

Rev. & Hon. Mr. Beach

DEFENCE

OF A

SERMON

Preached at Newark, June 2. 1736.
intituled, *the Vanity of human Institutions in the Worship of God, against the*
Exceptions of Mr. John Beach, in a
Letter to him.

JONATHAN DICKINSON, M. A.
Minister of the Gospel, at Elizabeth-
Town in New-Jersey.

1 Joh. ii. 19. *They went out from us; but*
they were not of us: For if they had been of
us they would no Doubt have continued with us.
Jam. i. 6. *He that wavereth is like a Wave*
of the Sea driven with the Wind and tossed.

New-York, Printed by J. Peter Zenger.



A
D E F E N C E
O F A
S E R M O N

Preached at *Newark*, June 2. 1736, &c.

S I R,



AM so far from finding Fault with your Attempt to vindicate the Church of England from the Exceptions both of Mr. J. G. and my self, that I cannot but think every Man equally entitled, both to follow the Dictates of his own Reason, and Conscience in matters of Religion ; and to give the Reason of his Hope to others for their Conviction or Satisfaction. And I must acknowledge

knowledge, that you and the rest of your Brethren that have deserted our Communion for that of the *Church of England*, had a special Call to satisfy the World about you, as to the Reasons of your surprizing Conduct. And I know no other but this publick Method of doing it, that would so effectually obviate those harsh Insinuations and censorious Reflections, unto which you are liable; and convince every Body, that your Change was not owing to the Want of necessary self-Denial, and christian Contentment with the Hardships and Indigencies, that (thro' the Ingratitude of the People) are the too common Lot of the Ministry in this Country. But you'll pardon me, if I find it more difficult to apologise for the Method, in which you have chosen to publish your Vindication.

It might have been expected, that tho' you had seen Reason to change some of your Religious Principles; you would nevertheless have retain'd something of that common Civility, for which you have formerly been famous; and at least have treated your Adversaries with that Decency, that is alwaies due to human Nature; if your new Principles could not have allowed us the Character of Friends, Gentlemen, or Christians. (Indeed Sir, I cannot account for those opprobrious Epithets you are pleased so freely to bestow, such

such as brutish Noise, palpable and notorious Truths, Prophan enough for an Infidel, Fool &c. I cannot but think your Arguments would have been every whit as conclusive, without these Decorations as with them.

I am in like Manner incapable to apologise; for your overlooking so great a Part of the Sermon you had undertaken to answer. You have wholly overlook'd the Preface to that Sermon. — You have made no Reply to the Imputation of *Arminianism*, which methinks might have stuck pretty close to such Clergy-men of the Church of England, as have subscribed the xxxix Articles. — You have made no Reply to the Reasons offered against Requiring as a religious Duty, what God has not propos'd as such, nor required of us; against enjoining as Terms of Communion, what God has not enjoined; and against imposing any Terms of Communion by penal Sanctions. — Nor have you taken any particular Notice of the three following Heads, wherein is shewn, how *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, renders our Worship vain. — You have indeed roundly asserted, that *there cannot be any publick Worship, but there must be some stinted Prayer imposed.* p. 17. And that *there neither is nor can be any Church upon Earth, but what hath Terms of Communion and Ceremonies imposed, which*
 God

God hath not expressly commanded. p. 51. But did you think that these strong Assertions, were sufficient Answer to all the Arguments in the Sermon against Impositions? Are we to take your Word in this Case, and not know why? This is I confess a very concise and summary Method of answering that Discourse, to wholly neglect the greatest Part of it; and even that Part which was proposed as the Grounds and Foundation of those Exceptions, that you have been pleased to make some Remarks upon. — If you thought these Things unworthy your Notice, 'twould have been proper for you to have treated the whole with the same Contempt; since it was so necessary to take off *Sampson's Hair*, (as you are pleased to style my Arguments against Impositions) in Order to prevent his making further Spoil of the Philistines.

But perhaps you might suppose, that the answering those Arguments would not at present be quite so popular, among the new Protestants at Newark, to whom it might be something shocking to think, that they had parted with their old Profession and Freedom together. — They might have been frightened at the Sight of the Yoke; and it is therefore too early to indoctrinate, them in the Necessity of a blind Obedience to their spiritual Guides, and an absolute Subjection to their Impositions.

Having

Having premised these Things, I proceed to consider your *Vindication*, which as you inform us, 'is no new Reply; but a Collection from several Writers, that we may see how each Complaint has been answered, long before I preached or published them; and therefore, how little Need there was to renew the tragical Outcry.' By which Declaration I find, I have the united Strength of all your Party to grapple with. — For you have doubtless collected the best Answers, that you could find, among all the Authors that have written on your Side of the Controversy. — And if I can justify my Exceptions, against all these Champions called in to your Assistance; it will appear, that we have good Reasons, why we cannot ordinarily join with the Worship of the Church of England; which was the Thing I undertook to prove in that Sermon. And that there is Cause to continue the same Complaint, that has ever been made from the beginning of the Reformation, against the Impositions of the Church of England, in the Points under Debate.

I am first to attend upon your Explication of the Text I preach'd upon; and your Answer to that Enquiry, *What is it to teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men?* This (you tell us) 'is no more nor less, than to teach that, that is a divine Law or Ordinance, which

' which is really but a human Appointment
 ' When Men father those Practices on God
 ' which have only an human Original ; and
 ' that God has made that a Duty or a Sin
 ' which he has never commanded nor forbidden
 ' p. 5.' But by what Argument is this Glorified
 justified? — You tell us out of Dr. Pridaun
 of the Jews pretending to a twofold Law, the
 Written and the Oral Law ; the latter equally
 divine, and of the same Authority with the
 former ; that this Oral Law, or Bundle of
 Traditions, was committed to Writing in a
 Book called the *Talmud*, &c. In the *Talmuds*
 I confess these Traditions were pretended to
 be of Divine Authority : But don't you
 know, that the *Jerusalem Talmud* was written
 above five Hundred Years after Christ ; and
 the *Babylonian Talmud* much later? — How
 then does the ridiculous Dotages of the *Tal-*
mudists, prove this to be the Doctrine of the
Pharisees, opposed by our Blessed Saviour in
 this Text? It is certain they had Multitudes
 of most trifling ridiculous Traditions and Ob-
 servances, at the Time that the *Talmuds* were
 written, which were utterly unknown, while
 our Saviour sojourned upon Earth. 'Twould
 therefore have been more to the Purpose, for
 you or your Author to have proved, That this
 Doctrine of the Oral Law, and of Washing of
 Hands before Meat as a part of it, was re-
 ceiv'd

ed to be of Divine Authority in those
 Cases of which that Context treats ; than
 have founded your consistent and positive
 Interpretation of the Text, upon Stories
 so many Hundred Years after.
 But suppose this was the Case, I can't see
 how it at all affects the present Argument. —
 are not they as well chargeable with teaching
 Doctrines the Commandments of Men,
 who enjoy these Commandments by the
 severest Penalties ; and are more careful of
 their Observation, than of the Observation of
 God's own Institutions ; as they who expressly
 declare, that these Commands are of divine
 Institution? — What does it signify for the
 Church of England to teach that, ' These Ce-
 remonies are not Ordinances necessary to Sal-
 vation,' when they are imposed with such
 severe and dreadful Sanctions? — You tell us,
 the Scribes and Pharisees valued their pretend-
 ed Oral Law, ' more than the written Law of
 God ; and made the written Law give way to
 ' it.' p. 9. — And I must tell you, That the
 written Law of God requires us, to receive one
 another, as Christ also received us, to the Glory
 of God, Rom. xv. 7. To receive him that is
 weak in the Faith, but not to doubtful Dispu-
 tations, Rom. xiv. 1. Not to judge one ano-
 ther any more ; but to judge this rather, not to
 put a Stumbling-block, or Occasion to fall, in
 our

our Brothers Way. Rom. xiv. 13. And not to destroy him with our Meat, for whom Christ died; nor to eat Flesh; nor drink Wine; nor any Thing whereby thy Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak. vers. 15. 24. — The written Law of God requires, that we should have Compassion one of another, love us Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous. 1 Pet. iii. 8. —

And would it not be a valuing the Commandments of Men, above the written Laws of God, to declare all excommunicated *ipso facto*, that don't acknowledge these Commandments of Men, to be such as they may with a good Conscience approve, use, or subscribe to; or that do but pretend to groan under certain Grievances, imposed upon them by the Commandments of Men? * And yet you are no Stranger to that excellent Constitution, where all such as these are by Canon delivered up to Satan. — And did the Scribes and Pharisees ever go further than this, in teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men?

You also inform us, That the Scribes and Pharisees 'esteemed this Instance of washing 'of Hands before Meat, as much a divine 'Command, as that *thou shalt not kill*; or *thou shalt not commit Adultery.*' — And would it not be a virtual and practical declaring the

* vid. Can. vi. & x.

same Thing, to treat such as capital Offenders, who conscientiously refuse Subjection to these Commandments of Men? And yet that many Hundreds have been laid in Irons, in stinking Dungeons, been banished, dismembred, and put to Death in this Cause, is well known to all that are acquainted with the History of our Nation.

And now, Sir, I dare even make the Appeal to your self, whether it ben't as much teaching these for Doctrines, to impose them with such dreadful Severity, as to barely declare them divine, when they are not.

You tell us, *they are not taught to be necessary to Salvation.* p. 7. And that *the Church has declared to the World, That they place no Religion in these Things.* p. 9. And must all be lookt upon as Heathen Men and Publicans, by Virtue of the Church's Excommunication, who can't conform to these Things, that by your own Confession have no Religion in them? — Must they be perpetually pelted, with the frightful Clamours of damning Schism, who scruple the Observance of those Commandments of Men, which the Imposers themselves declare to the World that they place no Religion in?

But that we may put an End to this Debate, let us view the Case, as it is represented by the Evangelist himself, and see whether all

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teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, are not condemned in the Text.—

And whether all Impositions of our own Institutions upon other Mens Consciences, (whether we give them the Character of divine Ordinances or not) are not culpable, by this Verdict of our blessed Saviour. If we recur to the sacred Story, we find it thus related. —

Then came to him the Pharisees, and certain of the Scribes which came from Jerusalem; and when they saw some of his Disciples eat Bread, with defiled (that is to say, with unwashed) Hands they found Fault. — Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, why walk not thy Disciples according to the Tradition of the Elders, but eat Bread with unwashed Hands? He answered and said unto them, well hath Isaiah prophesied of you Hypocrites, as it is written. — This People honoureth me with their Lips; but their Heart is far from me. — Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men. — By which Narrative it plainly appears, that the Thing and the only Thing found Fault with by the Scribes and Pharisees, was that the Disciples *eat Bread with unwashed Hands.* — That the Reason and the only Reason of their finding Fault was, that they *walked not according to the Tradition of the Elders.* There was not the least Pretence that

this

his Observance was founded upon any divine Authority. — It was the Injunction of this (in it self) innocent and indifferent Rite, by the lawful Authority in the Jewish Church, that brought upon 'em these severe Centures. *You Hypocrites, in vain do you worship me, &c.* And I must take Liberty to say, that I cannot imagine any Plea or Pretence, that can possibly be made for the Imposition of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, that may not with like Propriety be offered, in Favour of the Scribes and Pharisees in this Context. — Are the Injunctions of the Church of England imposed by lawful Authority? So was washing of Hands before Meat. — Are they significant of inward Purity and Holiness? So was this. — Are they pretended to be decent and orderly? And was not this Pre- tence much more plausible in the Case before us? Are your Ceremonies as you tell us, p. II. 'convenient; and conducive to the Peace and 'and good Order of the Church, in the Opi- 'nion of the civil and ecclesiastical Gover- 'nours?' And was not this so too? Do you pre- tend that the Churches Injunctions are not forbidden by God, and therefore lawfully im- posed? You know this has been alwaies a Sub- ject of Debate. — But none can pretend that God has any where forbidden us, to wash our Hands before Meat. — Or do you plead, that
your

your Ceremonies are indifferent Things; and therefore what can't be justly objected against. But can they be more indifferent, than the washing of our Hands before we eat? In short, try your Skill in making what Apology you please for the Imposition of your Rites and Ceremonies; and the same Arguments will conclude with equal Force, in Favour of the Scribes and Pharisees in this Context.

And now I'm come to consider your artful turning the Point upon us; and to try if we can no Way avoid the dangerous Thrust.—

'No, no, they teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, (you inform us) who say it is a Sin to join in an imposed Form of Prayer, when God never said so, &c.' p. 8. But what is this to the Purpose? We do indeed say it's a Sin for any to join in those imposed Forms and Ceremonies, against the Remonstrances of their own Consciences; and a Sin for any to impose them.—But you must give us better Conviction than your bare Word, that God has never said so.—I am sure God hath said, that *he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith; for whatsoever is not of Faith is SIN*, Rom. xiv. 23.—And God has also said, that if ye *SIN against the Brethren and wound their weak Conscience, ye SIN against Christ*. 1 Cor. viii. 12.—But you tell us. 'They are the

'guilty

guilty Persons, who make these Things sinful, which God has left indifferent; as he has all the Ceremonies of the Church of England.' Has God left these Things indifferent? Why then I beseech you, don't the Church of England leave them indifferent too? Can they order this Matter better than God has done? And I must further enquire, to whom are these Things indifferent? If to the Imposers, they could easily part with indifferent Things, for the Peace and Union of the Church, without any Prejudice to their Conferences.—But how often must you be told, that they are not indifferent to us; and therefore cannot be comply'd with without Sin.—If you say, that our Scruples are unreasonable.—I answer, that you have no Business to monopolize all Reason to your selves.—We have as good a Claim to follow the Dictates of our own Reason, as you have.—We must believe for our selves, act for our selves, and give an Account for our selves.—And are therefore not to depend upon your Reason for our Guide.

