

Monergism

THE COMBAT BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE DEVIL DISPLAYED

A COMMENTARY UPON THE
TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST

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by William Perkins

Or a commentary upon the temptations of Christ:

Preached in Cambridge by that reverend and judicious Divine;

MR. WILLIAM PERKINS.

The second edition much enlarged by a more perfect copy, at the request of M. Perkins Executors, by Tho. Pierson Preacher of God's word.

ROM. 16.20.

The God of Peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly.

LUK. 22.28, 29.

You are they which have continued with me in my temptations:
Therefore I appoint unto you a kingdom even as my Father hath
appointed unto me.

London, Printed by Melchizedek Bradwood for E. E. and are to be
sold in Paul's Church-yard at the sign of the Swan. Anno 1606.

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Editor's Note - During the TCP Transcription Process, all the text was hand transcribed according to visual representation; and as such, sometimes the letters s, l, f & t are misconstrued with each other, these letters regularly being almost illegibly similar in the original facsimile script. Though it is rare for these errors to remain post-edit, unfortunately they may remain if uncaught. My apologies in advance where such errors occur. Also, the symbol <H&G> signifies omitted Hebrew & Greek. Because a majority of readers are not fluent in the original languages; it was thought best to omit, instead of possibly misconstrue; since most original languages are written in antiquated script in the original facsimiles. Lastly, some archaic words may be updated to more contemporary terminology; but changes have been kept to a bare minimum.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE I.

Sir William Russell, L. Russell, Baron of Thornhaugh; with the virtuous Lady his wife, Grace and Peace.

Upon that strange battle in heaven, between Michael the great Prince, and Satan that old Serpent, was heard a loud voice sounding forth joy and woe: joy to the heavens and to them that dwell therein: because the accuser of the brethren is cast out thence: but woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, (that is, to the sons of men in this vale of tears) for the Devil is come down unto them with great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.

In this voice (right Honorable) are two things affirmed, touching Satan's first, that his casting out of heaven is joyful to the Saints; next

that his coming down on earth is woeful unto men. Is the matter of our woe, joy to the Saints? Nothing less; but that the Devil might be known to be an evil guest where ever he comes, the heavens do rejoice for his departure, and sea and earth ought to mourn for his approaching; so that he is, or at leastwise ought to be, nowhere welcome, except it be in hell; and all such persons may well perceive themselves, not heavenly but plainly hellish minded, as give more kind welcome unto Satan in their cheerful practice of the works of darkness, then they do unto Jesus Christ, who knocks at the door of their hearts promising to come in and sup with them, if they will hear his voice and open unto him.

But what do the heavens gain by Satan's casting down? And how doth his descending to the earth work man such woe? Ans. For heavens gain, they are well rid of the malicious accuser of the brethren. Who would know more, must strive to get to heaven, and if more be needful, there his information shall be certain. As for man's woe by Satan's company here on earth, who so doubts hereof, may well suspect himself to have already received of him that deadly hurt, in blindness of mind and hardness of heart, whereof none save Jesus Christ the good Physician of our souls, by the eye-salve, and anointing of his spirit, can work the cure. Is it not woeful to the flocks and to the herds, when ravenous beasts do frequent their pastures? Then woe to man because of Satan: for the peril of the lamb from the wolf; of the kid from the leopard; of the fat beast from the Lion; and of the sucking child from the Asp, is nothing comparable to the danger of man from this old serpent, who in craft and cruelty, yea in every hurtful property goes beyond them all. Other devouring creatures keep their circuits and observe their times; they are sometime weary, and not always hungry; some are unfit for the dark, and others afraid of the light, whereby their silly pray gets some respite: but Satan is a prince of the darkness of this

world, who yet for his advantage can transform himself into an Angel of light, so as the day and night are to him both alike for the working of our woe: he is ever greedy, and never weary, and therefore always seeking; and if we dream of any restraint to him for time or place we deceive ourselves, for he was a murderer from the beginning, and so will continue till time shall be no more; and he compasseth the whole earth walking in it to and fro, even like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. With other creatures woe is ended, when the pray is once devoured; but to Satan's pray it is not so, for unless his snare be broken and they delivered in this life, their woe continues easeless, endless and remediless after natural death. Indeed the natural man doth not perceive that working of Satan which doth procure his woe; it may be he hath seen the platers and the painters Devils, some black horned monster with broad eyes, crooked claws or cloven feet; and till some such thing appear unto him, he never feareth hurt by Satan: little doth he think that ignorance in the scriptures, neglect of God's worship, profaning God's sabbaths, with greedy affecting the wealth, pomp, and pleasures of this world do give advantage unto Satan against his soul; and therefore while the matters of this life do answer his desire, he can sing to himself this pleasant requiem; soul, soul take thy rest. But our voice from heaven cries woe to all such inhabitants of the earth because of Satan; for they are of this world, and he is their prince, and their God, who having blinded their minds, worketh in their hearts, and so keeps them sure in his possession: Indeed like a seeming friend he suffereth all things to be in peace; but woeful peace, like to Absalom's wine which he gave to Ammon, that when his heart was most merry therewith, his least suspected deadly wound might light upon him. Everyone by nature is the child of wrath, and so of himself full of all misery; but merciless Satan seeks the increase hereof, by causing the root of man's corruption to spread forth the branches of all transgressions: indeed he is not the beginner of every sin, for much impiety flows from

man's inbred impurity; yet so sure a friend is Satan to corruption in the works of darkness, that if nature do but stretch forth the hand, Satan will thrust at the elbow: doth Cain hate Abel? Then will Satan bring this hatred from the heart to the hand, and cause Cain to kill Abel: Is Judas covetous? Then will Satan for the satisfying of that desire make him traitorous: let him find but a sparkle, he will soon kindle it to a flame; so that woeful is his coming to all natural men.

But doth the child of God escape his hands? No verily; Satan is a professed deadly foe to all such, he is their adversary and accuser: that which should procure them good he seeks to hinder; and whatever may work them woe, he will be sure to further: if they fall into sin, he seeks to bring them to despair; and when they endeavor to do good, he moves them to be proud: they are no sooner converted to the Lord, but he hath some Elymas to turn them back to the world: and though they stand against that assault, yet he will pursue them still, by troubles without and terrors within; by raging foes, and flattering friends; so as in regard of Satan advantaged by their flesh and his world, they shall find this to be true, while their flesh is upon them, they shall be sorrowful; and while their souls be in them they shall mourn: Satan is a mighty prince, and a wily serpent, and if either force or fraud may work them woe, no child of God shall escape his hands; he spared not the green tree, what then will he do to the dry?

But is there no remedy to man for all this woe that comes by Satan? Yes, blessed be our God who hath not left us for a pray unto his teeth, but to show the exceeding riches of his grace and love to the world, hath given his only begotten son to be our prince and our deliverer; who in no sort took the Angels, but the seed of Abraham: and because they were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself took part with them, that he might destroy through death him that had the

power of death, that is, the devil. For the evidence and application of which deliverance, he hath ordained in his church a holy ministry, whereby natural men are brought from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan to himself; and his own children do grow up into Christ their head, and be edified in their most holy faith, through which they are kept by the power of God unto salvation. Yet we must so conceive of this deliverance, that as Israel being brought out of Egypt, was not presently settled in the land of Canaan, but for the space of forty years was exercised with sundry temptations in a barren and dry wilderness, where they met with fiery serpents, and were encountered with many and strong enemies, who sought to debar them from the promised land: so the children of God, though redeemed by Christ, are not presently translated from the bondage of corruption, to the full inheritance of perfect glory in the heavens; but must pass through this vale of tears, and in the wilderness of this world meet with that crooked serpent the Devil who will seek to sting their souls to death, and also stir up many an Amelec to entrap them in the way, that either through disobedience or unbelief they may be deprived of their heavenly Canaan. True it is, this match is far unequal, for flesh and blood to fight against spiritual powers; yet here is comfort, that we have him for our Captain who in his deepest humility spoiled our strongest adversary, and is now crowned with glory and honor, being highly exalted far above all might and domination at his fathers right hand, where he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet; yea till he hath trodden Satan under the feet of all his members: only this he requireth that we should be valiant and quit ourselves like men in the power of his might, knowing that the battle is the Lord's, and so the victory sure before we strike a stroke. Now for the manner of our fight (a matter indeed of great moment, because a smooth stone out of David's sling will foil to the ground great Goliath) we have in this combat between Christ and the Devil, so pregnant direction set before us, that unless

we do willfully shut our eyes against the light, in this behalf we cannot be ignorant of our duty: whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning; and therefore the recording of this combat is as much from Christ to every Christian, as the speech of Gideon to his soldiers, look on me and do likewise; even as I do, so do ye; for Christ left himself an example that we should follow his steps, though not in his miraculous fast, yet in his courageous fight against sin. The view hereof hath formerly been presented to your Honors, by Master Robert Hill, bachelor of Divinity, under this title, Satan's Sophistry answered by our Savior Christ. And now at the entreaty of M. Perkins executors, I have published it again; yet under a new title, and more large almost by one third part. Mine endeavor hath been that this poor Orphan might imitate his brethren, who were the messengers of love unto our Church, while their happy father lived among us. What is wanting herein, or may deserve a just reproof I willingly take to myself, me me adsum qui feci &c. What I have been able to do, I humbly commend to the church of God under your Honorable protection. If herein I seem presumptuous, because I am unknown unto you, I humbly crave this favorable construction; that I chose rather by presuming to wrong myself, then to alienate this book from your Honors, who had right hereto by former dedication. When your Honorable employments in time past required your wisdom and courage, for the just defense of our Sovereigns right, I make no question, but as well the messengers of victory over rebels, as the counselors of peace, were always welcome to your Honor: why then should I doubt, whether this ensuing display, being as well a counselor of peace with God, as an Herald of triumph through Christ over Satan, the Arch-enemy of our souls, will be grateful unto you, who have learned long since, that whosoever will keep a good conscience towards God or man must endure many a conflict with Satan?

Now that God of peace who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, grant unto your Honors according to the riches of his mercy, so to fight the good fight of faith on earth, that you may receive the crown of glory in heaven.

Cambridge, Emmanuel College, 25. of June. 1606.

Your Honors in the Lord to be commanded, Tho. Pierson.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE II.

Sir William Russell, Lord Russell, Baron of Thornhaugh, younger son to that most Christian and Honorable Earl, Frauncis Earl of Bedford; with the virtuous Lady his wife, Grace and Peace.

Right Honorable, as John the Baptist was in one desert, so our Savior Christ he was in another: but as these two differed in their being in the world: so did they not accord in their being in the wilderness. John was with some men, Christ with none; John was with wild men, Christ with wild beasts; John was preaching, Christ praying; John was baptizing, Christ fighting; John was feeding, Christ fasting; John was encountering with Devils incarnate, Christ did encounter with the Prince of those Devils. From John preaching in the desert, learn we diligence in our callings: from Christ tempted in the desert, see we troubles at our calling: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of all.

If it please you to give these after-lines the reading, you shall see set down that monomachy or single combat, which was hand to hand

betwixt Christ and the Devil. And as for Christ Jesus, you shall see him fasting, fighting, conquering. Fasting and a hungry, to show he was man: fighting and encountering, to show he was Messiah; and conquering and triumphing, to show he was God. And as for the devil, you shall see him objecting, answering, flying. Objecting, that Christ might despair; answering, that he might presume; and flying, when he could not overcome.

