42, 43, 44.*  
*Jacobs divine*  
*beginning and*  
*institution of*  
*Christs visible*  
*Church.*  
*Philips answer*  
*to Lambe, p.*  
*150.*

4. The Presbytery may be the party offending, and then you must tell the Church, that the Church offendeth: that is, gotell themselves.

Obj. I may tell a higher Classis or Assembly.

Ans. But what if they joyn with the offending Presbyters? then I must stay for a generall Councell, which is not free from error, neither.

5. If by *tell the Church* be meant the Presbytery only, then there being but two or three of the Presbytery, a brother offended, cannot take one or two of them for witnesses, because then he should tell the Church before the time come, and so could make no further proceeding. But a brother offended may take one or two of the Elders for witnesses, *ergo*, Presbyterie cannot be the Church; and if so, then much lesse can it be taken for a Classis, Synod, &c.

8. If the Church be compleat in point of government, without Presbyterian, classicall, and Synodicall Offices, and callings, then the Church hath power in it selfe, without such offices and callings: But a particular Church is compleat in point of Church power, and exercise of government, as we have shewed, and proved abundantly before, and they themselves grant *ergo*.

9. Where the sentence administred by the Church of a particular Congregation, is ratified and confirmed in heaven by Christ, there the power must needs be granted to be in the Church: But the sentence administred by the Church of a particular congregation, is ratified by Christ in heaven, as *Mat. 18. 18, 19. ergo*.

And thus now by the assistance of Christ, I have gone through all the parts of this second Proposition; whereby the meanest may come to have insight into the reality and excellency of the Congregationall way, and be able not only to satisfy themselves about it, but others also, and see sufficient ground to suffer for it, as for a principall part of the will and mind of Christ, if ever they should be called unto it.

Now then, this being so, that the Church to which the Officers and administration of the Seales is limited under the New Testament, is an ordinary congregation of Saints, having power of government within it selfe under Jesus Christ, their head and King, then it will follow,

1. That there is no ground or warrant in Scripture for an uni-  
versall

1. Inference  
from the former Proposition.  
en.

versal visible Church, with Officers & government correspondent, a universall visible Church militant on earth, is not denyed, but the question is of a universall, visible, politicall Church, with Officers and Administrations sutable, that is, universall Pastors, universall Elders, universall Deacons, universall Seales and censures, universall Lawes, and rules of Government : for such as the Church is, such must her Officers, Ordinances, and Government be : But this we cannot find the Scriptures to hold out in the least to us, but are altogether silent : and little do men know how much they contribute towards the keeping of the Pope in his chaire, by pleading so much as they do for such a universall visible Church, subject to government : for if there be such a Church, of *divine institution*, then it will necessarily follow, that there must be a universall ordinary Pastor of that Church, and then the Papists will thanke them. And to speake truly, let us but once grant that particular Churches are not *entire in themselves*, nor endowed with the power of government, *immediatly from Christ*, but are parts and dependants of one whole universall Church visible, ministeriall, or politicall; then it will follow, that we must referre our selves in matters of Religion and Government, to that one body visible, whereon we professe our selves to depend : and what this leads to, those that have but halfe an eye may discern. The just extent therefore (without doubt) of a true visible Church under the Gospell, is no other then what we have before shewed : to wit, one ordinary Congregation or society of Saints, that can meet together in one place to worship God.

2. Then it will follow also, that there is as little ground for a Nationall, Diocesan, and Provinciall Church : And to speak truly, there is lesser shew and ground for these in the Scripture, then for the other we spake to before : and are therefore justly condemned by diverse judicious and learned men in their writings : *vide Jacob. Reaf. for Reformation, p. 5, 6, 7, 8. &c. Burrough. Vindication against Edwards, p. 23.* his words are these.

“ I said that we are freed from the Pedagogie of the Jewes, and  
 “ now there were no Nationall Churches by institution, as the  
 “ Jews were, mentioning three things.

“ 1. There are no Nationall Officers, as they had.

“ 2. No Nationall worship as they had.

3. " It was not sufficient now to make a member of the Church, " because one is by birth of this or any other Nation, as then it was, " because one was born of the Nation of the Jewes; and is this (saith " he ) a doctrine that will not go down with a Presbyterian? " Surely it must be a Prelatical Presbyterian who cannot digest this: " I am confident all the Presbyterian Churches in the world, will " acknowledge what I said here to be true : That wee may call the " Church in England a Nationall Church, because of the many Saints " in it, who are the body of Christ, I deny not, nor ever did, ( neither " do I know any of his judgement or practise that do; ) but that it is " by the institution of Christ formed into one politicall Church, as " the Nation of the Jewes was, this is no Independency to deny. " Where are any particular men standing Church Officers to the " whole Nation by divine institution? What Nationall Worship " hath Christ instituted? Doth our birth in the Nation make us " members of the Church? These things are so palpably plaine to " any that will understand, that tis tedious to spend time about " them; so also *Cottons Keyes*, p. 31, 32. affirms the same.

3. It will follow also that the ruling power of Synods and Classes over the particular Churches, which is now so much pleaded for, (not the counselling power, for that is granted by us) is not *Jure divino*, but a meer usurpation, and such a way and practise as Christ will never own, nor prosper: For what he hath said *Mat. 15. 13.* shall certainly come to passe; which is, *That every plant, which is not of his Fathers planting, shall be rooted up;* such a government possibly may stand for a time, as the Prelaticall did, having the power of the *Prince* to support it; but doubtlesse it will (being so neare of kinne to it) share in the like destiny: And that which moves me to believe and expect it, is not only the *non-Scripturalnes* of this high Classicall way of Government, but the *unreasonablenes*, and *sinfullnes* of it; which will easily appeare from these ensuing particulars, which are the naturall issues of this government; and by which you may understand from whence it takes its originall, and derives its pedigree.

3. Several sorts of fruit, that growes upon the lofty Tree of high Presbytrie.

1. This high Classicall government makes one ordinary Pastor, or Elder, to undertake the rule of more Churches and Flocks then his owne; perhaps twenty or forty, if not more; and so brings in a burden too heavy for the ablest Minister to go under: for if one Flocke

be worke enough for one Shepheard to watch over, he hath little reason to take the care of twenty on him : wise men judge it the safest course to meddle with no more worke then they can comfortably go through, especially such worke as the care of soules, which is of greatest and highest concernment : and the rather considering that of the Apostle 2 Cor. 2. 16. *ὁ θεὸς πάντων τῶν πραγμάτων, who is sufficient for these things?*

2. It makes the church ( which is the body of Christ, and hath all parts and members suted to her condition ) to be *lame and defective*, having no power of discharging her own offices; viz. of receiving in, and casting out members, but by anothers leave, that is inferiour to her.

3. It refuseth to have matters heard and determined in that place where they are done and acted; then which, what more unreasonable ? it was condemned in *Cyprians* dayes, as Doctor *Reinolds* proves against *Hart* in his conference with him, p. 570. and *Cyprian* himselfe saith, *lib. 1. epist. 8.* That it is not fit that those over whom the holy Ghost had made them overseers, should go to and fro, speaking of matters that were carried from their own church to others.

4. It occasions tyrannie and oppression, to the free born Subjects of Christs Kingdome; domineering over their consciences; not suffering them to enjoy their liberty in Church or State, unlesse they will subscribe to their dictates, and be of their judgement, as he that runnes may read, in their late published and printed Petitions, &c. The right garbe and straine of Antichrist, that man of sinne, that *Ἀβασσορ* & *Ἀντιχριστος*, mentioned in *Rev. 13. 17.* that will not suffer any man to buy or sell, unlesse he have the marke, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name : and of that Gyant *M. Burroughs* speaks of, in his *Heart divisions*, p. 55. who laid upon a Bed, all he tooke, and those who were too long, he cut them even with his Bed, and such as were too short, he stretched them out to the length of it : and this verily (saith he) is cruelty.

5. It puts men upon inevitable temptations of wresting the Scriptures, and applying them to another, and cleane contrary sence then God appointed them for : e. g. to make them speake out, that there is a patterne of diverse single Congregations in one church, and of a Presbyteriall government in common over these single

**Congregations:** That differences in matters of opinion are not to be suffered, though in things not destructive to Church or State: that men are to be driven from their errors, *Cogendo, non persuadendo*, by compulsion, &c. when the Scriptures are directly against these things.

Ephes. 3. 10.

6. It puts a stop in the way of knowledge, stinting and straitning, if not stifling mens gifts and abilities in searching out divine truths, and the great mysterie, which that Apostle calls *ἡ ποικιλία τῶ Θεοῦ*, that manifold wisdom of God, having such variety in it, as is able to exercise the strongest abilities, even of Angels themselves, to search into, and make discoveries of. Now saith this Classicall Government, Thus far you must goe and no farther. This is the judgement of the Church of England, and the Assembly and Presbyterie in their severall Classes have subscribed to it, touching the knowledge of God, and the way of his Worship, and Government in the Church; and no man is to vary or differ from it, nor call it into question, without running the hazard of his precious liberty, &c.

7. It makes men to build their observation of, and practicing obedience to the Divine Lawes, Institutions and Ordinances of Christ, upon the principles of humane wisdom and policie, yea the meere wills and commandements of men. For Ministers must not preach, nor administer in the holy things of God to their people, neither must the Saints beleve or practice, *further then shall the Classis shall judge to be sound and orthodox, and give their consent to, and approbation of:* and are these things of God?

3. Epist. of  
Joh. 9, 10.

8. Lastly, it so gendres to bondage, and begets in the best men such a *Diatrophes*-like spirit, a spirit of pride and bitterness against the Brethren, (like the Prelates chaire, that infected the most pious soules, and ablest Preachers that sate downe in it, as we could instance in many.) Yea it so mingles with the world, and introduceth such formality (if not worie) in the worship and service of God, that I cannot but beleve and expect the Lord Jesus root it up, as he did the Prelacy, the difference between them being more *in name then nature, shew then substance.*

The 4. Inference from the  
*Proposition.*

4. From what hath formerly been said touching the nature and priviledge of a particular society of Saints united together as the true and proper visible Church of Christ, now under the Gospel.

The

The constitution of the Parish Churches in *England*, must of necessity be found faulty, and their originall to be from beneath, and not from above; *from men, and not from God*: and therefore not so much to be pleaded for and defended, as true visible Churches of Christ, as they are by the Presbyters in the Preface of their *Jus Divinum. Reg. eccles.*

1. For first of all, how doe they answer to this Church we have spoken of in this chapter, in respect of the efficient cause and instituter of it, *scil.* Jesus Christ, when their originall is from men? Now that this is a truth, is evident from the first founding of them; which appears to be from *Dyonisius* Bishop of *Rome*, which first ordained Diocesan Churches, as *Platina* observeth of him, and in *England*, by one *Honorius* Bishop of *Cant.* as Master *Salmarsh* hath lately observed out of Master *Selden, De decimis.* So *Polydor Virgil, De invent. rerum, li. 4. c. 9.* And tis no other then what M. \* *Jacob* hath long since noted from M. *Hooker* in his Ecclesiasticall Politie, and Doctor *Tooker*, both Prelaticall men, who affirme the distinction of parishes to be a meere positive law, and not *jure divino, i. e.* by Divine right. And I find the like in that famous learned man Master *Paul Baynes* his *Dioc. Tryall, p. 12.* whose words are these: A Parishionall Church may be considered, 1. Materially, and 2. Formally. 1. Materially, as it is a Church within such locall bounds, the members of which dwell contiguously, one bordering upon the other. Now (saith he) *this God instituted not*, for it is accidentall to the Church. If a parishionall Church in *London* should dwell as the Dutch doe, one far enough from the other, while the same *Beleever*s were united with the same Governours, the Church were not changed, though the place were altered, (which is worth observation against such as cry out against the Independent Churches, because the members of them dwell not contiguously one bordering upon the other, (though in point of convenience (not of absolute necessity) we judge it fit that Members of Churches should dwell as neere together as their occasions and callings will give leave.) 2. Formally, for a multitude which do in manner of a parish ordinarily congregate, Now (saith he) *such Churches and such onely, we say God erected.*

\* Reaf. for Reformation, p. 28, 29.

To this purpose M. *Owen* also in his *Country Essay* for Church-government, answering this Objection, *By this means, parishes will be unburched,* saith,

1. If

1. If by *Churches* you understand such entire societies of Christians, as have all Church power both according to right and exercise in and among themselves, as Independents speak of Congregations, then they were never church'd by any.

2. If onely *civill divisions* of men, that may conveniently be taught by one Pastor, and ruled by Elders, whereof some may be fit to partake of the Ordinances, some not, as the *Presbyterians* esteeme them, then, &c. So that here is no other then an humane constituti<sup>o</sup>n. allowed of to the parish Churches in England.

2. How doe these Parish Churches in *England*, answer to the former true visible Church of Christ under the Gospell in respect of the right matter of it, which we have shewed to be Saints? Now in this they come as short as in the other, for experience tells us, that Parish Churches for the generall consist of loose, profane, scandalous livers, such as the Apostle saith are *without God*, and *without Christ*, and *without hope*, *Ephes. 2. 12.* that are strangers to the common-wealth of Israel, and covenant of Promise. Now we may safely argue from that Scripture, that such as are without God, and without Christ, cannot make a Church of Christ. Besides, the Kingdome of Christ, which is his Church, is spirituall, and not of this world, as he himselfe saith, *John 18. 36.* Now these parishes for the generality of their matter, are of this world, carnall and earthly, and therefore cannot be the Kingdome of Christ. Jesus Christ cannot be the Head of such a Body, nor King of such a Kingdome. Moreover, that cannot be the matter of Christs Church, which he hath commanded to be cast out of his Church, as wee have shewed before. But the subject matter of the Parish Churches are such, as ought to be cast out from the Church of Christ. And therefore some of our more godly Brethren of the Presbyterian way, dare not admit of them to Church priviledges with the godly, but separate the godly from them, where they have a competent number by themselves to administer the seales to, as we could give instances, if need were. Neither will it be sufficient in this case, to say as many doe, that the denomination is from the better part; because we never find in the Scriptures, that holinesse is ascribed to a multitude for the sake of a few, if the rest be unholy, loose and profane: As we doe not say, that because such a meeting hath three or foure Gentlemen or Nobles in it, that the whole  
company



company are Gentlemen and Noblemen. We read that unclean persons and things doe pollute and unhallow cleane persons, as *Levit. 14. 46, 47.* & *15. 4, 11, 12.* *Hag. 2. 12, 13, 14.* and that a little leaven sowres the whole lump, *1 Cor. 1. 6. 7.* and that by the springing up of one root of bitternesse, many are defiled; and that by one dead flye, the whole box of ointment is spoiled; but that cleane persons should hallow and sanctifie persons that are unholy, or that a little sweet meale should make sweet a sowre lump, this we read not of.

Besides, can it be made out by any man, that the matter of those Parish Churches, for the most part, can answer the ends for which a Church is instituted by Christ, as we have noted before? can a company of disolute livers, worship God and Jesus Christ spirituallly? can there be ability for spirituall and holy services, where the Spirit is not yet given? can there be communion between light and darknesse, between Christ and Belial? as *2 Cor. 6. 16.* can they edifie one another in the most holy faith, that have not the work of faith yet wrought and begun in them? I desire to know of any sober-minded and religious-hearted man, whether a company of vile, profane drunkards, swearers, scoffers at goodnesse, enemies to the power of godlinesse, ignorant poore soules, that know no more of God and Christ, (I had almost said then the seats they sit on) can doe any thing in a Church society, that tends to the honour of God, and edification of the body of Christ.

1. If you say they are hearers of the Word, that is not sufficient, for Heathens may doe that, and yet not be Church members, as *1 Cor. 14. 23, 24.* The Scribes, and Pharisees, and other wicked Jewes, came often to heare Christ himself preach with his Disciples, and yet they were not his Disciples, but enemies, and opposers, seeking to kill him. Tis not bare hearing the Word, that makes a person a member of Christ and his Church, but his willing and professed subjection to Christ and the Gospel to be ruled and ordered by it, as *2 Cor. 9. 13.*

2. If you say, they are Professors of Christ, yet that also, if contradicted in the life, is not sufficient to make a member of Christ & his Church, for *2 Tim. 3. 5.* we are bid to turne from such.

3. If you say, they are baptized. I answer, that is not sufficient to make them members of this Church of Christ, because the

Church of *Rome* hath Baptisme in it, and yet no true Church, as Master *Perkins* hath well observed in his Exposition on the Creed. A false Church may usurpe Ordinances that hath no right to them, as well as a true church be for a time without them, that hath right to them. Neither is Baptisme the forme of a church, or the way and meanes now left to bring men into the church, but a seale of Confirmation rather to those that are already joyned to some particular visible Church of Christ. And to adde no more, Baptisme in it selfe is so far from making any man a church-member, as that church-membership may be dissolved, though Baptisme remaine, as in case of Excommunication.

4. If you adde farther, and say, that the primitive visible Churches, as *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, &c. had profane wicked men in them: This neither will be to any purpose; for the question is not, whether a true visible Church of Christ may have wicked persons in it? for that is not denied: but whether it is to be constituted & made up of such persons. Tis one thing what these Primitive Churches may be through degeneration, another thing what they were in their first constitution. And therefore I suppose we are not to produce those Churches for examples as they were in their degenerate estate, but as they were in their first planting, otherwise we do but delude the simple. Indeed if those that plead so hotly for the Parish Churches could make it out, that in the beginning they had a pure constitution, and their first planting was *juxta Evangelium Christi*, it were something, and their degenerating only from the right, should not hinder us from the upholding of them. But till that be done, they must beare with us, if we labour the bringing of them to the Primitive rule and order of the Gospel, which how it may be effected, I shall endeavour to hold forth in its proper place.

5. If you adde farther, that the Parables of the *draw-net*, and the *tares* and *wheat* together, seeme to hold out, that the visible Church of Christ consists of good and bad together. I answer in a word, if by the *field* it be granted is meant the visible state of the Church, though Christ himselfe saith, by *field* is meant the *world*, which is never called the Church, *Mat. 13. 38, 39.* but suppose it be taken for the visible church of Christ, yet it cannot be understood of the essence and constitution of the church, which here we are disputing of, and what ought to be the matter of such a church, *de jure*, i. because

cause Christ saith that those Tares were sowed in the field by the envious man, the Devill, through the carelesnes of those that were set over the Field to keepe it, *Mat. 13. 39.* So that if they be in the church, he hath no hand in it, tis not by his allowance, & much lesse his appointment and ordination, and therefore to make this more cleare, I adde this 2. reason, that if Jesus Christ never ordained that wicked men should be matter of his house, stones in his building, because if this should be true, then all those commands of Christ for casting them out of his church, when they are discovered to be in, should be void, & to no purpose: for if that wicked men which are the Tares, be the true matter of a church, & of the true constitution of a visible Church, then they are to be let alone & not cast out; lest in so doing we destroy the church, sin against the commandement of *Christ.* So that notwithstanding what is said for the matter of the parish churches, we see they cannot be found to be according to the first constitution of the Gospell, and I feare those that go about to set up a new building of Reformation, upon this rotten foundation will find in a short time, that all they do will fall about their own eares.

3. Again, it may be further demanded, how these parish-churches do answer to the church we have formerly spoken of, in respect of their union and knitting together, by a free and voluntary consent, which is the forme of a true visible church of Christ: hath there ever been such a knitting and combination of the Officers and Members, in an holy and unanimous consent and agreement to walke together (as we have formerly shewed) according to the rule of Christ in the Gospell? &c. Is not the contrary evident? For

1. Have not those parishes been time out of mind under one visible *Antichristian* church-government, and rule, for the outward worship of God, and dispensation of Ordinances?

2. Have not Prelates and Patrons imposed preachers over those parishes, without, yea, many times against the approbation and consent of the People?

3. Have not the godly with the wicked in those parishes, been alwayes mixed together in the ordinances and worship of God, making up one church frame and constitution, without any separation?

4. Hath not co-habitation, and comming within the bounds

and precincts of a parish, been sufficient to make a person a member of the Church in their sence, though never so notorious a liver, so he be not poor, and (through his charge of children) burthensome to the parish, never enquiring whether he be capable of communion with Christ, and his Saints in the enjoyment of the Ordinances?

5. Wherefore else is it, that now in these times of greater light and liberty, that many of our Presbyterian bretheren do beginne to gather the godly in their parishes into a body of themselves, separating the precious from the vile, in a way of acknowledging what worke of grace the Lord hath wrought in them, of which there would (I conceive) be no need, if they were already united and embodied together?

4. Lastly, to speake nothing of the rule by which they walke in the worship of God, it may be demanded, how these parish Churches, do answer to the pattern before set down, according to the Gospell, in point of Discipline and government? do they enjoy the priviledges of church power within themselves, without subordination to others? Have they not generally to this day been without it, standing formerly under the authority of the Lord Bishops, and their Courts, that used them at their pleasure, and led them captive to their wills? Did not both Priest and people dance after their pipe? And if the classicall government do now take place, is it not to be feared, that they will be (poore soules) *In statu quo prius*, under as great bondage, if not greater then before? But for that, we leave it, till time (the discoverer of all things) make the truth known in this particular.

5. Another inference from the former position, is this, to shew how great the sinne is of those that are called *Seekers*, that have been professed members of such a particular church of Saints rightly constituted according to the order of the Gospell, but now have left it, denying any such church, or churches, and Ministry to be, and so have left all communion with *Christ* and his Saints, in the ordinances of his worship, expecting a Ministry accompanied with the gifts of Miracles, as in the Apostles dayes: But such men do not see how much Sathan hath blinded their eyes. I shall speake more largely and directly to them in the fourth chapter of this Treatise.

6. Then

6. Then it will follow in the last place, that the bretheren of the congregational way are not guilty of all those foule crimes of error, heresie, blaspheymes, and of making schismes and rents in the church of *Christ*, as they are accused by the tongues and pennes both of Preschers and professors in the Presbyterian way : for the judicious Reader may see by what hath been already, and is yet further to be laid downe, that those that walke in this Separated Church-state from the world, do not swerve from the way of the Lord, which he himselte hath instituted and commanded : nor from the judgement and practise of those that have been some of the famous lights that have shined in this Kingdome, and therefore after all those former aspersions have been laid, and cast upon them, they will be found in the truth, and God will make their enemies ashamed, that ever they should write such volumnes, and waste so many precious houres, to oppose and vex their righteous soules, for *Magna est veritas, et prevalebit.*

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## CHAP. III.