Thus I've endeavour'd to rescue my Text out of your Hands, and have (I think) left the Foundation of that Discourse safe, notwithstanding all your Attempts to subvert and undermine it. You next endeavour to turn my own Concessions against me; and 'appeal to any Man

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‘ that is not stark blind with Prejudice, whether I have not by these true Assertions, wholly freed your Church from that dreadful Charge, of teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.’ But why could you not give your Reader my Concessions in my own Words, without leaving out some Passages, and altering and adding others, according to your own Fancy? Did not your publishing those Passages in the *Italick* Character, give your Reader Reason to suppose them an exact Transcript; and did not the Justice of the Cause require, that they should be so? Indeed Sir this looks a little suspicious.

I did (I confess,) allow, that agreeing among our selves, upon any meer Circumstantials and Apendages of Worship, is not *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.*— That it’s impossible to attend upon any publick Worship, without adjusting some external Circumstances with Relation to it, such as the Time and Place of Worship, and such like Things as are altogether extrinsecal to the Worship it self; and which have no Religion placed in them.— But what is this to the Affair under Consideration? You indeed demand, ‘ What has the Church of England done, but only agreed together about some meer Circumstantials and Apendages of Worship?’ And tell us, ‘ They have de-
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clared to the World; that they place no Religion in these Things, &c.’ But could you be serious, when you wrote this? Are the Churches Impositions of these Things with such severe penal Sanctions, no more than an Agreement among themselves? Is there no Difference, between adjusting such external and altogether extrinsecal Circumstances with Relation to the Worship of God, as the Time and Place of Worship; and the imposing your mystical significant Ceremonies, your Modes and Forms of Worship? Don’t you your self allow, that the Sign of the Cross (for Instance) is a visible Sign of invisible Grace.— That it is a Badge of our Christianity; that it is a covenanting Sign, a Sign of professed Consent to the Covenant Duties, an obliging Sign, an investing Sign; that it is to operate Grace morally on the intelligent: And that it is a Discharge of our Duty, by glorying in the Sufferings of Christ? From p. 20. to 26. And can any Body pretend, that this is no more than meer Circumstantials and Apendages of Worship, such as Time, Place and the like? Or can any Body pretend, that the Modes of Worship are altogether extrinsecal to the Worship it self; that they are meer Circumstantials, that have no Religion in them? Why then are we forbid in the second Commandment, to *bow down to any Thing in*

Heaven or Earth? Why did the three Children rather choose the Fiery Furnace, than to fall down to *Nebuchadnezzar's* golden Image. *Dan. iii. 16?* And why were the Martyrs in the Roman Persecution so weak, as to suffer the most terrible Death their Enemies could inflict, rather than take a Censer in their Hands, with burning Incense, in an Idols Temple? Could not these have performed the outward Act, without any inward Consent, by the Help of this fashionable Distinction; These are but meer Circumstances, we place no Religion in them? — You'll remember Sir, that I am not now comparing your Modes of Worship to the idolatrous Modes of the Heathen; but endeavouring to shew, that the Modes of Worship are something more than meer Circumstances. — And if it be so in heathen Worship, it is so likewise in Christian Worship. — Since it is so from the Nature of the Thing, it is so in all Cases whatsoever, as might be abundantly proved from Scripture, if there needed any further Evidences, in so clear a Case. — And I have the same Cause to expostulate with you, with Respect to your Forms of Worship. — Will you yourself say, that there is no Religion placed in them? If you do say so, you acknowledge all the Forms of the Church of England to be void of Religion; and I'm sure then not very desirable.

ble. — If you do not say so, how are they meer *Circumstantials* and *Appendages* of *Worship*? How can your Church declare to the World, that they place no Religion in these Things? In a Word, you must persuade the World to quit their Understanding; and to act wholly by an implicit Faith, before your Reasoning will pass among Men of Discerning, for any Thing but most egregious and ludicrous Trifling.

I am in the next Place to take Notice of your Attempt to vindicate the Church of England, from the Imputation of *Will-Worship*. — And whether that Church be chargeable with *Will-Worship* or not. I can't but think the Difference here made by you, and the learned Advocates called in to your Assistance, is very lame and deficient. — You begin with an Exposition of *Col. ii. 23.* And tell us, from thence, that '*Will-Worship must consist in these two Things, 1. In giving that Worship to a Creature, which is due only to God. 2. In enjoining a Thing as necessary and commanded of God as a Piece of his Service, when God never commanded it; and in prohibiting Things as unlawful by God's Command, when God never forbid them.*' — But whence I beseech you, is this Limitation of *Will-Worship*? Can no Worship be instituted from Mens own Wills, as the Foundation and Rule

Rule of it, without terminating in the Creature, or pretending an immediate Command from God for it? Nay, are not all Institutions of Worship meerly human, founded upon the Will of Man, and that only; Whatever Reasons Men may pretend for their willing and requiring such Kinds of Worship; yet their *Wills* are the only Foundation and Rule of it.—This is (I think) incontestable, that such Worship must be founded upon a Declaration of the Will of God, or the Will of Man.—The former you your self expressly exclude in the present Case; and tell us, that *they are not imposed under the Notion of Necessary Duties, or religious Actions, or as commanded by God.* p. 11. They must be therefore imposed as commanded by Man; and founded upon the Will of Man.—That is, they must be Will-Worship.—But you may yet object, that this is not what was designed by the Apostle in the cited Text.—Let us then consider the Case a little.

Either this Imputation of *Will-Worship*, must be connected to all the foregoing Context; (as you seem to suppose) or else only to the two Verses immediately preceding.—If the former, then the imposing of *Meat Drink and Fasts* v. 16. *Voluntary Humility, and worshipping Angels.* v. 18. *the Rudiments of the World, and human Ordinances*

es. v. 20. forbidding to *touch, taste, or handle.* v. 21. *all the Commandments and Ordinances of Men.* v. 22. are equally condemned as a *Shew of Wisdom in Will-Worship*, in the Text under Consideration.—But if we are to consider this Charge of *Will-Worship*, as referring only to the two Verses immediately foregoing the Text; yet even then, all the *Doctrines and Commandments of Men* in the Worship of God, are without Distinction to *perish* together, under this Indictment.—They are all in the Apostles Account, but a *Shew of Wisdom in Will-Worship*.—There is no Place at all for your Distinction, of *pretending these Things to be necessary and commanded of God, when God never commanded them.*—All that the Apostle founds this Charge upon, is their being meerly *the Commandments and Doctrines of Men.*—No Pleas or Pretences of Gods having commanded or not commanded them comes into the Question in this Context.

And now for the Application.—Whether this Charge lies against some „ hot Dissenters, (as you are pleased to call us) or against those that made them such; is a Question pretty easily answer'd.—Let us be deem'd guilty, if we forbid *Meats and Drinks*; and appoint for *Days of fasting and Abstinence, the forty Days of Lent, the Ember Days*

Days at the four Seasons, being the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, the Feast of Pentecost, September 14. and December 12. The Rogation Days, being the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, before holy Thursday or the Ascension of our Lord; and all the Fridays in the Year, except Christmas Day. — Let them bear this Imputation; that say *touch not, taste not, handle not*, for above a hundred Days in the Year. — We will also be content to bear this Charge, when you prove us guilty of appointing **HOLY DAYS** to be observ'd; (which is another Article in the Catalogue of Will-Worship) and when we require between twenty and thirty Days in the Year, to be observed in Commemoration of certain Saints departed; and of notifying in our Calendar, the Days of above fifty more, some of them very little worthy to be remembered; and some of them utterly unknown, besides Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphany, good Friday, Easter, Whitsunweek; with a long *etcetera.* — If we (I say) thus appoint above half the Days in the Year, for Feasts, and Holy-Days, let us bear the Imputation of *Will-Worship.* — For if so, I don't see how we could evade the Charge of *rejecting the Commandment of God*, (six Days shalt thou labour) *that we may keep our own Traditions.* Mark vii. 9. I will add
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this — We shall also confess our selves chargeable, when we enjoin *the Rudiments of the World*, and subject our People unto *human Ordinances, and the Commandments and Doctrines of Men*; (Which are the other Articles in the Apostles Catalogue of *Will-Worship*) and impose all these, under the Pains of Excommunication: When we impose the *Athanasian Creed*; and damn all that don't believe the whole of it, tho' not one in five hundred understand it. — When we impose contested and scrupled Forms of Prayer, canonical Vestments, the Cross in Baptism, Kneeling at the Lords-Supper, and the like. And yet at the same Time acknowledge; as you do. p. 11. *That we don't impose them under the Notion of necessary Duties or religious Actions, or as commanded by God*: But in short, to assert our Dominion over other Mens Consciences. — When we ordain, that the Church shall be governed by *Arch Bishops, Bishops, Chancellours, Commissaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Arch-Deacons, &c.* that the Scriptures know nothing of. — Then must we plead guilty at this Bar. For *we have but one Law giver, who is able to save and destroy. — And who is he that judgeth another?* Jam. iv. 12. *But in the mean Time,*

Turpe est Doctori cum Culpa redarguit ipsum.
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As to your Discourse of *Superstition*, which you acknowledge to be another Name for the same Thing, p. 12. There is no Occasion to say any Thing about it, having already obviated all your Pretences upon that Head; and shall therefore only observe, that it can certainly be no *Superstition*, to avoid *Will-Worship*.— And to whom that Imputation properly belongs, let the World Judge.

Upon the whole, I must remark to you, how impertinent are all your Pretences, of fixing the Charge of Will-Worship and Superstition upon us; for avoiding what God has not forbidden. For he has forbidden every Thing in his Worship, but what he has required.— Christ has given no Commission to his Ministers to teach any Thing, but what he has commanded them. Mat. xxviii. 2. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to th's Word, it is because they have no Light in them.* Isai. viii. 20. *Whatsoever Thing I command you, observe and do it; thou shalt not add thereto; nor diminish from it.* Deut. xii. 32. *For I testify unto every one that beareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, if any Man shall add unto those Things, God shall add unto him the Plagues, that are written in this Book,* Rev. xxii. 18. To which may be added, besides many other plain Scripture Proofs, the Texts already debated.—

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the one they are reprimanded as *Hypocrites*, who worship God in vain, on Account of their acting for Doctrines the Commandments of Men; and by the other, they are stigmatized as *Will-Worshippers*, who teach the Commandments and Doctrines of Men.

Pardon me Sir, if I here take Liberty to enquire of you, upon what Warrant the Church of England have rejected the Popish Ceremonies and Institutions? The Scripture no where expressly forbids saying Mass, using holy Water, crossing our selves upon all Occasions, setting up Crosses in our Churches or Streets; or wearing them in our Bosoms: Nor does it expressly forbid wearing a String of Beads about our Necks, and counting them when we say our Prayers, or the like. Now according to your own Rule. p. 12. *since you think to please God by avoiding what he has not forbidden*, are you not guilty of Will-Worship and Superstition, in rejecting of these Things? If you say that the general Prohibition of these Things in Scripture is sufficient. We give the same Answer with respect to your unscriptural Institutions. And assign any Reason if you can, for the Church of England's Authority, in appointing any unscriptural Institutions, which she thinks decent and orderly in the Worship of God; which can't be urged with the same Force, in Favour of the Church of Rome's

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Authority in appointing such unscriptural Institutions, as she thinks decent and orderly in the Worship of God, I must take leave to tell you again, that tho' there is greatest Difference in the Nature of the Things imposed; yet there is none at all in the Authority to impose them; nor any at all in the Authority to judge, what are, and what are not decent and orderly in Gods Worship.

Thus I'm prepar'd to hear what you have to say, to the particular Charges as you call them.

The first is, that I think stinted and imposed Liturgies, are teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, for this Reason among others; because the Scriptures have not imposed nor prescribed any. And is not this a good Reason? Such imposed Liturgies must be either the Commandments of God or the Commandments of Men.— If the former, God has prescribed and enjoined them; and if he has not, they are the Commandments of Men, which is what I undertook to prove; and I think this falls nothing short of Demonstration.— If it had been the Will of God that we should worship him by stinted Liturgies, he would have told us so in his Word.— It is impossible by any Evidence to determine that to be his Will in this Case, which he has not revealed to be so in his Word, which is the only Manifestation of his Will, with Re-

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pect to the Modes of Worship. — And it is not so light a Concern, whether we worship God with a Form or without, whether we have a stated and stinted Liturgy or none at all, or by what sort of Form or Liturgy, whether by a Mass-Book, or Common-Prayer-Book, or some other, we are to perform our publick Worship, that there should be no Provision made about it in the Word of God, if it had been the divine Pleasure, that there shou'd be a stated stinted Liturgy constantly used in the Church, for publick Worship. Whence I think we may safely conclude, that the imposing any stinted Liturgy, is teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.

But was you in earnest, when you pretended to turn this Argument upon us? Can you, who have lived so long among us, be capable to imagine, that we impose our extemporary Prayers, upon our Congregations? Did you ever know any Penalties inflicted by us, upon such as differ from us about conceived Prayers? How could you with any Justice say, that "I excommunicate all that can't in Conscience join with me." p. 17. I challenge the World to produce as much as a Shadow of an Instance of this Kind.— No, it is with such as agree with us about the Use of conceived Prayers, with whom that Part of publick Worship is performed.— We have no canons to excom-

municate

municate such as differ from us in that Matter. We refuse no sacred Ordinances to any upon that Account.— And let it be so in the Church of England, and (tho' we could not then think their Way of Worship the best ; yet) we would maintain no Controversy with them about it ; but consent to have every one Practice, according as he is *fully perswaded in his own Mind*. And what Imposition, I entreat you, is it, to agree with them that agree with us ; and use conceived Prayers with those that desire it ?