In Christ's temptations, we see the estate of the Church; in Satan's assault, we see his malice to the Church, Is Christ tempted? Think it not strange if we fall into temptations. For the grief of the head, is the grief of the members: and the temptations of Christ, show the temptations of Christians. It is true of Christ, that by many tribulations he did enter into the kingdom of God: that our High Priest was consecrated by afflictions, that so he must suffer and enter into his glory.

He is no sooner borne into the world, but he is hunted by Herod; baptized at Jordan, but Satan sets on him; a Preacher for repentance, but the Scribes proscribe him; to work miracles, but the Pharisees slander him. He is no sooner to suffer, but the Devil assaults him; apprehended, but the Jews deliver him; delivered, but Herod derides him; derided, but Pilate condemns him; condemned, but the soldiers abuse him. Is he on the cross? The people will not pity him: is he risen? The high Priests will belie him. In a word, is he upon earth? He is tempted in his person; is he in heaven? He is tempted in his members. Thus the life of Christ was a warfare upon earth, and the life of Christians must be a warfare upon earth. We live here in a sea of troubles: the sea is the world, the waves are calamities, the Church is the ship, the anker is hope, the sails are love, the Saints are passengers, the haven is heaven, and Christ is our Pilot. When the sea can continue without waves, the ship without tossing's, and

passengers not be sick upon the water, then shall the Church of God be without trials. We begin this voyage so soon as we are borne, and we must sail on till our dying day.

We do read in God's word of many kinds of temptations: God, Satan, Man, the World, and the Flesh, are said to tempt. God tempteth man to try his obedience, Satan tempteth man to make him disobedient: man do tempt men to try what is in them: and man tempteth God to try what is in him. The world is a tempter, to keep man from God: and the flesh is a tempter, to bring man to the Devil: So God tempted Abraham in the offering of his son: Satan tempted Job in the loss of his goods: a Queen tempted Solomon in trying his wisdom: men tempted God by distrust in the desert: the world tempted Domas, when he forsook the Apostles: and the flesh tempted David, when he fell by adultery. Doth God tempt us? Take heed of hypocrisy: doth Satan tempt us? Take heed of his subtlety: doth man tempt man? Take heed of dissembling: doth man tempt God? Take heed of inquiring: doth the world tempt man? Take heed of apostasy: doth the flesh tempt man? Take heed of carnality. But do we so? Are we wary of these tempers? No, we are not, and therefore we fall. We fall on the right hand, by temptations in prosperity, and we fall on the left, by temptations in adversity. Of the one it may be said, it hath slain thousands: of the other, that it hath slain ten thousands.

When we come and see cities dispeopled, houses defaced, and walls pulled down, we say, the soldier hath been there: and when we see pride in the rich, discontent in the poor, and sin in all, we may justly say, the Tempter hath been there.

Now of all other temptations, it pleaseth God to suffer his church to be tempted with afflictions. It is never free either from the sword of Ishmael; which is a reviling tongue: or the sword of Esau, a

persecuting hand. Neither was there yet ever Christian man found, who had not his part in the cup of affliction. We must drink of the same cup our master did: the disciple is not above his master.

The reasons why God doth visit us thus with afflictions, are: 1. To humble us. 2. To wean us. 3. To winnow us. 4. To prevent us. 5. To teach us. 6. To enlighten us. 7. To honor us. 8. To cure us. 9. To crown us. 10. To comfort us. 11. To protect us. 12. To adopt us. And last of all, to teach and comfort others. To humble us, that we be not proud: to wean us, that we love not his world: to winnow us, that we be not chaff: to prevent us, that we do not sin: to teach us, that we be patient in adversity: to enlighten us, that we see our errors: to honor us, that our faith may be manifest: to cure us, that we surfeit not of security: to crown us, that we may live eternally: to comfort us, that he may send his spirit: to protect us, that he may guide us by his Angels: to adopt us, that we may be his sons: and to teach others, that they seeing how sin is punished in us, they may take heed it be not found in them: that they seeing our comforts in troubles, may not be discouraged in the like trials.

Thus a Christian man's diet is more sour then sweet: his physic is more aloes then honey: his life is more a pilgrimage then a progress: and his death is more despised then honored. This if men would think of before, afflictions would be as welcome to the soul of man, as afflicted Ruth was to the field of Boaz. But because we look not for them before they come, think not on God's doing when they are come, and do desire to be happy both here and hereafter; therefore we can away with the name of Naomi, but in no case would we be called Mara. We see the sea, not the whale: the Egyptian, not the salvation: the Lions mouth, not him that stoppeth the Lions mouth. If we could see God in our troubles, as Elisha did in his, then would we say: There are more with us, then there are against us. But

because we do not, therefore at every assault of the Assyrians, we say, as the servant to Elishah did: Alas master, what shall we do? And with the disciples: Carest thou not Master that we perish? Yet it is good for us to suffer affliction: Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. It is commanded by God, practiced by Christ, yielded to by the Saints, assigned by God's providence, and good for us each way. We are God's trees, we shall grow better by pruning: God's pomander, smell better by rubbing: God's spice, he more profitable by bruising: and God's conduits, we are the better by running. Let us suffer afflictions, they are momentary in respect of time: favors, if we respect God's love, and a means to bring us to the kingdom of God. If they did consume us, we might wish them an end: but they do purge us, let us be content. They are God's fan, we are God's wheat: they are God's boulder, we are God's meal: they are God's flame, we are God's bush: they are God's cords, we are God's sacrifice: they are God's furnace, we are God's gold. The wheat will not be good without the fan, nor the meal without the boulder, nor the bush without the flame, nor the sacrifice without the cords, nor the gold without the furnace: they are trials, not punishments, if we be sons: punishments, not trials, if we be slaves. Let us then bear them, they will have an end: joy will follow: they show us our weaknesses: they move us to pray: they show we are in the path way to heaven: and make us contemn this present world. By them we learn to repent us of sin past, to take heed of sin present, and to foresee sin to come. By them we receive God's spirit: are like to Christ: are acquainted with Gods power: have joy in deliverance: know benefit of posterity: made more hardy to suffer: and have cause to practice many excellent virtues. They cause us (as one saith) to seek out God's promise: the promise to seek faith: faith to seek prayer: and prayer to find God. Seek, and ye shall find: call, and he will answer: wait, and he will come. I am to write an Epistle, I

must not be long. Job's messengers came not so fast on him: but Job's afflictions may come as fast upon us. Hath David slain a Bear? He shall encounter with a Lion: hath he killed a Lion? He must fight with Goliath: hath he subdued Goliath? he must make a rode upon the Philistines: are the Philistines conquered? Saul will assault him. Remember David's troubles, and foresee what may be our troubles. The more righteous we are, the more manifold are our troubles: and he better we are, the better we may endure them.

But as our troubles are many, so are our deliverances many God will deliver us out of all. He that delivered Noah from the flood, Lot from Sodom, Jacob from Esau, Joseph from Potiphar, Moses from Pharaoh, Israel from Egypt, David from Saul, Elijah from Ahab, Elisha from the Syrians, Naaman from his leprosy, Hezekiah from the plague, the three children from the fire, Daniel from the Lions, Joseph from Herod, the Apostles from the Jews, and Christ from the Devil: he, even he will either deliver us from trouble, or comfort us in trouble, or mitigate troubles when they come upon us.

He, he hath promised to do it, and he that hath promised, is able to do it. And this he doth sometimes by no means, sometimes by small means, sometimes by ordinary means, sometimes by extraordinary, sometimes contrary to all means. By no means be cured a cripple at Bethesda: by small means he fed five thousand in the desert: by ordinary means he was brought from the pinnacle: by means extraordinary he was provided for in hunger: and contrary to all means were the three children preserved in the furnace of fire.

I have good cause to think of God's gracious deliverance, being myself delivered from a great trouble. Since the time I was unkindly dismissed from my poor charge, where I would have continued, if malice had not hindered me, I have lived in an end of this City:

dangerously in respect of the sickness; poorly in regard of maintenance; and painfully, in respect of my ministry: yet till this time hath the Lord delivered me: and as Paul said, he will deliver me, if that he see it be best for me.

Let man therefore comfort himself in the Lord: after two days he will revive us, and the third day he will raise us up again: Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning. Doubtless there is a reward for the righteous: verily, God retaineth not his wrath forever. Could he overcome the world, and can he not overcome many troubles in the world? Yea, let one plague follow another, as one quail sings to another: yet as the viper leaped on Paul's hand, and forthwith leaped off again, so one trouble shall leap upon the righteous, and anon leap off again: though he fall, he shall rise again, the righteous shall not be forsaken forever.

if he hath delivered us from the guilt of our sins, he will deliver us from the punishment of our sins. Let us then therefore be patient in trouble, constant in hope, rooted in love: let us wait and he will come, call and he will hear, believe and he will perform, repent us of our evil committed against him, and he will repent of his evils intended against us. He is over us by his providence, about us by his Angels, in us by his spirit, with us by his word, under us by his power, and upon us by his Son. In him is our help, from him is our comfort, by him is our victory, and for him is our trouble. In thee have I trusted, saith a king: whoever was confounded that trusted in the Lord, said a friend? And as Elkanah was to Hannah instead of many sons, so God is to his instead of many comforters. Of other comforters, we may say as Job did of his friends: Silly comforters are you all. They will leave us, as mice do a ruinous house, but the Lord (like Ruth to Naomi) will never leave us, nor forsake us, Especially in the hour of death, which is in remembrance bitter to great men: in

that hour of death he will be with us, and command his Angels to take charge of our souls, the earth to be as a bed for our bodies: that so the one may go into glory, the other reserved in hope of like glory, and be made one day like unto the glorious body of Christ Jesus. Thus, right Honorable, you have seen the righteous in affliction; as Israel was in Babylon: and that the Lord like Zerubbabel is ready to deliver them. Though in troubles Christ's seems as in the ship to sleep, yet in deliverance he awakes as a man out of sleep, and as a Giant refreshed with wine. He will rebuke the waves and winds of troubles and persecution, and they shall fly before him as Sisera did before Deborah, and the Philistines before Jonathan and his servant. And as Christ asking the woman of her accuser she answered, There was none: so in the end ask a Christian of his troubles, and he will say, There are none. He is a buckler for our left hand, and a sword in our right: he is a helmet on our head, and harness for our body. We shall look upon troubles, as Israel did on the Egyptians, as the Jews did on Goliath, and as the Grecians did on Hector, to triumph over them: and as the Angel said to Joseph. They are dead that sought the child's life; so the Spirit shall say to the afflicted, They are dead that did seek your life. A day of deliverance, a year of Jubilee will come, and then Joseph shall be out of prison, Jacob out of servitude, and Job shall lie no more in the dust of the earth: Let us comfort ourselves with these words.