*That the severall administrations of this Church-state, especially for Seales and Censures, are now in these dayes (since the death of the Apostles, and extraordinary Church-officers and governours) limited to, and bounded within every particular Church: the Officers of one Congregation, may not ordinarily & in common, (as the Apostles did) administer the Seales and Censures, that belongs to another Congregation.*

Now the truth of this I shall endeavour to make out, in these ten following Conclusions:

1. **T**HAT all Ministerial power for administration of Seales, and execution of Church censures, was first given in commission to the Apostles only; as these Scriptures hold forth, *Mat. 20. 19. Joh. 20. 21, 22, 23. 1 Cor. 11. 23.* And therefore we read oftentimes of *Peters* baptising *Cornelius* and others, *Acts 10.* and *Pauls* excommunicating of *Alexander*, *1 Tim. 1. 20.* and such like acts of theirs, which they did by themselves alone, as the first Subjects of this executive Church-power.

2. That these Apostles were immediately called, and extraordinarily gifted by Christ for this worke and employment of their Ministry, *Joh. 20. 21, 22. Gal. 1. 1. Act. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 12.*

3. That these extraordinary officers were only *Pro tempore*, and so were the last, as well as the first subject of this power and authority; so that when they dyed, their extraordinary call and commission, together with their extraordinary gifts for the discharge of it, dyed with them, as may be gathered from *Acts 20. 29.* and experience hath manifested soon after their decease.

4. That Jesus Christ the Head and King of his Church, in admirable wisdom, ordained such to succeed them, which should (though they were not so extraordinarily called and qualified) accomplish and effect that great worke of gathering and perfecting the Saints, which are his body the Church, as is evident from *Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Rom. 12. 7, 8.*

5. That these kind of ordinary officers, as *Pastors* and *Teachers*, were (in the very times of the Apostles, and by the Apostles themselves

selves, with the consent of the people ) begunne to be chosen and settled in particular Churches and Congregations, as appears from *Act. 14. 23. and 20. 28.* and appointed to be perpetuall, and continue in the Churches of Christ to his comming again, *Ephes. 4. 13.*

6. That these ordinary officers were charged by the Apostles to looke to their owne flocks, over which the holy Ghost had made them overseers, as *Act. 20. 28. and 1 Pet. 5. 2.* and the People also to obey them, and submit themselves to them, as *Heb 13. 17.* & that notable place, of *1 Thes. 5. 12.* where he shewes how that Church should know them that were over them in the Lord, and did labour amongst them, and admonish them, and how highly they should account of them for their workes sake, *ver. 13.* In which Scripture he excellently and clearly holds forth the truth of the Proposition in hand, by discovering that speciall relation was between those officers and the members of that Church, three times in one verse, which labour εν υμιν, amongst you, *οειςταυθες υμεις, are over you;* and then againe, *κι υδετεντας υμας, and admonish you:* where we see the Apostle still keeps himselfe to the *Pronounne Relative, Vos, vos, you, you,* not others, so much as you (viz.) members of that particular Church, to whom these Pastors and Teachers were related.

7. That these Pastors and Teachers, did obey for the most part this charge and command of the Apostles, as we see in the former instance; neither can we read that the officers of one particular Church did *ελλοιζεπισκοπη,* that is, play the Bishops in other mens Diocesses: they did not administer the Seales and censures out of their own Churches: they might preach and pray in other Churches beside their own, but not administer Seales and censures; the reason is, because there is a greater liberty allowed by Christ in the one, then in the other.

8. That the office of a Pastor and Teacher, is founded in the relation that is between the Church and the officer, or officers thereof: now the Church under the Gospell, to which these officers doe belong, is not Univerfall, and Nationall, or Diocesan ( as we in the former Chapter made manifest ) but congregationall only, (viz.) *such a company of believers as can meet together to worship God in one place:* and therefore the execution of their office, cannot be univ-  
ersall, but limited to the congregation to which they belong,  
espe-

especially, in the administration of the Seales and Censures.

9. That no such Officer, as Pastor, &c. can require from any other Church or Congregation besides his own to which he belongs, and over which the holy Ghost hath made him overseer, that respect, maintenance, and obedience, which is due from people to officers, as appears from \* *Heb. 13. 17. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13.* Neither stand they charged with giving account for the soules of any other, then those are committed to them in that particular Church where they are called; nor can any other then those of their particular Church, challenge from them the watching over their soules, and dispensing to them the Ordinances of Christ: This is cleare and evident in nature, and civill government of States and Families: one State cannot be charged with the government of another, nor one master of a Family with the rule of another: but as nature hath ordained one to one, so Christ hath ordained in his Church, to each congregation their proper Pastors and overseers, and they that know what belongs to the worke, will not complain they have not enough to go through, and answer for, as I noted before.

*Arif.*

10. That no such Pastor and Teacher (lawfully called to a particular Church and charge of soules) may easily translate himselfe from such a Church to another; but attend on that office and worke he is called unto, notwithstanding many hardships he meets with: the reason is, because every man, in every place and calling, is to strive to continue and abide with God in it, and to attend that work God hath called him unto; and not out of covetousnes or distrustfullnes (as it is with many) get more worke into their hands, then they can with a good conscience discharge.

And though the testimony of the learned doth not in the least adde any worth or weight to the Scripture, yet because many men think nothing is authentickall, that hath not evidence from learned men, I will adde the judgement of two, among many famous writers, *M. Calvin of Geneva, and M. Baines of England.*

1. *M. Calvin*, I shall only quote that in his *Institutions, lib. 4. cap. 3. sect. 7.* The words translated are these; he having spoken of what helps a Minister of one Church may afford to another, by way of councill in any darke and difficult matter; he presently addes, *But for as much as for the keeping of the Peace of the Church,*

*this*

\* *πῶς δε δε τοῖς  
ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν*



this politie is necessary, that there be set forth to every man, what he should doe, lest all be confusedly dis-ordered, runne about without calling, or rashly runne all together into one place; and lest such as are more carefull for their own commodity, then for the edification of the Church, should at their own will leave their churches vacant: this ordering ought commonly to be kept so neer as may be, that every man contented with his own bounds, should not breake into another mans charge: And this is no invention of man, but the ordinance of God himselfe. For we read (saith he) that Paul and Barnabas made Presbyters or Ministers in all the churches of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, Act. 14. 22, 33. and Paul commands Tytus that he ordain Elders in every towne, Tit. 1. 5. elsewhere he mentioneth the Bishops which were at Philippi, Phil. 1. 1. and Archippus the Bishop of Coloss. Col. 4. 17. and there remaineth a famous Sermon of his which he made to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, Act. 20. 28. whosoever therefore shall take upon him (saith he) the government and charge of the Church, let him know that he is bound to this law of Gods calling: And so goes on in his discourse to this purpose.

2. M. Baines in his exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, Cap. 3. ver. 2. p. 350, 351, 352. where he is large to this purpose. I shall give you but a taste of what is more fully to be seen in the Booke on this place: His point is this; That as the Lord doth give a calling and grace, so a people towards whom it is especially blessed with Gods calling and grace: there are a people designed, towards whom it is especially blessed: It is true, the Apostle had a more large flock, the care of all Churches was upon him; but whosoever God giveth a calling, there he giveth a People of whom the Minister may say, toward you Grace is given me of God, Act. 20. 28. 1 Pet. 5. 2. God hath assigned every ordinary Minister a portion of his people: For this is the difference between extraordinary, as the Apostles, Evangelists, the seventy Disciples, and our ordinary Pastors: The Apostles had an universall Commission, and the Evangelists were Delegates of the Apostles, Durante beneplacito, that is, as long as they pleased: The seventy, if not Evangelists (which some of the Antients incline to) yet they were illimited helpers and fellow-labourers in the worke of the Lord: But ordinary Ministers, the Lord commanded to fasten them to certain places, Tit. 1. 5, ordaine Elders, City by City: and

Μηδεις χειρο- in the Council of Chalcedon, the 6. Chap. *Let none be ordained at  
 εις δω απολευ- large, lest he prove a wandering Jonathan: Every Minister must be  
 υωθ, Ne 1. Separated. 2. Authorized. 3. Have allotted to him a certaine por-  
 dicatur men- tion of people, which may be instructed by him, which the D. minutive  
 dicat in Pale- παρ' αυτου, not ποιουν, may seeme to insinuate: Now as God doth give  
 stra, infelix every Pastor his severall focke, so he will that we travell in leading  
 Clericus. Grec. of them; we must not αλλοτεροεπισκοπη, be B. B. in other mens Di-  
 Scoliaſt. oceses, lest God say who required this at your hands? When the  
 Lord lighteth candles, he doth find candlesticks on which to set them;  
 when he giveth a calling, he giveth a people amongst whom this fun-  
 ction should be exercised, in whose consciences he doth give his Mini-  
 sters a speciall report, &c. And thus we see the judgement of both  
 these reverend Divines, full up to the busines in hand: There  
 remaineth only one objection to be answered, and then I  
 shall give in the severall inferences from what hath beene laid  
 downe.*

Obj. The objection is this, *That from what hath been delivered it will  
 follow, that the word of God should be bound, if every Minister  
 should be tyed within the compasse of his own Congregation.*

Sol. I Answer, it doth not follow, my reason is, because as I noted  
 before, there is a greater liberty allowed by Christ in the preach-  
 ing of the Word, then there is in the administration of the Seales  
 and Censures: the one cannot be done, but *Virtute officii*, the other

\* *vid.* A little but learned \* *Virtute donorum*; one that is not in the number  
 of Wisdomes maidens, by vertue of office, yet may be one of Wis-  
 doms children; whom God may so blesse in the exercise of the gifts  
 and graces of the Spirit, to be an instrument of turning many to  
 righteousnes, *Dan. 12. 3.* As for those that are in office, and called  
 to particular Churches, doubtlesse they are not so tyed to their own  
 Congregations, but that they may preach in other Churches besides  
 their own, as *M. Baines* hath well observed out of *Clemens, lib. 2.  
 constit. cap. 48.* and not only in other churches of the same consti-  
 tution, or with their own according to the Gospell, but in such assem-  
 blies and meetings of people, that are not yet converted to the faith of  
 Christ, if they may be permitted and have liberty given them, espe-  
 cially if they be desired and entreated, as we find the servants of Christ  
 have done in former times, as in *Act. 14. 7.* In which Ci-  
 ties of *Lyconia*, and the inhabitants were for the time Idolaters, as

in *ver.* 11, 12, 13. of that chapter, so *Act.* 17. 22. where we find that *Paul* in *Mars Hill*, a place that was consecrated to Idolatrous worship, takes occasion to preach the Gospell to those heathens: and doubtlesse so may the Ministers of Christ, that are in office, if they may have liberty given them, take occasion to exercise their gifts in preaching Jesus Christ to the Congregations of men and women, yet uncalled, and in an Idolatrous, and Antichristian State.

Indeed those of the rigid Separation do deny the Ministers of those they call Independant Churches, this liberty, saying that *Paul* was forced to that place of *Mars Hill*, when he preacht the knowledge of God in Christ, to the *Athenian* Idolaters; but I answer, though it should be granted, that by violence he was carried by the *Athenians* to that Idolatrous place, which the words will not yield to them, *ver.* 19. but suppose it, yet it seemes when he came there, he was not forced to preach, but what he did, he did voluntarily, *ver.* 22. as one that had a fit opportunity put into his hands to do good; it seemes that the former words of their taking him, & bringing him to that place, was no other but their bringing him to a place of greater conveniency to deliver and make known the truth, then the market place was. And without question the Apostle knew under the Gospell, all places were alike to hold forth the truths of Christ: none holy, nor uncleane, but one as lawfull to preach Christ in, as another, all things being pure, to those that are pure, *Tit.* 1. 15. and for that place of *1 Cor.* 8. 10. where the Apostle forbids believers to sit at meate in the Idols Temple, it is manifest that it was in case of scandal & offence to them that were weake, not that the thing was simply in it selfe an evill, as we may see *ver.* 9. and *Rom.* 14. 14. 15. now as for those places wherein the mixt multitude do meet here in *England* ordinarily, commonly called Parish churches, though many of them were dedicated to Saints and superstitious uses by the Papists, and the ignorant people have formerly put holines in them; yet now these abuses being removed, and ignorant people may be better informed in this point if they please, as is evident by the late Ordinance of the honourable house of Commons, for the removing of all scandalous and offensive Pictures, and Monuments of Idolatry, and these places lookt upon as only such, where for more conveniency, the worship of

A digression touching the rigid Separatists, that will not allow any to preach, or hear in the meeting places, commonly known by the name of Churches, because they were at first dedicated to Idolatrous & superstitious uses,

\* And this was the judgement of *M. Robinson*, see his *Apolo-gy*, p. 49.

God may be performed. I see no reason why Ministers and other gifted men may not preach, and the Saints comfortably, and without sinne, come to heare and enjoy the ordinances of Christ in them, so they be performed according to the order of the Gospell, \* As for that place of *Jeremy*, 15. 19. where the Lord saith, *they should returne to him*, but not he to them, doubtlesse the Lord doth not speake it of the Ministry of the word, for that he continued afterwards to those rebellious Jewes; but in respect of more speciall ordinances, wherein the Lord prohibits his Ministers and Saints to have communion with Idolaters: but especially I take it to be understood of the Lords forbidding the Prophet to conforme himself in his life and conversation, to their wicked wayes; but that he should be such an example and pattern of holines and righteous walking before them, that they might the better be convinced of the evill of their wayes, and so returne to the Lord from whom they had departed: not in the least, that he should cease declaring the mind and will of God to them. Now this objection being answered, I come to the inferences.

Now the truth of the former Proposition being thus cleared and confirmed, these things will then unavoidably follow.

x. Inference from the former Proposition.

I. That those particular instances which are produced by diverse reverend Divines, of the Eunuch, Centurions and Jailors baptisme, though not belonging to any particular Church, against what we have laid downe, are of little force and validity, in regard that what was done to those persons, was by the hands of extraordinary officers, that were not tyed to particular Churches, as ordinary Pastors & teachers were then, & still are: & of like insufficiency, is that instance of circumcision which is brought by some (of high accomplishment in learning and pyety) to warrant their practise against what hath been delivered, for it is well known that to the administration of circumcision, there was not required a *Church-Officer*: but God leaves it undetermined, and as a thing indifferent in respect of the administrator, whether the Priest, or the Father, or the Mother, so the thing be done, as we see in *Moses* child, whereas tis otherwise in the administrations of the Church under the New Testament, as wee have shewed before: and though we cannot read of any baptissmall administrations in gathered Churches, in the dayes of the Apostles, yet I suppose we are not to deny it, unlesse

unlesse we will deny the children which were members of Churches, as appears, *Ephes. 6. 1, 2, 3. Col. 3. 20.* were not baptized at all, either they must be baptized before the Churches were gathered, or after, not before, for doubtlesse many of those children were not then born, therefore after, and then without all controversie there must of necessity be baptismal administrations, when and where the Churches did meet; though the holy Ghost (for reasons best known to himselfe) is pleased to conceal them.

2. That those are justly blame worthy, that very frequently and ordinarily in these dayes of the Gospell in which we live, goe from place to place to baptize such as are not of their own, nor scarce of any other particular Church of Christ: I shall crave leave to propose these few things to them.

1. Whether they do not hereby introduce an universall or Nationall church visible, with officers, and ordinances sutable thereunto, taking for granted, that their Parish membership being a branch of the other, is sufficient to instate them in church priviledges? the insufficiency of which, I have already shewed.

2. Whether they do not by this their practise, not only confound those offices which Jesus Christ, the King of his church hath distinguished, *Ephes. 4. 11.* but also hereby hold forth to the world,  
1. That the extraordinary offices of Apostles and Evangelists are not to this day ceased, whose commission did extend it selfe to all Churches? 2. That they presume to have the same Call, Warrant, and Commission for what they do, which the Apostles had at first from Jesus Christ?

3. Whether they do not take that to them, and upon them, by this their practise, which the Apostles themselves by all their authority, did never give to the officers and Elders of particular churches? for we never read that ever the Apostles did give in command, that the Elders and Ministers of particular churches, should extend to the exercise of the office, especially the administration of the Seals and censures (which is the point we speake to) beyond the bounds of their own congregation?

4. Lastly, whether hereby they do not, only by this their example, occasion from and by others, the pollutions & prophanation of the holy things of Gods House, but also lay stumbling blocks in the way of many precious and godly soules, that would come off from

their old wayes of confusion, did they not discern such practises in those that take upon them to be guides and leaders of others: for are we not ordinarily upbraided with these and the like words, Do you not see, how such and such godly men, reverend Ministers, and learned Divines, make no scruple at all of administring the Seales, especially that of Baptisme, to those that are not of their own congregation? and thus according to the old saying, *Plus profunt exempla, quam precepta*, multitudes are kept from comming to the enjoyment of the pure ordinances of Christ, in the right order of the Gospell.

3. It will follow also from hence unavoidably, that those many Christians (the truth of whose grace and union with the head and foundation we question not) which of late dayes (calling into question the truth and lawfullnes of their first baptisme) have fallen upon the practise of *rebaptizing*, and taking up the Ordinance of baptisme, *De novo*, are utterly void, and altogether to seeke of a true and a just ground from the Scripture for their practise herein, and so this latter baptisme of theirs, will be found as *unlawfull* upon the same ground they held their first *unlawfull*: (because) *unlawfully administred*. For if the administration of the Seales be now tyed to ordinary officers, and these to a particular Church, since the Apostlestimes, that give them their lawfull and right call to administer the ordinances, then it will follow that there is no lawfull baptisme, but by him that is an officer of some particular Church, and he that is an officer of some particular church, must have a lawfull calling from the Church to which he is an officer, for all extraordinary officers that had their call and commission immediately from heaven, are ceased: now those which rebaptize, cannot prove the taking up of that ordinance again *after this manner*, but are enforced to hold, that a Disciple in common, that by the exercise of his gifts, doth convert a sinner from the evill of his wayes, may also baptize him; which if true, then first of all, what need of Christs ordaining officers in a Church for these purposes? Secondly, then why may not a godly woman (by her good exhortations and chaste conversation, converting her husband) baptize him also, which I suppose they are farre from maintaining, and yet it necessarily followes, the ground they build their practise upon: wherefore three things I shall here propose (in the spirit of love,

love and meeknesse ) to be seriously and conscienciously considered by them.

1. Whether there be any lawfull baptisme, where the administrator hath no lawfull calling thereunto.

2. Whether the lawfull call to the dispensing of that ordinance of baptisme be not now, (in these dayes of the Gospell) from or by that particular Church, and society of Saints, to which that administrator or officer doth belong.

3. Whether a persons entring on such an action of so high a nature, by his own meer private motion, or supposition of an extraordinary and immediate call from heaven, wanting the ordinary instituted way of Christ in the Gospell, be not a strong delusion, and an occasion of leading them into dangerous errors, as we find by wofull experience, to wit, *universall grace, free-will, denying originall sinne, and the decrees of God to be absolute.* And of late there is a small Pamphlet that goes under M: Francis Cornwals name, (a great pleader for rebaptizing, and champion against *Pedobaptisme*) that hath diverse unsound things in it, deceiving the simple, and among other these two that follow.

The first is, that those that are not able to make out a confession of their beliefs in Jesus the Christ, are therefore not born of God, *1 Joh. 5. 1.* Then it must follow, that there is no salvation where there is no actuall profession, and confession of faith; Nay, that there is no worke of inherent and habituall sanctification and regeneration, where there is not ability and power to hold it forth, which how false, and against the very letter of the word, those that have but halfe an eye may discern.

2. That those that refuse and deny to be baptized, (that is, after that manner he there speaks of all along, by making a confession of their faith, and going into the water to be dipt) have no promise to receive the gifts of the Spirit, but rather shall be given up to strong delusions to believe a lye, *2 Thes. 2. 11.* Now whether this poore man be not given up to strong delusions in writing as he doth in in this manner, let any understanding man judge: for either he meanes the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, as the gifts of Miracles, that such as are not so baptized, have no promise to receive; or else he understands the ordinary and usuall sanctifying gifts of the Spirit, that all the elect have in their regeneration, and conversion

to God: Now let him take either of these, or both, and he shall find how he is deluded: For as for the first sort of gifts, we have a cleare instance that they were powred out upon *Cornelius*, and those that heard the word with him, from the mouth of *Peter*, before ever they were baptized, or came neare the water, or the water them, as we find *Act.* 14. 44, 45, 46. So it seemes the gifts of the Spirit did precede baptisme, not follow it: And if it should be demanded of him, whether since his rebaptizing, and other of his way, they have received those gifts of speaking tongues, and healing all manner of diseases, and casting out of Devils; I feare they would be to seeke of answering affirmatively: and why then do men speake so confidently of that they have no warrant for, nor experience of? And then for the second sort of gifts, those which are proper only to the Elect, as Faith, Repentance, and the like; its as cleare as the Sunne in the firmament, that they are in the hearts, and put forth many times in the lives of elect persons, before ever they were baptized; as we see in the new converts, and the Eunuch, *Jaylor*, *Paul* himselve, and others: and experience shewes it abundantly to this day, in those that were never baptized by way of dipping. But to make the vanity of this doctrine to appeare fully, is it not evident from Christs own mouth, that the promise of the Spirit is believing simply, without the least mention of baptisme as? in *Job.* 7: 38, 39. *Which they that believe on him should receive, not they that are baptized.*

4. It will unavoidably follow from hence, that the power of Ministers in a Classis or Synod, exercising authority and jurisdiction in the name of Christ, over more Congregations and Churches then their own to which they belong, is altogether unwarrantable; and not from Scripture: for if the administration of the Seales, and execution of Church censures, that officers are intrusted with, be appropriated to their own Congregations, then it must needs follow, when they take upon them the government, ordering and censuring of other Churches, they violate those sacred bonds which *Jesus Christ* hath tyed them to.

And for this *M. Burroughs* in his Treatise of *Heart Divisions*, is very cleare, c. 22. p. 157. where having laid down the chiefe controverfie now on foot, he gives two considerations to helpe us in our thoughts about it,

1. That



1. That the extent of power of jurisdiction, must be by institution; as well as the power it selfe; all juridicall power whatsoever, either in State or Church, receives limits or extent, from the same authority it first had its rise: this is impossible to be denied. if a man by a Charter be made a Major of a towne, he cannot therefore challenge the power of a Major wheresoever he comes, except the authority that first gave him his power shall also extend it: now the Charter by which any Church officer is invested with power is the word, and therefore we cannot straiten or enlarge the power of a Minister, otherwise then we find it in the word, &c.