But you insinuate, that we have no Command of God in the Scriptures for our conceived Prayers, any more than you have for imposing your Liturgy upon us.— To which I answer.— We have express Command in Scripture to attend upon this Duty of Prayer, to pray with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit.— We have particular Directions as to the Method of performing the Duty: But no Precept, no Example, no Direction at all for the compiling, imposing, or using any Liturgy, either for publick or private Devotion.— From whence I think the Consequence is necessary, that we are commanded to pray without a Liturgy, since we are commanded to pray, and have frequent Examples in Scriptures of praying without a Liturgy ; but no divine Warrant for the Use of a Litur-

gy upon any Occasion, much less a stinted Liturgy for constant publick Worship. And I must further observe to you, that your Reasoning will as well conclude against our preaching any Sermons of our own composing ; and for our constant Use of the *Homilies* in our publick Ministry.— For God has no where expressly commanded us to preach our own Compositions.— Will you therefore conclude, that we must preach no Sermons but what the Church has composed for us ? I believe you'll acknowledge that the general Commands to preach, to *be instant in Season and out of Season, to declare the whole Counsel of God, &c.* are a sufficient Declaration of God's Will, against a stinted and stinted Use of the Book of *Homilies*.— And why it is not equally so in the other Case, it concerns you to shew.— Would you argue, that composing of Sermons, is one of the chief of those Gifts that Ministers are required to stir up and exercise. And why not composing or conceiving their Prayers too ? How comes the Gift of Prayer confined to the Composers of the Liturgy ; and denied to all other Ministers, tho' as much concern'd as they, about both the Matter and Form of their Prayers ? Would you urge, that our Sermons should be suited to the several Occasions and Exigences of our Congregations.— And why not our Prayers too ? Why should we be confined

lined by the Book, to Joy and Gladness, when God calls for Weeping and Mourning and Baldness and girding with Sackcloth? See *Isai. xxii. 12 13.* And on the other Hand.— Why must we be confined by the Book, to Fasting and Humiliation, when some signal Instance of special Mercy calls for present Thanksgiving? See *Neh. viii. 9. 10.* And yet these are Cases, that often do and must occur.

Besides, it's utterly impossible, that this Book, or any other, should provide for all the various Exigencies and different Dispensations of Providence, that frequently happen.— And must these Occasions be never regarded in our Devotions? Thus you see what becomes of your fine Reasonings upon this Subject.

But after all, if it were indeed as you boldly assert, that there is a Necessity of Peoples submitting to imposed Prayers, p. 15. And that conceiv'd Prayers are a Form imposed upon the People: Yet this makes nothing at all for your Prayer-Book, I should nevertheless be unsatisfied with stated and stinted Liturgies, for these Reasons.

1. Because there was no such Liturgy composed nor imposed in the Christian Church in the earliest and purest Times of it.— Christ and his Apostles have given us no such Pattern for our Imitation; and I would willingly walk so, as to have them for an Example, *Phil. iii. 17.*

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Certainly if this Method of publick Worship had been the best, it must have been used by them who were infallible in their Choice of the best Methods of worshipping God.

2. Because there is no Commission given by the great Head and King of the Church, to any Man or Men upon Earth, to compose or impose any Liturgy for the Churches Use.— Wherever it is, it must be without Authority; and therefore without any Promise of God's Acceptance.— And I am loath to do any Thing in the Worship of God, that will expose me to that Reprimand.— *Who hath required this at your Hand, Isai. i. 12.*

3. Because where this Commission is wanting, Christians are bound to withstand and oppose all these Impositions; and all Infracti- ons of their Christian Liberty: And even in lawful and indifferent Things, not to be brought under the Power of any, *1 Cor. vi. 12.* But to stand fast in the Liberty, where with Christ has made us free. *Gal. v. 1.* And in doubtful Cases they should certainly take Care, that they condemn not themselves, in those Things which they allow. *Rom. xiv. 22.*

4. Because a stated and stinted Liturgy, limits both the Matter and Manner of our Prayers; and as it prevents those proper Addresses to God which special Exigencies call for, and which no Form can provide for; so it deprives

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us of those divine Assistances, that may be hoped for in the Use of conceived Prayers.— Whence it seems inconsistent with that of the Apostles, *Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities: For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: But the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us, with Groanings that cannot be uttered.*— Of this you were told before, but have found nothing to reply to it.

And now let us consider, whether I am chargeable with such a gross Mistake as you suppose. In saying, that there is no Account in the Old or New Testament, of Forms of Prayer for stated publick Worship.— You call upon us to look into *Deut. xxi. 7. xxvi. 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15. Num. vi. 23. Joel, ii. 17.* But you did not think it proper to transcribe the quoted Texts. That would have laid them open to the Readers view, whereas you might hope, that the most of 'em would take your Word, for the Pertinency of these Quotations; and never take the Pains to read and consider them.— But I have followed your Orders, I have lookt into *Deut. xxi. 7.* And find there Directions, how Men were ordered to clear themselves from the Guilt of innocent Blood, in the Case of an unknown Murder. But then, this was no publick Worship at all, much less was it stated publick Worship.—

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I have lookt into *Deut. xxvi. 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15.*— And find there Directions given, for the Method of bringing the first Fruits to the Priest; and for the Declaration they were to make, when they had made an End of Tything all the Tythes of their Encrease: But in this Case also, the same Objection lies against you.— Were these Directions for publick stated Worship, when the Occasions occurred but once in a Year; and but once in three Years? Did the publick stated Worship of the Jews return no oftner? Is there no Difference between stated, and such Occasional Worship (if it be proper to call it Worship at all)? I confess I was so Ignorant, as to think occasional and stated Worship to be opposites; and did therefore put in the Word *stated*, in Opposition to these occasional Observances.— I have also lookt into *Numb. vi. 23.* Which is only a Direction as to the Manner of the Priests pronouncing the Blessing to the People; and not for the Peoples Worshipping God at all.— And as little to the Purpose is your last Quotation from *Joel ii. 17.* Which is no more than a Direction to the Priests, to use a particular Petition in their Prayers to God, on one particular Fast Day then appointed by the Prophet, without any Direction that it should ever be used, upon any other Occasion.— And what is this to stated publick Worship? Could

Could you your self suppose, that those Texts of Scripture any Thing affected the Debate between you and I? Do they make any Thing at all, for the composing and imposing a stinted Liturgy for their constant publick Worship? Which was the Thing (as you know) that I was then pleading against. --- Is it just arguing, that because in the Case of an unknown Murder, Men were to use a Form to clear themselves from the Guilt of that Murder; Or that when the Jews brought in their first Fruits, and Tythes, they were to use a particular Form of Words, upon their delivering them to the Priest; or because the Priests were to bless the People in a particular Form of Words; or that because there was a special Petition to be used, upon one particular Fast Day of Gods appointing; that therefore we are to be tied up to a stated stinted Liturgy of human Invention and Appointment, in all our Prayers in the publick Worship of God? Methinks a little more thought upon this Subject would have been proper, before you had published that scripture Evidence to the World.

But you have one more Scripture Proof which is, that " *the Psalms of David, Moses, &c. are Forms of Prayer as well as Praise; and called Prayers.* " p. 6. But were not these penned to be sung in the Congregations? Were not praying and singing different

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Parts of publick Worship, in the solemn Assemblies of the Jews? And do not we as well as you, use these very Forms in our publick Worship? What then is this to the present Case? Is this Reasoning; or is it trifling, to urge, that because it is agreed between us, that there were Forms of Divine Appointment for publick Singing, that therefore there were also Forms instituted for the stated publick Prayers in the *Jewish Church*. --- What does it signify, that these Psalms were some of them by Way of Petition to God, since they were design'd for a different and distinct Part of Worship, from their stated publick Prayers.

Upon the whole, I have this further Remark to make, that you your self don't pretend to any Warrant from the New-Testament, for the Use of Forms of Prayer in our stated publick Worship. --- Whence you implicitly allow, that there is no scripture Warrant for their Use under the Gospel Dispensation.

I am now to consider, what you can offer against this Saying of mine, in the Sermon you oppose, that we can't help but think, that taking a great Part of the Prayer-Book out of the popish Liturgy, is *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*. To which you answer, first " *I wish you had the Mass-Book that you might see with your own Eyes, how wide he is from the Truth.* " But what an odd

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Evasion is this? Did I pretend, that the Common-Prayer was taken out of the *Mass-Book* strictly speaking? Or is that Book (if considered only as the Order and Canon of the Mass) all the popish Liturgy? No Sir, when you undertake to compare Notes, be pleased to look into the Roman *Breviary* for the first Part of the publick Prayers; into the *Ritual* for the Order of Administring Sacraments, Matrimony, visiting the Sick, and Burials; into the *Missal* for the Order of Consecration; in the Communion, for the Epistles and Gospels and Collects; and into the Pontifical, for the Order of Consecration of Bishops and Priests: All which belong to their Liturgy.

You next pretend to call in some Witnesses in your Favour, *Mr. Ball* and *the Ministers of Old-England*, in their *Letter to the Ministers in New-England*.— But what do they say? Do they deny; or could they deny, that the Method and Form of the Prayer-Book, was taken out of the popish Liturgy? No, but that the popish Liturgy was refined; and that what the Church of England retain'd in their Prayer-Book, was in most Things according to the purest Liturgies, that were in Use, long before the Mass was heard of in the World.— Which if true, does not contradict any Thing spoken, by me, since it is not denyed; but that these Things were Part of the popish Liturgy, when

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the Prayer-Book was compiled.— But what are we to understand by these ancient and purest Liturgies, they speak of? You tell us, “*The Truth is the Church of England when she reform'd came as near as she possibly could, to the Church in the purest and apostolical Ages, long before Popery was heard of in the World*”. p. 18. This (I must confess) is something surprizing.— Can you direct where to find those Liturgies of the Apostolical Ages, that the Prayer-Book was copied from? Or can you find any Liturgy at all, of constant stated Use in the Church, before *Pope Gregory's* Time, in the Year of Christ 600. If you can find any such Liturgy, from which the Church of England copied any Part of the Prayer-Book, before that Time, let us hear of it in your next.— But if you can't, what mean these Boasts of the Apostolical Ages? What if the Church of England might find something of *Pope Gregory's Liturgy* in the Popish Service, when she extracted the Prayer-Book: I must nevertheless observe to you, that the Church in *Gregory's* Time, instead of being Apostolical, was very Apostatical; and *Popery was heard of in the World*, long before that Time.

But since you are pleased to call in human Testimony in your Vindication, it maynt be improper for me also, to offer you some hu-
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man Testimony, more pertinent, and of better Authority. And I'll first bring forth two Royal Witnesses, who are as express in my Favour as Words can be. — King Edward the vi. in his Speech to the *Devonshire* Rebels (that were armed in Opposition to the Reformation) tells them, *As for the Service Book in the English Tongue, it perhaps seems to you a new Service; yet indeed it is no other but the old THE SAME WORDS in English that were in Latin, saving a few Things taken out, that were so fond, that it had been a Shame to have heard them in English. If the Service of the Church was good in Latin, it remains good in English; for NOTHING IS ALTER-ED, but to speak with Knowledge, what was spoken with Ignorance; and to let you understand what I said for you.* * King James the first, in a speech to the general Assembly of the Church of Scotland, thus expresses himself, *As for your Neighbour Kirk in England, their Service is but an evil said Mass in English, they want nothing of the Mass, but the lifting up, &c.* † To these I add Mr. Thomas Gage, who was bred a Popish Priest; and therefore very capable to judge in this Case. Who thus expresseth himself. *When in Paul's Church,*

* Foxes Acts and Mon. Vol. 2. p. 667. † Calderwood Hist. p. 256.

I heard the Organs, and the Musick, and the Prayers, and the Collects; and saw the Ceremonies at the Altar, I remembered Rome again; and perceived but little Difference between the two Churches. I searched further into the Common Prayer; and carried with me a Bible into the Country, on purpose to compare the Prayers, with a Mass Book, which there I had in Command; and found no Difference but English and Latin, which made me wonder, and to acknowledge that much remained still of Rome in the Church of England; and that I feared my Calling was not right. * And if a Witness from among the Papists will add any Force, you may take that of Weston, whom I believe you will think satirical enough. *Some Protestants (says he) that they may not appear absolutely impious and irreligious, use our Missal and Breviary, selecting what they please thereof, for their Liturgy; and to make the Form of their Worship to appear more goodly, they have their Canonical Persons forsooth, after the Modes and Customs of the Church of Rome. Their Caps, and Hoods, and Holy-Days, and such like Stuff, which they say they found in the Synagogue of Antichrist. By which very Thing it is apparent, that the Religion of these Protestants stands guilty of*
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* English Amer. p. 205.

Stealth and Robbery, by which it first came in to the World. Or if they will not be taken for Thieves, let them go for our Apes. These with their whole Service are derided, not only by ours, but also by their own. The English seem to have driven the Pope out of England in such Haste, that they forced him to leave his Cloaths behind him, which they, like Fools in a Play, put on with a kind of pompous Ceremony of Triumph, and so lead the Quire. A good Reformation it is, that they dare not earn through! Thus he. To which I may add, That two successive Popes offered Queen Elizabeth, on certain Conditions, to confirm or allow the Prayer Book, as we are told by the aged Nonconformists, out of Camden's Eliz. p. 46. and Fox's Acts and Monum. Vol. 2. p. 667.

Thus I have entertained you with some counter Evidences, and have more at your Service, if these wont satisfy.

But what need of Evidences in a Matter of Fact, always open to the Test? Mr. De-Laun you know, has exactly drawn the Parallel, between the one and other Liturgy, to whom I refer you for further Satisfaction.

But you say, *suppose the Papists use several of those Prayers that we use, what then?* Did I not tell you before, what then, that we think we have just Cause to complain, that the Or-
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der and Method, as well as a good Part of the Matter of those Prayers, are not only from the Commandments of Men; but from the Commandments of *Antichrist* himself. It therefore appears to us, too great a symbolizing with Idolaters, to stately use them in our publick Worship, contrary to that Rule, 1. Cor. x. 28. and that 1 Cor. vi. 17. To which you have not seen Cause to make any Reply.