I have exceeded an Epistle, especially to such a small book. If the walls seem too great for this city; abundance cautela non no cet. It is usual for students not only to present their own labors, but also other men's to great personages, especially such Works wherein they have been either Translators or overseers. It were infinite to instance this point. I am bold to do the like to your Honor at this time. This Copy it was brought unto my hand, I have conferred it with another, I have pursued it at the Press, I heard diverse of the Sermons, I have added

nothing of mine own: and I desire, that of those many baskets full of most delicate diet, which this worthy man hath now left behind him, there may not so much as any one be lost. If any such come unto my hand, surely they shall not be lost. By his life had I much comfort, and I will seek to honor him after he is dead. I was twenty years acquainted with him: I at his request made the first fruits of his labors to speak English. And now I am bold to present this his posthume to your patronage. Your honorable Nephew, his virtuous Lady, your worthy sister, have heretofore accepted the labors of this man. If it shall please your good Honor to do the like, this Preface of mine shall remain as a perpetual testimony of my duty to you: and the book following as fully armed against all such adversaries as shall speak against it. The God of heaven, who hath made you honorable in your most honorable Progenitors, make you thrice honorable in your future successors: that the memorial of the righteous may be everlasting, when as the name of the wicked shall rot. London, Saint Martins in the fields. Jan. 12. 1604.

Your Honors at commandment, Robert Hill, Fellow of S. John's Coll. in Cambridge.

THE COMBAT BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE DEVIL EXPOUNDED.

Resist the Devil and he will flee: Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. - Jam. 4.7,8.

The true grace of faith enables us to both: for,

Whom resist steadfast in the faith. - 1 Pet. 5.9.

Let us draw near with a true heart in assurance of faith. - Heb. 10.22.

VERSE 1.

Then was Jesus led aside of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. - MAT. 4.1.

The eleven first verses of this chapter do contain a brief description of Christ's temptations, whereof I have chosen to entreat, having formerly handled the doctrine of Conscience, because all that endeavor either to get or keep a good conscience, are most of all subject to temptations: Now here we have the special temptations of the Devil wherewith he assaulted our Savior Christ, and in Christ's

example the best way to avoid the same. This description consisteth of three distinct parts: First, A Preface or preparation to a Combat between Christ and the Devil, verse. 1, 2. Secondly, The combat or conflict itself, verse. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Thirdly, The issue or event of this combat, verse. 11.

I. Part. The Preparation to the combat hath two parts: First, Christ's going forth to that place where the combat was to be fought, verse. 1. Secondly, his abode and conversing in that place, verse. 2.1. Christ's going forth to the place is set out by sundry circumstances of the Evangelists: as, The time when he went; The author of his going; The manner how he went furnished; the place whither he went; And the end wherefore.

I. Circumstance. The time when Christ went forth to be tempted is noted in this word Then: what time this was, we shall see in the end of the former chapter, where is set down the baptism of our Savior Christ by John in the river Jordan; as also the great honor and majesty wherewith he was there renowned: for it pleased Christ for special end and purpose to be baptized, not as we are, to put off sin, for he had none; but to be ordained a Mediator for us, that putting on our sin he might bear the burden thereof in our stead. Again in his baptism he was distinctly proclaimed, The doctor of his Church: for immediately thereupon, The Holy ghost descended upon him like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, saying, This is my well-beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Now so soon as Christ was thus solemnly inaugurated into his office, and proclaimed from heaven to be the sole Doctor and Prophet of God's Church, even then immediately without any delay was he driven forth, as Mark saith, chapt. 1.12.

The use. In that Christ is no sooner baptized, but he is presently tempted, we learn; that all those who are truly baptized into Christ must make account to be tempted, and prepare for a combat with the Devil, even through the whole course of their lives: for if Satan durst be so bold as to encounter with Christ Jesus the head of the Church after his baptism, then doubtless he will not spare any of his members who are but weak and sinful men. Again, in baptism a man gives up his name unto God, promising therein forever to renounce all service to the Devil, the flesh and the world; and contrariwise to believe in God, and to serve him; and this vow being thus made, it is the will of God he should be tempted, that in the school of temptation he might learn to practice his baptism. But here most men will say, they never felt by experience in themselves the truth of this doctrine; for they have not perceived any such combat in themselves, though they have been baptized many years ago.

Answ. Such men, whatsoever they be, have indeed the outward baptism of water, but they never yet received the inward baptism of the spirit; they wear Christ's livery, but as yet they do service unto Satan; And though they have been made partakers of the seals of the covenant, yet still they abide within the kingdom of darkness; for Christ here teacheth by his own example, that all those who have received the inward baptism of the spirit, whereby they have effectually put off sin, and put on the Lord Jesus, are as sure to be tempted by Satan as himself was: therefore let such persons as never yet felt in themselves this spiritual conflict, now begin to reform their lives, and to perform their vow of baptism, and they shall undoubtedly find in themselves the truth of this doctrine, That all that are baptized into Christ, shall be tempted of the Devil. So long as the children of Israel continued under Pharaoh's bondage, they were not pursued by his army; but when they set their faces toward the land of Canaan, then presently he makes after them, with all his might and malice; even so, while men live in sin and submit

themselves to Satan's spiritual bondage, he will suffer all things to be in peace with them; but if once they set their hearts on the heavenly Canaan, and give themselves sincerely to God's service, then will he with all his force pursue them, and meet them with armies of temptations to turn them back into their old way of sin again. The silly bird that is in the snare or under the net, so long as she lieth still feels no harm; but when she stirs and offers to get away, then begins her pain, and the more she strives, the more she finds herself ensnared: So fareth it with silly men, while they live in sin securely, they are not troubled with Satan's temptations; but when they begin to leave their bad courses, and settle themselves to serve the Lord, then presently the Devil seeks to spread his net to entangle them in his snare. The consideration whereof must teach us, to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation; and (as Paul saith) to put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the assaults of the Devil, Ephes. 6.11.

Secondly, in that our Savior Christ after his solemn inauguration into his mediatorship, was immediately to go to be tempted; we learn, that all those that are set apart by God to any special calling, even at their very entrance thereinto must look for temptations. This befell the head, and therefore all the members must reckon for it. When Moses was first called to be the guide and conductor of God's people out of Egypt, having slain an Egyptian in defense of one of his brethren, upon knowledge of the fact he was fain to fly from Pharaoh's court into the land of Madian, and there to live a shepherds life for many years with his father in law Jethro. And David was no sooner appointed by God to be king over his people Israel, but Saul began to persecute him, and so continued all his days. And our Savior Christ, having called his Apostles to their office of preaching his kingdom, took them soon after to the sea, and there falling asleep suffered their ship to be so tossed with waves in a great

tempest, that they looked for nothing but present drowning, so as they cried out, Master save us, we perish. And this the Lord doth in great wisdom for the good of his children: first to teach them, that no man is able of himself, to carry himself in any acceptable course of his calling without God's special assistance and grace. Secondly, to stir up in them those good gifts and graces which he hath formerly bestowed on them; as the fear of his name, the love of his majesty, the gifts of prayer, faith, patience, and many other which he would have tried in the entrance of their callings, and exercised in the continuance therein unto the end.

Thirdly, seeing Christ begins his prophetic office of teaching his church, with temptations; This should admonish all Ministers of the word, that howsoever all God's people must prepare themselves against Satan's temptations, yet they must do it above the rest; for look as in a pitched field, the enemy aimeth principally at the standard-bearer; even so Satan and his instruments, do among all God's people, bend their greatest forces against the ministers of Christ which hold up his scepter, and display his banner in the preaching of the Gospel. When Jehoshuah the high priest stood before the Lord, Satan stood at his right hand to resist him, Zak. 3.1. And when Ahab went to fight against the king of Syria, Satan became a lying spirit in the mouth of 400 prophets and more, 1 King. 22.22. This is that great red dragon, that with his tail drew down the third part of the stars of heaven, that is, of the ministers and preachers of the word, and cast them to the earth, Revel. 12.3, 4. This is he that desired to winnow the Disciples as wheat, Luk. 22.31. And as the king of Aram said of Ahab, fight not against small nor great, but against the king of Israel only, 1 King. 22.31. So Satan fighteth not against any so much as the Prophets of Israel, the ministers of the Church.

Fourthly, in that Christ is tempted before he go to preach, we learn that it is good and profitable for God's ministers to be exercised with temptations even of Satan himself, and that for sundry causes; first, that they may know what temptations mean; Secondly that they may be the more able to minister help and comfort to those that are tempted; Thirdly to make them understand the word of God aright; for many places of Scripture cannot so well be understood by bare study only, as by temptations therewithal; and it is true which one saith well, Reading, meditation, prayer, and temptation, make a divine.

II. Circumstance The author or efficient cause of Christ's going forth; to wit, the Holy ghost, noted in these words, was led by the spirit: The word led, in the original signifieth thus much, that Jesus was carried apart by the spirit; which must not be understood of any local transportation of his body from the river to the wilderness, as Elias was carried from earth to heaven; or as Philip was taken away from the Eunuch, and carried to Azotus; but it was a motion of the Holy ghost, wherewith Christ was filled above measure and made willing to encounter with Satan in that combat; for so are the words by S. Luke, being full of the Holy ghost he returned from Jordan, and was led by the spirit into the wilderness, that is, by the inward motion and instinct of God's spirit; Again, S. Mark saying, the Spirit drove him into the wilderness, giveth us further to understand, that this motion in Christ from the spirit, was a peculiar motion, not forced or constrained, but voluntary, and yet very strong and effectual.

Again, by the spirit here, is not meant the Devil or an evil spirit, but the Holy spirit of God: he it was that moved Christ to go into the wilderness; so that the meaning is this; After Christ was baptized in Jordan by John, he willingly took his journey into the wilderness, being moved thereunto by a special and strong instinct of God's holy

spirit, wherewith he was filled above measure. If any ask, how Christ could be led by the spirit, seeing he sends the spirit: Answ. These two may well stand together: for Christ must be considered two ways; first as man in the form of a servant; secondly, as God, even the son of God, yea God himself: Now as Christ was man, he was subject to God's providence, and so was led and guided by the Holy ghost: but as he is God, he is not subject to providence, but is the author thereof, and is not himself led or sent, but together with the father sendeth the spirit.

The use. In this circumstance we may observe; first the exceeding holiness of Christ's manhood, in that he moved not from one place to another, without the special instinct and direction of the spirit of God. By which example we are taught to suffer ourselves to be ordered and guided by the spirit of God in everything we take in hand, yea in all our thoughts, words and deeds; for this is the true note of every child of God to be led by the spirit, Rom. 8.14. where the Apostle useth the same word that S. Luke doth speaking of this leading of our Savior to be tempted: we must therefore labor to be of David's disposition, to have our hearts pliable to all God's testimonies; when God said, Seek ye my face, David's heart answered, I seek thy face O Lord, Psal. 27.8. and thus doing we shall suffer ourselves to be directed and guided by the Holy ghost, for he teacheth and guideth men by the word.

Secondly, from this that Christ was led unto temptation by the spirit of God; we learn, That temptations come not by chance, nor yet by the will and pleasure of the Devil only: for he could not touch Job, or ought he had till God gave him leave; nor enter into the heard of swine, till Christ said, go; but temptations come by God's most just permission, and not without his special providence and appointment. This combat of Christ with Satan was decreed of God

by his special appointment in his eternal counsel. And therefore was Christ led by the spirit to encounter with the Devil, that he might perform this one work of a mediator, namely in temptation overcome him, who by temptation overcame all mankind. And as God appointed this combat of our Savior, so hath he also ordained the temptations of every Christian and the circumstances thereof: The theater or place of this combat is this present evil world; the actors are Satan and every Christian; the beholders are men and Angels, 1 Cor. 4.9. The umpire and judge is God himself, who overruleth Satan, so as the issue cannot but be happy and blessed to those that fight manfully; for he casteth away none that be mighty and valiant of courage, Job. 36.1. he will give an issue with the temptations, 1 Cor. 10.13. from whence we learn sundry good instructions.