2. That a man naturally, is of nothing more impatient, then to have jurisdiction challenged over him, except he sees the claime to be right: & in the point of spirituall jurisdiction, man is the most tender of all, because in that men come in the name of Christ to him, challenging authority to exercise the power of Christ over him, not over the outward man, so much as over his soule, to deliver it up to Satan; surely there had need be shewn a cleare and full charter, that any men have, that gives them such a power as this, that men in conscience should be bound to submit to.

Obj. You will say, what helpe or remedy can there be, if the officers of a Church, or a whole Church should erre, as its possible?

Ans. See what the same M. Burroughs saith in his answer to M. Edwards, p. 31. where he hath this very question.

The Church (saith he) is a spirituall society, gathered for spirituall ends; it hath within it selfe no helpe against spirituall evils, but spirituall, and these can only prevaile with men, so farre as they are spirituall & consciencious. If the declaring the mind of Christ by other churches, if the protesting against erring Elders or churches, and withdrawing communion from them, will not strike upon conscience, what shall? Can the adding of an act of formall jurisdiction, whose divine institution few see, (and I may adde, which the Presbyterians themselves have no precept from Christ, nor example in all the primitive Churches to shew for) and is doubted of by those, with whom it should prevaile: can that do it? The former meanes will remedy evils if men be consciencious, the latter will not do it, if men be not consciencious.

Obj. But the Magistrate must come in and helpe.

Ans. Then in Church helpe there is little difference between the

Presbyters and the Independents, whatsoever they pretend to the contrary, in the point of church power.

2. If you interesse the Magistrates power, be must then either by himselfe, or by some commission, take cognizance of the jus and fact wherein his power is to be exercised, he must not act upon an implicite believe, that the acts of the church are right.

3. Will you call in his power in all matters of difference, wherein your selves cannot agree, or will you only desire his power to helpe, when either the hainousnesse of the matter, or the turbulency of the carriage manifests stubbornnesse? If in the former case, then you make the Magistrate the Iudge of all controversies in Religion, which I believe you are not willing to do: If in the latter only, wee are agreed, Why then is there such a stirre, such an out-cry, against that which is called the Independent way, as if there must needs be a confusion of all things, if liberty in it be granted. The Lord judge between us and our bretheren in this thing, to him wee referre our names, and our cause. Thus that eminent and famous servant of Christ in the conclusion of his Vindication against M. Edwards. And if any desire further satisfaction touching the undue power of the classically way, he may read at large M. Dampports Reply to M. Paget, sect 27. p. 226, to 231. and 254, 255.

5. The next inference from the former position, is this. That those of the *Congregationall way*, commonly known by the nickname of *Independents*; do not walke without a rule for what they do, in appropriating the administrations of Seales and Censures, to their own particular Congregations; nor sinne against Christ, in refusing to administer the Seales to such, as are not in fellowship with them, nor any other true visible Church of Christ. I know it is layd to the charge of such, as if they were proud and scornfull, but it is no other then an aspercion: for if this be the revealed will of Christ, that the administration of the Seales is limited to Pastors and Teachers, and they to their owne particular charge, then if they had all the humility in the world, that is in the hearts of the Saints, yet that would not allow them to go against the least part of the revealed will and mind of Christ, which they should do, if they should administer Church ordinances, to such as are of no Church, and refuse also to sit downe in fellowship with them. For as M. Burroughs in his *Heart Divisions*, p. 166. hath well and rightly observed

served, In all worship that belongs to Saints, as Saints, they joyfully joyne with them, that is (as I conceive) in prayer, hearing of the word, holy conference, and duties of such like nature, that concerne christian communion: but as for that worship that belongs to Saints as gathered into a society under officers, so they judge it unreasonable that any should have the benefit of the priviledges of the Church, and yet be under no power nor discipline of any Church, but live at liberty, and pick & choose ordinances where they please, & if they walk disorderly, have no Church to call them to an account. And therefore hence forward let not men censure us as they have done, for the discharge of our duty to Jesus Christ.

Indeed if it were meere will and not conscience, that did lead & guide us, it were another matter, but when (through riches of mercy) we can upon good grounds appeale to the Lord, that it is meere conscience and not will that leads and swayes us, let them take heed how they passe such unrighteous judgement on their brethren, lest that of our Saviour light on them, *Mat. 7. 1, 2. Judge not that ye be not judged, for with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* I would only desire to know this one thing, of such rash and bitter censurers of their brethren, what profit & advantage it can be to us, to expose our names to reproach, our persons to contempt, and all we have to hazard, if wee were not perswaded of the truth of what wee practise, and that we should stand against God, if wee should (to please men) do the contrary. Besides, is it not wel known that we strive to go so farre as we may possibly, with a good conscience, for the satisfying of those that are contrary minded? what would men have yet further of us, unlesse it be to sin against the light of truth God hath revealed to us? let but a few things be duely considered, & then see whether we are guilty of those abominable and foule crimes that are laid to our charge.

1. Those of the Congregationall way, are content to receive such into communion and church fellowship, upon their proffering themselves, that differ from them in their judgement, in things of lesser consequence and moment, so long as they have good evidence and testimony of their upright conversation, and find them willing to sit down with them, and submit themselves to the churches proceedings, as farre as God shall give them light.

2. They are studious of taking notice of *the least breathings of Christ*, in those that offer themselves to joyn with them in Church communion, whether poore or rich, condescending to the meanest worke of grace, where they have any the least hintes of truth and sincerity, being assured that Christ hath appointed his green Pastures for his weake Lambes, as well as for his grown sheep.

3. They are willing to give liberty to any such poore soules to manifest what God hath done for them in uniting them to Christ the foundation, (not to make a confession of their sinnes, as many report) for the satisfying of those *that shall have communion with them* in the holy things of God, (which is no more then reason requires) either before the whole Church publicely, or else if they are weake and bashfull (as many are) to the \* Pastor in private, with one or two more of the Church, and they to transmit it to the Church.

\* And thus much the Presbyterians themselves practise in their admission of men and women to the Sacrament.

4. If they meet with broken language, and bad and low expressions (as oftentimes it falls out) yet they make not that a ground of refusal, so there be *sufficient testimony* of the holines of the life, viz. such a profession as carries with it no palpable contradiction in mens walking, but is accompanied with the power of Religion and godlines.

5. They bind not any to a formall and expresse written covenant at their comming in (as they are commonly slandered with) but only, after satisfaction is given, demand their *willingnes* to give up themselves to the Lord, & his Church, & to walke together in the mutuall discharge of those duties that concerneth such a Church-state, and Gospell relation, upon the manifestation whereof, they are admitted to fellowship and use of the ordinances.

6. If any are not found fit upon tryall, they are only desired to wait a while, till God shall bring them into a further capacity. Some Spirits I confesse when they see they cannot obtaine their ends, fly out, and leave walking with those they would have joyned, speaking evill of the way of Christ and his servants that walke in it, and for no other cause, that is truly *discovered*, but this, that they cannot have *their own wils*, though it be made (upon good grounds) evident, that they are not fit for such a condition. Now what shall be done in such a case? Either those of the Congregational way must act so as to please *Christ*, or the creature; now if they

they strive to do the first, then they incurre the displeasure of the last, and if they should in a sinfull way seeke to the pleasing of the creature, then they displease Christ; but this will be their comfort, so long as Christ helps them to discharge their consciences towards him, they need not regard how the creature deales with them: *In the world we must have tribulation, but in Christ wee shall have peace, Job. 16. ult. And as our tribulations abound for him, so our consolations shall abound also in and by him, 2 Cor. 1. 5.*

O j. *But they will not come into publique.*

*Ans. 1. Jesus Christ saith, wheresoever two or three are met together in his name, there he will be present with them, he will owne them, and blesse them: he hath taken away all difference bet weene places under the Gospell, there is not one more holy then another, but all alike now, & Jesus Christ & his Apostles indifferently shewed their practise this way in the Synagogue, Temple, Field, Chamber, and doubtlesse where ever the Church meets to worship, there is a publique, not private Assembly.* Mat. 18. 20.

2. They shut not the doors where they meet, for the most part, but leave them open for all to come & behold their wayes, unlesse they come to make disturbance.

3. Some Churches are in publique (as you call it) and others have been, but have been forced back againe, and all would be more publique then they are, (in that sence as you cal publique) if they might enjoy their liberty, and not endanger their peace or purity: let but Authority allow us that liberty they do the Presbyterians, (as in conscience they stand bound, we walking peaceably) to dispense the ordinances of Christ without molestation, and then see whether we would refuse it. Alas! alas! that ever men should find fault with us for that we cannot remedy but count our affliction.

## CHAP. III.

*That this Church-state, with the Officers, Ordinances, and administrations thereunto appertaining, is of perpetuall use, to the comming again of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the instituter of it, without either alteration, or cessation.*

**B**Efore I enter on the evidencing and making clear of the truth of this Proposition, I desire to premise this one thing, to wit, that by this *Church-state*, I do not here understand, any one particular and single Congregation, residing in any one place or countrey, but the instituted state of Christs visible Church, in one place or other, consisting of few or many, whether in liberty or bondage, in purity or corruption, according to its severall and various conditions to which it is subject, and in which, for the essentiall and integrall parts thereof, it is kept and preserved by the Almighty power and presence of Jesus Christ; for doubtlesse in respect of this or that particular Church, and single congregation, it may cease and be utterly lost, but in respect of the essentials of that instituted Church-state and order of Christ, revealed to us in his word, and delivered to us by the Apostles, and left by them upon record for us to follow and practice: so it is not lost, but remains and continues to the Saints to his comming again. Now that this is the truth of God, I shall endeavour to make out, 1. from Scripture, 2. from Argument.

1. For the Scriptures that hold out this truth, they are of three sorts.

1. *Prophecies*, as *Esay* 9. 6, 7. and 59. 21. *Psal.* 110. 1. compared with *1 Cor.* 15. 25. *Luk.* 1. 33.

2. *Promises*, *Mat.* 16. 18. *1 Cor.* 11. 26. and *Ephes.* 3. 21. & 4. 11, 12, 13.

3. *Precepts*, *Mat.* 28. 20. *1 Tim.* 6. 13, 14. to which I might add the judgements of many learned men, if there were need. All which do clearly shew the perpetuity and continuance of this *Gospel Church-state* in all ages to the comming of *Christ*.

2. For the Arguments that confirm the perpetuity of this *Church-*

*Church-state*, and confute the contrary that is affirmed by many, viz. the cessation of it, they are such as these.

1. If the government of *Christs church*, which the Father hath given him, and he hath accepted, shall never have an end, then it must of necessity follow, that this *Church-state* cannot cease, to which this government hath relation, unless we can suppose, that *Christ* can be a *King without a Kingdome, a Head without a Body, a Husband without a Spouse*, which once to imagine, is exceeding dishonourable to him, and little lesse then blasphemy. But now the Scriptures are cleare, that the government of *Christ* in his *Church* shall never have an end, as we have shewed before: therefore, &c.

*Esay 9. 7.*  
*Luk. 1. 33.*

2. If this *Church-state*, which *Jesus Christ* hath instituted, for the essentials of it, should cease, and not be continued in all ages, then it would follow, that there would be a time, when the gates of *Hell* should prevaile against it, and his presence with it, to the end of the world, should not continue, and so all his promises to the contrary should be void and of none effect: But this cannot be, for he is faithful that hath promised, and not one jot or tittle of his word shall perish, or be made void: and therefore there must needs be a perpetuity, and continuance of this *church-state*.

*Mat. 16. 18.*

*Mat. 28. 20.*

3. If the *Temple of God*, which is his visible *Church*, as appears from *1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. Rev. 3. 12. and 11. 1, 2.* doth remain where *Antichrist* sits, even as the *Church of Pergamus* did, where the *seate of Sathan* was, *Rev. 2. 13.* then this *Church-state* is not ceased, but remains to this day. But this *Temple of God* is where *Antichrist* himselfe sits, as appears by the *Apostle, 2 Thes. 2. 4. who opposeth, &c. So that he is as God, sitteth in the Temple of God:* where the greeke word for *Temple*, *sc. ναός*, is one and the same with that of *1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. ἐν οἴκῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, i. e. Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God?* so *v. 17. εἰ τις ἅναψεν τὸ οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ, i. e. If any man defile the Temple of God,* and that of *2 Cor. 6. 16. ἡμεῖς τὸ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἐσμὲν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡμεῖς, i. e. For ye are the Temple of the living God:* In all which places, with divers other, that word *Temple* is used for the visible *Church*, because the *Apostle* there speaks to, and of the whole *Church of Corinth conjunctim, Ye are the Temple of God, &c.* So that by *Temple* here where *Antichrist* sits, is to be understood the *Church of God*.

Obj.

Obj. You will say, by Temple is meant the consciences of Gods people, in that place of the Thessalonians.

Ans. 1. Grant it, yet that doth not make void the other, but rather confirms it.

2. We never read in all the Scriptures, that the conscience is so called, but the church of Christ is frequently so styled, as wee have shewed before : and therefore, either its the Church of God, Antichrist sits in, or it is not; if not, then that Scripture is not true; but if true, as cannot be denied, then there is a church-state remaining under Antichrist.

Obj. But how can this church-state remaine, where there is such a generall defection, as there is under Antichrist? Rev. 13.

Ans. We must distinguish between the corruption of things, and the things themselves, between the essentials of a church-state, and the accidentals : now it cannot be denied, but in respect of the accidentals of a church-state, so all is lost, under this defection of Antichrist, that is, in respect of the right order and administration of Ministry, Ordinances, and government, but not the essentials of these; and so long as these remaine, the Church-state is not lost; for we cannot reason from the corruption of a thing, to the nullity and non-being of it : as for example, the children of Israel, and vessels of Gods House, that were carried captive into Babylon, and prophaned by their being there, yet so long as they were not destroyed, and broken in pieces, they were brought back again to Jerusalem, and sanctified from their pollution, and set againe in the Temple as before, and the Lord owned and accepted them notwithstanding their being in Babylon : so here the Saints and ordinances, the Ministry, Seales and Censures of this instituted Church of Christ, though they have been under Antichrist, yet so long as the essence of them remaines, they may be brought back from Rome, and reduced to their former purity, and first order of the Gospell, not that they have a new being, but rather they are brought to their wonted well-being, and primitive institution.

Obj. But doth not this then make the Church of Rome a true Church, having the essentials of a true Church-state in it?

Ans. No not a jot, no more then a Thieves having the goods of an honest man in his house, which he hath stollen, makes him to be true, he is a thiefe still. So here Rome is still Rome, the mother of Harlots



lots still, notwithstanding her possessing of the essentials of Christ's heavenly things: we may see it clearly in *Babylon* of old, the type of *Rome*, when the Jews were carried away captive with the holy vessels of the Temple, it was not the being of these in *Babylon* that made her the church of God, but she was *Babylon* still, full of abominations, there was *Bel* and *Merodach*, her great Idols and Images still worshiped, *Ier.* 50. 2. and as God once overthrew the Type, (as he overthrew *Sodome*, and *Gomorah*,) so that not so much as a son of man should dwell there, *ver.* 4. So shall be it with the *Antitype*, *Rome*, the mother of fornications, the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foule spirit, *Rev.* 18. 22, 23. and the good Lord, for his Son, and *Syons* sake, hasten it.

4. If *Church-state*, and *Ministry*, and *Ordinances* be all lost under the defection of *Antichrist*: then the *Scriptures* also are lost, which are the churches treasure, and as a *Depositum*, were once delivered to the church to keepe, *Iud.* 3. but we find that the *Scriptures* are not lost, but by the power of *Christ* they have been preserved, yea recovered out of *Babylon*, and freed from those horrible corruptions, they were exposed unto, while they were in the hands of *Antichrist*, and why may not the *Ordinances* as well as the *Scriptures*, the church as well as her treasure?

5. If this *Church-state*, and *Ordinances*, should not continue, but were all lost and ceased, then it would follow, that there were no meanes left ordinarily for the conversion and salvation of poore lost soules; but the contrary to this appeares, as wee find by experience, for 1. We have the word of life in the sacred *Scriptures* to be our *Cynosura* or rule and guide to direct us in the way to life. 2. We have the holy Ghost accompanying the *Ministry* and preaching of this word, in an effectuall manner, to the calling and conversion of multitudes, and bringing those that are called out of their *Antichristian-church-state*, to *Sion*, and to worship God according to his own revealed will. 3. We have *Pastors* and teachers lawfully called, and set a part to the worke of the *Ministry*, and faithfull dispensing of this word of life, and other ordinances, that concern a true visible *Church-state*, according to the practise of the *Primitive Churches*, as we before shewed: now where there are the same word and ordinances, the same Officers for kind with those in the *Apostles* dayes, to dispense and administer them, and the precious presence

presence of Christ in his Spirit, accompanying them, to make them effectually, (though perhaps not in such an ample & large measure as in those Primitive times) there we may conclude the ordinary *meanes for saluation are not lost*, but still remaine and continue.

Ob.

But it is objected, that those that are called now in these dayes to administer the *holy things of Gods house*, are not so qualified as those were in the *Primitive times*, they have not those *extraordinary gifts of working miracles* as they had.

Ans.

1 Cor. 12. 29. 30

1. I would faine know, whether all those that were *in office* in the *churches of Christ*, in those times, had those *extraordinary gifts*, as the *Officers* of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Philippi*, *Corinth*, &c. doth not the *Scripture* shew the contrary?

2. I would faine know, whether the gifts of *working Miracles* be so *essentiall* to the *Ministry*, as that there can be no *true Ministry* where these are wanting. If so, then many in the *Primitive times* were not true *Ministers* of Christ, as *John the Baptist*, *Apolos*, and those *Pastors* and *Teachers* that were in the severall Churches of the *Saints*, mentioned in the *Scripture*. For we cannot find in the *least* of their *working miracles*, and yet they had a true *Ministerie*, If not, why then do men refuse the *Ministry* that hath no *miracles*?

3. I desire to know, where it appeares, or how it can be made out, that the *Primitive Saints*, *Ministers* or *People*, were given to succeeding ages, as *patternes* for *extraordinary gifts* of *Miracles*, that they were left as *patternes* of *grace*, and *helps* of *faith*, and *love*, and *repentance*, and *obedience* to the truth of *Church-fellowship*, is without *controversie*, *Eph. 4. 12, 13.* but not of the former. And the *Apostle* makes it cleere in *Heb. 2. 3, 4.* that the *chief end* of gifts of *Miracles*, was to *confirm* the *Gospel* of Christ, then sent forth to be preached, which now needs not; for as *M. Thomas Goodwin* lately in one of his *Lectures* on the *Ephesians*, shewed, *common education* serves so farre now, as *Miracles* did of old, which were not to begin a *saving*, *justifying* *faith*, for that was the office of the *Word*, but to make men to *attend the Word*, which now *education* doth, and therefore there is no such need of a *Ministry* with *Miracles*.

4. Doth not the *Scripture* abundantly shew us, that *working of Miracles* may be in a *false Ministry*, as *Marke 13. 22.* *2 Thes. 2. 9, 10.* *Rev. 13. 13, 14.* *Rev. 16. 14.* and *19. 20.* and in such

as Christ will not owne for his at the last day; as *Math. 7. 22, 23.*

5. Doth not such an *opinion* as this, of requiring gifts of working Miracles in those that are called and sent to preach and administer ordinances, bring a great disparagement on the *truth* it selfe, for if it be not able to make it selfe evident without Miracles, is it not a great Argument of its *weaknes and insufficiency*? whereas its farre otherwise with the truth, as *Ephes. 5. 13.*

6. Doth not this opinion directly crosse and contradict that of our Saviour, *Job. 16. 8.* and derogate from the authority and power of the Spirit, for there he tels us, that its the office of the Spirit, to convince *the world of sinne, of righteousness and judgement*: now to say that this worke cannot be done unlesse there be Miracles wrought by men, that are the Spirits instruments, what is this, but to derogate from the Spirit, and to make the efficacy of the Ministry to depend more upon the externall working of Miracles, then upon the internall working of the Spirit: whereas the greatest Miracles that ever were wrought by the Apostles or others, can never prevaile to gaine the hearts of wretched sinners, to the embracing of the truth, nor convince them of *sin, righteousness, and judgement*, if the Spirit's presence be wanting, and therefore many times wee find amongst the *Jews*, that notwithstanding all the Miracles that Christ himselfe, and his Apostles wrought before them, they continued obstinate and hardened in their sinnes; so that the efficacy of the meanes depends on the Spirit, and if so, then there is no such necessity for working of Miracles to convince men of the truth: for be the externall meanes or instrument weak or strong, it matters not, so the Spirit employ it: and commonly we find it to be true by experience, that the weaker the secondary cause or meanes is, the more glorious doth the power of the Spirit appeare, according to *I Cor. 1. 26, 27, 28, 29.*

7. Lastly, what greater miracles can there be wrought by men to evince the truth of their calling, then by casting out of the Devil from men and womens soules and consciences, and the opening of the eyes of their understanding, the raising of them from the death of sin, the healing and sanctifying of their corrupt natures, &c. by the power of the Spirit. All which are far greater Miracles, then corporall dispossession, healing of mens bodies, opening of their bodily eyes,

*Act. 26. 18.*  
*John. 8. 25*

eyes, &c. and the power of Christ appears far greater in Working of these Miracles, then in all other miracles whatsoever: and of these kind of miracles, I conceive that Scripture is to be understood, *Job. 14* 12. where Christ promiseth, that his Disciples after he was ascended to the Father, should by the power of the Spirit doe greater works then those himselve wrought, which I suppose he understands of those spirituall works of wonder that I have formerly mentioned in the raising poore soules out of the grave of sinne, opening the eyes of their blind and dark understandings, &c.

The truth of the Proposition being thus cleared, I now come to some inferences.