What next offers, is your Attempt to vindicate the Prayer-Book from the Imputation of *vain Repetitions*. And in Order to a just view of the Case, it may be proper to enquire into the meaning of our Lords Prohibition of *vain Repetitions*, in *Mat. vi. 7* — And then consider, how applicable that Text is to the Case before us. The Words of that Text are:—
But when ye pray, use not vain Repetitions as the Heathen do: For they think that they shall be heard, for their much speaking. — From whence it's apparent, that the frequent Repetition of the same Thing, that God may the rather hear and accept us on that Account, is what is here prohibited and condemned by our blessed Saviour, under the Character of *vain Repetitions*. And is not this the Case in the Prayer Book? That there are numerous Repetitions of the same Thing, is certain. And that these Repetitions are all together needless, is as certain. One single Use of *Good Lord deliver*

deliver us; or of *We beseech thee to bear us good Lord*, would have been as well connected with the Whole of that Prayer in the *Litany*, as the Repetition of the one eight Times, and the other Twenty. And what is this much **speaking** of the same Thing for? Is it not that God may hear you? Or is it meer trifling to no Purpose at all? The one or other of these must be the Design of it. If the former, how can you be excused from vain Repetitions, in the very Sence that they are prohibited in this Text? If the latter, it is horrible Profaneness, which therefore cannot be the End of it. I don't apprehend what Answer you can give to this.

It don't at all affect the Case, for you to say as p. 19. '*When we repeat Good Lord deliver us, it always relates to new Matter*;' since there is no new Matter at all, spoken by those that vocally pronounce these Petitions; nor any Cause at all (that I know of) that calls for their Repetition. And there are besides this, many other *Repetitions* in your Prayers, where there can be no Pretence for any new Matter intervening. For instance, in the very same Prayer before referred to, that Petition *Have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners*, is used eight Times successively, without any other Petition between; and that Petition, *Lord have Mercy upon us, Christ have Mercy upon us*, six Times successively

successively, without any new Matter. And you know where to find more of the like Kind. The Common Prayer Book complains of the Papists using *Multitudes of Responds, Verses and vain Repetitions*. We make the same Complaint of the Prayer-Book. And the likeliest Way to satisfy our Complaint, is to shew how *Multitudes of Repetitions* in the Popish Prayers are *vain*; and *Multitudes of Repetitions* in the Prayer-Book are not *vain*. But I can think of no possible Method of doing this, unless you pretend, That the Papists have wrong Ends in their using these Repetitions: But then, mayn't they that joyn in your *Litany* have wrong Ends too? And don't the Repetitions in both, tend to the same End? You tell us indeed, that '*these Repetitions are very necessary to raise our Devotion, and keep up our Attention*.' p. 19. And won't the Papists make the same Plea, upon the same Grounds? But unto what, I beseech you, are they likely to raise our Devotion, and keep up our Attention, when we are doing Nothing but repeat the same Thing over and over again, unless it be to an Expectation of our being heard for our much speaking? This appears to me their direct Tendency; and I don't know how you can instance in any *Repetitions* used among the Heathen, that carry a greater Shew of this Kind in their Countenance, than these do. Let

Let us for Instance, pitch upon that Prayer of the *Priests of Baal*, 1 *King* xviii. 25. And how do these shew their Expectation, of their being heard for their much speaking, by repeating *O Baal bear us!* any more than they, that above Twenty Times going, repeat, *We beseech thee to bear us good Lord,* or that do nothing but repeat, *Have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners?* It's granted their Petitions were made to a false God, yours to the true God: But that is so far from helping the Case, that it is the very Argument of our Saviour, why we should not imitate them, in the Verse following the Text under Consideration.

But in Justification of these Repetitions, you plead, that 'in *Psalm* cxxxvi, *there are but Twenty seven Verses; and those Words, For his Mercy endureth forever, are repeated twenty seven times.*' And what can you argue from hence, but that because we may use Repetitions in Singing, where Christ has not forbidden it, we may use Repetitions in Prayer, where Christ has forbidden it. Besides I have often heard of the *Burden of a Song*; and this has been at all Times usual, both in sacred and prophane Songs. But I never heard of the *Burden of a Prayer*.

You add, 'Christ himself repeated the same Words thrice, in his Prayer in the Garden, Mat. xxvi. 41. And twice on the Cross in one
Breath,

Breath, Mat. xxvii. 46.' But I must needs tell you, That you ought to have considered this Case better, before you had ventured to publish so great a Mistake to the World, upon any Man's Authority. For (*first*) if it were granted, that our Lord did use the same Words three times; it was in three distinct different Prayers; and what is this to the Case of using needless Repetitions in the same Prayer? Did ever any Body object against praying for the same Thing, in several distinct Prayers? If you pretend, that these Words were repeated in the same Prayer you directly contradict the sacred Story referred to, where we are expressly informed, that he came from his Retirement to his Disciples, the first Time, the second and third Time; and waked them up, conversed with them; and then returned again to his secret Devotion. And (*secondly*) there is no such Thing in the Original of that Text you quote, as Christ's repeating the same Words. The Original Words are *TON AUTON LOCON*, which signifies the same *Speech*, or the same *Matter*; but not the same *Words*; and so it is accordingly rendred in both the *Latin* Versions. And it is certain that he did not use the same Words. For the Words of his first Prayer were, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* ver. 39. But his second

cond Prayer was thus express'd, *O my Father, if this Cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy Will be done.* ver. 42. So that it's plain, our Lord used no Liturgy, in that he prayed for the same Thing in different Words, much less did he use any Repetitions at all. So far from it, that in his praying for the same Thing, in several distinct Prayers, he used different Expressions.

And as for your last mentioned Text. Was there any Petition twice used, or any Thing like it, in the same Breath? What then could you mean by pretending to it? That he invoked the Name of God twice is true, but nothing to the Purpose. I can't but think it looks pretty hard upon your Cause, that you have no better Arguments to support it.

And now I proceed to the Consideration of what you have to say in Vindication of your Churches appointing the *Apocrypha* to be read, as a Part of publick Worship, while there are a great many Parts of the canonical Scripture, never read in publick. Your first Answer is by Way of Recrimination upon your Adversaries, for complaining of this, *'when they themselves have laid by the whole Bible; and never read one Chapter by way of Lesson.'* But who are these Adversaries you speak of? It was with me, that you had to do in this Debate; and you very well know, that it is my constant

constant Practice to read a Chapter of the Bible, upon every Occasion of publick Worship. There are, it is true, some of our Ministry in this Country, that do live in the Omission of that Part of publick Worship; and I dare not undertake to justify them. Our publick Formula's do (I think) all declare for it. And I confess my self ignorant, upon what justifiable Pretence it can be omitted.

Your other Answer is, that *'they (your Adversaries) know, that you never read the Apocrypha as the Word of God, never read it on the Lord's Day, never neglect the Holy Scripture for it.'* To which I answer. How should we know, that you never read this as the Word of God, when you declare so loudly in the Preface to the Common Prayer, that *'nothing is ordained to be read, but the pure Word of God, the Holy Scriptures; or that which is agreeable to the same.'* And must we suppose, that the legendary Story of *Judith* and her wonderful lascivious Feats, in a meer Utopian *Bethulia*, on a certain Time, that could never be brought into any Calendar, under the Reign of a *Nebuchadnezzar*, that never had any being, is the pure Word of God, or agreeable to the same. And yet your Calendar directs *Judith* the first and second, to be read *October 5th.* Or must we suppose the same of the famous romantick Story of the lying Angel

Angel (that said his Name was *Azarias*, *Tobit's* near Kinsman, of the Tribe of *Naphtali*, &c. who in Company with *Tobit's* Son, rescued him out of the Mouth of a Fish big enough, and fierce enough, it seems, to have devoured him; and yet these two (a couple of notable Trencher Men, I confess!) eat up the mighty Fish at a Meal, except his Heart, Gall, and liver, which were reserved for very sacred Uses; the one of 'em, to cure *Tobit's* Eyes, that were muted out by a Swallow; the other, two to smook away the Devil into the furthest Parts of *Egypt*, that he might be bound there, and return no more, to carry on his Amour with the young Man's Wife. And yet you know, this very edifying Story is by your Calendar appointed to be read, in your publick Worship. It is there ordained, that *Tobit* 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, be read on the 27, 28, and 30 of *September*; and that *Tobit* 7, 9, 11, and 13, on the 1, 2, 3, and 4, of *October*. You tell us us indeed, that these are never read on the Lord's Day. But tell us not, why they are appointed to be read on any Day in God's immediate Service. And I would humbly enquire, whether the Lord's Day never happens on the three last Days of *September*, or the four first Days of *October*; or on any other Days of the Months, on which Lessons are by the Calendar appointed to be read out of the

Apocrypha. But to avoid Prolixity, I venture to sum up this Debate, by an Appeal to the World, whether the ridiculous and false Stories, as well as the many false Doctrines, that are appointed to be read out of the *Apocrypha*, are worthy of that Honour, which is due only to the Word of God, to be made Part of our publick Worship, in our Religious Assemblies. And whether it ben't the highest Indignity to the *Oracles of God*, to omit the reading of a great Part of them at all, in order to make Way for such fabulous Comlosures.

And now let us consider, whether the *Sign of the Cross in Baptism*, be not teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men; and a just Exception against your Liturgy. I had observed, that the *Cross* is made on the Forehead in Baptism, in Token, that the Party be not hereafter ashamed to confess the Faith of *Christ crucified*, and that he is to fight manfully under his Banner, &c. Now if this be a Token of these invisib'le Graces, it agrees with the Churches own Definition of a Sacrament. *A visible Sign of invisible Grace*. To which you answer, 'Surely he thinks the People of Newark are Ideots or natural Fools, to believe that to be true, which every Child which has learned the Catechism, knows to be false, &c. But why so much Heat! Will you cool a little, and submit to be catechized; and answer

me a few Questions, according to your own Catechism and Prayer-Book.

D. How many Parts are there in a Sacrament?

B. *Two. The outward Sign; and the inward spiritual Grace.*

D. To what End is the Sign of the Cross used in Baptism?

B. *In Token that hereafter we shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified; and manfully to fight under his Banner, against Sin, the World, and the Devil; and to continue Christ's faithful Soldiers and Servants unto our Lives End.*

D. Is here no outward visible Sign?

B. *Yes, the Sign of the Cross, which the Prayer-Book calls a Token, that hereafter we shall not be ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified, &c.*

D. Is here no inward spiritual Grace, accompanying this outward Sign?

B. *Yes, the confessing the Faith of Christ crucified; and manfully fighting under his Banner, against Sin, the World the Flesh and the Devil, and continuing his faithful Soldiers and Servant unto our Lives End, are certainly inward spiritual Graces. if there be any such Thing as spiritual Grace.*

D.

D. Has not then this Use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, all the Parts assigned by the Church Catechism unto a Sacrament?

B. *It seems so. But then I don't understand, why in the Definition of a Sacrament these Words are added, ordained by Christ himself, as a Means whereby we receive the same; and a Pledge to assure us thereof.*

D. No wonder you don't understand it; for you confess your self to be but a *Novice*, p. 4. and you can't expect to learn every Thing at once. It may'nt be unserviceable therefore, for you to have it explain'd to you. That these Words do not belong to the Definition of a Sacrament as such, plainly appears by the following Answer in the Catechism, where we are told, that there are but the other two Parts, in a Sacrament: But it belongs to a *divine Sacrament*, to have it ordain'd by Christ himself. Institution is indeed of the very Essence of a Sacrament; and Christ's Institution is what makes it of divine Original.— But then a human Ordinance such as the Sign of the Cross, may be, nay must be, according to your Catechism, a Sacrament nevertheless; if it have (tho' by human Institution) both the Parts of a Sacrament. For what can be wanting to make it a Sacrament, if it have all the Parts? To make this a little more familiar to you. It's to be observ'd, that the Catechism countenances

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nances this Distinction of a *divine* and *human* Sacrament, in the immediately foregoing Answer, where we are taught, that *there are but two Sacraments only, GENERALLY NECESSARY to Salvation, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.* Whereby it's plainly intimated, that there may be other Sacraments, tho' not *generally necessary*; and it belongs only to these two, that are *generally necessary* that they be ordained by Christ himself &c. — Thus you see, what Injury your Parents have done you, by neglecting to teach you this Catechism in your Childhood. But I'm afraid I have been too free with you. And it's well if I han't provoked you to put me in Mind again, of my Want of *good Manners*; and to accuse me of a *Flood of railing virulent Language*, &c. As in p 21. I shall therefore add no more upon this, but return to the Consideration of what you have further to offer.

You inform us, that, “ *if this Definition of a Sacrament be true, then Kneeling or Standing in Prayer is a Sacrament. For it is a visible Sign of our Fear and Reverence of God; yea my ministerial Band is a Sacrament. — For that is a visible Sign of my being devoted to Christ in the Ministry.* ” Well! suppose this were true, who I beseech you are you disputing against? Who have determined these

two Things to be the only Parts of a Sacrament? But I must take Leave to inform you, that these are groundless Surmizes, unless you can prove that every one that Kneels or stands in Prayer; and every Minister or Lawyer that wears a Band, are gracious Persons. Nor would that do neither. — For these are not instituted either by God or Man, to signify any such Thing. — And it is the Institution that makes a Sacrament, as I observed before. And as I am utterly averse to all human Sacraments, so in an especial Manner, to the giving by Institution, the Honour of a Sacrament to a popish Idol, as you can't but acknowledge the Cross to be.