First, when we are tossed and tried by manifold temptations, we must not think it strange, but rather count it exceeding great joy, Jam. 1.2. because it is God's blessed will and ordinance that Satan and every Christian should enter combat and conflict, for the trial of his graces in them.

Secondly, we are hereby taught to labor with patience to bear all trials and afflictions, not using unlawful means to wind ourselves out of them, because they come by the special providence of the Almighty.

Thirdly, Christ went not to be tempted till he was led by the spirit; therefore no man must wittingly put himself into danger without a calling from God, lest therein he tempt God: indeed a man may be moved extraordinarily, to offer himself into places of danger; thus Paul went bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, that is, he willingly followed the motion of the Holy ghost, which inwardly enforced him to go thither. And the same may be said of many holy Martyrs, who

though they might have escaped by flight, yet did willingly offer themselves into the hands of their persecutors, and endured the violence of their torments, which we must think they did by a special motion of the Holy ghost; otherwise, for a man to offer himself into danger without all warrant from God, is to swerve from the practice of Christ in this place.

Fourthly, Christ being led by the spirit, did not seek to shroud himself from this combat; so likewise if a man follow his calling according to God's will, and thereupon fall into troubles and temptations, he may not seek to escape them by neglecting his duty, but with courage and patience must inure himself to bear them, waiting on the Lord by well-doing for his deliverance. Here it may well be asked, whether a man can lawfully and with good conscience abide in those places which are certainly known to be haunted with evil spirits? Answ. Some indeed are so venturous and bold that they fear nothing: yet the truth is, no man ought on his own head abide or lodge in such places, unless it be within the compass of his calling, or else have a true extraordinary motion of God's spirit so to do; we are therefore rather to avoid them, than wittingly and willingly thrust ourselves into the danger of such places; for if God have given liberty unto Satan to possess such places as have been consecrated to Idolatry, or defiled by oppression and blood, or such like abominations, why should we without warrant from God, put ourselves into his hands? This also may serve to reprove those men who presume so much upon their strong faith, that they never stick to thrust themselves into most lewd company: but let such persons beware, for places of bad company are places of danger by reason of that power and liberty which Satan hath among them, for there he hath a throne, Revel. 2.13. How then can it be, that they should clean escape the infection of sin, who do usually converse with those that commit it without controlment? He that walketh with the wise (saith

Solomon) shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be made worse: so the words signify: and therefore his counsel is, not to consent when sinners entice us: nor to make friendship with the angry person, nor to go with the furious, lest we learn their ways and receive destruction to our souls:

Fifthly, in this leading of Christ by the spirit, we learn a further thing: so long as Christ was a private man he lived with Joseph and Mary a private life; but being baptized, and thereby installed in his office of Mediator, he returns not to Bethlehem or Nazareth where he was borne and brought up, but gets him presently into the wilderness, thereto encounter with Satan, and that by the motion of the spirit; wherein we may see, that all that are appointed and set apart by God for any special calling, are in some sort changed by his spirit, and as it were made other men. When Saul was anointed to be king, the text saith, God gave him another heart. 1 Sam. 10.9. And when David was made of a shepherd a king, he was furnished for that place, as his behavior showed, which was such as did beseem a king. Thus the Apostles of our Savior Christ, of poor fisher-men, altogether unlettered, by the gift of Christ's calling, were made able ministers of the New testament, and so became indeed fishers of men, Mark. 1.17. Which serves to confute such men as plead extraordinary callings, as many have done; some saying they were Elias, some John the Baptist, &c. For if these were such men, and had received such extraordinary callings, then should they withal have been endued with extraordinary gifts fit for those callings; but no such thing befalleth them, nay it is plain, they remain the same men they were before, without any change at all in respect of gifts fit for such persons as they pretend themselves to be. And to apply this to ourselves; we are all by nature the children of wrath, and enemies unto God; but by grace we are made Kings, Priests, and Prophets; Kings to rule over the world and the Devil, in respect of their

provocations unto sin, as also to subdue in ourselves our own evil lusts and affections; Priests to offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God, as prayers and praises for his daily blessings; and Prophets to instruct ourselves and others in the ways of God, according to our gifts and calling. Now then it behooveth us all to become new men, and to lead new lives fitting and suitable to our holy calling, giving ourselves wholly to the honor and service of God, showing hereby, that we are hereunto called by his spirit of grace and holiness, so shall we walk worthy of the Lord, and show forth the virtues of him that hath called us, 1 Pet. 2.9.

III. Circumstance. How Christ went furnished into this place of combat: which though our Evangelist Matthew hath omitted, yet hath S. Luke plainly noted, saying, He was filled with the Holy ghost. Luk. 4.1. If any shall say, this seems to import that Christ wanted the fullness of the spirit all the former part of his life, if now only after his baptism he were filled therewith. I answer, This fullness of the spirit is ascribed unto Christ after his baptism, not as though he formerly sustained any want of the spirit, but because at his baptism he received a greater measure of the spirit than he had before: for this we must know, that Christ was always filled with the spirit; being an infant he had a full measure of gifts fit for his infancy, and still as his growth in years required more graces of the spirit, he increased therein, having in his youth and in his riper years full measure of gifts fit for his estate in those times. And at his baptism being inaugurated into his Mediatorship, he received such fullness of the spirit as was behooveful for so high an office, which because it was far greater than before he needed, therefore is he now said to be filled with the Holy ghost: so that though Christ were always full of grace, yet he increased therein as his estate and calling did require.

The use. This serves to confute the Papists, who teach that Christ had all fullness of spirit in his infancy, even from his conception and birth; and did not grow in grace at all, save only experimentally, as he had occasion to manifest the same more and more in practice. But. S. Luke saith plainly, that Jesus increased in wisdom, and stature, and in favor with God and men, Luk. 2.52. Again, Christ was like unto man in all things, sin only excepted, and therefore did increase in grace as man doth in gifts from time to time.

Further, Christ goeth thus furnished to this combat that he might be able to encounter with Satan hand to hand, and at the end give him the final overthrow. Thus he furnished Moses for his ambassage unto Pharaoh; and David for his combat with Goliath; Aholiab and Bezaliel for the work of the Tabernacle; and everyone whom God employeth about any special work, is furnished and fitted thereto of God with special gifts: whereby in every age we may see whom God placeth in any calling, for they are well qualified for the duties thereof; and therefore those that want gifts meet for their callings, do thrust in themselves thereto, and are not placed therein of God.

IV. Circumstance. Whither was Christ led to be tempted? Namely, into the wilderness, that is the place chosen of God for this combat. There be diverse opinions touching this place; some think it was a little wilderness between Jerusalem and Jericho; some the desert of Palestine; others, the great desert of Arabia, where Elias fasted forty days and forty nights; and where the Israelites wandered forty years. But seeing the Holy-ghost doth not define what wilderness this was, we are not curiously to inquire after it, but only know it was a desert and solitary place. Let us rather search into the reasons wherefore he chose a desert place for this combat; and they are diverse: First, because he was to work our redemption in great humility, even in the base and low estate of a servant, for the satisfying of God's justice in

that nature which had sinned, therefore he would not go to Jerusalem there to show his glory and Godhead, as a little before he was proclaimed in his baptism; but he gets himself to a desert place void of all pomp and glory, where he meant to begin this great work for us by encountering with our chiefest adversary. Secondly, he chose this place for the more easy encountering with our adversary Satan, whom he was to overcome for us: for if Christ after his baptism should have showed the glory of his Godhead, Satan durst not have meddled with him; therefore as the fisher hides the hook and shows the bait to entice the fish, so our Savior Christ with the veil of his flesh in this base estate and solitary place did cover the glory of his Godhead, that Satan seeing him only in this low degree, might be the more eager and bold to set upon him. Thirdly, Christ was willing to give unto his adversary the advantage of the place, that therewithal he might give him the greater overthrow; for the Devil delights in desert and forlorn places, and there he would choose to practice his temptations, because in such places men want those helps and comforts which in society they may find: hence Solomon saith, Woe be to him that is alone: yea, God himself said of man in the state of his innocence, It is not good for man to be himself alone. And that Satan takes advantage of such solitariness, appears by his tempting of Eve, when she was apart from her husband, Gen. 3.1. Fourthly, the praise and honor of this victory over Satan, was peculiar to Christ, and not communicable to any creature: and therefore Christ chose a desert place for this combat apart from all human society, that no man might challenge any part of this glory to himself, but that it might be wholly Christ's, as of right it was. Fifthly, he went into a desert place for a time, that afterward he might thence return with more credit, reverence and authority to exercise his prophetic office: for we see by experience that when a man hath been abroad for some time, he is received with more reverence at his return.

The use. From hence the church of Rome would fetch a ground and warrant for their monastical life; saying, that as Christ went apart into this desert, so may men sequester themselves from ordinary societies, and live as Monks and Heremites in cloisters, woods and deserts. But this collection is absurd, as may appear by these reasons: first, Christ went not thus apart on his own head, but by the instinct and motion of the spirit of God: but the Papists admit and undertake the state of Eremiticall and Monastical life without any warrant in God's word. Secondly, Christ did thus sequester himself but once for a certain time: but with them, an Heremiticall estate is ordinary and perpetual for their whole life. Thirdly, our Savior Christ fasted truly all the while he abode in the wilderness: but Papists in their Cloisters and Hermitages do plentifully enjoy the wealth of the world in great ease and liberty. And therefore howsoever solitariness for a time may be commendable in some cases, as to meditate on the works or word of God, as Isaac did, Gen. 24.63. or for the exercise of prayer and fasting in more earnest manner; yet the Eremites life being a perpetual forsaking of human societies, is neither warrantable by God's word, nor commendable in God's child.

V. Circumstance. The end why Christ went into the desert; namely, to be tempted of the Devil: wherein observe three points; How he was tempted; wherefore, and by whom. For the first; To Tempt, in Scripture is ascribed to God, to man, and to the Devil: God tempteth man, when he proveth him; that is, when he maketh manifest what is in his heart for sin or grace, which before were hid to the world: thus God tempted Abraham in the offering up of his son, Gen. 22.1. and Christ, the ruler, Luk. 18.22. Man tempteth God, when he proveth by unlawful means whether God be so powerful, just and merciful as the Scriptures do affirm him to be: and thus the Israelites tempted God, when they required meat for their lust, and said, can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Psal. 78.18, 19. The Devil tempteth when he

allureth unto sin, by inward suggestions or outward objects; and hereof must we understand Christ's tempting in this place; to wit, that he was led into the wilderness for this end that Satan might assault him, and use what means he could to bring him unto sin. If any shall think it was too much derogatory to the dignity of Christ to be thus tempted. I answer, if it had so pleased him, Christ could have confounded the Devil with the least word of his mouth: for as he is Creator of heaven and earth, so Satan had no power to tempt him, for God cannot be tempted with evil, Jam. 1.13. But here Christ stood in our room and stead (as he did upon the Cross) encountering with Satan for us, as if we in our own persons had been tempted. This therefore must be understood as a part of Christ's humiliation in his manhood, whereto he subjected himself for our sakes, otherwise the Devil could not have tempted him. Object. This stands not with the holiness of Christ as he is man to be tempted of Satan? Answ. Yes, he might be tempted of Satan without sin, as our first parents were before their fall: this will plainly appear by comparing Christ with other men in their temptations.