1. In the first place, it will clearly follow, that those men are mightily mistaken and *out of the way*, that stick not to affirme, that the Church-state and order of Government *thereunto correspondent*, which Jesus Christ hath instituted, is *mutable*, and ought to be *suitted* according to the *Lawes* and *Government* of particular *States* and *Kingdomes*, as if the Churches of Christ in the Primitive times had a mixt government and administration of the Ordinances, according to the lawes and customes of the countryes: As for example, the Church of Christ in *Asia* had one way of government, the Churches in *Galatia* another way of order and government, and the Churches in *Judea* another. Whereas the Scripture affirms the cleane contrary, *scil.* that Jesus Christ hath left but *one order of Church state* and *politie* for all his Churches to observe and make use of, which as I have shewed in the *essentials* of it, is unchangeable, and to be observed and kept to the appearing of Jesus Christ, the author and instituter of it, *1 Tim. 6. 13, 14.* and therefore what the Apostle ordained in one Church, he did in all, as *1 Cor. 7. 17.* And this is the judgement of learned *Whitaker* against *Dureau*, and *Cartwright* against *Whitgift*, who handles this point very largely in his second Reply, his words are these: *Thus* (saith he to *Whitgift*) *where the Christian Magistrate is given of God, to keep the order which God hath set in his Church: you bring him in as a breaker and changer of the order, which God hath appointed by his holy Apostles: But the godly Christian Magistrates may understand, that as neither our Saviour Christ, nor any wise and well instructed Ministry under him, will meddle with any order*

or forme of Common-wealth lawfully instituted of them, for the better government of their people, but leave them as they find them: So they ought to leave whole and untouched, that order that Jesus Christ hath placed in his Church. And as the Author saith truly in another place, that Christ came not to overthrow civill governments; even so, he saith, it is as true, that God sendeth not Kings to overthrow Church Government, planted by Christ and his Apostles. Yea so much more absurd is this latter then the first, by how much they ought to have more firmity, which were set downe by the Lord himselfe, then which were by men. For what sonne of Adam shall presume to alier that order, which the Lord himselfe from heaven hath set? &c. And therefore certainly Iesus Christ will give such men but little thanks another day, for their endeavour to make his Institutions as a nose of waxe, to be altered and changed to whatsoever forme and fashion men shall please in every Civill State and Kingdome on earth.

2. But I shall passe from such Formalists and Time-servers, to another sort of men, who although they allow not of an alteration of Christs Institutions and Ordinaances, yet plainly hold a cessation of them for the present, and therefore forsake the Assemblies of the Saints, to which they were joyned, and say there are no Churches, no Ordinaances, no Ministry now, to dispense them, but all lost under Antichrist.

Now that such men may see the evill of their opinion and practice herein, and so (if it be the good pleasure of Christ) they may come to repent, and doe their first works, and returne to the Shepherds Texts, where Jesus Christ feedeth and causeth his flock to rest at noone, Cant. 1. 7, 8. I shall set these few considerations before them, from the evils that follow this practice.

1. That this opinion & practice of theirs, directly crosseth the very letter of the Scriptures, as that of Eph. 3. 21. formerly mentioned, where the holy Ghost saith, that glory is to be given to God by Jesus Christ, in the Church, *eis nobis tuis Spectis*, that is, throughout all generations, or ages. Now how could this Scripture be true, if there be an or generation in which this Church state doth cease and is utterly lost? So that of 1 Cor. 11. 26. where the holy Ghost also shewes, that the Lords death, that is, the effect and fruits of his death, in the administration of the Supper, is to be observed and made use of by

Five evill effects that attend those that hold cessation of a visible Church-state:

the Saints in Church-fellowship, for their benefit and comfort, to his comming againe. Now how can this be, if the Church, and Ministry, and Ordinances are all lost and ceased? And that of *Mat.* 18. 20. and 23. last verse, in which places Christ promiseth to be with his Churches and people in the administration of his Ordinances, to the end of the world, as wee have formerly shewed.

2. It discovers men, notwithstanding the *high thoughts* they have of themselves, to be of a *low* and *sensuall* frame of spirit; that *Thomas-like* will not beleeve, nor give credit to the *testimony of the Word*, unlessse they *see*, and have *visible and sensible signes and wonders wrought before them*, and so to speak truly, destroy the *excellency and livelynesse of faith*, which our Saviour placeth in this, that it acts and works most *properly and genuinely*, when it hath no *externall and visible signe* to look on, as *Ioh.* 20. 29, 30. and the *Apostle*, *Heb.* 11. 1. The *Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites*, and those *hard-hearted Jewes* indeed, in our Saviours time, stood much upon signes and wonders, that so they might beleeve; but our Saviour returnes them this answer, that *an evill and adulterous generation seeketh after a signe, but there shall none be given them*, that is, to profit them, &c. *Mat.* 12. 38, 39. And we may much feare, that all those *signes and wonders* that God hath of late wrought in *England* to recover us out of our old wayes, and to bring us to his own instituted wayes of worship, shall not profit such kind of spirits, who walk more after the *flesh*, then *spirit*, in the very things of God.

3. It makes men to place the power and authority of administering the things of Gods house, in that which is *fallible and deceiving*, as gifts of working Miracles are and may be in a *false Ministry*; as we have shewed before: and if it were possible, our Saviour faith, the elect themselves would be deceived by the workers of them, as in *Mat.* 24. 24. for there shall arise false christs and false prophets, and shall *shew great signes and wonders*, in so much that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect.

4. Such as are carryed on in this way, are unavoidably brought to *deny themselves Beleevers*; for if there be no conversion now for want of such a Ministry as they talk of, then they exclude themselves from the number of the faithfull, and proclaime to the world

world that they are strangers to the Promise and Common-wealth of Israel, being without God, and Christ, and hope in the world, and this (at length) some stick not to affirme, not onely denying worship, but Beleevers and Scripture also.

5. Lastly, It not onely leaves upon them the guilt of cursed ingratitude and unkindnesse to Jesus Christ, for what he hath bestowed upon the Saints, and vouchsafed to them; and they (at least wise some of them) have enjoyed, in the use of church-fellowship and ordinances, for I appeale to them and other of the Saints, whether the highest and sweetest enjoyments from Christ have not been by the Spirit in these. Now this relinquishing of this fellowship I say doth not onely render them odiously ingratefull to God, but exposeth them also to most dangerous and dreadfull temptations, and at last to Apostasie, and that unpardonable sinne against the holy Ghost, as appears from *Heb. 10. 23.* to the end: where he makes forsaking Church-communion, *ver. 25.* to be the *Prodromus* and fore-runner of that unpardonable sin, *ver. 26, 27, 28, 29.* and a drawing back to perdition, *ver. 39.* and how just is it with the Lord, to leave us, when we wilfully put our selves out of his protection! Wherefore let such be intreated, in the bowels of Christ, to take heed, how they tempt the Lord in this kind. I say those that are wilfull in their way, and refuse counsell. I shall leave with such men those few Scriptures of *2 Chron. 15. 2.* *Heb. 3. 12.* and *Rev. 2. 4, 5.* to be considered, which I conceive doe in a speciall manner look to the walking and continuing of the Saints with God, and Jesus Christ, in his Ordinances, and hold forth the danger of relinquishing and forsaking them.

## C H A P . V .

That the godly in this Kingdome are every where bound to gather themselves into this sacred, visible, politicall Church-state and order of the Gospell, if they are of a competent number, in those places where they live, or to joyne themselves to those particular churches of Christ, which are already rightly gathered. One of these must be done by them.

**N**OW that this is the duty of the godly, I shall labour to make out from these ensuing Reasons and Arguments, which are as to many soule-quickning and convincing motives, and which (by the blessing of Christ) may be very effectuell, to put them upon the practice of it.

1. Motive, The call of Christ.

1. Is taken from the call of Christ, which is to come from *Babylon to Sion*, that is, not onely from grosse and sinfull practices, but also from communion in speciall ordinances, as *Esay 52.11. Rev. 18.4. 2 Cor. 6.16,17. Act. 2.40 Ephes. 5.11.* he calls them to *Sion*, that they may be a *habitation* for the Lord to dwell in. As long as you continue (that are Saints) in your old *Babylonish* wayes of *confusion*, you can never be a holy temple to Christ, nor a golden candlestick for him to walk in. And therefore the names of *Temple, house, tabernacle, candlestick*, are given to Beleeveres especially as they are in *Church-fellowship*, *1 Cor. 3.16,17. Eph. 2.21,22. Heb. 3.6. Rev. 1.20. & 21.3.*

2. Motive, The example of the Saints in the Primitive times

2. Because in so doing, they shall doe *no more* then what the Saints have done before them in the Primitive times; for we find in those daies that Beleeveres did not live loosely, and casually, or (as we say) *at randome*, but were gathered and brought into *distinct bodies*, or *church-societies*, to live under that *discipline* and *church order* or *government*, which Jesus Christ had commanded and left to his Apostles to settle. For it is worth our *observation*, that Jesus Christ *did not onely send forth his Apostles and Disciples to convert sinners to him*, but he appointed an *order of government* to be established by them, to which those that were converted should subject unto, as we may see in many places, *1 Cor. 12.28. Ephes. 4.12,13.*

Rom.



Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. and therefore we read so much of churches that were planted and gathered into the order of the Gospell, Act. 14. 23. as Corinth. Ephes. Phil. Coloss. and so the churches of Judea, Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, as we have noted before; which were no other then so many distinct bodies, or societies of believers, which the Apostles after they were converted to Christ, did unite together in those Cities and Countreyes: So much is evident from the Epistles that the Apostle Paul wrote to those Churches: For he doth not write to all in Corinth, to all in Rome, to all in Philippi, but to the Saints in those Cities, that were called and become a Church to Christ: 'twas not every Towne, and City, and Countrey, that made a Church, as tis now in England, but so many as were called and united together: now people become members of a church by vertue of being born in those Townes, and places, and parishes, where they live, but *ab initio non fuit sic, i. e.* from the beginning it was not so.

3. Because till the godly do fall upon this worke, there are many holy and sacred duties that Jesus Christ hath laid down to them in his word, which they will be found to live in the neglect and omission of, viz.

3. *Motive.*  
Necessity of yeelding obedience to Christs commands for it.

1. That of Mat. 18. 17. *Tell the church;* but how can those tell the Church, that are not joyned to a Church? that is, such a Church, or Congregation of Saints, as we have in the former Chapter set downe.

2. That of 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 13. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such a one to Satan,* &c. but how can they cast out of the Church such as are scandalous, by that authority Christ hath given to it, that are not joyned to any church?

3. That of 1 Cor. 14. 12. *Seeke that ye may excell, to the edifying of the Church;* but how can such seeke to excel in spirituall gifts for this end, that they may edify the church, when they are of no church?

4. That of 1 Cor. 14. 34. *Let your women keep silence in your churches, that is, church-meetings,* as Beza and Piscator reade it, *Mulieres vestrae in conventibus sileant,* not that there were severall distinct particular churches, standing under one common classall government, as the Presbyterians would have it: but how can godly women keepe silence in the churches, when they are members of no churches?

5. That of *Heb. 13. 17.* Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves, but how can they obey their Rulers, if they have none to rule and watch over them in the Lord ?

6. That of *Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8.* But how can believers keepe up the administration and execution of those offices and ordinances in the churches of Christ, so long as they are not in such churches, where those offices are to be executed ?

7. That of *Gal. 5. 1, 13.* Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, & be not, &c. but how can believers stand fast in that liberty which Jesus Christ hath purchased for them, and bequeathed unto them, while they are not in any Church-state, to which this liberty referres ?

4. *Motive.*  
Christ hath ordained no other condition for believers to abide in here.

4. Another reason is, because there is no other state and condition that Jesus Christ hath appointed for his Saints in this life, in relation to the enjoyment and performance of his publique worship, then this, to wit, to be joyued to a particular church, and therefore as Head and King of Saints; he ordained not only a word to call & convert them, but holy offices, and officers, holy lawes and ordinances to rule and govern them, and build them up in grace to glory, as *Ephes. 4. 10, 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Mat. 16. 19* compared with *Mat. 18. 18.* but of this we spake sufficiently before upon the second argument.

5. *Motive.*  
The Word and Spirit of Christ are more especially entailed to this church-state.

5. Because the Lord Jesus Christ hath in a more especiall manner tyed his Word and Spirit, and all his precious Promises, to believers in such a church-state, as *Exod. 20. 24. 1 Kings 9. 3. Esay 4. 5, 6, and 25. 6, 7, 8. Esay 56. 7. Psal. 132. 13, 14, 15. Mat. 6. 33. Mar. 18. 19, 20.* Here the Saints may in a more full and excellent manner expect the presence of Jesus Christ by way of assisting, quickning, comforting, sanctifying, and strengthening of them, and therefore this should greatly prevaile with them to come into this church-state.

6. *Motive.*  
Christ takes most delight to be with the Saints in this church-state.

6. Because the Lord Jesus Christ doth own such particular churches of Saints, as the places of his greatest delight, as appears,  
1. In that he maketh in the midst of them, as *Revel. 2. 1. 2 Cor. 6. 16.*  
2. In that he not only walkes in them, but lodgeth and dwells in them, they are his resting place, where he takes sweet repose, *Psal. 132. 13, 14. and 72. 2, and 26. 8.*

3. In

3. In that here he feedes, *Cant. 1. 7. and 6. 2, 3.* every particular church of Saints is as a *Bed of Spices*, full of sweetnes & pleasantnes to Jesus Christ, here he eates his *pleasant fruits*, *Cant. 4. 16.*

4. In that here he *imparts his loves*; *Cant. 7. 12.* Christ and the Saints do mutually impart their inward bofome delights to each other, a man will not let out his heart to others, as he will and doth to his wife, nor the wife to any as to her husband: Now Christ and the Saints in church-fellowship are as husband and wife.

2. Cor. 11. 2.

5. In that here Jesus Christ doth *more then ordinarily hold forth* and manifest his glory, as God did of old in the Tabernacle, *Pfal. 63. 2.* which was a type of particular churches now under the Gospell, and Christs appearing in his glory to them, by his word and Spirit. Indeed it cannot be denyed but Jesus Christ doth hold forth the glory of his wisdome, and power, and goodnes, and holioes, and truth in every place, but *no where as in the Assemblies of the Saints*: here the Spirit reveales the glory of Christ in all these to and upon the hearts of the Saints in a farre more eminent manner and degree, *in pardoning their sinnes, subduing their corruptions, healing their back-slidings, curing their distempers, supplying their wants, strengthening their weakenes, supporting them under their troubles, helping them against their infirmities, defending them against their adversaries, perfecting and encreasing their gifts and graces, making them fruitfull in holines, and crowning them with loving kindnes, and tender mercies*, as they find by experience. All which shewes us how much Iesus Christ takes delight and pleasure in the right ordered congregations of the Saints.

7. To make out this *more fully*, the Scriptures speake of many notable and singular *priviledges* which such shall enjoy in this relation, which may be another argument to move the Saints.

7. *Motive.*  
Many singular priviledges the Saints enjoy in this church-state.

1. Here they shall have *a feast of fat things*, *Esay 25. 6, 7.*

2. Here *Death shall be swallowed up in victory*, *v. 8.*

3. Here they shall enjoy *a fuller manifestation of Gods love*, *Pfal. 36. 8.*

4. Here the Lord will *command the blessing to them and theirs*, *Pfal. 133. 6.*

5. Here they shall *see the King in his beauty*, *Esay 33. 17.* that is, in his excellent ordinances and Gospell administrations.

6. Here they shall have *glorious protection and safety, sitting under*

under the Banner of Christs love, *Cant. 2. 9. Esay 4. 5, 6. Joel. 2. ult.* And here the glorious Lord, will be a place of broad Rivers and streames, wherein shall go no Gallie with Oares, neither shall gallant Ship passe thereby, *Jerusalem shall be a quiet habitation, Esay 33. 20, \* 21.*

*Qua descriptio-  
ne incolumitas  
ecclesie, et de-  
fensio divina  
ab hostibus in-  
nuitur.* *Gloss.  
in loc. vol. 3.  
P. 563.*

7. Here they shall enter into Christs Wine-celler, and be stayed with his flaggons, and comforted with his Apples, being sick of love, *Cant. 2. 5.*

8. Here their soules shall grow up as calves in the Stall, and spread forth their rootes as the Trees of *Lebanon, Hof. 14. 6, 7, 8.* yea here they shall flourish and grow fat, and bring forth fruit in their old age; *Psal. 92. 13, 14.*

9. In a word, here they shall enjoy heaven upon earth, and glory on this side glory, so that they shall say, *tis good being here, and never repent their condition, nor desire to go back again to the Tents of the Edomites,* but go on triumphing in the service of *Jehovah,* till they come to breath out their soules into the armes of Christ their everlasting husband.

8. *Motive.*

The Saints enjoy many excellent helps and advantages to their soules in this church-state.

8. To make out this more fully as another argument to prevaile with the godly hereunto, consider the excellent helps and meanes they may enjoy in these societies, to further them in the wayes of godlines, and advantage their eternall welfare, as

1. Here they shall enjoy all Gods ordinances in *Gods own way,* after his *own mind,* and accompanied with his *speciall power* to make them *effectuall* to their soules, which they cannot enjoy out of these assemblies: because the Lord hath not annexed his promise of meeting his people out of his own way, where he walkes.

2. Here they shall enjoy Christs *own instituted discipline* and government, (the excellency of which I shall speak to in the next place) which is very effectuall, to prevent from falling, and to recover when poore soules are falne, and which is no where else to be found, *Mat. 16. & 18.*

3. Here they shall have the *help of the Saints* in a more speciall manner engaged to look after them, to watch over them, that they go not astray; or if they be overtaken at any time, to restore them againe; not in a rough, but in a meek and gentle manner, *Gal. 6. 1. 1 Thes. 5. 14, 15. Phil. 2. 4.*

4. Here they shall have their *burthens borne,* their *necessities supply-*

plied with cheerfulness, their afflictions and temptations laid to heart. If they are in prison, or sick, they shall be visited, and prayers made for them, for their support in, or deliverance out of their troubles. *Act. 12. 5, 12.* If they have unruly passions breaking out, here they shall be warned; if their minds be feeble, here they shall be comforted, *1 Thes. 5. 14.*

5. Here they shall have special occasions to exercise those gifts and graces they have received from Jesus Christ, for the edifying themselves and their brethren in love, and building up each other in their most holy faith, *1 Thessal. 5. 11. Jude 20. 1 Corinthians 14. 12.*

6. Lastly, here they shall find and meet with all the encouragements that their hearts can desire to make them holy, humble, heavenly, cheerful, and abounding in the Spirit, because here they shall enjoy most of God, and be under his continuall care, and watchfull providence for good, as I have before shewed you. And therefore this should be a great encouragement to the godly to joyne themselves.

9. In the ninth place, I shall desire the godly to set before them, the beauty, excellency, and glory of this Church-state, and order of the Gospell, above, and beyond all other Church-states whatsoever, that are false and spurious; to which end and purpose I shall set before them these six things.

9. Motive.  
The admirable beauty and glory, that shines forth in this Church-state.

1. The originall rise and spring of this Church-state.
2. The matter of which it is composed.
3. The means by which it is effected.
4. The Lawes, and Ordinances by which it is governed, and the manner how they are administred.
5. The power and priviledge, with which it is invested.
6. Lastly, the ends and purposes, for which it is ordained.

1. The originall, rise, and spring of this Church-state: Now this is from above, not from beneath; from heaven, not from earth; from God, not from men. Tis not in all the power of men and Angels to compass and bring about such a worke, as we have shewed, Chap. 1. This is a house for none but wisdomer her selfe to build, *Pro. 9. 1, 2.* who is no other thē Iesus Christ the eternal Son of God, the wisdom of the Father, *αὐτοῦ αὐτῆς ἑσῆς, ἡ σοφία τῆς συνέσεως αὐτοῦ,* the brightness of his Fathers glory, and the expresse image of his per-

son,

*⁊ Ecclesia, Dominus ibi, nomen habet, quia Dominus ait, ubi duo vel tres congregati sunt in nomine meo, ibi sum in medio eorum. Occolampad. in loc. Job. 17. 14.*

son, *Heb. 1. 3.* and therefore this church-state is said to come down from above, from heaven, *Rev. 21.* and the name of it \* *Jehovah Shamah*, the Lord is there, *Ezek. ult. ult.* All other church-states are from beneath, of mens framing and constituting, they may call corruption their Father, and the worme their Mother and their Sister, as *Job* said of himselfe, for they shall all of them perish and be consumed at the brightnes of Iesus Christs comming, *2 Thes. 2. 8.* but Mount *Sion*, that is from above, endureth for ever.

2. The matter whereof this church-state is composed: now this is spiritual and heavenly, *viz.* such as are sanctified in Christ Iesus, called to be Saints, *1 Cor. 1. 2.* spiritual worshippers, *Iob. 4. 24.* And hence it is, that the true visible churches of Christ are frequently styl'd *heaven* in Scripture, as *Mat. 13. 24. 31. 47.* and *Rev. 12. 1.* and *12. v. Rejoyce ye heavens and ye that dwell in them, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, &c.* by which *heavens* can be understood no other but the visible congregations of the Saints: so *Revel. 15. 1, 5.* and *18. 20. 19. 1. 21. 1.* and there cannot be a more lively picture, or emblem of heaven, then this church-state on earth, which I shall make out, in these briefe resemblances.

1. *Heaven* we all know is a *high* place, not only separated from, but elevated farre above the earth: so are the visible churches of Christ, though they be in the world, yet farre above the world, and therefore compared to a *mountaine*, and a *City upon a hill*, *Propeter altitudinem, Esay 2. 2, 3. 30. 9. Mat. 5. 14.*

2. *Heaven* is a place of purity and holines, the inhabitants of it are all pure and holy, for no unrighteous person can enter into it, as *1 Cor. 6. 9.* So the visible churches of Christ are places of purity and holinesse, no uncleane person is *De jure, i. e.* of right, to enter into this church-state, *Rev. 21. 27.* neither is any that worketh abomination to be tollerated in it, but to be put away, and cast out. *1 Cor. 5. 13. Rev. 2. 2.*

3. *Heaven* is a place of unspeakeable sweetnes, and joy, to those that are in it, there being a Sea of boundlesse and bottomlesse pleasures, in which the Saints shall bathe themselves to all eternity, *Psal. 16. ult.* So in this visible church-state the Saints that are upright in heart, are filled and overcome *ostentimes* with the joyes of the Spirit, having fellowship with the Father, and his Son Iesus Christ, in the pure and precious ordinances of his worship, *1 Iob.*

1. 3. They are abundantly saustyed with the fatnes of his house, and inebriated or made drunke with the Rivers of Gods pleasures, *Psal.* 36. 8. they are carried into Christs wine-cellar, and stayed with his flaggons, and comforted with his Apples, being sick of love, *Cant.* 2. 4. in a word, they are made partakers of those joyes that eye hath not seen, nor eare heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. *I Cor.* 2. 9, 10.