I had demanded in my Sermon, why this Honour was done to the Cross, on which Christ was crucified, any more than to the Thorns with which he was crowned, to the Traitor by whom he was betrayed; or the malicious Court by which he was condemned? To which you answer, “ *because the Scripture makes an honourable Mention of the Cross frequently; but not of Judas and the rest.* ” p. 22. You instance in two Places of Scripture, *Mat. xvi. 24.* and *1. Cor. i. 17. p. 26.* But could you seriously suppose, that these or any other Scriptures that mention the Cross, intend thereby the material Cross upon which Christ suffered, or the Figure of it made in the

Air? Let us see what Work we shall make of it, if we understand these quoted Scriptures in that Sence.— *If any Man will come after me, let him take up his Cross, (that is let him carry a wooden Cross on his Back; or keep making an Aerial Cross on his Forehead) and follow me. For the preaching of the Cross, (that is preaching about a wooden Cross; or the Sign of it made in the Air) is to them that perish Foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the Power of God.*— Can you think this a just Interpretation of these Scriptures? If not, why are they quoted, if it be, why is the wooden Cross laid aside? Why don't you wear Crosses upon your Breast? Why are not Crosses painted on your Church Walls; and erected at every Corner of the Streets? Why don't you cross your self upon every Occasion? I believe you will be hard put to it to find any Thing in Scripture, that speaks more honourably of your Use of the Cross, than of these Practices of the Papists, which you have rejected.— But the Truth is, wherever the Scripture makes honourable Mention of the Cross of Christ, it intends the Death of Christ, or Christ himself that suffered upon the Cross; and not either a Cross of Wood, or the Sign of it.— How impertinent therefore, are all those Pleas or Pretences from Scripture! And the same Answer is sufficient for your second Pretence, that

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the Cross was reproach'd by Infidels; but so were not the rest.— That is, they reproached our Saviour and his Followers, on Account of his accursed Death.— And what is this in Favour of the Sign of the Cross? Did he not suffer this accursed Death, thro' the Treason of Judas, by the Sentence of the malicious Court by which he was condemned; and with a Crown of Thorns on his Head? And I venture to affirm, that there is no more honourable Mention made in the Scriptures, of the Cross of Wood on which he suffered, than of these.— That is, there is no honourable Mention made of either of them.

But its Time to attend upon the Answers you give, to " *any that shall be so impertinent, as to ask what Warrant you have from Scripture for the Sign of the Cross,*" p. 25. And you tell us, " *The Scripture requires of us, that we express our inward Sence of God and Duty towards him, by such Actions as general Custom has made significant in like Cases.*" Ibid. But I'm afraid you have not sufficiently considered this Rule of yours; and what Consequences must necessarily follow from it.— For if this be true, then the Scripture requires of you, that you should paint God the Father in the Form of an old Man, Our Saviour in the Shape of a Younger Man upon the Cross; and the Holy-Ghost in the Form of

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a Dove.— You should keep Images of Angels and Saints in your Churches ; and in your Houses. For you know where these, and multitudes more of such Abominations, are by *general Custom, become significant of our inward Sence of God and Duty towards him.* If you say, these are evil Customs, be pleased to clear the Custom in Question from that Imputation. And besides, the Rule you have given, has made no Distinction in this Case. If it had 'twould have been altogether impertinent.

You go on to argue, “ *glorying in the Sufferings of Christ is a Duty.* Gal. vi. 14. But good Sir, is there no way to glory in the Sufferings of Christ, but by making a Cross on the Forehead? For my Part I can't conceive how this is glorying in his Sufferings at all.

You add, “ *making the Sign of the Cross, is an Action which by universal Custom in all Ages, since the Apostles Time, has been applied to signify our glorying in the Sufferings of Christ,*” A bold Assertion, without any Pretence of Proof ! Be pleased in your next to shew, that the Cross in Baptism was ever once used during the three first Centuries ; and it will be more to the Purpose.— But suppose it were so, since it was not used in the Apostles Time, I enquire by what Authority was that Custom introduced.

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There is one Thing more, proposed as an Argument for this Use of the Cross ; and that is, “ *'Tis Part of our Christian Liberty, that God allows us to express our Devotion, in such becoming Actions, as universal Custom has made significant.*” p. 27. But is it Part of your Christian Liberty, to impose these Things upon those that scruple them? Is your Liberty infringed, if you want Liberty to excommunicate the half of the Kingdom? Have none any Claim to Christian Liberty, but your selves? Or is it an Attempt upon your Liberty, to peaceably debate these Things with you? I know not how you can pretend, that your Liberty is in the least invaded, unless in these Instances. — Thus I have, tho' but briefly, yet (I think) fully answered all your Arguments for the Use of the Sign of the Cross in Baptism ; and shall under this Head only subjoin some Qeries, which I hope you will particularly answer in your next.

Q. 1. I would first enquire, Whether any Church upon Earth, has Power to impose doubtful and scrupled Rites, (such as you know the Sign of the Cross is, to the greatest Part of the Protestant World) upon the Consciences of others ; and to excommunicate all that won't comply with them? And whether this be not *to judge another Man's Servant, who must stand or fall by his own Master?* Contrary to Rom. xiv. 1.

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Q. 2.

Q. 2. Whether, since the Sign of the Cross has no divine Institution, and has been abused to the most abominable Superstition and Idolatry, it ought not to be treated as *Herzkiab* did the brazen Serpent, and called *Nebushtan*, 2 Kings viii. 4? And whether God's Directions to his ancient People, that they should utterly destroy all the Remainers and the Monuments of Idolatry, all that had been abused and polluted by an Idolatrous Use, be not from the Nature and Reason of the Thing obligatory upon us? See *Deut. vii. 5, 25. Isai. xxx. 22. and xxxii. 9.*

Q. 3. Whether that which is the principal Badge of Popery, has been a dreadful Snare to Multitudes of poor deluded People, and has shed so much precious Blood, which the Earth will not cover, should be advanced to the highest Honour in a Protestant Church, without any just Pretence to a divine Warrant? And yet you know all these Things are true, of the Sign of the Cross.

Q. 4. Whether the cursed Instrument of our blessed Saviour's extream Sufferings, should (on the Account of its having been such to him) be had in highest Honour and Reverence by us?

Q. 5. Whether any of the five Popish human Sacraments, have not as good a Claim to our Observation, as the Sign of the Cross; which

which I have already proved from your Prayer Book to have the Nature of a Sacrament, by the Institution of your Church?

I am now prepared to consider your Arguments for *Kneeling* at the Lords Supper. And I shall begin with that which you triumph most upon. 'But does he think (say you) that the Apostles continued eating or sitting, whilst Christ was at Prayer over the Bread and Wine. — But if the Apostles rose up or kneeled, whilst Christ prayed, where does he find that they sat down again to receive immediately after the Consecration. Let Sitters answer this; or else let them cease to tell us, that Christ when he used this Ordinance, did it in a Table Posture: But this they can never answer.' p. 32. — The best Way to set this in a clear Light is, to see how this Affair is represented by the Evangelists. We are told by one of them, That *when the Hour was come, he SAT DOWN, and the twelve Apostles with him. — And he took the Cup and gave Thanks, &c. Luke ix. 14, 17.* We are told by another of them, that *Supper being ended, HE RISETH FROM SUPPER, and laid aside his Garments, Job. xiii. 2, 4.* And is not their sitting down to the Table at the Beginning; and their rising up from it when they had done, a sufficient Evidence, that they partook of this Ordinance sitting? If not, I despair of ever seeing

seeing any Thing proved, by the most plain, positive and intelligible Expressions. Therefore as to your curious Question, whether the Apostles continued sitting, whilst Christ was at Prayers over the Bread and Wine? Or whether they arose and sat down again after the Consecration? I answer, they might do either the one or the other. If the former, it would not be the first Time that they sat by our Saviour's express Commandment, while he prayed for a Blessing upon his Table. See *Mat. xiv. 19. And he commanded the Multitude to sit down on the Grass, and looking up to Heaven, he blessed and brake, &c.* So also *Mat. xv. 35.* Nor do I see any Incongruity in supposing on the other Hand, that they rose up whilst Christ was at Prayer; and sat down again after the Consecration. Certain it is, if they did rise at the Consecration of the Elements, they did sit down again, or else they could not rise from the Table, when the Supper was ended. In short, whether the Apostles sat or stood whilst Christ was at Prayer, we know that standing is by divine Institution, a proper praying Posture, which is a sufficient Warrant for our Conduct in standing up, whilst we pray for a Blessing on the Elements. And the Example of Christ and his Apostles, is a sufficient Warrant for our sitting, when we partake of them. We do not know, whether they

they sat or stood whilst Christ blessed the Elements, and therefore may attend upon that Part of the Institution, in a proper praying Posture. But we do know that they sat, whilst they partook of the Elements, and therefore may not deviate from that Pattern. Impertinent therefore are all those specious Pretences, urged from Bishop *Beveridge*, of Kneeling out of greater Humility, Reverence, and the like. For where will the Charge of wanting Reverence, Humility, &c. terminate? Was sitting the Posture that Christ himself appointed; and shall his own institutions be charged with Irreverence? Or can you pretend to refine upon his Institutions, and order Things better than he has done? Would not this be the highest Reflection upon his Wisdom and Authority? Our blessed Lord has given us an Example, which ought to be a standing Pattern to his Church, this we are bound to imitate. We have no Allowance to decline from it, no Authority to alter or change it, no Warrant to contrive a more humble, decent, or reverend Posture, than he has exemplified. And are therefore certainly safest, whilst we are *Followers of him as dear Children.* For Obedience is the best Humility.

I must therefore again enquire; since the Church of *England* disclaims any Adoration to the Elements, why does she use the Posture of Adora-

Adoration? Why will she symbolize with the *Papists*, in their Adoration of their Breaden God? And why give such Countenance to their horrid Idolatry, to the Grief and Wounding of so many of God's dear Children? I must observe to you, that your pretended parallel Case, is altogether impertinent: For when I kneel before a Chair in Prayer, I don't kneel down to any Sign, Representation or Image, with my Mind and Eyes fixed upon that, as you do, when you kneel at the Lord's Supper; and therefore can be in no Danger of Idolatry, when I kneel immediately to the highest Object of Worship, without any intermediate Sign.

You deny that Kneeling was brought in by the *Papists*.— And in Answer, I make you this fair offer.— If you'll prove that Kneeling was used in any Church upon Earth, at the Lord's-Supper, before Transubstantiation was brought in, I will acknowledge my Mistake, as publickly as you please.

You complain of my saying, that the glorious Author of this Feast, is pleased to stoop to a friendly Familiarity with his Guests; and seem ignorant of what I mean by it.— I will therefore inform you, that I mean by it, that Christ is dealing by us in this Ordinance, as a great Monarch does by his mean Subjects, whom he invites to a Feast.— He is suffering

ing us to *sit down with the King at his Table*; and allowing us most near and intimate Communion with himself.— He is here calling upon us saying, *eat O Friends, Drink, yea drink abundantly, O my beloved*.— And now I'll conclude this Head also, with a few Queries, which I hope you'll particularly answer in your next.

Q. 1. I first enquire, whether Bowing down or Kneeling to Signs or Representations of God, and heavenly Things, does not incur the Guilt of Idolatry and Image Worship, even when the Adoration does ultimately refer to God himself? Whether this sort of Idolatry ben't expressly forbidden, by the Letter of the second Commandment? Whether the Elements in the Lords Supper, be not Signs and Representations of our Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore, whether this don't look too much like that sort of Idolatry, to bow down or kneel to these Elements; or whether it has not at least too much Tendency to lead weak and ignorant Persons to it?

Q. 2. Whether Meditation and ejaculatory Prayer, ben't the proper Exercises to be attended at the Time of Participation; and whether Kneeling be an instituted Posture for the attending those Duties?

Q. 3. Whether appointing a different Posture in this Ordinance, from that instituted by

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our Lord Jesus Christ, under a Pretence of Humility, be not according to the Letter of that Text, Col. ii. 22. *A Shew of Wisdom in Will-Worship, and Humility?*

Q. 4. Whether those can be in any Danger of displeasing our Lord Jesus Christ, who imitate his own Example in the Posture they use at this Ordinance? And whether there be no Danger on the other Hand, in deviating from the Pattern he himself has set us?

The next Thing that offers, is your Vindication of your Sureties in Baptism.— Upon this Head you tell us, that ‘ *It’s no Wonder. I find Fault with it; For I have mistook the whole Matter.— Here the Sureties make not one Promise of any Thing, that they will do for the Child; but only are the Mouth of the Child; and the Child promises and professes by them as Proxies.* ’ p. 30. 31. Then according to this account of the Matter, the Sureties are under no Obligation at all.— *They don’t make one Promise of any Thing, that they will do for the Child.—* What then do you mean by saying, that ‘ *Tho’ some Sureties are careless of their Duty in this Regard, yet others do it very well.* ’ What Duty I beseech you? They are under no Obligation.— *they are ONLY the Mouth of the Child, to let the Congregation know for their Edification, what the Child ought to have spoke, if he had*
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been able to speak. What signifies it to tell us, that *we may see the Duties of the Sureties, in the Exhortation, at the End of the Office;* when they are under no Obligation to regard that Exhortation, any more than their Neighbours? They have done their Part already. *They are only the Mouth of the Child, to speak in his Name; and that they have performed.* And what is all this, but a meer Piece of Pageantry? Could not the Minister acquaint the People with the Nature of this Ordinance, and the Duties belonging to it, without all this ado? And does not his Office oblige him to it? How came the Sureties by their Call, to preach to the Congregation? *The Child (you say) speaks and professes by them, as his Proxies.* As his Proxies for what? Who constituted them his Proxies? How came they such without his Leave? Or how does the Child promise and profess by them, when he knows Nothing of what they say? How ludicrous is the Pretence! How vain and trifling is the whole Affair, if this be a true State of the Case! But I suspect, that upon an impartial View, it will appear in very different Colours.

Will you be pleased, Sir, to allow me once more a little of that former Intimacy I have had with you, and answer me a Question or two, according to your Catechism and Prayer Book.