The Devil in tempting a man to sin, first conveys into his mind, either by inward suggestion, or by outward object, the motion or cogitation of that sin which he would have him to commit. Thus he tempted Judas, by casting into him this evil thought, Judas betray thy Master. And so dealeth he with Christ in this temptation, he conveyed to his mind or apprehension, the unrighteous cogitations of unbelief, idolatry, and covetousness; yet so as Christ received them not, but with all power of grace repelled them. Secondly, as Satan conveys evil suggestions into men's minds, so the same are full of trouble, sorrow, and vexation, at least to the godly: for when Satan presseth upon man his temptations, the whole man is disquieted, his thoughts and affections are troubled, and his heart is vexed. And this also was in Christ, he felt sorrow and molestation in himself through

these temptations, as appeareth by his Avant Satan upon his last assault. And thus far was Christ tempted like unto men. Thirdly, in temptations usually be corrupt motions; for though a man do not approve, neither entertain with delight, the Devils temptations, yet shall he hardly keep himself from the stain and taint of sin, because the imaginations of his own heart are naturally evil. Now herein Christ differeth from all men in temptation; for being perfectly holy in his human nature, he did not in the least measure receive any corruption into his mind, but by the power of grace did repel them more strongly than they were offered. Put a burning match to tinder or gunpowder, and it will kindle presently; but put it into water, and that will quench it straight: so it fareth in temptations; our corrupt hearts like tinder do easily suffer corruption to kindle in us; but Christ's most holy heart did presently like water quench the evil of Satan's motions. And thus we see how Christ was tempted, and yet without sin.

The use. Hence we may observe a good direction for their comfort that are troubled with blasphemous thoughts. Among other temptations that befall men in God's church, the Devil doth mightily assault some men by casting into their minds most fearful motions of blasphemy against God the Father, the Son and the Holy-ghost, whereby he doth greatly astonish them and bring them to despair. Now the ground of their stay and comfort hence is this: There be incident to the mind of man two kinds of evil thoughts: First, such as arise from the flesh, that is, from our corrupt nature; and the very first motions of these are sins, forbidden in the tenth commandment. Secondly, there be others that rise not inwardly from the flesh, but are from without conveyed into the mind by the devil, as these most horrible blasphemies against God, which would make a godly heart to tremble and quake once to think upon. Now these are our heavy crosses indeed, when we be assaulted with them, but the devils sins

wholly, and become not ours, till we receive them by some degree of delight or assent, as may hence appear: for Christ was tempted to infidelity, covetousness and idolatry, yet his holy heart received them not, and so they never became his sins.

The second point to be considered in this circumstance is, wherefore Christ was tempted: for it may seem strange that Jesus Christ the son of God, yea very God, equal with the Father, should be tempted. The reasons therefore that moved him to be tempted are these: First, that he might foil the Devil at his own weapon; for the Devil overcame the first Adam in temptation, therefore Christ the second Adam would in temptation overcome him. Secondly, that in his example he might give us direction whereby to know the special temptations wherewith the Devil assaults the Church, as also how to withstand and repel the same: for this cause no doubt hath the spirit of God so distinctly set down Christ's preparation to this combat, Satan's several assaults, and Christ's victory over them all: which plainly confuteth the common opinion of ignorant people, who think those that are tempted by the Devil to be most vile and wicked men, such as have forsaken God, and therefore God hath forsaken them; but behold Christ Jesus the most holy person that ever was, even the holy one of God, was tempted of Satan, and that exceeding sore, having the same troubles and vexations thereby arising in his mind that we have, insomuch as the Angels came to minister comfort unto him, verse. 11. God's dearest children therefore may and must be tempted, for that is no token of a child of wrath, unless we will say, that Christ Jesus was the child of wrath, which once to think were most blasphemous. Thirdly Christ was tempted, that he might be a merciful high priest, unto them that are tempted, Heb. 2.17, 18. for himself knowing the trouble and anguish of temptation, must needs in a more compassionate fellow-feeling of their miseries be ready to help and comfort his members when they are tempted.

The third point is, the author of Christ's temptations, to wit, the devil: the name Devil signifieth a caviler, a slanderer and an accuser: He is an accuser three ways; he accuseth God to man; man to God; and man to man. First God to man; as when he told Eve, they must not die though they did eat of the forbidden fruit, Genes. 3.4. which was as much as if he had said, God doth but deceive you with that threatening, ye shall not die at all. Secondly he accuseth men to God, and therefore is called the accuser of the brethren: and our adversary who goeth about like a roaring lion: which word adversary signifies one that enters plea or suite against us: thus he dealt against godly Job, by the Lord's own confession Job. 2.3. Thirdly, he accuseth man to man, by engendering ungodly and uncharitable surmises and suspicions in one man against another, and in causing one man to slander and injury another; and for this cause is he said to work in the children of disobedience, Ephes. 2.2. and their wisdom is said to be devilish, who have bitter envying and strife in their heart, Jam. 3.14, 15.

The use. From this very name we are to be admonished of two things: First to beware of false accusing, tale-bearing and slandering; for in these practices we put on the devils name, and show forth the infection of his nature: Paul telling Timothy, that a minister must not be a novice, lest he be puffed up and fall into the condemnation of the devil, useth such a word for the devils name as signifieth a false accuser or slanderer, to show unto us that such a one is a devil incarnate: And yet this is the common sin of this age, to speak evil and to backbite, when they speak one of another. Secondly, hereby we are taught to beware, how at any time or any way we dissuade any one from embracing or obeying true religion: for herein we show ourselves to be the children of the devil. When Elymas the sorcerer would have turned away Sergius Paulus from the faith, Paul calls him, full of all subtlety and mischief, the child of the devil. And this I

do the rather observe, because it is a usual thing to draw others back from the power of godliness; though not in plain terms, yet partly in reproaches and partly by bad example of life. Now all such had need to look to their estate, for the children of the devil are like to have their portion with the devil and his angels. And thus much for the author of Christ's temptations; as also for the first part of Christ's preparation to this combat.

VERSE 2.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward hungry. MAT. 4.2.

Here is the second part of Christ's preparation to this combat, namely his abode in the wilderness, which is set out unto us by four arguments: I. by his fasting forty days and forty nights, noted in the words of this verse. II. by his abode with wild beasts, noted by S. Mark. chap. 1.12. III. by his enduring of temptations within the space of these forty days and forty nights, Luk. 4.2. though in particular those be not set down by any Evangelist. IV. by his hunger after forty days fasting, in the end of this verse. Of these in order.

I. Circumstance. Christ's fasting forty days and forty nights: There be three kinds of fasts, if we take the word in a general sense: first the daily fast of temperance and sobriety, whereby we use God's creatures for our sustenance with that moderation and abstinence, that we rather give less to nature's appetite, than that which it desireth: This Christ enjoineth to every Christian, take heed lest at

any time your hearts be oppressed with surfeiting and drunkenness. The second kind of fast is, the religious abstinence of God's church from all meats and drinks for a time, for the furtherance of their prayers, when they humble themselves unto God for the preventing or removing of some heavy judgment: thus the Jews fasted, sometime for one day, sometime for three days and three nights, Hester 4.16. yea sometime for seven days together; but then it is like they received some sustenance in the evening: for so Daniel fasted for three weeks of days, eating no pleasant things, Daniel 10.2, 3. but of neither of these must Christ's fasts here be understood. The third kind of fast is miraculous, done by the power of God restraining the appetite for many days together without meat or drink, beyond the power of nature: Thus Moses fasted forty days and forty nights in mount Sina, where he enjoyed the presence of God so long. And so did Elias fast in mount Horeb; and our Savior Christ in this wilderness. We read indeed that Paul in his conversion fasted three days and three nights eating nothing, Act. 9.9. So did the Jews with Hester and her maids, Hest. 4.16. And experience teacheth that a sick man may live seven or nine days together without meat or drink, yea (as some learned Physicians write) fourteen days: And Paul's companions in his journey to Rome, are very little or nothing at all, for fourteen days, for the words are plain, eating nothing: And it may be so, since the like hath been found true by experience in our age. And this is the longest that a man can fast and live, to wit fourteen, or fifteen, or seventeen days; for so much is recorded of some, that after so long abstinence have lived, though with some weakness of nature: but for a man ordinarily, being of good constitution of body to fast forty days and forty nights together, is impossible. Indeed it hath been avouched that a man might fast months, yea a whole year together without meat or drink and yet live; but we may persuade ourselves it is not true. Now our Savior Christ (which is yet more) during this fast felt no faintness nor weaking of his body, as we

ordinarily do with a little abstinence, so that his fast was not ordinary but miraculous altogether.

The reasons why Christ fasted thus long in the wilderness may be these; First that he might perform his ministry, which now he was to begin, with more reverence and authority: for this cause would God have Moses to fast forty days and forty nights before he delivered the law written in two tables of stone unto the people; and so must Elias do, before he did restore religion in his days: Secondly, that it might appear he was no whit inferior to Moses and Elias: and Thirdly, that he might show his full consent with them. Quest. Seeing Christ did far excel Moses and Elias, why did he not exceed them in the length of his fast, for threescore days or a whole year? Answ. He did it not through want of power to have fasted longer, but because he would not give occasion thereupon that any should call into question the truth of his manhood, which might easily have happened, if he had fasted a whole year together.

The use. Hereon the Church of Rome would build their Lent fast; but very fondly; for first Christ did not thus fast to give us example to follow him herein, but to prepare himself to the great work of his ministry; secondly, there is great difference between Christ's fast and theirs; Christ fasted thus but once, and that by the instinct of the Holy Ghost; they keep their fast yearly, and that on their own heads: Christ's was a true fast, without all meat or drink; but theirs is a mock-fast, for they eat the finest fishes and other dainties, and drink wines, wherein is as much nourishment to the body, and as good as in flesh; neither can they justly build it on the practice of the primitive Church, for they used to fast (at least in some places) but two or three days before Easter: and their Lent fast was not ordained nor imposed till many years after Christ; so as everyone might choose whether he would fast, or not.

II. Circumstance. S. Mark doth further set out Christ's abode in the wilderness by his being and conversing with wild beasts, Mark. 1.13. which some think Christ did for this end, that wild beasts might come to him and do him homage due to their Creator and Governor: but this is a device of man without likelihood of truth; for howsoever Christ in himself deserved all homage and reverence of all his creatures; yet because he abode among wild beasts to be abased and humbled in the low estate of a servant, therefore it is not like he went to receive homage from them. The true cause rather is this: we find in Scripture that among the Jews were two sorts of deserts; one, in part peopled and inhabited, having here and there cities and villages; in such a desert was John the Baptist borne, and did baptize and preach; that the prophesy of Isaiah might be fulfilled, The voice of a crier in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord. The other, not inhabited at all by men, being a place of abode only for wild beasts, as Lions, Bears, Tigers, Wolves, &c. which lived therein continually: Now into such a desert as this, was our savior Christ led by the spirit, and made his abode among such wild beasts; which circumstance is therefore noted to give us to understand that in this combat, our Savior Christ had no aid, protection, succor, help, or comfort from any man or other creature whatsoever; for by nature his companions were so far from being an help and comfort unto him, that they would rather seek to devour him. Whereby we plainly see that the praise of victory in this combat, is proper to Christ alone, and not communicable to any creature whatsoever.