4. *Heaven* is a place of great and wonderfull dignity, honour & glory, where the Inhabitants have all of them their crownes upon their heads, to set forth their excellent and high condition, *I Pet.* 5. 4. so the members of this church-state on earth, are persons of great honour and dignity, though the world seeth it not, and therefore they are styled Kings and Priests to God, *Rev.* 1. 6. and they have crownes of gold on their heads, *Rev.* 4. 4. and 5. 10. and they sit on thrones, *Psal.* 122. 5. having power committed to them, both of binding and loosing, opening and shutting the Kingdome of heaven, *Mat.* 18. 19. by their officers.

5. In *Heaven* there is a lively and sweet communion of Saints that live in wonderful love together, taking unspeakeable delight & joy in each others society and fellowship: So tis with the Saints in this church-state on earth, their hearts are linked together in wonderfull love and deare affection one towards another, as bretheren and sisters dwelling together; & if they are at any time at variance, through the cunning of the Tempter, or the corruption of their own hearts, to which the best of the Saints are subject, while they are here, yet they are not at rest till they are reconciled, and their hearts closing againe sweetly each with other, *Psal.* 133. 1.

6. In *heaven*, the Saints and Angels do continually sound forth the praises of the eternall God: So is it in the congregations of the Saints here on earth, there is nothing more they are affected with, and exercised in, *Rev.* 4. 9, 10, 11. and 5. 8, to 12. and 15. 2, 3, 4. and 19. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

7. *Heaven* is the place where God dwels, and doth more especially make himselfe known to the Saints and Angels: So here the congregations and churches of the Saints, are the places where the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, doth more especially shine forth, and his mind is made known by his Spirit, as I have shewed in the 5. Motive.

8. In

8. In the lower heavens are placed the *Sunne, Moon, and Starres*, to give light and influence to the earth, without which the earth would soon corrupt and grow inhabitable: So in the visible churches of Christ, is placed the light of the truth, and glorious Ministry of the word, and other shining ordinances, and *divine institutions*, without which the whole world of mankind, would live rather like *Beasts* than *men*, and be in continuall danger of sinking under the burthen of Gods wrath.

9. The lower heavens are oftentimes *darkned*, with clouds, stormes, and tempests that are generated in the middle region of the aire, so that many times, neither *Sunne, Moone, nor Starres*, do appeare, but are, as if they were not, to our discerning, and yet they have their being notwithstanding these clouds and stormes: So it is with the visible churches of the Saints, they are so clouded many times with the tempests and stormes of persecutions, &c. that they scarce seem to be, having no glory, nor beauty, that externally appeares to the eye of men, as *Cant. 1. 5.*

10. Lastly, *Heaven is a place that abideth for ever*, there is no enemy to overcome & conquer it: so tis with this Church-state of Iesus Christs instituting & ordaining, he hath passed his word, which cannot faile, *that the gates of hell shall not prevaile against it*, as in *Mat. 16. 18.*

By all which we cleerly see, of what a spirituall frame and constitution this true Gospel Church-state of Christs appointment is, but it is far otherwise with all other false Church states that are not gathered according to Christs order and appointment; for they are made up of the world, cages of all uncleane birds, habitations of devils, and all foule spirits, *Rev. 18. 2.* drunkards, swearers, lyars, Idolaters, Adulterers, persecutors, and what not? are *Church-members.*

3. The next particular that holds forth the beauty and excellency of this true Gospel Church-state of Christs Institution, is the proper meanes and way by which it is gathered and brought to passe. Now these meanes are no other then the *\* Word and Spirit*, *Mat. 28. 19. Ioh. 16. 8.* as in the Primitive times from the practice of the Apostles is most cleare. The visible Churches of Christ were then gathered and planted, *Verbo, non Ferro*, by the *Word*, not by the *Sword*. None were compelled by externall force or violence to be-

\* *vid. M. Dwie* (a learned Presbyterian) in his Sermon before the honourable house of Com. p. 39.



lieve in Christ, and come into church-fellowship, but as the word and Spirit did enlighten them, & sweetly draw them to Christ and his ordinances of worship, so they came in willingly, freely professing their subjection to the Gospell of Christ, 2 Cor. 9. 13. *Act.* 2. 37. 41. But it is otherwise with false *Antichristian church-states*, they force men to the faith, and use of church ordinances; the meanes they use are externall, by power and policy, allurements or threatening, the Foxes Skinne, or the Lyons Paw, the noyse of Axes and Hammers are heard in the building of their churches; so that let persons be what they will, have they conscience or no conscience, knowledge or no knowledge, they must come in and subject to their power, and authority, as is the practise of Antichrist, *Rev.* 12. 15. 16, 17. and thus they make whole Nations *christians*, and *churches*, (though false ones) suddenly, and in a day.

4. The *Lawes* and *ordinances* by which this true Gospell church state is ordered and governed, and the manner how they are administred.

1. The *Lawes* and *ordinances* by which this Gospell Church-state is ordered and governed. Now these are none other, but *divine institutions*, such as Christ gave in commission to his *Apostles*, to teach those that they converted, and made disciples, by the preaching of the word, to observe, *Mat.* 28. 20. *Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you:* and therefore saith the Apostle, that which I received of the Lord, that I deliver unto you, *1 Cor.* 11. 23. but its otherwise with all *false church-states*, the lawes by which they are ordered and governed, are not simply divine, and fetcht from the unerring rule of Gods word, but from *unwritten Traditions* from the Cannons and constitutions of men, carnall ordinances of the creature, not of Christs appointment.

2. The manner how these divine Lawes and ordinances of Christ are executed and administred in this Gospell church-state. Now This is done by way of *instruction*, *exhortation*, *comfort*, *reprooffe*, and *correction*, in all *meekenes*, *gentlenes*, *long suffering*, and *forbearance*, using the Keyes of this Kingdome of Christ, not in a *Lordly*, and *Majesteriall* way, but in all *humblenes* and *feare*, as Christ himselte the author of them, whose way of dealing with men was in all *gentlenes*, and *love*: and by this rule he hath charged all the officers of his Kingdome to walke towards his Saints, that

\* *vid Duries*  
Sermon before  
the Ho. House  
of Commons,  
ut *supra*. p. 41.

\* *vid Duries*  
Sermon, ut  
*supra*. p. 40.

are his Subjects, which have as great right in him, as those he hath made rulers over them, for in him they are all but fellow-servants & bretheren, & the \* meanest of them (as M. Dury hath observed in his Sermon. before cited) in case of any offence may call the greatest, though he were an *Apostle*, yea the chiefest of the *Apostles*, to an account, as we see it fell out in *Act. 11*. But tis not so in other church-states, that are not according to the order of the Gospel, for usually they deale with the soules of men, as with \* *Beasts* in a meere arbitrary way and manner, binding men to do all they command them *Volens nolens*, let conscience be for it or against it, requiring no more then a meere implicate faith, ignorantly to obey, only because commanded, as a horse turneth this or that way, because he that rides him, drawes the bridle to this or that hand, having no respect to *reason* or *conscience*: and herein indeed (as the same M. Dury in his Sermon saith, *The great whore of Babylon, the mother of fornication, hath out-strippt all the rest of the earth in poliey, and shewed to all the Kings of the earth, the depth of the mysterie of iniquity in this kind of government; so that they have drunke out of the cup of her fornications, and their State-men have committed adultery with her.*

5. The *Power and Priviledge*, with which this Church-state of Christs instituting is invested, This holds forth the beauty of it; here none are higher and greater then other, or standing in subjection and subordination one to another, but are all alike in *jurisdiction* and authority, (as I have proved before in the second Chapter) all (Sister churches, all golden Candlestjcks, all fellow servants and bretheren, seeking the welfare and happinesse one of another; having thrones of judgement set up within every one of them, and whole Christ to be their King, Priest, and Prophet, by and from whom they enjoy all his *power and promises*, all his sacred *Laws and ordinances*, to rule and govern them, to quicken, comfort and establish them in the truth, but its farre otherwise with those church-states that are not of Christs constituting and framing, for all their power and priviledge is *lockt up* within the *compassse of the Cleargy*, that *ingrosse all the power* to themselves, and among themselves; for they make themselves the *prime subject* of all church-power and authority, & are a *distinct body* of themselves from the people, they call the *Layety*, & hereupon, having all *power in themselves*, they have all  
Laws,

Lawes, Ordinances, and administrations in themselves, be they divine or humane, and can adde or detract as they please; the congregations under them, being meereley passive, further then their authority and injunctions all them; which is little lesse then meere slavery and bondage, altogether unbecoming the free Denizons of Sion.

6. Lastly, The sacred ends for which this Gospell church-state was ordained. And they are these two.

1. The exaltation of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, for here his name is great, Psal. 76. 1, 2, 3. Esay 12. 4, 5, 6. here he is greatly feared and revered, as Psal. 89. 7. Here his noble acts are declared, and his praise set forth, Psal. 149. 1. Ephes. 3. ult. In this true Gospell church-state, the eternall God enjoyes the perfection of his Saints, his services by them in this state, being far more eminent, rich, and noble, then when performed singly, and by themselves alone, as Rom. 16. 6. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God.

2. The bringing of the Saints into nearer fellowship with God, and Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 16. 1 Joh. 1. 3. both which are not carnall but spirituall ends, whereas the ends of a false church-state are carnall, not spirituall: more selfe, then Christ, is aymed at by those that are the founders of it, viz. their own greatnes, power, and dominion, their own pleasure, ease, profit, to have all in subjection to them, not to Christ, so they may have an absolute being of themselves, and have all things in Subjection to them, without controll, (for naturally all false and Antichristian government, reacheth to this, and are the only Independants, as they use the word) that's all they care for or looke after, as we saw in the Prelates of late, and are like to see in their successors, if the God of all mercy and grace, prevent not.

10. In the tenth place, this should move the Saints to this excellent worke, because till they do come out from the wicked, and separate themselves, and fall upon the practise of this Church-fellowship, they will not only by their continuance amongst them, endanger themselves by partaking in their pollutions, but also all endeavours to reforme the worship of Christ, and exalting his Kingdome here in England, will be greatly obstructed, if not altogether in vaine, and to no purpose. For grant the Prelaticall government

10. Motive. Without this the worke of Reformation will be to no purpose.

be removed, and the Presbteriall set up in the roome of it, which many wise men do much question, and not without cause, yet they will find it a work not to feisable & possible to rule & govern the rude multitude, as they imagine: but notwithstanding all their terrible thunderbolts of excommunication, and delivering them over *Brachio seculari*, they will be the rude multitude still, if they should sit never so much in the *chaire of Repentance*, of the Presbyterians making, yet that would have no spirituall efficacy upon their hearts, but they would be loose still, and prophane still, as wo- full experience shewes it in *Scotland* and other places, where this Discipline is on foot.

II. Lastly, to adde no more, Is not this the day of *Englands Vowes*, to become the *Lords*, and his *Christs*? Have they not covenanted *Reformation* in the worship of God, according to the rule of his Word, and not after the will and commands of men, or their own or others inventions? And doth not the Lord now expect that they should performe their vowes?

If any desire further Arguments to move them hereunto, they may read M. *Burroughs* his *Moses Choise*, that hath much to this purpose, from p. 260. to p. 335.

So that all these things rightly and duely weighed, I hope the godly will be provoked every where, speedily to set upon this course of joyning together where they live, or to some particular churches neare them, where they may enjoy fellowship with *Jesus Christ* and his *Saints*, and be built up from glory to glory. How they should be able to set about this excellent worke, I shall shew in the next Chapter that followeth.

CHAP. VI.

How and in what manner the godly are to embody and joyn themselves together into holy church-fellowship, in the places where they live, and what concerns them, to know and practise after their embodying.

**T** His Chapter consists of two parts.

1. How the godly are to embody.
2. What concerns their knowledge and practise after embodying.

Touching the first, the embodying of the Saints together. For the better effecting of it, three things are to be done by them.

1. They are to *informe themselves* touching the right order of the Gospell what it is, and *how* it was practised, by the churches, in the dayes of the Apostles, before it was *desfloured* and abused with the *dreggs* of mens inventions: The Saints are to observe the *pattern in the Mount*, (that is) they are to looke to the *Primitive institutions* of Christ, and observe them, and walke according to them, in all the worship of God: When *Moses* was to build the *Tabernacle*, he was to looke to the *pattern* that God gave him in the *Mount*, and he did so, and he was judged *faithfull* before the Lord for so doing; *Heb. 3.* and *David* after him, and other of the Servants of God, they diligently looked into the Booke of the Law, that they might know how to proceed in such a work as this, as *building the Temple*, and thus *Jesus-Christ*, when the question was put to him about divorce, he brings them to the first *institution*: and the Apostle *Paul* in the business of the Supper of the Lord, he raiseth them up to the consideration of the first *institution*, *1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.* And so should the godly in this way of becomming a *Temple, and House to God*, and *Jesus Christ*: looke *how* and in what *manner* it was done in the *Primitive times*, and there is great reason for it, 1. Because as *Tertullian* saith, *Quod primum, optimum*, that which is first is best. 2. Because the *Primitive order* was left to be a *pattern* to all succeeding generations, till *Jesus Christ himselfe* do come. 3. Because in so doing, we give a testimony of our honouring

ing of Christ in following his commands. And lastly, because then we may expect his *bleſſing* on our endeavours : but on the contrary, we shall provoke him to anger, as they did of old, that tooke not the due and *right order* of bringing the Arke to *Jerusalem*. 1 Cron. 15. 13.

2. When we have done so, then we are to sit down and compare our selves in our *present stations*, with that first order of the Gospell, and see how farre short we have come of it, and then be ashamed and blush, and be confounded before the Lord, for the neglect of our duty all this while, and beg pardon through Christ, as *Hezekiah* did, for those that have eaten the Passover otherwise then it was written, i.e. then God had *instituted and ordained*, 2 Cron. 30 18, 19. and this is requisite to such a condition, *Ezek. 43. 11, 12.* and if they be ashamed of all they have done, shew them the forme of the house, and the fashion thereof.

3. When the godly have endeavoured this, then in the strength of the Lord of glory, they are to set upon the bringing of themselves and all they take in hand about this worke, to that *Primitive order*.

Q. But you will say, we may mistake in this point, unless we be directed, as many do to this day, some going too farre on the right hand, and others too farre on the left, and both are dangerous. It would be necessary therefore to afford us some helpe, by shewing what this order of the Gospell is, which the godly are to come up unto in their practise, for the right worshipping of God.

Ans. To helpe therefore in this thing, I shall afford what light I have received from Jesus Christ in the Scriptures, touching this particular, and referre all I have to say touching the true order of the Gospell the Saints are to observe, to three heads.

1. To right meanes of worship.
2. To right persons that are to make use of those meanes.
3. To the right manner, or method of putting these meanes into practise.

1. Right meanes  
of worship.

Touching the first of these, the right meanes of worship. Now by these I understand true and pure ordinances, such as Jesus Christ the Head & King of his Church hath alone *instituted and commanded*, *Mat 28. ult.* 1 Cor. 11. 23. and 13. 23. And the reason is this, because if the worship we performe and bring to God, be not of his own ordering and appointing, though it be never so specious and glori-  
ous

rious to the eye of man, and *pleasing* to our selves, yet it will not *please* the Lord, for he will be served in his *owne* way, and by his *owne* meanes and institutions, or else he rejects it, as *Commandement 2. Col. 2.*

*Quest.* But what are those *Gospell-Ordinances* and meanes of worship which Jesus Christ hath *instituted* and ordained for the Saints to use?

*Ans.* 1. The *pure* Word of God preached, as it is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, *Mat. 28. 19. Act. 6. 4. Rom. 1. 16. & 10. 14, 15, 16, 17.*

2. The pure and precious scales of the Covenant of Grace, given to the Saints, *viz. Baptisme*, and the *Lords Supper*, *Mat. 28. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24.*

3. The gift of *conceived Prayer* from the assistance of the Spirit, *Act. 6. 4. Rom. 8. 26, 27.*

4. Singing of Psalmes, *Mat. 26. 30. 1 Cor. 14. 15. Col. 3. 16.*

5. The administration of the Censures, opening and shutting the Kingdome of heaven, *Mat. 16. & 18. 1 Cor. 5. 4.*

6. A right Ministry to dispense all these, *viz. those offices and officers* Christ hath ordained and given to this end, *Eph. 4. 11.*

7. Lastly, a Church or congregation of Saints, in which all these are to be dispensed, observed and performed, as *1 Cor. 12. 28.* These I take to be the true and right meanes of worship.

2. To right *meanes* of worship, there must be *right persons* to make use of these meanes. Now these must of *necessity* be such as can make use of those spirituall meanes, in a *spirituall manner*, and they can be none but such as are spirituall, *i. e.* that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be Saints, *1 Cor. 1. 2.* such as are acted by the Spirit, and indeed such onely doth the Lord seeke to worship him, *Joh. 4. 23.* for they onely can worship him in spirit. But as for others that are yet dead in their *sinnes and trespasses*, and *slaves* to *Satan* and their *owne lusts*, as all naturall persons are, he seeketh not after them to worship him, for they cannot make use of those instituted meanes of worship, though the *faul* be, not the Lords, but their *owne*, and they shall one day answer for it; they cannot *pray*, nor *fast* spirituallly, nor performe any duty of Gods worship acceptably, for they are *destitute of the Spirit, destitute of faith, strangers to the covenant of promise, without God, and Christ,* *Ephes. 2. 12:*  
and

and hope in the world. Yea they pollute these holy ordinances of Gods worship, when ever they make use of them, and thereby provoke the Lord to wrath, as *Psal.* 50. 6, 17. *Esay* 1. 13, 14. *Ier.* 7 7, 8. they are a burthen to the Lord and his people, as the *Sodomites* were to *Lot*, and the wicked were to *David*, and *Judas* was to *Christ*, *Ioh.* 13. 21, 31. and therefore as they were not suffered to come neere to the Lord of old under the Law, so they are to be rejected under the Gospel, and not suffered to remaine in fellowship with Christ and his Saints; and as the Lord found fault with the Church of the Jewes for suffering the *uncircumcised* in heart and life, and such as polluted and profaned his great name, in drawing neere to him, and put no difference betweene the cleane and the uncleane, *Ezek.* 22. 26. So he blamed the Churches in the time of the New Testament, for their indulgence towards such, *1 Cor.* 5. and *Rev.* 2. and therefore Christ of purpose ordained Laws and Ordinances both for the keeping out, and casting out of the Assemblies of the Saints, such as were open and knowne vicious and scandalous persons.

*Ezek.* 44. 7, 8, 9  
*1 Cor.* 5. 13.

\*That is, such a profession of godlinesse, as hath no apparent contradiction thereunto in men and womens conversation and walking.

By all which it is most cleare and certaine, that none but such as are holy and sanctified persons, at the least \* professedly so, are in a capacity to use those holy ordinances and means of worship that Christ hath instituted and appointed to be observed and used in his Church. Indeede those that are yet in their naturall estates, *uncalled and unconverted, unsanctified, and altogether destitute of the spirit of Christ*, are to enjoy the liberty of the Word preached, because that is an ordinance which Jesus Christ hath ordained to convert sinners from the evill of their wayes, and to put them into a capacity for communion with Christ and his Saints in all the rest of his ordinances, but till they are called and brought home to Christ, by yeelding a professed subjection to the Gospell, as those were in the Primitive times, *2 Cor.* 9. 13. they are not to be admitted to speciall ordinances and enjoyment of those spirituall privileges, which Christ hath appointed onely for the Saints.

Obj. Are not those that we judge godly, and in a capacity to make use of all the holy ordinances of Worship, to be baptized againe, before they be admitted into Church-fellowship, and to the use of those ordinances, as is the judgement and practice of many in these dayes?

Ans<sup>r</sup>.



*Ans.* Negatively, they are not, and my reasons are these three that follow.

1. Because tis supposed they have been (*though corruptly*) baptized already, and therefore not to be baptized againe. Now the corruption of an administration doth not wholly make it void and null. If they had the *essentials* of that ordinance when it was first administered to them, that is sufficient, without taking of it up againe *de novo*, though there was an error in the circumstances. Now the *essentials* of *Baptisme* the learned conclude to be true matter and forme, the matter, *water*, the forme, *baptizing them in, or into the Name of the Father, of the Sonne, and of the holy Ghost.* And both these cannot be denyed, but that the godly in this Kingdome have had, though a *right administration*, or manner and way of administration, might be, and doubtlesse was to the most wanting.

2. Because it cannot be denyed, but such godly persons we speak of that were baptized in their infancy, have received the effect and fruit of that ordinance, in a lively manner on their soules, the Lord having added to the outward washing with water, the inward grace, and *baptisme of the Spirit*, bycausing them to put on Christ, which is sufficient to cover or make up all the failings that were in the first administration.

3. Because if the essentials of their first Baptisme were all destroyed, and lost in their Antichristian administration, as *Re-baptize* hold, but I deny, and have shewed to the contrary in the 4. Chap. then it must of necessity follow, that the godly must altogether remaine without any Church-state, because there must be the same power to erect this ordinance anew, that first ordained it, and the same or the like officers to administer it, as were before it was lost, but neither Christ, nor any such extraordinary officers are now on earth. And hence it is, that this doctrine and practice of the *Re-baptizers*, hath made so many to turne Seekers and Waiters, denying all Churches, Ministry and Ordinances, expecting when Christ or his Apostles will come to restore them to their primitive purity and rectitude.

3. There must be a *right manner* of performing those ordinances and meanes of worship, by those that are qualified and called hereunto by Christ, and this must carefully be lookt unto, because

the best ordinances may be spoiled by the evill handling and managing of them.

Now the right manner of worshipping God by those that are to enter upon this Gospel-order and Church-state instituted by Christ, consists in these five things.

\*Owens Country Essay for Church Government. p.60

1. There must be a \* voluntary union and knitting together in one. This is necessarily supposed, as I shewed before, Chap. 2. The godly must be formed into one body, or Church-society, as in the *Primitive* times, distinguished from others. Now this is to be done by the Saints that are to embody these three wayes.

1. They are to *separate*, or *sequester* themselves from the loose and profane multitude among whom they live, having no more *fellowship* with them in *speciall* ordinances, whiles they continue such. This is expressly commanded 2 Cor. 6. 16, 17. Ephes. 5. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 5. Rev. 18. 4.