D. What did your Godfathers and Godmothers promise for you?

B. *They did promise and vow three Things in my Name. First that I SHOULD renounce the Devil and all his Works; The Poms and Vanities of this wicked World; And all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh. Secondly, that I SHOULD believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. And thirdly, That I SHOULD keep God's holy Will and Commandments; and walk in the same all the Days of my Life.*

D. Dost thou think that thou art bound to believe and to do, what they have promised for thee?

B. *Yes verily, and by Gods Help so I will.*

D. How long are Godfathers and Godmothers under the Obligation of that Vow and Promise, they make for Infants.

B. *An Infant faithfully promises by those that are his Sureties, until he come of Age to take it upon himself.*

D. And now, Sir, what do you say, is not vowing and promising that the Child SHOULD renounce the Devil, the World and the Flesh; that he SHOULD believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith; and that he SHOULD keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of his Life, something more than you pretended? Is not this what the Sureties have promised for the Child?

Child? Is not this what they take upon them until the Child comes of Age, to take it upon himself? How then can you say, that they make not one Promise of any Thing, that they will do for the Child?

B. *I see I was in a Mistake. But since they have taken these Vows upon them, they must endeavour to perform them.*

Thus your own Catechism and Prayer-Book determines the Case against you. It's most certain, the Sureties do make all these Vows and Promises for the Child, according to the Churches own Interpretation of the Obligations; and it is as certain, that these are Promises beyond human Strength or Ability to perform. For who can promise for an Infant, that it shall have the Exercise of Reason, much less that it shall have the highest Exercise of Grace? As I observed before. Nor may we pretend to (for we may not expect) divine Assistance, in invading the divine Prerogative.

I had before observed, that God has never given, never promised Assistance to any Man, in changing the Hearts, sanctifying the Natures, and governing the Affections and Passions of others. Upon which you exclaim; —
'This I confess is as fine a Piece of Divinity, as ever I heard in my Life.' And so go on to gravely argue. *'If this Doctrine be true, it renders not only the Office of Sureties vain; but*

'but all Endeavours of Parents to educate their
 Children. And why does our Author preach,
 and endeavour to convert his People, when
 God will never assist him, nor any Man, for
 the obtaining that End?' But what a Pity
 it is, you could not understand this plain easy
 and familiar Sentence, before you got into
 such a Heat, as to cry out so vehemently, 'How
 madly will some Men lay about them, when
 they design to scare People from the Church!'

Can you seriously think, That there is no Dif-
 ference between having God's Assistance IN
 changing Mens Hearts efficiently; and in us-
 ing the appointed Means, for the Obtaining
 that End? Is it the same Thing to be assisted
 IN doing the Work our selves; or in being
 only Instruments in the Hands of the great
 Workman? Or in other Words. Is it the
 same Thing for us to do it, or God to do it?
 To apply this to the present Case. The Sure-
 ties promise what none but God can perform.
 They promise, that the Heart of the Child shall
 be changed, the Nature sanctified, and the Af-
 fections and Passions be under constant good
 Government. But are they Gods! Is this in
 their Power? Or can they even expect di-
 vine Assistance IN doing that which no Man
 ever did do, what no Man ever could do, or
 ever will do; and what belongs to the divine
 Royalty to do? Can they enable the Child to

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renounce the Devil and all his Works, the
 Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, to
 believe all the Articles of the Christian Religion,
 &c. ? If not, how can they promise that he
 shall do it; since they have no Power, nor are
 ever like to have Power, to endue him with
 that Grace, which they have vowed and pro-
 mised that he shall live in the Exercise of?
 I hope now you see, what little Reason you had
 for that passionate Exclamation. — And thus
 I'll conclude this Particular, with a few
 Queries, unto which I shall expect your An-
 swer.

Q. 1. Have not Infants a Claim to Baptism,
 on Account of their Parents Covenant Rela-
 tion? According to that, 1 Cor. vii. 14. *Else
 were your Children unclean, but now are they*

Q. 2. Since Infants are baptized in their
 Parents Right, should not their Parents dedi-
 cate them to Christ in this Ordinance, and
 come under proper Covenant Obligations on
 their Behalf, to whom it belongs, to bring them
 up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord,
 Eph. vi. 4?

Q. 3. Whether you can agreeable to the
 Rules in the Prayer Book, allow Parents to do
 their Duty in this Respect, to dedicate their
 Children to Christ in this Ordinance; and to
 be (as they ought to be) Sureties for their Re-
 ligious Education?

Q. 4. Whether accepting of the Suretiship of Strangers, has not a direct Tendency to make Parents unmindful of their Duty towards their Children; and whether it be not therefore a great Prejudice, instead of a Furtherance to the religious Education of the Children?

Q. 5. Whether there be any Direction or Warrant in the Word of God, for Sureties in Baptism?

But it's Time to take some Notice of your Vindication of the *Burial Office*; and here you observe to us, that when you say in sure and certain Hope of the Resurrection, &c. It is only a Repetition of that Article of the Creed, *We believe there will be a Resurrection of the Body; and it is very injurious to say, that this necessarily relates to the dead Person, so as to imply a certainty of his happy Resurrection.* I am then at some Difficulty to understand, what you mean by saying, *That it never was the Design of the Church, that it should be used over a Person, let him have lived never so wicked a Life; and dyed in the very Act of Sinning. I know of no Minister that would; and I am sure I would not, use it over such a Person.* But I pray, why would you not use it over such a Person? Is it not as suitable that the People should be put in Mind of the general Resurrection, at the Funeral of a wicked

Man as of a good Man; or is it not at least lawful to do so? But I must needs tell you, that I am surprized at this wonderful Evasion; and that you could publish to the World such an Exposition of the Church's Meaning, where the Prayer Book can be had. Can you yourself think, that there is nothing but the general Resurrection intended by declaring, that *it hath pleased almighty God of his great Mercy, to take TO HIMSELF the Soul of our dear Brother, here departed?* And is it nothing but the general Body of Mankind, that they commit to the Ground; the general Earth; of all that are dead, to the Earth; the general Ashes to Ashes; and the general Dust to Dust, in sure and certain Hope of the Resurrection to eternal Life? Can you yourself believe, that there is nothing but the general Resurrection intended, by giving hearty Thanks to God, that *it hath pleased him to deliver this our Brother, out of the Miseries of this Sinful World?* Or can you suppose that there is nothing else intended by that Prayer, that God would raise us from the Death of Sin, unto the Life of Righteousness, that when we shall depart this Life, we may rest in him, as our HOPE is, *this our Brother doth?* Whoever was the Author of this chimerical Gloss upon the burial Office, should have perswaded the World to have receiv'd it upon his Authority, and never to read

read a Prayer Book, or attend a Funeral, for fear of being undeceived.

As to your trifling Accusation, that the Particle (*the*) was left out in my Sermon. It only shews that you were glad to find something to carp at when so small an Omission of the Press, must be made an Occasion of so much Triumph.— And whoever informed you, that when I preached that Sermon, *I said his Resurrection, instead of the Resurrection*, was in a great Mistake at the best; and entertain'd you with a false Report, which you have credulously published to the World.

Asto your Pretence, that it never was the Design of the Church, that this Office should be used over those that have lived wicked Lives.— I answer, that there is no Way so certain to know the Mind of the Church, as to recur to her own Declaration, what her Mind is.— Let us then hear the Direction of your Prayer-Book in this Case.— *Here is to be noted, (saies the Book) that the Office ensuing is not to be used for any that dy unbaptized, or excommunicate, or that lay violent Hands on themselves.*— Are there any but these excepted? Does the Church suppose, or do you suppose, that there are no wicked flagitious Persons, that are not unbaptiz'd, or excommunicate, or self-Murderers?

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“ *But this Office supposes (you say) the Visitation of the Sick to go before, p. 37.* ”
That is, it supposes that they are by the Priest absolved from all their Sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and then their Sins being pardon'd, it may be safely concluded, that God has taken their Souls to himself. But where does the Office suppose this? Is there a Word of that Nature in all the Office? Is there any Direction that this Office must not be used, over those that have died without the Priest's Visitation or Absolution? This your Pretence (weak as it is) is founded upon Nothing, but your own Imagination. — I will again take Leave of this Article, with a few Queries, to which I hope you'll favour me with a particular Answer in your next.

Q. 1. Whether it does not directly tend to harden loose Sinners in a careless sensual Life, to hear the eternal Salvation of such as themselves, so positively and solemnly declared, in your Addresses to God?

Q. 2. Whether it ben't an Affront to the glorious Majesty of Heaven and Earth, to solemnly declare in his Presence, and praise him for, the Salvation of those, who have never by their Lives and Conversations evidenced their Conversion to God; and thereby their Title to eternal Happiness?

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Q. 3.

Q. 3. Whether these Things which are such just Matter of Prejudice, can do any good to the Dead or to Living; and if not, why are they retained to the Offence and Scandal of so many good Christians?

Q. 4. Is it not much safer to let these Things alone, that are at the best so very suspicious?

The next Thing that offers, is your peremptory and authoritative Absolving Men from all their Sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And do you verily believe (as you are ordered by the Prayer Book to declare) that there is Authority committed to you, to absolve Men from all their Sins? If so, what Fault can you find with the Popish Indulgencies? Have not the Popish Priests as much Authority in this Case as you have? And can't they cite that Text *Job. xl. 23.* in Justification of their Conduct, as pertinently as you can? If it gives Authority to you to absolve Men from all their Sins, it also gives Authority to them to absolve Men from all their Sins. But if Christ has yet retained the Prerogative of Pardoning Mens Sins in his own Hands, it is impertinently urged by you, in the present Case.

But you pretend, that you mean no more, than that *'you think his Repentance is sincere; and that if it be, God will certainly forgive him.'*

'him.' But then why do you declare any more than you mean? If you intend no more than that God will absolve him, upon his true & sincere Repentance, why do you declare, that you absolve him from all his Sins? Is God's Absolving, and your Absolving, the same Thing? Who has placed you in God's Stead; and vested you with that incommunicable Branch of his Prerogative, to Pardon Sins? To what Purpose is your Quotation from Mr. Baxter, that *the Pastors of the Churches may as God's Officers declare the conditional general Pardon, &c.* whereas it is an Authoritative special Pardon, that we find fault with. A Pardon by Vertue of the Power left by the Lord Jesus Christ to his Church. A Pardon pronounced by Vertue of his Authority committed to the Priest. A Pardon not only pray'd for, but Authoritatively pronounced. *I absolve you, &c.* And do you think indeed, that there is no Difference, between a Declaration of conditional and Authoritative Pardon? Or between the Declaration of a general Pardon to all that truly repent and believe; and a special unconditional Pardon, to this particular Person, upon a bare Presumption of his Sincerity? I must needs say (whatever you in particular may intend, when you pronounce the Absolution) the Words are very exceptionable, and of a very ill Sound. And I can't be reconciled

conciled to that Office where the Minister must say one Thing, and mean another.

Why, I beseech you, does he that finds Fault with the Absolution, at the same Time condemn both the Sacraments, as you suggest? Is God's Conditional Offer and Confirmation of Pardon at the Sacraments, the same Thing with the Minister's absolute authoritative Declaration, That he absolve the sick Person from all his Sins? How impertinent is this Pretence!

I shall not spend Time to debate with you the Meaning of that Text in *Job. xx. 23.* which you seem to build upon, since you yourself don't pretend, that it authorizes an absolute authoritative Absolution, which is the only Thing here in Question. But shall only observe, that this Text is generally supposed to imply no more, than a gracious Promise to the regular Exercise of Church Discipline. When by the Discipline of the Church, scandalous Offences are regularly remitted or retained, this is ratified in Heaven. Some there are (I confess) that understand it of a ministerial and conditional Declaration of God's Forgiveness. But no Protestant that I know of, so much as pretends, that this Text gives any Man Authority, to actually discharge Men from their Guilt; which is what your Office in Question seems to suppose. Nor any Authority,

thority, so much as to positively declare, that their Sins are forgiven; tho' this is what you seem to have especially brought the Text to prove. I shall add no more under this Head; but only a few Queries, which you'll be so kind as to give a particular Answer to.

Q. 1. Has it not a direct Tendency to give ignorant Men a vain Confidence of their good Estate, to hear a Minister positively and Authoritatively pronounce the Forgiveness of all their Sins, in whatever Sense the Minister himself may understand the Words?