The use. In this estate of Christ in this wilderness, we may behold the condition of Christ's militant church; to wit, that it is in this world as in a wilderness and desert of wild beasts; for during their abode on earth, God's children live with men, who in disposition and affection are like Wolves, Bears, Tigers, Lions and Cockatrices, until such time as the Holy Ghost by grace shall turn their hearts, as we may plainly

see, Isaiah 11.6, 7, 8. in regard whereof they must arm themselves with patience against manifold assaults and vexations, comforting their hearts with this consideration, that Christ their head hath undergone this estate before them.

III. Circumstance. S. Luke observeth, that while Christ abode in the wilderness, within the space of those forty days and forty nights, he was tempted of the Devil, before the three great temptations: the words are plain: And was there forty days tempted of the devil: And when they were ended, then the devil said, &c. what these temptations were, either for matter or form, the holy Ghost hath not set down; and yet we may probably think they were more mild and gentle temptations than those three which are set down; the devil making them as it were an entrance to his strongest and most dangerous temptations; for his manner is, when it makes for his advantage, not to show his violence and extremity at the first, but to proceed by degrees, and by little and little to insinuate himself till he have gotten his best advantage, and then will he show the strength of his malice. Thus he dealt with Cain, first he provokes him to anger and malice against his brother, because his brothers sacrifice was accepted, and his rejected; then having settled hatred in his heart, he never leaves till he had caused him in his rage to slay his brother; and yet he stays not there, but after bring him to despair of God's mercy, in so much as he cried out, my sin is greater than I can bear. Thus also he dealt with Judas; first he cast this evil thought into his heart, Judas betray thy master, and when he had gotten entertainment for that (for doubtless Judas would not yield to so vile a thought at the first motion) then he caused him to put it in execution, whereupon in fearful despair he brought him to hang himself. This is the subtlety of the old serpent; first he conveys one claw or talon into a man's heart, and then another; after that he gets in his head, and so at length winds in all his body: Thus he assayed to

do with Christ, and so will he continue towards all God's children. Which should teach us to labor to be strong in the Lord, and wise in his word, that so we may stand against all his assaults: Yea, this must move us to a special watch through the whole course of our lives against the occasions of sins, that we may cut off temptations in the beginning, because it is Satan's craft, not to spit his venom at the first, but to sugar his temptations at the beginning that no danger may appear till he have conveyed into us the bane and poison of our souls.

IV. Circumstance. Christ's abode in the wilderness is further set out by his hunger, in the end of this verse; He was afterward hungry: that is, after he had fasted forty days and forty nights by the power of his Godhead, then he began to wax hungry. But some will say, this stands not with the glory and majesty of the son of God to be hungry, for his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. Answer. Christ was content to lay aside his glory and majesty, and to take upon him our base and frail nature, becoming like unto us in all things save sin; now in this his abasement and humility he had not only a true soul and body, but the true faculties thereof, as understanding, will, memory, &c. and though his body was free from personal infirmities, as palsy, gout, dropsy, or such like, yet he was subject to such infirmities as agree to the nature of man, as hunger, thirst, weariness, &c. Yea this was one part of his humiliation to become not only man, but man with infirmities: and therefore though he could by the power of his Godhead have preserved himself forty years without meat or drink as well as forty days; yet that he might abase himself to the lowest degree of a servant, he was content to sustain the infirmity of his human nature in being an hungered: And that for these causes.

First, to confirm unto us the truth of his manhood; for some man might say, it was an easy thing for him to fast forty days and forty nights, seeing he had not a true body, but only the show and shadow of a body: therefore to show that he was true man, and had a true natural body as we have, he was content to sustain hunger, as we do, and that truly. Secondly, that hereby he might cast an object before the devil, to cause him to be the more eager and violent in his temptations, and to show his malice in full measure against him; for by virtue of his office whereto he was now called, Christ was to encounter with Satan our common enemy, and therefore gives him not only the advantage of the place, but also the opportunity of estate, that Satan perceiving his infirmity of bodily hunger, might thereby be emboldened to give the more violent assault upon him. And thus much of the second part of Christ's preparation to his combat.

VERSE 3.

Then came to him the Tempter, and said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones may be made bread. - MAT. 4.3

Here begins this strange combat between our Savior Christ and the devil, consisting of three great conflicts: The first whereof is contained in this verse and the next, being indeed the greatest of them all, as after shall appear. In this temptation observe these three things: first Satan's preparation to this conflict: secondly the temptation itself: thirdly, Christ's answer and repulse made thereunto.

I. Point: The devils preparation is in these words: Then came to him the Tempter, and said: herein observe four things; first, the title given to Satan the author of this temptation, the Tempter; so Paul calleth him, 1 Thess. 3.5. I sent to know of your faith, lest the Tempter had tempted you in any sort: And Satan is called the Tempter, because his continual study and practice hath been and is, by all means to tempt all men; he omits no times, neither spares any pains day or night, but by all means seeks to draw men from God, and to bring them to destruction: the consideration whereof should move us to the practice of these duties.

First, to be watchful in all manner of prayers and supplication against Satan, for the gracious protection of God against his assaults: If any of us had our dwelling among Lions, Bears, or Tigers, which were hungerbit, and therefore would seek greedily for their pray, we would be sure never to go out of our dwelling houses, without preparation for rescue and defense, whereby we might avoid their danger. Well, though we have no such wild beasts to endanger our bodies; yet our souls are daily assaulted by a more deadly enemy, even the devil, whose continual study and practice is by temptation to devour us, 1 Pet. 5.8. and therefore we must always be watchful against temptations, putting upon us the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against his assaults.

Secondly, as it is the Devils practice always to tempt, and to seek to draw men from God, so because we must be unlike him in all things, we must draw near to God in the practice of all good duties, James 4.7. 8. Resist the devil and he will fly; draw near to God, and he will draw near to you: the conjunction of these two duties shows, that the nearer we come to God, the more we oppose ourselves to Satan: now he that cometh unto God must believe, Heb. 11.6. and therefore by faith must we exercise ourselves unto godliness, as Paul exhorteth

Timothy; and unless we thus strive to be unlike him, we shall never be able to withstand his temptations.

Thirdly, we must hence learn to beware of the practice of seducers, in seeking to draw back others from the love or practice of religion, or in hindering the good means whereby religion is begun and furthered in men; for if either by endeavor in action, or by bad example we shall thus do, doubtless we become tempters, and the children of the devil: for to tempt and draw to sin is the property of Satan, and he that in tempting fulfils the lusts of Satan, must needs be his child, John. 8. 44. hence it was, that our Savior Christ calls Peter Satan, when he went about to dissuade him from that work for which his Father had sanctified him and sent him into this world, saying, Get behind me Satan, Matt. 16.23. And when Elymas sought to turn away the Deputy from the faith, Paul calls him enemy to all righteousness, full of all subtlety, and child of the devil, Act. 13.10.

The second thing in this preparation is, the time when Satan began to tempt our Savior Christ in a more strong and violent manner, noted in this word Then, that is, when Christ had now fasted forty days and forty nights, and was an hungered; when the devil saw Christ not only to be alone in the wilderness, but also perceived that he was afflicted with hunger, and so the more weak being in the low estate of a miserable man, Then he prepares to assault Christ with a most violent temptation.

The use. This discovereth unto us the deep policy of Satan in making choice of the fittest time for his assaults: he will not tempt all men at all times, neither always with the greatest temptations; but he forecasts for the time of man's greatest weakness, and thereto he reserveth his strongest assaults: Now usually a man is most weak, when he is under some grievous affliction; either in body, mind, or

both; or when he lieth in the pangs of death: these times doth Satan observe; and keep his strongest temptations against they come, as doth notably appear by his dealing with Christ, not only at this time when he was an hungered, but also and especially at his passion; for the Scripture saith, He spoiled principalities and powers upon the cross: whereby is apparent, that the Devil with his greatest power did then assault him, thinking either then or never to give him the foil, when as he did sustain the wrath of God due unto the sins of man; and so will he handle all the members of Christ; in their greatest extremities they shall be sure to feel Satan's deepest malice, unless God restrain his power. Which must teach us in the day of peace and strength, to prepare against the day of weakness by any affliction or by death itself, that so we may by God's grace be able to stand against the rage of Satan; for then he will be sure most eagerly to seek our ruin, and unless we prepare beforehand, we shall never be able to stand: Now our best preparation is to come to hear the words of Christ and to do the same, for then, though the winds blow, the rain fall, the waves beat, and Satan do his worst, yet being built upon the rock Christ Jesus, we shall never fall, Matth. 7.24, 25.

The third thing in this preparation, is the occasion of Satan's onset at this time, namely, Christ's bodily hunger, as the knitting of this verse to the former will plainly show, for Christ being a hungered, Satan came unto him and tempted him. He could not find in Christ's most holy manhood any blemish of sin, or inclination thereto whereon to build his temptation; yet such is his malice, that rather than Christ should escape his hands, he will take occasion from the infirmity of his nature in bodily hunger to provoke and allure him unto sin.

Herein we learn a special point; namely, that the devil will have some ground in us for those temptations wherewith he doth assault us; for as we may see by his dealing here with Christ, he observes not only

the inclination of man's heart and soul, but the state and constitution of the body, that if either body or mind will afford him the least advantage, thereon he will be sure to take occasion to tempt. If we regard the seed and root of sin, it is true that every man hath all sins in him, but yet through the work of God, restraining corruption in some, and renewing grace in others, it comes to pass, that each man is more inclined naturally to some sins than to others, which thing Satan doth observe most diligently; and as an enemy that besiegeth a city will go about it and espy where the wall is weakest and most fit for his entrance, and there will be sure to give his strongest onset; and as a man that would strike fire with a flint, will turn it about in his hand, to see what part is fittest; even so the devil, he goes about a man, and as it were turns him to and fro, to spy out his weakness, and to what sins he is most inclined, and there he will, be sure to try him often, and to assault him with greatest violence. Example: If a man be impatient of poverty, he will seek to carry him to picking and stealing: If a man be prove to covetousness, he will provoke him to fraud and oppression: If he be inclined to ambition, Satan will puff him up with pride and vainglory: nay, which is far more, Satan will take occasion from the very constitution of a man's body to draw him unto sin; if choler be predominant in him, Satan will labor to stir him up to wrath, anger, and fury, and if he can, to bloodshed and murder: If a man be of a sanguine complexion, Satan will seek to carry him to immoderate mirth, and to excess in pastimes, pleasures and delight, that if it be possible he may drown him therein, whether they be good or bad: If a man be melancholic, Satan will sometime take occasion by that humor to strike him with exceeding sadness, with terrors and fears; and otherwhile to intoxicate his brain with strange fantasies and delusions, causing a man to think himself to be Elias, John the Baptist, Christ, &c. So as it is true which an ancient Divine saith of this humor, that it is the Devils bait wherewith he sports himself. See the experience hereof in the lunatic person, whose

disease was, to be exceedingly troubled certain times of the month, by reason of melancholy oppressing the brain. Now Satan (as it there appears) took advantage of that humor to abuse him most fearfully, not only in making him deaf and dumb, but also causing him to cast himself into fire and water. So that look how many sins and infirmities we have in us, so many dares we carry about us, wherewith Satan will seek to wound us. He taketh ground or occasion from us, of all the advantage he hath against us; his temptations are like fire and bellows, and our infirmities and corruptions are wood and fuel.