2. They are *voluntarily* to give up themselves to the Lord, and one another, as those of *Macedonia* did, 2 Cor. 8. 15. to walk *together* in all the ordinances of Christ.

\*Some promise for engagements. Owens ut supra.

3. This is to be done in a *mutuall consent, covenant, or \* agreement*, as was the practice of the Church of the *Jewes*, and was also *prophecyed* then, should be done now in the dayes of the Gospel, Jer. 50. 5. and is now practiced in the very *Nationall Churches of England and Scotland* accordingly. Now if it be (as they take it) *lawfull* for a *Nationall Church* to enter into such a *Covenant* to walke with God, and one another, according as he shall make himselfe knowne to them in his Word; I cannot see how it can be *unlawfull* for a *particular Church* thus to doe. And for this, *Vide* Master Burr. *Heart Divis.* p. 69.

2. As there must be *union*, so also *communion*, that is, they must in the worship of God meet *together* joyntly, as *members* of one body, *carrying one for another*, as 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17. & 11. 33. 1 Cor. 5. 4.

3. There must be a *sweet harmony*, consent and agreement in the performance of the holy ordinances of Christ, labouring to the uttermost to be of *one heart* and *one mind*, in executing all *Church-affaires*, Act. 2. 1. 41, 42. & Act. 4. 32.

4. There must be a *free, ready, willing, and cheerfull contributing* of such *bleffings, mercies, gifts and graces*, *temporall* and *spirituall*,

as Jesus Christ hath bestowed upon us, for the comfort and edification of the whole body thus united and joynd together, 1 Cor. 14. 12. Ephes. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8. Act. 4. 32.

5. There must be a diligent care had and taken that things be so ordered, and ordinances be so performed, that Jesus Christ do not suffer in his honour, nor the church in her happines & wellfare: which is done 1. By keeping the ordinances pure and free from the mixtures of mens inventions. 2. By keeping close to the rule of the word, in all church actions and administrations, without consulting with flesh and blood. 3. By following the dictates of the Spirit, that Jesus Christ gives to us as our guide, and not our own vain fancies, and carnall imaginations, laying aside, and denying our own wisdom, reason, understanding, further then we see it acted and guided by the word and Spirit of Christ. 4. By being very spiritual and heavenly, meeke, and humble, lowly and loving in all our undertakings and performances, that Christ may have glory, and the Gospell credit. 5. Lastly, by aspiring and pressing hard after perfection in holines, and comming to a full stature in Christ. Ephes. 4. 13.

And thus we have done with the first part of the Chapter, the Saints embodying, and how they are to do it. Now followes the second part of the Chapter, and that is, what concernes their knowledge and practise after embodying.

Now this I shall endeavour to make out in five things.

1. There must be choice of their officers, as Pastor, Teacher, Elder, Deacon, if they have such provision among themselves, which are to watch over them, & administer to them, in the things of Gods house: and these they are to set apart according to the rule of the word, by Fasting and Prayer, craving the helpe of other churches in such great and weighty affaires, and which may give them the right hand of fellowship, Act. 14. 23.

Q. Are they not to be ordained by imposition of hands?

A. There is no absolute necessity of it, for we read no precept for it, and but little practise of it in such cases. In other cases we do, but not in this. That of 1 Tim. 4. 14. is no institution of it, but only a practise of the Elders of the church of Ephesus with the Apostle, 2 Tim. 1. 6. not of the officers of severall churches, as it is now used.

When that *Matthias* was chosen an Apostle in *Judas* roome, we read only of his being numbred among the rest of the Apostles. When they made Deacons for the poore, *Act. 6.* we read, after they had prayed, they laid their hands on them, I say after, but not before, or in the time they were praying, as the *presbyterians* in their ordination do now, and whether that *Timothy* had hands laid on him in time of prayer, as it is now used in ordination of Ministers, is more then any I suppose can determine: So that it seemes it was used rather in way of blessing of them, as Christ did the little children and others that were sick, then setting them apart to the office they were chosen to. And that of *Act. 14. 23.* doth not prove it as we have shewed before. And Jesus Christ himselfe never used it, when he sent forth his Disciples to preach: nor gave it in commision to his Apostles that they should do it; nor have they enjoyed such a thing. And therefore as *Polanus, Tilenus, Calvin,* & other great Divines say, it is a matter indifferent, not absolutely necessary & essential to an officers calling, as many suppose: And tis no more then what the church of *Scotland* hath also declared heretofore. But to cleare this busines fully, there is a learned Treatise put forth lately, wherein the judgement of the Reformed churches, and Protestant Divines is shewed exactly, about this point, so that I need not to speake further of it.

2. The preservation of their unity, for unity among bretheren in church-fellowship, is very lovely, pleasant, and full of beauty, as *Psal. 133. 1, 2. O quam bonum & jucundum, &c.* and there is no one duty more prest on the Saints in church-fellowship then this of unity, as the Scriptures do abundantly testify, *1 Cor. 1. 10. Rom. 14. 19. Ephes. 4. 2, 3. Phil. 1. 27. and 2. 3, 4, 5.* And if we looke no further then to the evill and sad effects which the contrary doth produce, viz. *Divisions*, and *Rents* in Churches: The truth both of the excellency and necessity hereof will easily appeare. And therefore for this end and purpose, that the godly in this way, and order of the Gospell, may live together in unity and brotherly love, they are to study *self-denyall, humility, patience, long-suffering,* and *forbearance* towards one another, putting on bowels of mercy, for giving one another, as God for Christs sake hath forgiven us, *Ephes 4. ult. and Col. 3. 12.* For this, see more in that excellent Treatise of Heart Divisions.

3. They

3. They are to study the preservation of *purity* and *holines*, amongst them; this in a speciall manner is to be looked after: what *Paul* spake to *Timothy* in particular, we may say to them in *church-fellowship*, *keepe your selves pure*: and the reasons are these two.

1. Because that *purity* is the *beauty* of a church, *Psal. 93. ult.* as nothing doth more *darken* and *obscure* a church then *sin*, so nothing doth more *adorn* and *beautifie* a church then *holines* and *purity*.

2. Because that *purity* is the *strength* of a church: We never read of any churches that have miscarried, but first it came from *suffering* themselves to be *polluted* and *defiled*, either in *opinion* or *practise*: The *Vestall Virgins* we read could not be *overcome* before they were *defloured*, and therefore the *Emperour* first caused them to be *defiled*, & then *destroyes* them: So here therefore let the churches that are as *Virgins* espoused to *Jesus Christ*, *2 Cor. 11. 2.* labour to preserve their *purity*, and then they need not feare their *safety*: and to this purpose let them be *carefull* to observe and *practise* these following directions.

1. Let every *particular* member labour to keepe their own *vessels* pure, looke *narrowly* to his own heart and wayes, and keepe himselfe from his own *iniquity*, as *David* did, *Psal. 18. 23.*

2. Let them study *faithfullnes* one towards another in their *relations*, watching over one another, for the good of the whole, *Col. 1. 1.*

3. Let those whom it concernes looke *narrowly* to the *admission* of members, not looking to, nor *labouring after* multitude, so much as cleannes and *purity*: a *little church with great godlines*, is farre to be preferred before a *great church* (I mean for number) and *small purity*.

4. Let there be care taken that no root of *bitternes* be suffered to spring up to the *defiling* of any, or if it appeare, let it be in a spirit of love and *meekenes* suppressed *timely*: twas the church of *Corinths* fault that they did not *mourne* for the *incestuous persons* fact, and put him from amongst them, *1 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 6, 13.*

5. Let them have a *watchfull eye* to all church *administrations*, that they be done according to the *rule of the word*, and not after the *wisdom*e of the *flesh*.

4. They are to study the preservation of their liberty, which Je-

*A Model of the Congregational way,*

fus Christ hath bestowed upon them, and purchased for them, with his own blood, Gal. 5. 1. that they may not be servants to men, 1 Cor. 7. 23. Now this liberty consists in these following particulars.

1. In choosing their own officers, Acts 1. 15. and 6. 2, 3, 4.
2. In admission of members, Acts 9. 26. 10. 47. & Rom. 14. 1.
3. In trying and examining their own members, that are questioned within themselves, as the church of Ephesus, Revel. 2. 2. and debating matters controverted.
4. In case of difference, to crave the helpe of other churches, towards the composing it, as the church of Antioch did in Acts 15. 2, 3. which practise was not by way of appeal, but only by craving advice and counsell.
5. In case of an offending members refusal to heare the church, to admonish, or cut him off, by excommunication from the body, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 13.
6. In sending forth in the publique service of the church, such as they shall judge most fit, as Phil. 2. 25. 2 Cor. 8. 19.
7. In partaking with other churches in those priviledges and comforts that Christ hath bestowed upon them, upon due knowledge & commendation, as 2 Cor. 3. 1. Rom. 16. 1, 2.

If any desire further light in this particular, they may read M. Cotton in his Treatise of the Keyes, p. 13. to 20. and his Treatise of the way of the churches in New England, p. 102. to 110.

5. Lastly, They are to looke to the diligent performance of these duties mutually, which their relations call them unto, I shall only mention those duties that concern chuch members in generall.

1. There must be a high esteem one of another, Rom. 12. 10. Phil. 2. 3.
2. Unfeigned love one to another, 1 Thes. 4. 9. and this love must be pure, 1 Tim. 1. 5. Fervent, 1 Pet. 1. 22, 4. 8. Impartiall to one as well as another, differing in judgement, as well as agreeing, Phil. 2. 3. weak as well as strong, Jam. 2. 8, 9. Rom. 14. encreasing, Phil. 1. 9. faithfull, 1 Joh. 3. 17. constant, 1 Cor. 13.
3. A care to pray one for another, as well as one with another, Jam. 5. 16.
4. Watching over one another, 1 Cor. 12. 25. Phil. 2. 4. Rom. 15. 14.
5. Stirring up one anothers graces, Heb. 3. 13. and 10. 24

6. Imparting and communicating each to other, of what God hath vouchsafed to us, in temporals and spirituals, without grudging.

1 Pet. 4. 10. Acts 2. 44. 45. and 18. 26.

7. Delighting in one anothers society and fellowship, as Psal. 133.

1. Acts 2. 42.

8. Sympathising with one anothers condition, Rom. 12. 15. Heb.

13. 2. thereby helping to beare each others burthen, as Gal. 6. 2.

9. Bearing with each others unavoidable infirmities, and weaknesses, as, Rom. 14. 3. 13. Ephes. 4. 2. Col. 3. 12, 13.

10. An endeavour to recover such as are fallen, and overtaken with sinne, and that in the Spirit of meekenes, Gal. 6. 1.

11. A care to preserve the credit and reputation of each other, as Jam. 4. 11.

12. A striving after unity in mind and judgement, as well as affection, Rom. 15. 5, 6, 7. 1 Pet. 3. 8. that so ( if it be possible ) there may be no divisions, 1 Cor. 1. 10.

13. A giving to each other a liberty in the use of such things as are indifferent, and not restrained by the word of Christ, Rom. 14. 2, 3. not tying up the consciences of one another, where Christ hath left us free.

14. A maintaining of brotherly affection, where we cannot be of one mind, not grudging against, and censuring one another, Phil 2. 2, 3. Col. 3. 13.

15. Lastly, in being patternes and examples in word and conversation, in faith, in charity, in Spirit and purity, as the Apostle speaks to Timothy, 1 Tim. 4. 12. and Phil. 3. 17. &c.

## C H A P. VII.

*This chapter holds forth the severall hindrances and impediments that doe stand in the way of the godly, whereby they are kept from this Gospel Church-state. All which hindrances are removed, in answering all the principall objections that are made against it.*

1. Impediment. **T**He first impediment that stands in their way is this, *That there are many learned and godly Ministers, as well as private christians, that both write and speak against this way.*

Now to remove this impediment, I shall desire the godly to consider these few things:

1. *Whether all those are truly godly, that make a profession of godlinesse, even amongst them that goe for Ministers and guides to others. Is not the contrary too true? have not too many the forme of godlinesse, denying the power of it? according to that of 2 Tim. 3. 5. walking up and down in sheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves, as Jesus Christ spake of the proud and lofty Pharisees, and other false Prophets, Mat. 7. 15. and doe not their actions both abroad and at home, speak out aloud the truth hereof? So that the tongues and pens of such men-against this way of the Lord, whether Ministers or others, are no slander, but are rather to be lookt upon as the discovery of the rottennes of their own hearts, and the fruit of those, the Apostle Jude speaks of, that walk in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam, for reward, and shall perish in the gain-saying of Korah, Jude 11.*

2. But secondly, grant they are such Ministers and Christians; that is, *truly godly*, holding forth the power of godlinesse in their walking, that speak against this order of the Gospel, and way of the Lord. Yet I hope tis not an *impossible thing* even for such men to erre, and be drawne aside *some times, in some things*, to doe that which is *unworthy* their high and holy calling. Is it any *new thing* to heare of the godly themselves making opposition against Christ, even in the greatest matters that concerne his glory? let us looke upon that place of the Prophet, *Mal. 3. 2, 3.* where we may see, that when Christ shall come to purge and reforme his Temple, he shall



shall meet with *opposition* from a generation of people, which are not of the *vilest and basest sort*, but of the *precious*, such as are like to gold and silver: The sonnes of *Levi*, Preachers, as well as private Christians: and these shall scarce endure his coming, but shall make some kind of resistance. And are there not abundant instances for this? did not *Peter oppose* Christ himselfe in the worke of *Redemption*, insomuch that Christ called him *Sathan* for his labour, as *Mat. 16. 22, 23.* and told him to his face, that he did not favour the things of God? and yet *Peter* I hope will not be denied to be truly godly.

2. Did not the devout women many times rise up (by the instigation of the Jewes) against the *Apostles and brethren* where they came to preach, and practice contrary to the *Jewish customs*, in setting up, and planting this Gospel Church-state?

3. Have we not experience of many godly men, *Conformists*, in the late times of the Prelates, that did side with the Bishops, against their godly brethren, the *Non-conformists*, that wrote against the Ceremonies, Service-book, and Hierarchicall Government, and prest those *very things* at that time, that now these men practice, which speak evill of what we now stir up the godly unto? Now if it be so, then it is not so much to be wondred, that godly men have their hands, and tongues, and pens against this way of the Gospel, which we conceive to be a step or two higher for purity, and nearer to the will and mind of Christ, and practice of the Primitive times, then what is now on foot. The best men are *men*, & so have their *weaknesses*, as well as others.

Thirdly, it is to be considered, that not *all men*, no not *godly men* are enlightned equally *alike* in the *mysteries* of the Gospel. But as the wind blows when and where it listeth, so the *Lord* by his *Spirit* gives light when and where he pleaseth. Gifts of wisdom and understanding in the *mysteries* of godlinesse are Gods *peculiar goods*, (as one saith well) and he may give his *owne* where hee listeth; neither must our eye be evill because his is good. Sometimes (as the proverb is) *the greatest clarks are not the wisest men*, no not in lesser and petty things of this life. Now if they are to seek in these things many times, then much more may they be to seek in the *great things* of Christs Kingdome, and therefore our Saviour gives thanks to his Father, that he had *hid those mysteries*

*from the wise and learned, and revealed them to babes, Matth. 11. 28, 27.*

Fourthly, though there are many godly, both Preachers and others that are against it; Yet it *cannot be denied*, but there are also *multitudes of godly of all sorts* and callings in the *Magistracy, Ministry, practice of Law, Physick*, in *Counsels*, and *Armies*, both in *City*, and *Country*, that are for it. And not onely in this *City* and *Country*, but *forraigne countries*, and the number increaseth daily, and is like more and more to increase, till it have prevailed against all other, as *Dan. 2 44.* intimates.

Fifthly, We must know, that the godly are in a way of *learning* still more and more, both *Ministers* and others, they are not come to that *acme* and top of knowledge, as to proceed no farther, for we all know but in part, *1 Cor. 13. 9.* So that though they are *darke in this point*, this yeere, yet tis possible the *next yeere* they may be *insightned*. Seven yeeres since, many godly *Preachers* and *Professors* were for *Episcopacie*, for the *Ceremonies*, for the *use of the Service-book*; what *Sermons* were preached, what *books* printed in the defence of them, and against those that opposed them? how were the *Bishops* honoured and revered, bowed to, vindicated, and stood for, and that with great eagernesse and violence, so that those that were against them, were deeply censured by their brethren? but now it is otherwise; and why so? but because their judgement is changed, and men say, that God hath opened their eyes, and convinced them of the evill of those things, which before they saw not; and tis well if it be so: and not *simply a disclaiming of these evils from the Parliaments removing of them*, and *enjoyning the contrary*, which is much to be feared, and as some manifest without blushing, saying, what they now doe in renouncing *Episcopall Government*, leaving the *Service-book* and *Ceremonies*, and proceeding according to the order and forme of the *Directory*, and *Government* established, they *doe by Law*, in obedience and subjection to the *Parliament* that requires it in their *Ordinance* affixed to the *Directory*, *not out of any judgement of the evill they have formerly lived in, whilst they used that way of false worship*, or out of any more love to this new government, and order of worship according to the *Directory*. But suppose the best, that what men now doe is from the *Lords mercifull enlightning of them*, to

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See into the evill of their old and former *abominations*, they yeelded to, and so became guilty of, before the Lord; will it not therefore follow, that there is a *possibility* before seven yeeres come about againe, they may see further into this mysterie of the Gospel, and so discover the *unsoundnesse* of their present standing in the Parish Churches, as they are constituted and receive their life and being from the Civill Lawes of the Land? The Aire is enlightned by *degrees*, not all at once, and so are the Saints. So that I say so long as the godly themselves are in a way of learning and going from *one step* to another in *wisdom* and *knowledge*, as *Pro. 4. 18.* men should take heed, how they make preemprory conclusions against this way of the Lord, and *speak evill of the things they know not*, lest the Lord Jesus Christ (*the justifier of his wayes and people*) make them to *eate the words they have spoken*, and then they be forc'd (as *Austin* sometimes did) to write Books of *Recantation*, and have as little *credit*, as *comfort* in what they have done this way.

6. If the *truth* were knowne, and men would speak out *all* is in their hearts, it is not to be doubted but a chiefe ground of many mens crying downe this way of the Lord, and those that walke in it, is no other, but their *envy* at those (especially *young ones*) to whom the *Lord* hath in these last dayes imparted and communicated greater *measures* of his *Spirit*, and larger *discoveries* of the mysterie of the *Gospel*, according to the promise, *Joel 2. 28. Act. 2. 17.* wherein young men shall have the priority of old. Because the Lord is good, therefore their eye is evill, as Christ said to them, *Mat. 20. 15.* that took offence at his kindnesse to those that came into the vineyard after them, and wrought but an *houre*. But this is an evill frame of heart, and cleane contrary to that of *Moses*, that wilht that all the Lords people were Prophets, *Num. 11. 29.*

7. But lastly, doth not this *generality* of opposition against this way alledged, conclude and evidence the truth and goodnes of it, especially when such opposition tends to the increase and furtherance of it, and that also amongst the most pious and spiritualllest Belevers? What though the Authors in the \* Marg. (as men not having yet learned, or else not regarding what Christ in the Scriptures requires of them, *Rom. 12. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. James 1. 19, 20, 21. 1 Pet. 2. 1.*) have cryed it downe, as the most pernicious way; yet all the *dirt* they have throwne in the *face* of it, cannot

\* D. *Bastwick*,  
the Captain of  
the Presbyteri-  
an Army, as he  
styles himselfe.  
M. *Prinne*.  
M. *Edwards*,  
M. *Baily*.  
M. *Vicars*.

make the *Saints* out of love with it. In the dayes of the *Apostles*, those that embraced the doctrine of the *Gospel*, and right way of worshipping God, were generally condemned and spoken against, as *Sectaries*, and *Heretiques*, *Act.* 14. 5, 14. *Act.* 28. 22. yet that could not hinder the prevailing of it, being it was of God. So neither shall the *worst* that men can doe, hinder it now; but maugre all the *powers* of hell, and the world that oppose it, it shall take place, for *Christ* must reigne.

2. Impediment. 2. The second impediment that lies in the way of divers godly persons is this, *That salvation may be had, in that present church-state they for the present are, and therefore judge it a nee. lesse thing to come into any other Church-state.*

To such I shall commend these few considerations.

1. That though it be granted as a truth, (which cannot be denyed) that its possible for men to be saved, though they never come into a right visible Church-state and order, because faith and salvation is not so tyed to the visible church, as that there is no partaking thereof out of it. And though it be true also, that conversion may be obtained, and is, in many of the *Parish Assemblies*, as we know by experience, yet how unkindly do such Christians deal with *Jesus Christ*, that shall as the *Head and King* of his church, appoint & ordaine a holy order for his *Saints* to observe, in their serving and worshipping of God, and yet they shall refuse to submit thereunto; is it not a disparagement to the wisdom of the Lord *Jesus*, that hath thus ordained a church order for his *Saints* to walke in, and yet they shall count it a needlesse thing?

2. Such should consider, whether the truth of grace, doth not teach them to have respect to the whole revealed will of God; and not to dispense with themselves in the neglect of obedience to any, the least part of it; and if so, then how dangerous is it for them to sit downe and content themselves in their present disordered station, without comming out of it to *Sion*, as *Christ* commandeth, *Ejsey* 52. 11. with *Rev.* 18. 4.

3. Is not this an argument of a low Spirit, exceeding earthly & carnall, like those *Potters* that remained of the children of *Israel* in *Babylon*, when the rest were returned to *Jerusalem*, *1 Chron.* 4. 23. that preferred their carnall ease in *Babylon*, before the enjoyment of the true and pure worship of God, in *Sion*: do not such men exceedingly

dingly degenerate from the servants of God of old, spoken of in the Scriptures, that have greatly longed after, and mourned with much bitterness when they have been deprived of the enjoyment of God in his ordinances, as *David*, and others? *Esay* 56 3,4. *Psal* 84.

4. Doth not this plainly discover to the world, that such men are to this day marvellous ignorant of this great mystery of the Gospel? they see not the lustre and beauty that shines forth in the visible Churches of the Saints, a right and true communion of Saints, having fellowship with Christ in his own ordinances, is a meere riddle, a paradox to them, the comely order and sweet harmony of *Jacobs Tents*, and *Israels Tabernacles* is not discerned by them, though a *Balaams* himselfe was greatly affected therewith. Oh when shall this darkenes be removed!