Q. 2. If the Church has any good and safe Meaning in that Office, why was not her Meaning plainly and intelligibly expressed? And why is this stumbling Block in the Way? See *Rom. xiv. 13.*

Q. 3. Whether any Man can, with a good Conscience, perform that Office without a mental Reservation; and without understanding the Words in a Sense very different from their plain and natural Meaning? And *except ye utter by the Tongue, Words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken. 1 Cor. xiv. 9.*

Q. 4. Whether any Man can allow that Office to be performed for him, without giving that Honour to the Creature, which is due only to the Creator, who is blessed for ever? For who can justify his Claim to forgive Sins, that

that can't also say to the *Sick of the Palsy, arise and walk, Mat. ix. 5.*

Let us next see whether your Reasonings will conclude in Favour of the *Holy Days*, appointed by the Church of *Rome*, and by the Church of *England*. I reminded you in my Sermon, that the Apostle particularly complains of the *Galatians*, that they observed *Days and Months and Times and Years*, on which Account, he was afraid he had bestowed *Labour upon them in vain, Gal. iv. 10, 11.* I endeavour'd to shew, that this Text militated as much against the *Holy Days* observed by the *Church of England*, as against those observed by the *Galatians*; that if it was unlawful to these, it must be so also to us. And why did you not vouchsafe some Answer to this? Had you Nothing to reply? Or did you think it would be more popular to endeavour, to retort the same Accusation upon us, than to directly oppose and contradict the Scripture? — *'Metbinks this (you say) sounds very oddly, in the Mouth of a Presbyterian, when they observe Holy Days as well as we.'* And then demand, *'By what Authority are Dissenters Lectures kept; and in New-England annual Fasts and Thanksgiving Days enjoined? &c.'* p. 40, 41. — Your Pretence of our Lectures being *Holy Days*, is too trivial to deserve any Notice, since in this Case, there is no Time sanctified

sanctified, consecrated, or dedicated to God: There never was any more intended or pretended by *Lecture Days*, than an Agreement to meet together upon some set Day and Hour, to hear a Sermon, and to attend upon the other religious Exercises that should accompany Preaching. And I hope that you'll allow that this is done by God's Authority, who has expressly required Ministers to *preach* (and consequently People to hear) *in Season, and out of Season. 2 Tim. iv. 2.*

And as to your other Demand, by what Authority are our *Fast Days*, and *Thanksgiving Days* enjoyn'd? I answer, by God's Authority. God has given us Examples and Directions in his Word, that when we are under special Calls of Providence to it, we should set apart Days to these Purposes. We have particular Directions how a *Fast Day* should be celebrated; and to what End, *Isai. lviii. 3.* forward. And many Examples as well as Precepts for the Observation of such Days. See *2 Chron. xx. 3. Neb. ix.* throughout. *Jonah iii. 7. Joel i. 14. and ii. 15. Mat. vi. 17, 18. Mark. ii. 20* And in many other Places. — And the Argument is the very same, for Days of *Thanksgiving*. Tho' we have not Authority from God to make any Time holy; yet we have Authority to set apart Time for these holy Services, when his Providence calls for it. In

In Obedience to his Authority, when we have eaten and are full, we may bless the Lord, for the good Land which he hath given us. Deut. 10. We may praise him in the Midst of the Congregation: Our Praise be of him in the great Congregation. And we may pay our Vows before them that fear him. Ps. xxii. 22, 25. We may offer the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and call upon the Name of the Lord. We may pay our Vows unto the Lord, in the Presence of all his People, Ps. cxvi. 17, 18. and we may agree upon some Time to that Purpose, according as the special Dispensations of Providence call for these Thank Offerings. — Thus you see one Instance of very great Disparity between your Holy Days, and these that you would have thought parallel to them. Ours are of God's directing and appointing: Yours without any Direction or Warrant from him. And I think it is not very good Arguing, that because we may observe Days which God has appointed, that therefore we may consecrate Days which he has not appointed. Besides these Days are set apart on such Occasions, and for such Services as God has alwaies, and every where approved of in his Word; whereas the greatest Part of your Holy Days are set apart on such Occasions as God no where, ever approves of in his Word. For Instance, I think you won't pretend to any Scripture Ap-
probation

probation of any Saints Days, much less of such a Number of 'em. And therefore in this Respect also, there is a great Disparity in the pretended Parallel Cases. Moreover the Disparity is also manifest in this. The Days we appoint for these special Services, are occasionally accommodated to the present Dispensations and Calls of Providence. Your Holy Days by being unalterably Stated, are often directly contrary thereto. — When Providence calls for Mourning and girding with Sack-Cloth, your Prayer Book often calls for Feasting, and so on the Contrary, as I have observed before. I may add, That the Days we set apart for the beforementioned Services, occur but seldom, upon special emergent Occasions. Whereas your Prayer Book appoints above half the Year to be kept as Holy Time. How consistent with the fourth Commandment, it belongs to you to inform us. Allow us to observe once more. In keeping Days of Fasting and Thanksgivings, we are followers of those, who from the first Ages of the Church, have by Faith and Patience inherited the Promises. — Whereas in the Observation of these Particular Holy Days, you have no higher, nor better Example than the Church of Rome. And by far the greatest Part of them have been brought in by her since her antichristian Apostacy.

stacy. Thus you see, you have not been very successful in this Attempt.

As to your Reasoning from the Days of Purim and the Feast of Dedication, it may be sufficient to transcribe a Reply to it, written before you was born. *The Days of Purim Esth. ix. were seven Hundred Years since objected by Papists unto the Waldenses, and since by all Papists that have written against Protestants about Ceremonies, as Gregorius de Valentia, Belarmine, Suarez. And we need not seek for new Answers about it; for that which our Divines have answered to the Papists is sufficient in two Words. 1. That it cannot be evinced, that these Days of Purim were religious Feasts. Junius saith Preceptum fuit Politicum, they were only Days of civil rejoicing, they are called only the Days of Purim, not the Holy Days of Purim. They are not called Chaggim. No particular Sacrifice was appointed; nor any holy Convocation of the People enjoined. The Ordinance required but Feasting and Joy; and sending of Portions to one another. The Rest mentioned in Esth. ix. was from their Enemies. So much Work as might stand with a feasting Day, was not forbidden. — 2. Upon Supposition of a religious Feast instituted by Mordecai, He did it, said Dr. Whitaker, God inspiring him; and peradventure by order of some Prophet,*
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as Zech. viii. they changed their Fasts into Feasts, by the Mouth of the Lord, by the Ministry of the Prophet. And tho' we do not read expressly, that either God or any Prophet did require this Feast of Purim; yet forasmuch as it stands approved in Scripture, there is no Doubt but it was done by Warrant from God.

The Feast of Dedication, Joh. i. 22, 23. hath also been objected, from the Time of the Waldenses. But it is not certainly known what Dedication this was, and whether merely of human Institution. Some take it for that which Solomon appointed. Some ascribe it to Ezra, others to the Maccabees. Neither is there any Evidence, that Christ approved it. The Text only saith, that he walked then in Solomon's Porch, which he might do, without observing or approving it. If it was nothing but a Tradition of the Elders, we may be sure that Christ who testified against other Inventions of Men, did never observe this.' Thus you see that it yet lies upon you to prove, that the Days of Purim were ever observed by the Jews, as a religious Feast. For it is certain that there were no Exercises purely religious, required by the Institution to be attended upon those Days, as on all other Religious Feasts. And it belongs to you to prove, that if they were religious Feasts, that they were not

not appointed by divine Inspiration. — For *Mordecai* that instituted that Feast, is generally supposed to be the Penman of the Book of *Esther*, and consequently divinely inspired. — And it also lies upon you to prove that the Feast of Dedication was that instituted by the *Maccabees*; and that our Lord Jesus Christ did ever observe and approve that Feast, neither of which is capable of Proof. You tell us indeed, that *Christ was no Dissenter; but came many Miles in Winter, to keep this Feast.* p. 44 But how does this appear? There is not a Word of that Nature in the Sacred Story. His walking in *Solomons Porch*, is no Proof of it. He might take that Opportunity of a Congress of People, as he did all other proper Opportunities, to do good, without any Approbation of the Feast. Such is the sandy Foundation upon which your *Holy Days* are built.

As for that most injurious Calumny upon *New-England*: that *They will annually impose by civil Sanctions a Thanksgiving in November; yet of Choice they will shun the fifth Day, because the King has appointed it.* I wonder for your own Sake, you would publish such a Story in these Parts of the World. — And now I'll take Leave of this Subject also, with a few Queries, which you'll be pleased to answer in your next.

Q. 1.

Q. 1. Whether the *Jewish Holy Days* were not condemned by the Apostle, because they were *Shadows of good Things to come*, Col. ii. 16, 17? Whether it be't a Reflection upon him, who is the Substance pointed to by those Shadows, to imitate that typical Dispensation, as tho' it were not yet fulfilled, and done away? And whether when God has by the Death and Resurrection of Christ, taken the *Levitical Yoke* from off our Necks, it becomes Christians to wreathe a new Yoke for their own Shoulders?

Q. 2. Whether the Observation of Saints Days among the *Papists* (from whom you have taken them) were not appointed and attended by them for the Worshipping of the Saints; and other most execrable idolatrous Purposes; which the Scripture calls *Doctrines of Devils*, 1 Tim. iv. 1? And whether we should not on that Account, reject them with Abhorrence, as we should Meat offered to Idols, 1 Cor. x. 20.

Q. 3. Whether the Lord Jesus Christ was not wise enough, to appoint Days sufficient to keep in Remembrance his own Nativity, Birth, Resurrection, Ascension, and all the other Wonders of Grace and Love, that he hath done for us? Whether he has not appointed one Day in Seven for this very End? And whether it don't reflect upon his Provision for

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to; and upon the Holy Day he has appointed, to consecrate more Time for this Purpose?

Q. 4. Whether it ben't a great Infringment of our Christian Liberty, that when God has given us six Days to labour, your Prayer Book won't allow us more than three Days in a Week, take one Time with another, through the Year?

I observ'd in my Sermon, that we had the same Complaint to make of the Prelacy and its Attendants in the Church of *England*, and exemplified the Matter of Complaint. And tho' it was not possible in so short a Time, to go through the particular Evidences, in support of it; yet the World knows, that I have long since published the Proof of what I then asserted, which none of your party have yet pretended to answer. And you your self don't pretend, that there is any Mention in the Scripture, of *Arch Bishops, Lord Bishops, Deans, Prebends, Arch-Deacons, Vicars, Curates*, and the like belonging to the Heirachy of the Church of *England*. But you tell us, that 'it would have been more to the Purpose, if I had given but one single Instance, either in the New Testament or in Ecclesiastical History, for 1400 Years after Christ, of an approved Ordination without a Bishop,' which you say can't be done. p. 44. By Bishop we must here understand, an Officer by divine Appointment superior

perior to Presbyters, one that claims the whole Power of Jurisdiction and Discipline, as well as Ordination to himself; or else you speak nothing to the Purpose. And don't you know, that I have already given Instances enough of Ordinations without such Bishops; and vindicated them against all the Exceptions of your Party? Why then do you say, *it can't be done*? What Bishop (in this Sence of the Word Bishop) was concern'd in the Ordination of *Paul and Barnabas*, *Acts* xiii. 1.? Who but the Presbyters ordained *Timothy*, *1 Tim.* iv. 14.? How are *Timothy* and *Titus* proved to be such Bishops? And yet the Power of Ordination was committed to them, *1 Tim.* v. 22. and *Tit.* i. 5. Are not all Presbyters Scripture Bishops; and have they not all the Work and Duty of Bishops committed to them? *Acts* xx. 17, 28. *1 Pet.* v. 1, 2. And were the Apostles themselves in their ordinary Capacity, any more than Presbyters? *1 Pet.* v. 1. *2 Job.* i. and *3 Job.* i. And were not the Powers of Ordination and Jurisdiction, committed alike to all the Ministers of the Gospel, in Christ's Commission, *Mat.* xxviii. 19, 20? And have I not particularly and (for what yet appears) unanswerably prov'd all these Things, long since? What then could you mean by this wonderful Challenge? And as for your Pretence from Antiquity, how often have you all

all been called upon, to produce so much as one single Author, in the first three Centuries, that asserts Bishops to be by divine Right an Order superiour to Presbyters. But this is what by the Acknowledgment of the most eminent of your own Party, can never be done. We may therefore justly dispise the Great Words of these, that have but such weak Arguments; and must yet complain, that the depriving the Ministers of the Gospel, of exercising a great part of the Charge committed to them by the Lord Jesus Christ, is an Invasion of his Royalty, *who is Head over all Things to his Church.*

I did complain, and think there is yet Reason to complain, of the *Discipline* of the Church of *England*. It is wonderful, that the Church should every Year confess and lament before God, above a Hundred and fifty Years together, the Want of that Godly Discipline there was in the primitive Church, the Restoration of which is much to be wished; and yet not take one Step toward restoring of it. If it be so much to be wished, why is it not done? What stands in the Way to hinder it? But you tell us, *'I may make my Complaint to the Parliament.'* And how I pray does that vindicate your Constitution? You say, *we have nothing to do with Chancellors, &c. in this Country.* I answer, you therefore have

no Discipline at all among you. If refusing to administer the Sacrament to a scandalous Person, be all the Discipline that you desire, as you tell us, p. 46. you desire much less than Christ has appointed. But what Plea have you to make for your spiritual Courts, for having all your Discipline managed by lay Officers, by *Chancellors, Commissaries, Proctors, Apparitors, &c.* Officers that the Scripture knows nothing of? What Plea for carrying on your Discipline by corporal Inflictions, Imprisonments and Fines, to the vast Charge and temporal Injury of the Delinquents? Not one Word.

You complain indeed of *New-England* Country Courts, punishing Men for their Wickedness. But what is that, I beseech you, to Church Discipline? Do their Country Courts pretend to be ecclesiastical Officers? is there any Thing of that Nature done among you, but in Order to the Preservation of the Peace, agreeable to the Laws and Customs of *England*? And did you make this Complaint, to testify your Desire that Courses of Wickedness should go with Impunity; or was it because you could find nothing else to say? You tell us, that *'in England, if a Man be guilty of any Crime, and will manifest his Repentance to the Satisfaction of his lawful Minister; and to other Christians, to whom it belongs to make*

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‘*Presentment, be shall meet with no further Trouble.*’ But you don’t tell us, how he must make his Repentance satisfactory. How much he must give for his Time, and how much for the Fees of the Court, in Order to escape Excommunication and Commitment. As to the broken *Responses*, you pretend to vindicate from Mr. *Baxter*, I have not that Book by me, which you quote, nor can I tell what he design’d by the Words you quote from him. And it’s impossible to know what Scripture Command he referred to, there being no such Place in the Bible as *Pf. lxxvii. 25.* All I find Intended by Mr. *Baxter* in the Words, by you alledged, is, that *Responses* may be used; but whether such *Responses* as yours in the Prayer Book, there is nothing said. And it is manifest that he did not think it a Duty to use them, by his not conforming to that Practice himself. But it don’t so much affect the Cause, what his Opinion was, as how God himself has appointed his Worship to be managed. We have special Directions in this Case, *1 Cor. xiv.* from the 6. to the 20. Verse. Where the Apostle at large urges the Necessity, of all *Worships* being intelligibly performed. We must pray so that our Understanding mayn’t be unfruitful. *vers. 14.* We must pray with the Spirit, and with the Understanding also, *vers. 15.* We must pray, so that he who occupieth the Place of the Unlearned, may

may say *Amen* at our giving of Thanks, and understand what we say, *vers. 16.* We must pray, so that others may be edified, *vers. 17.* And can it be pretended, That your Method of using Responses agrees with those Rules? Is your Worship intelligibly perform’d, when all speak together, and therefore none can know what is said by the Rest? Can the Stander by say *Amen*, at your giving of Thanks, when he knows not a Word that’s spoken? Can others be edified by such Service, which is as unintelligible to them, as if pronounced in *Arabick*? It’s plain, that if the Apostle *Paul* had been consulted, he would not have recommended your Responses.