The use. I. Hence then we may behold our miserable estate by reason of sin; for thereby it comes to pass that we bear about us those darts, wherewith the devil doth wound us. And since Satan's craft and malice is such to take advantage from us, for to work our woe, we must labor the more diligently, to be thoroughly acquainted with our natural dispositions and inclinations, yea with our bodily infirmities, for the Devil will search us; and when we have truly found out our own estate, we must set a strong watch and guard about our own hearts in respect of our infirmities, and so shall we be the better able to break the neck of Satan's temptations.

The fourth thing in this preparation is, Satan's coming to Christ; The Tempter came unto him: By which phrase it is probable, though not certain, that the Devil took upon him the form of some creature, and so appeared unto Christ; thus he came to Eve in Paradise, abusing the serpent to further his assault against the first Adam: And it is like, that in his combat with the second Adam, he came in the shape of some creature, for otherwise he could not properly be said to come and speak. Some indeed think that these temptations were inward in mind only, and by vision; others think they were altogether visible and done actually; but the safest way is to hold that they were in part

actually done in bodily manner, and partly showed in vision. And thus much for the preparation to the first conflict.

II. Point. The temptation itself: containing matter of great importance, being indeed the main temptation of all, in these words: If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread. The Devil being well provided for time and place, and advantaged also by Christ's bodily hunger, doth here assault our Savior Christ like a cunning Sophister, and frame his argument Sylogistically, thus:

If thou be the son of God, thou canst make these stones bread.

But thou canst not make these stones bread:

Therefore thou art not the son of God. The ground of this temptation is this: It is no reason that the Son of God should starve for want of food; but thou must starve unless thou canst make these stones bread: and therefore unless thou canst do so, thou mayest persuade thyself it was but a false voice which thou heardest from heaven; This is my well-beloved Son, &c.

The scope and drift of Satan in this temptation stands in two things; First he labors to overthrow the faith of Christ. Secondly, to bring him to a practice of unbelief. For the first, By faith I mean, a gift or grace in Christ, whereby as he was man, he believed his Fathers words to be true, which said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: whereby we may see, what the Devil aims at principally in his temptations against God's children; for these his assaults against our Savior Christ are set down for our instruction in this behalf. Satan's main drift then in temptation is to overthrow our faith, whereby we believe every part and parcel of God's word to be true: See this in his tempting of Eve; first he labors to weaken her

faith in the truth of God's threatening, which done, he easily brought her to actual disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit. The same course he holdeth at this day; first he will seek to nuzzle men in ignorance, that he may keep them in unbelief: if he fail that way, then will he endeavor to plunge their souls into some damnable error and heresy; and by one of these means doth he destroy the faith of many; for while a man remains in ignorance he can have no saith; and if he miss of the truth of God, he wants ground for his faith. Now the reason why the Devil labors so much against our faith is, because we cannot truly rely upon God's mercy, nor depend upon his providence, nor yield any acceptable obedience to his commandments, unless we believe his word.

More particularly we are to observe that special branch of God's word which the Devil would have Christ not to believe; even that voice of his Father, which a little before Christ heard from heaven at his baptism; This is my well-beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: And this hath the holy Ghost recorded in great wisdom and mercy to God's Church; for hereby doth appear a main drift of Satan against Christ's members in his temptations, namely to make them doubt of their adoption, and to destroy this persuasion in them, that they are the sons and daughters of God; for if herein he spared not the head, doubtless the members shall not escape his hands. This appears by his usual assault against them, specially when God shall lay upon them any lingering cross or affliction, either in mind, in body, or in goods; then the devil will suggest this into their minds; If thou werst the child of God, he would never lay his hand upon thee so long a time and in so grievous manner; never was any child of God in this case that thou art in: But God lays his hand thus heavy on thee; and therefore thou mayest persuade thy self that thou art not the child of God.

The use. The consideration hereof must move us above all things to labor for assurance of our adoption, even to have our consciences, assured out of God's word, that we are the sons and daughters of God in Christ. The devils drift is to overthrow this persuasion in us, and therefore our endeavor must be, to confirm and settle our hearts herein. This is the charge of the holy Ghost upon every child of God; 2 Pet. 1.10. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure, that is, get the assurance thereof sealed up in your hearts, by the comfortable fruition and practice of the saving graces of God's spirit, joining virtue with your faith, and with your virtue knowledge, with your knowledge temperance, and with temperance patience, and with patience godliness, and with godliness brotherly kindness, and with brotherly kindness love, verse. 5, 6, 7. And indeed if we would have true peace and comfort in every estate whether adversity or prosperity, let us labor for the knowledge of our adoption: This will be our joy in want, in wealth, in bondage, in freedom, in sickness, in health, in life and in death. Herein is that joy of Christ which never can be taken from us, John. 16.22. We cannot do the Devil a greater pleasure, then to neglect the getting of this assurance; for hereupon he will take occasion (specially in time of distress) fearfully and dangerously to seek to break the neck of our souls; he cares not much otherways what men profess, and what knowledge and other common gifts of the spirit they have, so that they want this blessed assurance; and therefore with the Apostle Paul, we must account all other things to be but dross and dung in respect of this excellent knowledge of Christ, to be our Savior and Redeemer. True it is, that unto many this exhortation will seem needless; for ignorant persons that have nothing in them but mere presumption, will brag most of this persuasion; but they that have felt the smart of temptation, do know what it is that will stand us instead, even that assurance only which is rightly founded upon the word of God; and therefore forsaking the vain conceits of our ignorance, let us with all diligence

unfeignedly endeavor to get this resolution; if we cannot of ourselves attain unto it, we must use the direction and help of God's faithful Ministers; for howsoever it pleaseth some to think otherwise, yet this is the undoubted truth of God, that a man in this life may ordinarily be resolved and assured of his salvation.

The second thing which the Devil aimed at in this temptation, was to bring Christ to a practice of unbelief, namely in want of bread to turn stones into bread, for the present satisfying of his hunger; for the Devil would needs persuade our Savior. Christ that he must have bread to save his life, and therefore in the want of bread would have brought him to this distrustful course, to turn stones into bread.

And as the Devil here deals with Christ, so he assays to do with all his members; as he labors to work unbelief in their hearts, so he seeks to bring them to the practice of unbelief in their lives. See the truth hereof in the course of the world; Is a man oppressed with outward want and poverty? The Devil will tell him, he must needs live, and therefore will persuade him to rob and steal and to filch for his living. If a man be sick, and want present help in lawful means, or else be afflicted somewhat extraordinarily, then will the Devil move him to seek to Wizards and Witches, suggesting this into him by one means or other, that they can do more good in such a case then all the Physicians in the world. This is a most vile practice of unbelief, and yet too common in the world, wherein men for the removal of some outward evil, will not stick to hazard the loss of their souls. We therefore must labor to be acquainted with these wiles of Satan, and by the practice of faith in our lives, labor to express the power of faith in our hearts, as in all manner of godly conversation, so especially in using only lawful means for our relief in the time of misery and distress.

But to come more particularly to the words of this temptation; If thou be the Son of God command these stones, &c. It may be demanded, why the Devil should make choice of this question wherewith to tempt our Savior Christ, rather than any other? Answer. The reasons hereof may be these: First, he knew well, that if Christ were the true and proper son of God, then he must needs be the true Messias; and if he were that anointed of God, then also he it was that must accomplish that old and ancient promise made to our first Parents for the bruising of the serpents head: This was the thing that of all other, the Devil was most afraid of, and could not endure to hear; and therefore by moving this question he intends to infringe, yea and (if he could) quite to overthrow our Savior Christ in the right of this title. Secondly, The Devil since his fall, bears an unspeakable deadly hatred against God himself, and according to his nature, as occasion serves, he cannot but show the same. Now in this question he doth notably bewray his malice and spite against God; for, whereas in Christ's baptism a little before, God had proclaimed him to be his beloved son in whom he was well pleased, hereby the Devil goes about to prove the clean contrary, and so as much as in him lieth, seeks to make God a liar; which, because it fitted his nature so well, he makes choice of at this time.

The use. I. In this practice of the devil we may learn what to judge of sundry false teachers; for as well in the Primitive Church as also since that time, there have been sundry men of great fame for wisdom and learning, as Ebion, Cerinthus, Carpocrates, Samosatenus, and Arius; who have all labored severally to prove, that Jesus Christ the Son of Marie was not indeed the Son of God, very God, but only a worthy Prophet. Now of them we may safely think with the church of God in former times, that they were false prophets, heretics and seducers, yea the professed enemies of Christ,

guided by the spirit of Satan, for herein they do directly tread in his steps.

II. In this his practice we may observe the malicious and contradicting spirit of Satan against God himself, for here he labors to conclude that Christ was not the Son of God, notwithstanding God himself had a little before avouched that he was. And this is his continued practice unto this day; for where God in his church pronounceth grace, mercy and love, there on the contrary will the Devil pronounce a curse, hatred, and damnation. Again, where God denounceth his curse and judgment, there will the devil seek to persuade a conceit of grace and favor. If a man be the child of God, and have received the seal of grace for his assurance thereof; the Devil will seek to weaken this assurance, and persuade him if he can, that he is the child of wrath. And if a man be void of grace, and so indeed the child of the Devil, then will Satan suggest into his heart presumptuous thoughts, and make him think he is the child of God; so that every way he shows himself contrary to God.

Yet mark the devils words a little further; If thou be the son of God, command these stones, &c. that is, do but say the word, and bid these stones to become bread, and it will be done. And here in the very propounding of this temptation we may observe the deep policy of Satan; for in these few words (the better to effect his purpose) he coucheth three most true and notable points in Divinity: First, that he that is the Son of God by nature, is also true and very God; for here he ascribeth unto the Son of God the true prerogative of God himself; a point wherein the Pharisees withstood our Savior Christ, and which many heretics since have denied. Secondly, that the true God can without pain or labor, yea without all means at his very beck do whatsoever he will; and by his word only make stones become bread. Thirdly, that to work a miracle of himself, is a property and

prerogative of him alone that is true God; as to turn stones into bread in this place. Now when the Devil acknowledgeth all this, a man would not think that herein he should intend any hurt to Christ or to his church; but in very truth his drift herein is, to destroy the faith of Christ in that word of his father which spake from heaven, and to overthrow the foundation of the church, by proving that Jesus Christ the Son of Marie, was not true God.