5. I would faine know whether such poore soules are not great enemies to their own happines, and hinderers of their own selfe. For first, have they not many precious *Talents, Gifts, and Graces*, bestowed upon them, for which they shall be accountable to Christ one day, which now are as it were put under a Bushel & lye asleep, and of no use or benefit to themselves or others? all which, if they were once come into a society of faithfull and zealous Saints, would be occasioned frequently to be brought forth, and improved to the glory of God, the benefit of others, and their own great increase and advantage. Secondly, are they not subject to many wanderings, and out-goings from God, and so have need of some to watch over their precious soules, to prevent (as it is possible) such *swervings* from Christ, by their wholesome and gentle *admonitions, exhortations, and reprooves*, which priviledge they might enjoy if they were in this order of the Gospell, but now are deprived of? Thirdly, are they not many times so overtaken through the *subtiley* of Sathan, & *deceitfullnes* of sin, that they not only fall into sinne, but therelye and continue in their back-sliding, and have none to *looke after* them to restore them againe, to set their *broken bones* in joynt again: whereas if they were in this way of the Lord the Gospell requires, how sweetly might they be recovered, according to the injunction of the Apostle to the Church of the *Galatians, Gal. 6. 1*. And therefore doubtlesse those men that thus reason as before, that its no great matter to come into any other church-state then they are, are no small enemies to their owngood.

6. Lastly, may it not be just with God to leave men to themselves in this thing, and for their slighting of his wayes, swear in his wrath, that they shall never enter into this rest of his, that he gives his Saints, that he brings to *Sion*? *Let us feare and tremble.*

3. Impedimen<sup>t</sup>.

3. Another impediment is this, *That they have as learned and godly a Ministry over them, as any to this day in the world.*

Now for the removing of this, let these few things be seriously considered.

1. That it cannot be denied, but *divers* of those *Parish churches* have those over them, that are both *learned and godly*, though with-  
all it must also be granted, that there are in the *Kingdome* a *farre greater number* of such as have neither *learning nor godlines*, that go for Ministers of the Church of England, and are settled in those *Parish Churches*, such as are not only the shame and blot of this  
\* *Nation*, but have already endangered the welfare of it, and are like to do it the second time, if the Lord from heaven prevent it  
no<sup>t</sup>.

*V*d. whites  
Century of  
Ministers.

2. For many of those that have *learning*, its much to be feared, if it were brought to the Test, it would prove rather to be from *beneath*, then from *above*, not that of the *Spirit*, by which men are taught of God, and enabled to speake a word in *due season* to the weary soule, as Christ and his servants were, *Esay* 50. 4. but only that which is naturall, and from men, and they have attained in *Natures Schoole*, which naturall parts, and acquired learning, not meeting with a *sanctified heart*, and a true principle of *grace*, doth oftentimes through the corruption of pride and selfe-conceite that attends it, render men blind in the things of God, and leede them aside from the truth; and commonly, ( as we see by experience ) such men trust chiefly to other mens *workes and judgements*, looking no further for the *Sence and meaning* of what *Scriptures* they preach upon, and produce then, what this or that *Father*, this or that *Commentator* speaks of it, not daring to *swerve* from their interpretation, and the common received opinion of the *Church*, though oftentimes, quite besides the purpose and mind of Christ, and the holy Ghost.

3. As learned and godly, as the *most and best* of the Ministers are, in the Church of England, yet ( *with grieve of heart let it be spoken* ) very few of them have learned to this very day to *disclaime*  
and

and renounce the evill and errour of the way of their comming into the Ministry, I meane their *Antichristian* ordination, which they received from the Prelates; but allow of it to this day: which cannot but much provoke the Lord, and hinder his blessing of their endeavours for the future, to the People, the charge of whose soules they take upon them. For if the allowing of our selves in the least sinne may justly put a stop in the way of Gods prospering his people, & cause him to withdraw his presence from them, then much more doubtlesse such an evill as this, for those that beare the vessels of the Lord, are to be cleane, *Jer. 52. 11.* and that cleannesse respects freedome from *Babylonish* and *Antichristian* pollution. And doubtlesse the Lord looks much to his vessel-bearers, that they be cleane and holy, and not contaminated with these, or any other kind of pollutions, as we may see in his exemplary punishment on *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, that perished in their *wil-worship*, and false zeale, the great Idol of the world to this day.

Obj. But you will say, what need this renouncing our *Antichristian* ordination by the Prelates, seeing the Parliament hath removed and disclaimed the whole *Episcopall* government, root and branch?

Ans. There is great need, as may appeare in these foure things.

1. Because personall sinnes must have personall repentance, and humiliation, the Parliaments Act is Nationall, and doth not exclude, but rather intimates and leads to the practise of the other: Now each Ministers sinne, being particular and personall, so ought their Repentance also.

2. Because such Ministers, especially here about *London*, have lately covenanted to cast off whatsoever belonged to, and was an appurtenance of that *Antichristian* Hierarchie they were formerly under: Now their ordination was not the least, but a chiefe part of that power of the Prelates, wherein they so much gloried.

3. Because the Lords desertation of *Antichrist* is so great, that he will not endure his people should touch with the least of her abominations, as I shewed before; and as he would not of old so much as take a stone for a corner, nor for a foundation of his Church, from heathen *Babylon*, *Jer. 51. 26.* So neither will he now make use of any thing of *Antichristian* *Babylon*, in his Church of the New Testament.

4. Lastly, because God hath required that his people should be humbled

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*humbled and ashamed of all their old finnes in this way, before he will shew them the right and true pattern of his Gospell worship, Ezek. 43. 10, 11. And who knowes but for want of this amongst those that go for Ministers in the church of England, it is, that God suffers them to be so darke as they are even to this day, in the midst of so much glorious light, in the matters of his house and worship? A man may come into 40. places, where they are preaching and praying, even upon dayes of humiliation, and yet never heare them bewaile (among multitude of other finnes they confesse) this particular evill of their Antichristian ordination.*

*Obj. But some are so farre from seeing a necessity of this, that they rather plead for what they have done, and justify themselves in their condition, saying, that though they received their ordination, & so the office of their Ministry from the hands of Antichristian Bishops, (as they are now acknowledged since the Parliaments voting them so) yet they lookt on them as Elders and Presbyters, and no other wise.*

*Ans. To this I answer, 1. That it may be some did, though I suppose it will be granced, that thousands did not, not so much as enquiring or making scruple out of conscience, but as the blind man swallowes all, so have they done; and their sinne may be lesser then those that have had more light.*

*2. But secondly, its well known to those that have their eyes but halfe open, that the Bishops did not act in their ordaining of Priests, as they were Presbyters, but as they were a degree above them, to wit, Bishops, which was allowed them in those dayes by the Ministers of the church of England, and what preaching Elder was there by himselfe, or with a few other of his bretheren, and Colleagues, that could then (as now) without a Bishop make a Minister? Now then those Bishops being Antichristian, their ordination also must needs be so, according to that known Philosophicall maxime, *Quicquid est agit secundum quod est*, the effect must needs have resemblance with the cause, *vid. Whites Answer to Prynne, pag. 20. read the Queries about the ordination of Ministers, lately published.**

*4. I Answer in the last place, that tis not meere learning, no nor learning with godlines, that makes any man a true Minister of the Church of Christ, in these dayes of the Gospell, (though neither of these*



these is to be excluded in their proper place) for a man may be *qualified* for the place and office of a *Minister*, and yet no *Minister*; he may have excellent *endowments of humane learning, naturall parts, truth of holinesse*, and yet no *Minister*. Some women have store of all these, and many *Lawyers and Physitians* abound in them, and yet no *Ministers in office*. So that I say, though many men have excellent naturall parts, acquired gifts of humane learning, many precious breathings of Christ and the *Spiris* in him, yet that doth not presently *denominate* him a *Minister in office*, and I may adde, no not his *Ordination by the Classis*, nor a *Noble-mans or a gentlemans Presentation*, or bestowing an *Advowson* or *Benefice* upon him, no nor the execution of that office in a parish where he is sent. Tis not enough to say a man is a *Minister*, but how truly and lawfully he came to be a *Minister*.

*Quest.* What is it then makes a true and lawfull *Minister*?

*Ans.* A true and lawfull call to that office, and worke of the Ministry, as *Heb. 5.4.* Now this call in these dayes is not onely *internall* from God, in qualifying a man, and making him willing to the worke, but *externall*, from those he is to take the charge of, whose prerogative it is, they have received from Christ to choose their own officers, which the most learned and judicious *Divines* of all sides grant, as could with ease be manifested. Now the first of these is not sufficient without the last, and God hath so joyned them together, that it were no lesse then *high presumption* in any to separate them. So that this being granted for the truth, (as it cannot be denied) then it must needs follow, that most of the *Ministers of the Church of England* are not *Ministers properly in office*, being without the call of their people to them, (especially the godly) and not a few of them living where there were never any godly to call them.

A fourth hindrance in their way, is, *That they look upon this way, as a way of separation; which hath been and still is such an eye-sore to many, that they had rather dye then touch with it.*

Now to remove this, I answer in a word, there is a two-fold separation the Scripture speaks of.

1. A good separation, a separation from *evill*, from *evill and sinfull wayes, and things*, and *persons*, a separation from *false worship*, from *Babels confusion*, a separation of the *precious*

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\* Cyp. Ep. 3, 4, & 68.  
Theod. 1. 1. c. 9.  
Euseb. de vit. Const. 1. 3.  
Azor. the Jes. part 2. 1. 3. c. 28 & 1. 6. c. 14.  
Jerom ad Ruff. Ambr. epist. 82. Nazian. Aug. Bazi. Chrysost. So multitudes of Moderne Writers, as Cal. Musc. Bulling. Jun. Amef. Cartwr. &c.

4. Impediment

\* By Nationall Church-state in the Kingdome of England, I do not understand the preaching of the word, and administration of the Sacraments (for these make no more a Church then the ornaments of a house make a house.) But that false visible order, politie, & institution, in which these divine ordinances are performed. The officers & members of the National Church-state, not being framed, regulated and ordered according to Gospell institutions, but after the traditions & inventions of men from whom they receive their being and subsistence.

\* 5. Impediment.

from the vile, of the cleane from the uncleane.

2. A Bad separation from good to evil; from Christ to Belial; from God to the Devill; as *Jud. 19.* Now that Separation we stand guilty of, is of the first sort, and not the last, the separation which God allowes, commands and justifies, and without the practise of which he will not be well pleased with his people, as *Jer. 15. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 18. Rev. 18. 4. Ephes. 5. 11. 2 Tim. 3. 5.* and therefore I conceive there is no just cause or reason why the godly in the Kingdome should be offended, at what is now done, and which they themselves are called also to practise.

Indeed if they could prove their \* Nationall Church-state to be of divine and Gospell constitution, (as I said before) it were something; but till that be done, they shall find in the end, that they themselves are guilty of the fault they lay to the Congregational meus charge.

\* 5. Another stumbling block that lyes in the way of many godly persons, is, because they see many, after they have entred on this way, to fall into grievous errors, and some turne Libertines, and grow loose in their walking.

*Ans.* Now to remove this, consider these following particulars.

1. Suppose this be a truth, and so to be greatly lamented, yet dare any man say, that such persons would not have taken such courses, if they had not entered on this way of the Gospell? How many are there which are guilty of grosse errors in judgement, and loosenesse in practise, and yet never knew in all their lives, what this way of the Gospell meant? as in Germany, France, Holland, England, and other parts of the world.

2. If this way be of God, and hath footing in the Scriptures, example from the Apostles practise, and approved of by many famous servants of God, and purest churches in the world, as we have shewed you: then farre be it from any to make, it the cause of such abominations: Can the light of the Sunne properly beget darkenes? so as properly, can the way of the Lord be said to beget these evils either in judgement or practise?

3. Did you ever heare or know of any Church, where the government was most exact according to the Scriptures, and unquestionable, that hath been perfect, and without errors; or hath God promised that here on earth, his Churches should be totally free?

Doth

Doth not the Scripture speake otherwise, which is left to us for our instruction, as in 1 Cor. 11. 19. There must be *heresies* amongst you, saith the Apostle, and he gives the reason for it, *that so those that are approved may be made manifest amongst you*: not that these *heresies* and evils do necessarily flow from the true being and right government of a Church, but only *per accidens*, (*viz.*) from the evill disposition of those members that are sinfully tollerated in a Church, and not cast out, and those temptations of Sathan, that they are exposed daily unto, by Gods permission.

4. Consider where the Lord is most *rightly* and *purely* worshipped, there the Devill is most busie to make *Divisions*, *for* the seeds of *errour*, occasion scandals and offences, and the Lord in *infinite* wisdom seeth it good to have it so, partly

1. That his power may appeare the more in preserving such a Church and society.

2. That his *wisdom* may appeare the more, in guiding such a Church.

3. That his *mercy* may appeare the more in pardoning his People.

4. Lastly, that his *justice* may appeare the more, in hardning those that do not love, but hate his wayes.

5. Such as fall into errours and loose walking after their entrance on this way of the Lord, come not thereunto from their submitting to that way, but from want of good *principles*, and sound hearts at the first: If their ends had been good at first, and their hearts upright, they had never gone out to crooked wayes of their own, or others. but as the Apostle saith, 1 Joh. 2. 19. *They went out from us, because they were not of us*; so such as fall away from the truth, to the embracing damnable heresies, do therefore fall away, because they were never properly of the truth; certainly when men venture on the pure and sound wayes of God, with *unsound* and *base ends*, the Lord justly suffers them to fall: such as have not the glory of God, but themselves in their eye, the Lord shall in just judgement lead such forth, with the workers of iniquity, *Psal. 125.* last verse.

6. Though this way of the Lord, may have such evill weeds to grow up in it, yet it doth not allow of them, but labours either the reforming or casting of them out when they are discovered,

as a sound Constitution doth those distempers it lyes under, as *Mat. 18. 11. 1 Cor. 4. 4, 5. 2 Thes. 3. 6. 14. Rev. 2.* and as a learned Author saith, *What flaming Sword is there in the hand of a classicall Presbytery, to keep men out of errours, which may not be in a congregation? In one Congregation there may be as many Presbyters as from many Congregations make a Classis, and why then may they not do the selfe same acts; their offices & office is the same, & therefore the promise of assistance is the same; and if the councill and advice of other neighbour Churches be required, a Congregation may have that as well, and perhaps sooner then a Classis can, which must stay for a Provinciall Synod.*

Anatomist Anatomised, p. 10.

7. Lastly, let it be considered, that there have been (as the former Author observes) as great *defections* both of Ministers and people, unto errours under *Presbyteriall Government*, as under any other, as is cleare in *the Low Countreyes*, where so many Ministers and People have turned *Arminians, Papists, Socinians*; greater errours then the denyall of *Padobaptisme*: and yet those of the *Presbyterian way* here, are not free of that, as is well known, besides other evils of more dangerous consequence, as might be named.

6. Impediment.

6. Another impediment why the godly do not enter on this way of the Gospel, is, because they say, this way cries up toleration for all sorts of Religion, and liberty of mens consciences, and so every man may do as he list, and what confusion and destruction will this soon produce in Church and state?

For the removall of this impediment, let these few things be considered.

1. That this is a great *untruth*, and so nothing but a slander, and an evill report that some evill Spyes give out upon the view they have taken of this *holy Land*, from some base private ends (its much to be feared) of their own, which the *Searcher of all hearts* will in due time *reveale and discover*.

And that it is so, is evident from the workes of some of no mean abilities for learning and godlines, that have been in the Congregationall way.

1. That late precious servant of Iesus Christ, *M. Ier. Burroughs*, who was eminent for his Gospel anpointings, in his *Heart Divisions*, chap. 7. pag. 41. where he spends most of that chapter to this purpose,

purpose, pag. 42, 43, 44. and at last towards the end of the chapter, pag. 45. he hath these following words. *And consider now my bretheren, whether the Congregationall way be such, as if it be suffred, there will be no helpe to reduce an erring or hereticall church, but all Religions, Arianisme, Malumetisme, any thing must be suffered, Surely men do not deale fairely, in raising such mighty accusations upon such poore and weake grounds: This great aspersion, and huge out-cry, that these men would have all Religions suffered, and in their way, there is no helpe against any hereticall Congregations, moulders and vanishes away before you.*

So likewise in his Sermon before the House of Lords, *November 26. 1645. pag. 45.* where speaking to them excellently in the behalfe of the Saints, that have been faithfull to them in the trust committed to their charge, though they could not come up fully in some things to them, they have published to the world, and therefore desires them not to listen to any, who should whisper such suggestions, or vent such things, as tend to be exasperating of their spirits against those deare servants of Christ; he hath these words, *There is a great out-cry against the Toleration of all Religions, and we are willing to joyne against such a tolleration: But that which fills the mouthes of many in this, is the heate of their spirits against those that differ from them in any thing that they might with the more strength be able by this to strike at them; suffer not your power to be abused, to serve mens designes; be faithfull with God, encourage those that feare him, and God will take care of your honours, &c.*

2. Master Thomas Goodwin, of whose worth (without flattery I speake it) the Kingdom is not ignorant, in that notable Sermon of his, before the honourable House of Commons, called *The great Interest of States and Kingdomes*, p. 53. where pressing that Honourable House to looke well to their interest, meaning the Saints that are in England, to maintaine and preserve them, and make provision for them, as they meant to preserve the Kingdome: he hath these words, to our purpose; *If any man thinke I am a pleading for a liberty of all opinions, of what nature and how grosse soever, I humbly desire them to remember, that I only plead for Saints. and I I answer plainly, the Saints they need it not; The Apostle tels us there are damnable heresies, 2. Pet. 2. 1, 2. and they will soon un-Saint men; there are errors that are Capitall, not holding the Head,*

Col. 2. *Do but distinguish these from others, and let this be one foundation laid for this union.*

3. Master John Goodwin, whose innocency and integrity in the cause of Christ, and great worke and labour of love to Christ and his Churches, I doubt not but in due time shall be cleared and rewarded abundantly: In his Reply with another Brother, to *A. S. 2. Edit. pag. 24.* whose words to our purpose are these; *Nor on the other hand, do I speake this to intimate, that I approve a toleration of the breaching of all opinions, or any toleration of some practises,* And that men might see what he sayes, if they will not *shut their eyes* wilfully against the light, he reduceth his discourse to 3. Heads.

1 The least venting of any opinion against Fundamentals, as *Judaisme*, denying Christ to be the true Messiah; *Arianisme*, and *Socinianisme*, opposing the Deity of Jêsus Christ, *Arminianisme*, that questions the person of the Holy Ghost, *Papisme*, that holds justification by works; or that *Anabaptisme* that denyes the derivation of *Adams* originall corruption to us, &c. the venting of these and the like opinions he acknowledgeth to be suppressed, and much more the practise of Idolatry. *pag. 25.*

2. The spreading and practizing of opinions that apparently tend to Libertinisme, licentious ungodlines; ought not quietly to be permitted. *pag. ibid.*

3 And then shewes what opinions are to be tolerated, to wit, such are not against Fundamentals, nor lead to licentiousnesse, but tend only to the beating out of truths, *pag. 26.*

4. Master Sprigge, my *quondam* colleague in the University of Oxford, whose fruitfulness in the grace of the Gospell, hath not a little joyced my soule; In his judicious Treatise, called the *Ancient bounds, or liberty of Conscience stated*, chap. 1. *pag. 4.* whose words are these. *Nor do we question whether the Magistrate may not to this negative discountenance, adde positive, viz. to declare against errors, as well as the Ministers to convince and exhort against them: Nor whether ( amongst us ) errors of manifest scandall and danger to mens soules and consciences, as Arianisme, Socinianisme, Familisme, &c. ought not to be restrained by the Christian Magistrate, and the Assertors and maintainers of them, interdicted under penalties, the divulging or spreading of them, by publique preaching or printing, with much more to this purpose: So that this being so*  
 cleare

cleere and manifest from the published writings of these precious Saints of Christ, it can appeare to be no other then a grosse untruth, and apparent scandall and slander that is cast upon this way of the Lord, and thote he hath risen and stirred up to assert and maintaine it.

2. If by a *tolleration* of liberty of mens consciences, men understand it of things that are doubfull only, & in controverly amongst the godly, then what hurt can follow, though there should be a declaration of difference of judgement and practice? And doubtlesse if there should not be a *forbearing* one another in such things as are not cleare, but dubious, all the world (as M. Burroughes truly saith in his *Heart-Divisions*, Chap. 9. pag. 55.) must needs be quarrelling; and he in that Chapter shewes the lawfulnessse heroot, not onely from the judgements of many Protestant Writers, but also from eight (as I conceive) unanswerable and ungainsayable Arguments and considerations, from pag. 57. to pag. 66. which are too large to transcribe, but are very worthy the godlies-ferions looking into, and search after. See also M. Sprigs *Ancient Bounds*, c. 4. p. 17.

3. But if by a *tolleration* of liberty to all mens consciences, we understand it simply of the things of the mind and judgement, as opinions, and not of the externall practises of men. What hinders but that it should be granted, without the use of any externall waies of compulsion, to force men from them? For my owne part, I am so farre from seeing any reason or Scripture for using externall violence, to force men from their present judgements, though erroneous, suppose the worst of errors, as Papisme, Atrianisme, Socinianisme, Turcisme, Judaisme, &c. as that I judge such a course both against Scripture and Reason, as I shall endeavour to make out in these following particulars, though in so doing I shall crosse, and it may be displease two sorts of men.

1. Such as would give to the *Civill Magistrate* a coercive and compulsory power, to enforce men from their present opinions in the matters of Religion, and to change their minds, and alter their judgements by the use of externall violent, waies and meanes, as Imprisonments, Mulets, Fines, Whippings, banishments.

2. Such as give to *Ministers* met together in a *Classis* or *Synod*, an absolute power not onely of judging and determining in matters  
of

of Religion, but of *imposing* their *conclusions* on the consciences of people to be obeyed; and in case of *non-obedience* (*ipso facto*) to cut them off from enjoying the priviledge both of Church & state.

Now to shew my reasons againt both of these, for the better confirming of my former answer, I shall speake to each of them apart.

1. To those that cry up compulsion in matters of Religion, to force men by externall violent meanes, from their present *judgements* and *opinions* they are of, as *proper* to the *civil Magistrate*, and a part of his office: I cannot allow of it for these reasons.

Reasons against  
compulsion of  
conscience in  
matters of Re-  
ligion.