But you pretend that it’s evident from *Rev. xiv. 2, 3.* And *Rev. xix. 6, 7.* ‘*That this is the Method of Worship used by the Saints and Angels in Heaven.*’ And if this were true, what would it be to your Purpose? By what Argument can you make it appear, that we are to use the same Methods of Worship here, that are used in Heaven? If Responses are used there, the Perfection of their Knowledge secures them from the like Dangers of not understanding what is said, as we are in here. But it’s proper to consider, what Sort of Worship you pretend to be performed by Responses, from those Texts. Was it Praying, or Singing? If the latter, what is it to you
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Purpose? And that it was Singing in Consort with Harpers, is certain, and is expressly called *singing a new Song* in *Rev. xiv. 2, 3.* And the same is also evident from the *xix. Chapter* and *6 & 7 Verses*, where it's not only called *praising God*, but the Song begins with *Allelujab*. And what Argument can you bring from hence? Is it just arguing, that because we must unite our Voices in Singing, which you know we approve and practise as well as you, that therefore we must all speak with uplifted Voices in Prayer, the Point to be proved. But the worst on't is, that there are no Responses at all mentioned in the Texts considered. — There is not the least Appearance of it in the first of them; and all that can be made evident from the second, connected with the foregoing Verses is, That there was Praises sung to God, from *much People*, from the *four and twenty Elders*, and from *the Throne*: But whether in an immediate Succession, the Text says nothing. Or if they were in an immediate Succession, how were they Responses, since they were several Services, from several Companies or Congregations; and from several Places? And lastly, these are but mystical and visionary Representations, and no Worship actually performed by Saints and Angels in Heaven, at all. The Heaven here represented, is generally understood by all Interpreters of

of Note, to be the true Church of Christ upon Earth, called Heaven, from her heavenly Original, and heavenly Doctrine and Manners; in Opposition to the Antichristian Church, that had no Relation to Heaven. And these imaginary Responses, to be Nothing else, but the Praises of the several Parts of the Christian Church, as well from the newly converted *Jews*, as *Gentiles*. ascribed to God for the Destruction of Antichrist. And what Foundation have you then, for your triumphant Conclusion?

Thus I've taken particular Notice of all the Arguments you have brought in Vindication of your Rites and Ceremonies; and the Appeal must be made to the World, whether the Exceptions in my Sermon are not fully justified. But what was the Reason that you had not one Word in Favour of your *canonical Vestments*, your *Womens speaking in the Churches*; and the manifest Corruptions in the old Translation of the Psalms, yet in use? Do you acknowledge these to be indefensible?

And now shall we consider what you can say in defence of your Imposition of all these Things. — You seem to acknowledge the Charge, that you do impose all these Things; and have nothing to vindicate your so doing but this, that *'there neither is nor can be any Church upon Earth, but what hath Terms of Commu-*

'Communion and Ceremonies imposed, which God hath not expressly commanded.' p. 51. And that *'the Presbyterians do the same.'* Now suppose this were true. It is either well or ill done of all these Churches, thus to impose upon People's Consciences. If well done, you could easily have answered my Arguments against these Impositions. If ill done, it's no Justification of your Guilt, that others are in like Manner Guilty. These Arguments therefore conclude against you, as well as against all others that are equally chargeable. Besides, if others also are guilty of some Impositions, it does not appear from thence, that they are guilty of imposing Things equally disagreeable to the Word of God, equally wounding to Men's Consciences; and equally destructive to the Peace and Purity of the Church. But let us consider how you prove your confident Assertion. Did we ever punish or excommunicate any Man for believing the Lord's Supper should be administred at Evening; or for not approving the *New-England* Version of the Psalms for regular singing; or for scrupling to receive the Sacrament at the Hands of an unordained Deacon, or any Thing else of the like Kind; that you pretend to bring these Instances against us? Mayn't every Body entertain their own Opinions in these Points; and be treated with Kindness and Friendship, having
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all sacred Priviledges allow'd them notwithstanding, among us? If they will be peaceable with us, we should be so with them, and suffer them to abound in their own Sense. If they wo'nt impose upon us their own Humours or Imaginations, neither will we impose upon them. They may peaceably neglect what they can't comply with, and yet be treated with Christian Love and Charity. How then could you say, that they are excommunicated for these Things *ipso Facto*? Be pleased to give one single Instance, of any Man that was excommunicated among us for any of these Things, or for any Thing else of like Nature. But if you can't, it certainly concerns you to be more careful of publishing such Things for true, which can't be proved nor exemplified in one single Instance. For my own Part I would admit any Man that I have Reason to believe a true and sincere Christian, unto Communion in all the Ordinances of Christ, if he would regularly and peaceably desire it; notwithstanding any lesser Differences in Principle. And for ought I know this is the Mind of all the Ministers of our Perswasion. But is it so in your Church? Are not the Stumbling Blocks of your Rites and Ceremonies thrown in our Way? Must we not comply with these to every Punctilio of a Ceremony (tho' never so much against our Consciences)
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or be rejected, excommunicated, refused all Christian Priviledges; and in *England* be rendered incapable of any temporal Honours and Dignities, in the State? And can there be so much as a Pretence, that these are parallel Cases? That we are as much chargeable with Impositions, as the Church of *England*. The Principles of a Church are best known by their publick Formulas. Look into ours; look into the *Westminster Assemblies*, and the *New-England* Confessions, and into the Agreement of the *Synod at Philadelphia*; search them thoroughly, and see if you can find any thing of this Nature; any damning Creeds; or any Canons that excommunicate *ipso Facto*, all that don't approve of our Rites and Ceremonies, that don't approve of the Government of our Churches by an unscriptural Hierarchy, or that pretend to groan under any Grievances imposed upon them by our Churches. But if there can nothing of this Nature be found. If it appear upon strictest Search, that these are the Peculiarities of your own Church, and are monopolised to your selves, I hope you will have such a Regard to your Reputation, as not to entertain us with any Thing more of this Nature.

That an imposing Power has ever been claimed by the Church of *England*, even from her first Deliverance from the *Papal Yoke* and

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Smithfield Fires, is an incontestable Truth. A Truth awfully evinced by the bloody Persecutions begun in *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign; and long continued in the Reigns of her several Successors. A Truth most apparent from the *xx.* Article of the Church; and equally apparent from this Doctrine's being most openly and solemnly avouched in your Book of *Canons*, that yet remain unrepealed and in their full Force, whereby every one that conscientiously scruples the least Tittle of your Injunctions, is excommunicated and deprived of all sacred Priviledges in your Church. Nay, the imposing Power has been so little questioned by the Church of *England*, that they have even ventured to publish it with the holy Bible it self, as a Part of the Contents of it. A flagrant Instance of which we have in the Argument of the *cxlix. Psalm*; where we are said to be *exhorted to praise God, for the Power which he has given to the Church, to rule the Consciences of Men.*

And this is what has in all Times past raised the Wall of Separation, between the Church of *England* and her nonconforming Brethren; and yet continues the great Article of our Complaint.

This is what we cannot but esteem most inconsistent with the Rights of the Christian Church; and even with Humanity it self. —

This is not only to make us meer Machines, to receive our religious Sentiments from external Impressions, without any inward Principles of Conviction or rational Perswasion; but what we cannot but think a direct Invasion of Christ's Regal Power. And while the Church continues the Exercise of this imposing Power; and refuses to extend the Terms of Communion to all such as visibly comply with the Necessary Terms of Salvation; and will not open the Doors of the Church to all those that a Judgment of Charity obliges her to believe are sincere Christians; there will forever remain Cause of Complaint against your Constitution. And I trust there will ever be a Body of Men, that will stand up in Defence of the *Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.*

And tho' these Impositions are varnish'd over with the specious Pretences of *Decency* and *Order*: Yet they have fatally prov'd the unhappy Engines of dividing the Christian Church, and destroying that Peace and Charity that are the essential Characters of the true Disciples of Christ; — I cannot but think it would be more agreeable to the Nature and Design of the Christian Institution, to receive one another as Christ also has received us to the *Glory of God*, than to go on thus smiting our fellow Servants, by imposing upon their Consciences, or depriving them of the

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Ordinances of Salvation, upon Accounts confessed to be in themselves inconsiderable and of an indifferent Nature.

I cannot therefore but esteem it the peculiar Glory of our Churches, that we open the Arms of our Charity and Communion, to all the visible Members of Christ; and bear our Testimony against all Encroachments upon the Rights of human Nature, and the Liberty and Priviledges of Christians.

What Laws of *New-England* you refer to I know not; nor do you give any Account what they be. If there be any Laws that require the Persecution of those that conscientiously scruple their Methods of Worship, as you insinuate, p. 51. I have not one Word to say in their Justification. I acknowledge Persecution to be as bad in them as in you; and to be an unmerciful Violation of the Laws of Nature, wherever it is practiced. But you must pardon me, if I can't give a full Assent to your Representation of the Case; because I know there are a Variety of Assemblies for publick Worship, of very different Principles, in *New-England*, none of whom meet with the least Opposition from the Government.

I acknowledge that it is no Justification of the Principles of any Sect. that they were handed down to them from their Progenitors. But yet it is a great Apostacy, to renounce the

pure

pure Institutions and Worship of God, which our Fathers maintained at their Peril, for those human Institutions and unscriptural Impositions, which were the Cause of such dreadful Persecution to them. If their Cause was good (as I before proved it to be) then to decline from *the good old Way* of our Fathers would be displeasing to God, and injurious to our own Souls: And this would be every where true, when Reformations in Religion, that have been procured by our Progenitors, at the Expence of every Thing that is dear to them of a worldly Nature, are given up, and a Declension is made from a pure spiritual Worship, to such a Worship as is unscriptural, without any divine Institution, wounding to the scrupulous Consciences; and destructive to that *Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free*. Which (I think) I have proved to be the Case with Respect to the Rites and Ceremonies in Question, with the People of *Newark*, as well as *New-England*. And if you'll prove this to be the Case at *Canada*, I will allow, that the Argument concludes for them too, and that your Harrangue is pertinent; but not otherwise.

You were not willing (I see) to conclude your Book, without giving us some Intimation of what Manner of Spirit you are of. ' *Its true* (you tell us) *many of those who settled New-England, came from what they called Perse-*

cution.' p. 52. But don't you call it Persecution too, as well as they? Was it not a real Persecution to have Ministers silenced, sequestred and deprived; to have the Laity excommunicated, plundered and ruined; to have Ears cut off, Noses slit, Foreheads branded with hot Irons, unmerciful Fines imposed; to be barbarously and cruelly whipt, and to be shut up in the most afflicting and loathsome Dungeons; and banished to foreign Countries, &c. We see then, what we might expect from you, if you had the Power in your Hands. If *New-England* were guilty of some unjustifiable Severities towards a mad Sort of *Quakers*, they don't pretend to vindicate it, as you implicitly do, the barbarous Cruelties of the High Commission.

You tell us, that ' *it's certain, our Fathers did not cross the Atlantick for Presbyteria-* ' *nism, but for Brownism, or Independency.*' p. 53. But I answer, they did not cross it for either of these; but to fly from the Persecutions of Episcopacy; and to enjoy the blessed Privilege of God's own pure unmixed Institutions. As to *Brownism*, they all disclaimed it; and tho' the most of them were of Congregational Principles; yet there were a considerable Number of *Presbyterians* among them. There was from the Beginning and is yet, a Mixture of both Sorts, who have always lived together

together as united Brethren. — Some of the people of *Newark* have indeed formerly been culpable, for managing a Controversy with their worthy Minister, upon these points: And I hope your putting them in Mind of it, may conduce to their Humiliation, if there be any of them yet living. But then, they did not imitate the Disposition of the people in *New-England*, in this their Opposition to that worthy Gentleman, who removed from their Abuses to *New-England*, was there received with greatest Kindness and Love, advanced to the Rectoral Charge of their *Collidge*, in which Station he lived and dyed, in the highest Honour and Esteem among them all, notwithstanding his *Presbyterian Principles*. — In a Word, as both *Presbyterians* and *Congregationalists*, were from the Beginning embark'd upon the same Bottom, so have they yet Reason to conclude, notwithstanding their lesser trifling Differences in their Sentiments, that they have all the same common Interests to pursue; — *What then doth your Arguing reprove?*

Thus I have endeavoured to prove that the Sermon you took Notice of, was agreeable to the Council of God. And I think I have proved it from the Word of God. I hope therefore, I may now venture to say so, without the Hazard of such a severe Reprimand, as you gave me

me before, for such a Declaration of my Sentiments.

I have also offered you some Reasons, why I differ from you in some of those principles you profess. But tho' we differ in these Things, there are much greater in which we agree. — And it's certain, we are both under the greatest Obligations, by the sacred Bonds of Office, to agree in the most earnest Endeavours, to be instrumental of the Conversion of Sinners to Christ. And it greatly concerns us, not to spend all our Time, in filling the Heads of our Hearers with these controversial points, so as to make them unmindful of the weightier Matters, to the endangering of their Souls: But to endeavour so to acquit the awful Trust committed to us, as that we may *both save our selves, and them that bear us.*

That you may be a faithful Steward in our Lord's House, that the Blessing of many Souls ready to perish may come upon you, that these may be your Crown and Rejoicing in the Day of the Lord Jesus; and that we may both meet at last where all Debates and Differences will be ended; and where we shall both unitedly join in Communion and Consort, in the Praises

es of him that sits upon the Thron
and of the Lamb, for ever and eve
is the Prayer of

Your humble Servant,

Jonathan Dickinson

Elizabeth Town,

Feb. 23, 1736, 7.