\* *Vid.* The  
Reply of the 2.  
bretheren to  
A. S. p. 23, 24.

1. Because for any man whatsoever to take such a course, as coercive and *compulsory* wayes to force the minds of men, positively to *act contrary* to their principles conscienciously held, is to *act* beyond their commission, and contrary to the rule of Christ laid down in the word, which is to winne men by instruction, and not to force men by destruction: \* as *Mat.* 28. 20. *Luk.* 9. 54, 55. *2 Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *2 Tim.* 2. 24, 25. and 4. 1, 2, 3.

2. This course were for poore, weake creatures to encroach upon the *Prerogative of God himselfe*, whose worke, and in whose *power alone* it is, to change mens minds, as is apparent from Scripture, as *2 Cor.* 10. 4. *2 Tim.* 2. 25. *1 Pet.* 1. 22. *1 Cor.* 3. 6, 7. *Iob.* 16. 8. and the reason is, because the *subject* to be wrought upon, is too high for any, but *God alone*, *humane power* may reach to the *bodies* of men, to the outward man, but not to their *inward*, to their soules and consciences, poor *weake man* cannot make, as Christ saith, *one haire white or black*: they may restrain from *practise* by outward meanes, but *convert* and change they cannot. No not the glorious *Angels* that are faire aboye man, for power and strength, and for sutablenes to the Spirits of men, to whom they can in a more easie and familiar way, apply themselves, then one man can to another: and yet these blessed Spirits cannot effect this worke: This they can do, they can present things to the *fancy*, and *affect* the mind many times, but it is not in their power to make those things they present to the understandings of men to take *effectually*, so as to worke that for which they present them, without the *Almighty power of God* go with them: they are all but *ministring Spirits*, but as *instruments* in the hand of God, as men are; so that this is proper only to God, to convert and change the minds and



and consciences of men, and not in the power of any creature, and therefore as they *inroach* on Gods prerogative, so they lose their labour in all those *violent wayes* they take, unlesse the Lord concurre with them, which we cannot expect he should do, because its not a meanes of his ordaining, but contrary thereunto, as we have shewed before.

3. Because such wayes and meanes of *external violent compulsion*, are against the very nature of the mind and conscience, the one being *spirituall and rationally*, and the other carnall, and therefore they must be either *spirituall*, or *morall*, and rationally wayes at least, that must be used to worke upon the minds and consciences of men. What saith that judicious Minister M. \* Caryl, (whose judgement I suppose, and learning will every way ballance M. Prymies, or D. Bastwick, or M. Edwards, or any of the rest that have appeared in Print against the point in controversie, if we had not the Scriptures on our side)

4 In his Sermon before the ho. House of Parl. and City on a day of thanksgiving. pag. 23, 24, 25

To the said objection I answer, 1. Possibly there are more errors named, then are; all is not error that every one thinks to be error. We know who spake it, After the way which they call heresie, so worship I the God of my Fathers, Act. 24. 14. and they were no meane, no unlearned men, who called that way heresie. And I shall never believe all Heresiographers for his sake, who put Aërius into his Catalogue, for opposing Prelacy. There may be an error in taxing some with errors. But Secondly, whatsoever is an error or an heresie, whatsoever is contrary to wholsome doctrine, (such opinions are knowable) else all rules about dealing with them are vaine, whatsoever I say is an error or heresie, let all the penalties which Christ hath charged upon it, be executed to the uttermost; if we favour error, I know not how we can with confidence lift up our eyes to Christ for favour. If Chr. st would not have had error opposed, why hath he left us meanes, both for the opposition and suppression of error? Then presently he shewes what those meanes are: As he (to wit Christ) hath given a compleat armour to every christian, wherewith to fight against the wiles and temptations of the devil; so he hath given a compleat armour to his church, wherewith to fight against all the errors & unfound doctrines of seducers. Therefore (saith he, excellently) search the Magazine of the Gospell, bring out all the artillery, ammunition, and weapons stored up there, looke out all the chaines and

fetters, the whips and rods, which either the letter of the Gospell, or the everlasting equity of the Law hath provided to bind error with, or for the back of heresie, let them all be employed and spare not. I hope we shall use, (I am perswaded we ought not) Antichrists broom to sweep Christs house with, or his weapons to fight against errors with. Christ hath formed and sharpened weapons for this warre, we need not go to the Popes Forgo or File. We (saith the Apostle) have weapons in a readinesse to revenge every disobedience: they are ready made to our hands. And a great deale more to this purpose: By which we may see, if errors themselves must not be suppressed by any other then such spirituall wayes and meanes, that Christ hath set downe in his word, then much lesse may the minds and consciences of men, that hold these errors, be proceeded against by any other then such meanes, and so there will be no place left for these compulsory wayes that some men of harsh and legall dispositions stirre up the Magistrate unto the practise and use of.

4. Is not such a course as this, against the golden Rule of charity, and mercy, and to tread in the very steps of Antichristian cruelty? as Rev. 13. 15. 16. and we have had experience of this but lately, in the Antichristian Prelates, whose best arguments to draw men and women from their judgements, to be of their own minds, were Fines, and imprisonments, the Stocks, Whip, and Pillory, &c.

Luk. 6. 35, 36.

5. Nay, is not this course of violent compulsion, against the very law of nature, that our Saviour speakes of, and would have men to practise, Mat. 7. 12: *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, that do you unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* For suppose one should come upon his ordinary occasions into Turkey, or some other forraigne country, would it not be an offence to him if they should compell him to alter his mind and judgement in the matters of Religion, and enforce him by violence to be of theirs? So here: And therefore the Turks are so farre from enforcing mens consciences, as that they permit them to use their consciences, and practise their judgements, though different from them. And though in Spain the Protestants are prohibited the practise of their Religion, yet the Spaniard doth not violently compell men to alter their minds, and to be of their Religion: Temptations by way of Argument, or gifts, &c. they may lay before men, but not outward wayes of violence.

6. Besides all this, doth not this course directly crosse the *commandment and practise of Christ himselfe*, who bids us to *love one another, as he hath loved us*? *Ioh. 13. 14.* that is, for quality, and not for equality or quantity and degree: Now its as cleare as the Sun at noone day, that Christ loved all that believe in him, one as well as another, though they differ one from another in the knowledge of the truth, and are not of the same stature and tallnes, in all things he hath commanded, so long as they hold the Head; yea, though they differ from himselfe in many things revealed, and mistake and mis-understand him in many things, (as who doth not) yet still he loves them, and beares with their weakeneses, and fellowship with them by his Spirit, whilest their hearts are upright with him for the main; and the same he requires of the Saints one toward another, *Ephes. 4. 2, 3. 13. 32. Col. 3. 12. 13, 14.* not that they should proceed in a bitter manner, to cut off, and cast one another over board.

7. To take this course with men that differ from us in judgement, is it not the High-way to make more *hypocrites*, then sound Christians, and so to introduce a profession of Religion, no way pleasing to God, as all forced profession is? for when men become Profelites more for feare, then conscience, there is not only a mocking with God, in what they do, but a readinesse (when an oportunity is presented) to returne to their old and former errors, for outward violence is of this nature, that it rather *restraines* then *changeth*, and of this there hath been abundant wofull experience in all ages, and which of the two is worst, heretiques or hypocrites, to maintain an error, or counterfeit the truth, is not easily determined.

8. And doth not this course bring people to be more in love with errors then before? the reason is, because People conceive those errors so persecuted, are the truth of God, in regard that Jesus Christ hath fore-told that persecution should attend the truth, and those that are embracers and professors of it: now when men (especially the *weake*) shall see that such and such persons (*otherwise quiet and peaceable in the Land, only differing from others in their judgements*) shall be violently opposed, for what they hold, & have cruell meanes used to take them off from what they conceive is the truth, they presently conclude, this must needs be the very way of

God, and so there is more hurt a thousand times done, then good by such violent wayes of compulsion.

5. Lastly, to adde no more, *how contrary* this way is, and hath been not only to the mind of Christ in the Scriptures, but to the judgement of the most ablest servants of God, *in all ages*, twere easie to determine. If any desire satisfaction in this particular, let him read M. *Spriggs Antient Bounds*, where this particular is abundantly manifested, with M. *Iohn Goodwins Innocencies Triumph*, M. *Burrroughs Heart divisions*, &c.

2. Now for the second sort of persons, that give to *Ministers* met together in a *Classis* or *Synod*, an absolute power of imposing their conclusions and determinations on the consciences of people in particular, or whole Churches in generall, to be obeyed necessarily without refusing; I shall propose these few things to be considered.

1. Whether this doth not crosse that command of Christ by the Apostle, *1 Thes. 5. 21. Try all things, hold fast that which is good*: now to what purpose is this command, if I am necessitated to yeeld to anothers imposition the try all here spoken of respects the *mind and understanding*, as all wise men know, but how can he *exercise* his mind this way, that is *tyed and bound up* by anothers vote and imposition to obey? Seeing by this meanes he must yeeld without any further enquiry or search into the thing commanded, whether it be according to the mind of Christ, or not.

2. Whether this doth not make the *liberty of the Saints lesse* now in these dayes, then in the dayes of the Apostles, when we find the *Bereans* had liberty, first to examine the Apostles doctrine themselves, *I say themselves*, before they submitted and subjected their consciences to the obedience of it; and they are commended for it, *Act. 17. 11*: whereas now, its counted a matter of disobedience, and faction, for any the most holiest, and soundest in the fayth, so much as to question and enquire, whether what an *Assembly* or *Classis* doth impose on them, as necessary to be obeyed, is according to the Scriptures, to Christs will, and not their own.

3. Whether such a kind of Imposition, doth not bring such *Ministers* in their Synods and *Classis*, under the guilt and condemnation, of being *Lords over Gods heritage*, in exercising authority, power, and dominion over the faith of their bretheren, contrary to

2 Cor. 1. ult. and 1. Pet. 5. 3. and which we know was the common and usuall practise of the *Lordly Prelates*. And the rather also considering, that no *Councils or Synods*, since the Apostles times, can challenge to themselves, an absolute, infallible, and *unerring spirit*, in the matters of Religion, above the rest of their bretheren, that sit not on those *Thrones* with them.

4. Whether this practise of such Ministers doth not bring into the *Churches* of Christ, that Popish doctrine and practise of *implicite faith*, for if I must take all for granted to be true, that such men command obedience unto, without any further enquiry, then my *faith* is not an expli cite, but a meere *implicite* faith, and consequently my *obedience* blind, and so abominable: which some more moderate Presbyterians themselves, in their Sermons, dispute strongly against; as M. Hill in his Sermon called *the good old way*.

5. Whether this be not for Ministers to challenge that power, which Jesus Christ *never called them unto*, nor bestowed upon them.

Obj. Did not the Apostles practise it, in that Synod? Act. 15.

Ans. 1. Grant it, what will follow? Therefore Ministers may now do it, a meere *non sequitur*. Unless that ordinary Ministers now could expect the same *infallible guidance* of the Spirit, as the Apostles could: They could say without the least *hastancy* or doubting, *It seemeth good to the holy Ghost and to us*: And can any Assembly or Synod of Ministers do so now? can they say certainly, as the Apostles, that those Synodical and classicall *constitutions*, they impose with such authority, on the consciences of others, to obey and practise, are according to the true mind and meaning of Christ? If they can produce any *warrant* for it, let them; if they cannot, why do they beare the People of the Kingdome in hand, that it is in their power *alone*, without the *Peoples consent*, to determine and impose as they (by themselves alone) conceive to be right? I am sure that Chamier, that famous French Divine, in his *Panstrat, Cathol. Tom. 3. l. 15. cap. 10.* saith, that there is not the same authority of the Apostles, and of other Pastors: with them, he was *extraordinarily present, Ad eum ut quae illi proponerent a Deo simpliciter manarent: i. e.* So as what they propounded did simply proceed of God. But he is not so present with ordinary Pastors, and therefore their Decrees are not to be parallel'd with the Decrees

of the Apostles: and in matters of conscience, he sheweth, that God alone is *Judge and binder*, and not the creature: and tis no other then what we find abundantly in the writings of learned men, both ancient and modern, and agreeable to the Scriptures, as we have before abundantly proved.

2. But in the next place, can it ever be proved from the fifteenth of the *Acts*, that the Apostles in that *Synod* or Assembly, did exercise such a power as the Presbyterians speake of? did the Apostles in that meeting *meddle or touch* with any act of *Church government*? nay is it not cleare to him that hath but halfe an eye, that there was no *penalty* annexed to what they wrote, and sent to the Churches, in case they should not have embraced their counsell? Do not the words declare so much, *ver. 29. From which if you keepe your selves you shall do well, &c.* And that w<sup>ch</sup> is worth observation, the Apostles do not determine, (as M. Burroughs hath well showed) \* they should observe to do these things from their own authority, but from the reason of the things, for those things they enjoyned, were duties before they decreed & enjoyned them, & had been, had they never decreed them. As for example, that of *forbearing the eating of bloud*, was a duty in case of offence, though their decree had never been: and otherwise it had been no duty, if there had been no scandall, notwithstanding their decree: For afterwards the Apostle Paul saith, that men might eat whatsoever was sold in the *Shambles*, asking no question for conscience sake. And we find that every creature of God is Good, when it is sanctified by the word & by prayer, and received with thanksgiving: yea the same Apostle saith in that place, that nothing then is to be refused, *1 Tim. 4. 4.*

3. Lastly, if we observe that Scripture which the Presbyterians so much urge and stand upon, for the authoritative power of *Synods* and *Classes*, we shall find, that what the Apostles there and then did, as it was not from themselves alone, but from the holy Ghost; so neither by themselves alone, but with the approbation of the whole Church: as appears in *Act. 15. v. 22, 23. Then it pleased the Apostles and Elders, with the whole Church, to send chosen men of their own company, (viz. the Church) to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chiefe men among the BRETHREN, & wrot letters by them, after this manner; The Apostles, Elders, & BRETHREN, send greeting to the Brethren* which

Vid. Bur. Hca.  
Divisions.

which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia: that is, the Churches that were gathered and planted in those Countries. Now this is far from the practise & opinion also, of the *Presbyterians*, in these dayes, that affirm the authoritative power of *Synods* and *Classis* is in themselves, without the joyn't consent & approbation of particular bretheren in the churches: and therefore this instance of theirs which they produce against the Congregationall way, is altogether without warrant from the Scripture.

Vid. Jus Divin. reg. eccles.

7. Another impediment that stands in the godlies way to this blessed worke, is this, that they cannot see it to have the *Magistrates countenance and allowance*, whereas if this were ouce done, they would not forbear to enter on the practise of it. 7. Impediment.

For the removing of this impediment, Let these few things be minded.

1. That if by the *Magistrates countenance & allowance*, they mean an expresse Warrant and Ordinance for it, as they have done for *Presbytery*; tis granted, there is no such: yet thus much I can say, (and we have cause to blesse God for it) that to this day, the Lord hath so farre kept authority in Parliament, that they have not made any expresse Law against it; nor (we trust in Christ) will they ever doe.

2. Who knowes, but by that time the three yeares allowance of the other, be fully expired, the Lord may so farre reveale himselfe to Authority, as that they shall not only countenance the Congregationall way, but also make a Law for the establishing of it, not only three yeares, but as the Lawes of the *Medes* and *Persians*, that shall never be altered or repealed. *Jehovah*, the Lord and God of truth & peace, hath done, and can do as great things as these, and why should we not believe it? Seeing he hath made a promise, that *Kings* and *Queenes*, that is, such as are in authority shall be nursing Fathers and Mothers to his People, in the pure wayes of his worship, as *Esay* 49. 23.

3. Suppose that this way of the *Gospell* should never have the expresse command and countenance of the civill Magistrate for it, which for my part I cannot believe, (because of the former promise) yet I hope it will be granted, that what *Jesus Christ* the Head and King of his Church hath ordained and commanded, for his people to walke up to the practise of, (as I take this order of the *Gospell*,

to be that hath been formerly laid downe) is not to be left undone, and the practise thereof neglected, because it cannot obtaine the countenance of the creature: the reason is, because the practise of Gods will, and worship revealed in the Scriptures, doth not depend on the *will and pleasure of men*, but meerely on the command and injunction of God himselfe, whom we ought to love and honour above all men:\* And therefore we find in the Primitive times, that the Apostles and servants of Christ, when they had no countenance at all from the civil Powers, that were in those dayes, but rather the contrary, yet they went on in the practise of what Christ enjoyned them, against all their opposition: And its worthy our consideration, that if the way of the Lord, that now we pleade for the enjoyment of in peace, and holines, was lawfull in those dayes, when *civill Magistrates* were no *friends*, but professed *enemies*, to Jesus Christ and his Churches: Then doubtlesse its much *more lawfull* now in these dayes, wherein *civill Magistrates* do openly *professe themselves friends to Christ*, and hold forth to the world (by manifold Protestations) that they place their greatest ambition, in being Servants to Christ, otherwise it would follow, that Christ and his Churches should be losers, and in a worse condition by living under such Magistrates (as we are bound to believe are reall in their Protestations and professions of and for Christ) then under those that were Heathen, which were absurd in any to *affirme*: The reason is, because such Magistrates know themselves to be ordained of God, *for the good of the Saints*, and not for their *hurt*; for their *encouragement* and furtherance in the wayes of Godliness, and not for their discouragement and hinderance, *Rom.*

13. 4. 5.

4. Lastly, what ground for comfort can those have to build on, if the Magistrate should approve of it, and countenance it, (as wee doubt not as we said before, but in the Lords time he wil) when they enter upon it for that very reason & cause, *because its the command of the Magistrate, and he approves of it*: I say, *for that very cause and reason*, and no other, as many of late, that would not part with the Ceremonies and Service-booke, (though never so Popish and Antichristian) til they saw the *same Power* that set them up, did *pull them downe*, nor touch with any other way of worship *prescribed in Gods Word*, before they saw what the *Civill Magistrate* did authorize:

Now

\* *Quare in gratiam hominum nihil est agendum contra deum: sed quicquid deus precepit, agendum est: etiamsi homines eo offendantur, sequi odio a nobis haberi putent, quod ipsis nolimus contra dei preceptum gratifica i. Pilcar. in Mat. 10. 37. Obser. 28.*



Now I say, what comfort can these men have in what they do, seeing that her by, 1. They *make the order appointed by Christ for his service and worship to depend on the will and pleasure of man?* and 2. *Their fear of God is taught by the Precepts of men, Eiaſy 29. 13.* And 3. *Their honouring of the creature herein, is a flat dishonouring of God, for this kind of obedience to humane power, diminisheth, if not annihilates the right and true obedience that is due to divine power, setting up the Minister and servant, in the place and room of the Lord and Master.* And what comfort can men take in this? doubtlesse there is a day coming, when the eternall God will make men ashamed of it, and it may cost them bitterly.

Obj. *Then you will say, by this doctrine, Magistrates are not to be revered nor regarded.*

Ans. *A mere non sequitur, for cannot Cesar be obeyed, unless he be set up in Gods roome? but this is no other then a vile aspersi-  
on that malicious and envious spirits would cast on the faithfull servants of Jesus Christ, whose reverence, respect, and just obedience to authority, I make no doubt, shall be found in due time to appear in its beauty and excellency, (through the good hand of our God upon them) when the rottenness of such base malicious *selvish* spirits, shall be discovered, to their everlasting ignominy and disgrace; For God is faithfull, that hath promised, to plead the cause of his people, & cause their integrity and faithfulness (even in this point I doubt not) to shine forth as the Sun at noon-day, Psal. 37. 6. And doubtlesse authority is wise as an Angell of God, to discern what such Sycophants sime at, in their seeking to asperse the Godly in the Land withall, as those dealt by *Daniel, chap. 6.* where it is evident, what a course they tooke to be rid of him, as we may see from v. 4. to 18. and the cause of all is noted, v. 3. *Daniel was honoured above them; because an excellent spirit was in him, and Darius thought to set him over the whole Realme: I need not make application; certainly whatever such men talke in Presse and Pulpit, Authority may for ever be assured, that those that faithfully endeavour in all good conscience, as for their lives, to honour the eternall God, and their Saviour Jesus Christ, in one command of his, they will in another: and therefore they need not doubt but those they nickname Independants, will (by the helpe of Christ) strive to obey the the fift Commandement as well as the first, or any other: and I suppose to this day, ( notwithstanding all the aspersions of malevolent tongues and Pennes) Authority hath found the truth of this we now**

speake of in abundance, and I doubt not but so they shall to the end.

8. The last and great Impediment that lyes in the way of the Godly is this: *That they are jealous of this way we plead for, is but the device of man, having not the same an Image of Christ upon it, whatsoever we pretend; and so, if they would close with it, they cannot expect the Lords presence with them, or blessing upon them in the practise of it; but the Lord may say to them, as he did to the former Jewes in the like case, who hath required these things at your hands? Esay 1.*

Now for removing of this huge mountaine; I shall only desire one thing may be seriously considered, which is this, that farre be it from those of the Congregational way to perswade any man whatsoever, to walke in obedience to, and the practise of that which Christ himselfe will not own for his, nor carries his image, and superscription upon: wherefore let it be put to the tryall, whether this way of worshipping God, I have pressed the godly in the land to the practise of, do not hold weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and be not more like to *Jesus Christ*, then all other wayes of worship that are on foot in the Kingdome. I shall for this purpose set before the godly some few briefe particulars, that most naturally agree to this way, we presse unto the practise of, and undoubtedly prove it to be from Heaven, and hath the eternall God in *Jesus Christ* for its only author and institutor.

7. Arguments  
for the Con-  
gregational  
way.

1. *That way of visible worship & government in the Church of God, that is most agreeable to the Scriptures, in all its parts and parcels, that must needs be the way of God, but such is the way wee have before set down, commonly called the Congregational way, and nick-named Independency, ergo.*

2. *That way of &c. That most lifts up *Jesus Christ*, and throwes down and abaseth the creature, that must of necessity be the way of God: but such is the congregational way, therefore,*

3. *That way of, &c. that makes most for holines and advancement of purity in the hearts and lives of men, that cannot be denyed to be the way of the Lord, and so carry Christs image on it: but such is the congregational way, ergo.*

4. *That way of &c. that carryes most of Christs glorious power & presence in it, and with it, to the soules and consciences of men, that is without controversie the way of Christ; but so doth the congregational way, ergo, &c.*

5. *That way of, &c. that in the very nature and essence of it, not only tends to the preservation of the spirituall liberty of those are with-*