Here then observe a trick of the Devils cunning; when he speaks a truth, he doth it not to confirm the same as loving it, but indeed his meaning is to overthrow the truth thereby: which must admonish us, that when Satan shall any way assault us in temptation, we never give credit unto him, no not then when he speaketh the truth, because therein his purpose is to deceive us and to destroy the truth: hence it was that Christ forbad the unclean spirits to testify of him, though they acknowledged him to be the holy one of God: hence also Paul was grieved at the testimony of the foul spirit that was in the maid, though in itself a most worthy truth, to wit, that they were the servants of the most high God which showed unto men the way of salvation.

Further, in comparing our Evangelist Matthew with S. Luke, there may seem some difference between them in propounding this temptation, for in Matthew the words are thus, command these stones &c. And in Luke thus, command this stone. But they are reconciled thus, Matthew sets down this temptation as the Devil first propounded it; and S. Luke shows how the Devil urged it: for first the devil comes to Christ and bids him, if he be the son of God, command all the stones which he saw round about him to be made bread, this S. Matthew sets down: or if that seemed too much, command one stone to be made bread and it should suffice; and this S. Luke noteth.

The use. By this comparing of the Evangelists we may observe; that when the Devil hath once begun to tempt a man, he will not easily leave off, but will set an edge upon it, and enforce and urge it by all the means he can, that if it be possible it may prevail. Which should teach us on the other side, to be most earnest and resolute in resisting Satan's temptations: he will take small advantage before he leave; we therefore must not give place, nor yield one jot unto him: Resist the Devil and he will fly. This must every member of the Church do; the Minister by sound and through applying of every part of God's truth to the heart, whereby it may be armed against the enemy; and the people by faithful embracing and obeying of the same, as also by earnest prayer unto God for the assistance of his grace in all assaults.

VERSE 4.

But he answering, said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. - MAT. 4.4.

These words contain Christ's gracious answer, whereby he repelled the devils temptation; and in it we may observe three points; first, that Christ did Answer: Secondly, whence he borrowed his Answer: Thirdly, the very words of his Answer.

For the first, that Christ did answer, is noted by the holy Ghost in plain words, And Jesus answering, said; Whereby he would give us to understand, that Christ Jesus our Savior being in the wilderness, was not only willing and ready to encounter with Satan, but also able to withstand him, yea and to vanquish Satan without receiving any foil

at his hands. Which is a point of singular comfort to God's Church and children; for was Christ Jesus able in this low and base estate of a servant, being disadvantaged also by a desert place and bodily hunger, was he then (I say) able to encounter with Satan and to overcome him in his most violent and subtle assaults? Then how much more is he now able even in all his members to give Satan the foil, having spoiled him in his death? Seeing he is advanced to the throne of majesty and glory, and set at the right hand of his father, having a name above all names given unto him, at which every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and in the earth and under the earth? We therefore may now say, with that loud voice; Now is salvation in heaven, and strength, and power, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of the brethren is cast down.

The second point here noted is, whence Christ borroweth his answer, namely, from the Scriptures; It is written: It had been an easy thing for Christ being the son of God, to have confounded the Tempter with the breath of his mouth, or to have commanded innumerable legions of holy Angels to have driven him away; but he betakes himself to the written word for his defense. And this he did especially for our instruction; namely, that we might know, that the written word of God, rightly welded by the hand of faith, is the most sufficient weapon for the repelling of Satan and the vanquishing of him in all his temptations; hence Paul calleth it the sword of the spirit, because it serves not only for our defense, but also to wound Satan, and to put him to flight.

The use. I. This fact of Christ doth discover and condemn the damnable practice of the Church of Rome, who lock up the word of God from their people in an unknown tongue, and commend unto them for their defense against spiritual enemies other devices of

their own, as holy water, crossing, crosses, &c. which they highly commend as means of special strength and force to vanquish the Devil; when as indeed the word of God is the only true and trusty weapon, whereof while they deprive their people, they send them forth naked and unarmed to encounter with Satan.

Secondly, here also behold the miserable estate of all those that either through covetousness or any other profaneness are drawn to neglect or contemn the written word of God: their case is most fearful; for they cast away those weapons whereby they should defend themselves against the Devil, and quench all his fiery darts, and so betray their own souls into his hands: And doubtless all contemners and neglecters of the word are guilty of their own damnation, because God hath given us his word for our defense, and for the confounding of Satan, so as without guilt of willful murder not of our bodies, but of our souls, we cannot neglect this heavenly weapon.

Thirdly, hereby we may see the cause why sin so much abounds in all estates everywhere, namely, the want of love unto and knowledge in the word of God, whereupon the most are ignorant of it, or else know not how to handle this spiritual weapon, whereby Satan is resisted and foiled: Hosea 4.2. The Lord complaineth of lying, swearing, killing, stealing, and whoring yea of blood touching blood; and the cause is laid down in the first verse, There is no knowledge of God in the land: This David knew well, and therefore said, He hid God's saying in his heart, that he might not sin against him, Psal. 119.11. For as Saul's spear stood in readiness at his head even when he slept, so should God's word, which is the sword of the spirit, be ever in our hearts, as it were ready drawn, that to what sin soever the Devil allures us, we may be able to say for our defense, It is written:

through want hereof it comes to pass that the Devil at his pleasure leads men captives into all impieties.

Lastly, this excellent use of the word understood, believed, and obeyed must move all ignorant persons to labor for knowledge herein, and with all endeavor after growth in knowledge, by holy obedience, to show forth their faith: If we had an enemy that had sworn our death and vowed to see our blood, how careful would we be, for our natural life, both to get us weapons, and also some knowledge to use the same, not only for our defense, but also for the annoyance of our deadly foe? Oh then how careful should we be for the safety of our souls to put upon us the whole armor of God, and to learn to use aright this sword of the spirit, that when we meet with Satan our irreconcilable enemy, in the field of temptation, which is this miserable world, we may be able both to award his blows, and to wound his head! It is lamentable to see how ignorant people will bless themselves in their ignorance, and say they defy the Devil, and spit at him in defiance, and yet they know not how they are entangled in his snares of their own sins: he little regards such defiance so long as their souls lie naked and bare before his deadly darts: let two men meet that be at enmity, the one armed the other naked, what will it avail for the naked man to defy his enemy with big words, while in the meantime his armed enemy takes away his life? Lo, Satan is this strong man armed, and ignorant persons are poor naked caitiffs, they defy the Devil and spit at him with their mouth, but in the meantime the devil wounds their souls unto death. They will say they feel no such wounds, and therefore they fear him not: but they must know, that the less they feel, the more cause they have to fear; for Satan's wounds are most deadly when they are least felt.

The third point is, Christ's Answer itself: Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God:

This answer is borrowed from Deuteron. 8.3. And it is that lesson which Moses sought to teach the children of Israel after the Lord had fed them with food from heaven in that barren wilderness where they were afflicted with hunger. The words are something hard, and therefore I will show the meaning of them. Man shall not live; that is, shall not preserve his temporal life in this world; for of eternal life, neither Moses nor Christ did intend to speak. By bread only, that is, only by such ordinary means as food and raiment, sleep, physic &c. which God hath appointed in his providence for the ordinary preservation of natural life. But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God: This title word betokens diverse things in scripture: I. The substantial word of God, the second person in Trinity, John. 1.1. In the beginning was the word, and the word was God. II. It is usually taken for the written word contained in the books of the old and New Testament, 1 Pet. 1.25. Thirdly, it is sometime taken for God's will and decree, and it is called his good pleasure: so Heb. 1.2. Christ sustaineth all things by the word of his power, that is, according to his will and decree, by his powerful appointment: and by this word were all things made in the beginning and hereby have they been preserved ever since: this is that word that melteth the Ice, Psal. 147.18. And in this last sense must we understand word in this place; meaning that man doth not preserve this natural life by ordinary means only, but withal, by God's good pleasure, will and decree sanctifying the means for his good. Note further that it is said by every word, and therein lieth the substance of this sentence; for the understanding whereof we must know, that this powerful and working word of God may be distinguished according to the matter whereabout it is occupied: Thus, sometime God will have men to live by bread the ordinary food of natural life; and this is his ordinary word. Sometime his will and appointment is that man shall live by extraordinary means; as the Israelites did in the wilderness while they lived upon Manna; and this is his

extraordinary word: Other whiles he ordains that man shall live without all means, as Moses did in mount Sina, Elias in mount Horeb, and our Savior Christ in this wilderness; for the space of forty days and forty nights together; And lastly he ordains sometime, that man shall live against means and contrary to the course of nature; Thus Daniel lived in the Lions den, and the three children in the fiery furnace; both which last may be called God's miraculous word: So that we see good reason of this clause every: for hereby we learn, that man doth not preserve his life only by ordinary means ordained of God; but likewise by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, that is, by every appointment and decree of God, whether extraordinary, above the usual means, or miraculous without all means, or against the course of nature: this we must labor to know and be persuaded of. Nature teacheth that man liveth by God's blessing and appointment in ordinary means: But nature knows not this, that God preserveth man's life by his word, above means, without means, yea and against means. The believing heart will hardly yield to this, which Moses would teach the Israelites; and therefore we must take the more pains to be resolved of it. If any shall think hereupon, that a man may live by the written word without meat and drink, he is deceived; for Christ meaneth not that every word that God hath spoken shall preserve natural life, but that whatsoever way he hath appointed whereby man shall live, whether by ordinary or extraordinary means, whether, without means or against means, the same shall be effectual for man's preservation: Thus much for the meaning.

The applying of this testimony to the Devils temptation, is thus to be conceived: the Devils temptation was this. If thou be the son of God, then command these stones to be made bread: But thou canst not make these stones to become bread: Therefore thou art not the son of God. To this Christ answers, by denying the proposition or first part

of this argument, the ground whereof was this, (which the Devil took for granted) that when a man is hungry he must needs have bread or else he cannot live: and this our Savior Christ doth flatly deny, saying; Man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God: And this application is most excellent, teaching us that thing, for the learning whereof the Israelites were trained up forty years in the wilderness, and fed with Manna from heaven, and with water out of the rock; to wit, that God by his word can preserve the life of man without ordinary means even what way soever he appointeth for that purpose; and if we should spend our lives in learning hereof, no doubt the time were not misspent.

The use. First, hereby we are taught to consider aright of all creatures whereby our life is preserved, as meat, drink, apparel &c. and that is thus, besides the bodily sustenance of the creature, we must labor to see a further matter, even the blessing of God in the creature proceeding from his word, decree and appointment, whereby it is made fit and able to yield sustenance and nourishment. The Scripture calleth this the Staff of bread, and so it is indeed, for as an aged and impotent man falleth to the ground if his staff be plucked from him, so the best creature that serves for our use, without God's blessing becomes fruitless unto us. This, reason may teach us, for how should that thing of itself preserve and further life, which in itself is void of life? And how should that give heat and warmness to our bodies, which of itself is void of heat? Let us therefore confess that it is not the substance of food that doth refresh us, nor the matter of our raiment that keeps us warm, but the blessing of him that by his word hath ordained them for these ends, if he withdraw his blessing, the staff and stay is gone; men may eat (as Haggai saith) but they shall not have enough; they may drink, and yet not be filled; they may cloth themselves, and not be warm; It is God's blessing that

makes God's creatures do us good: how else should it come to pass, that the poor man's child which is barely clad, and homely fed, should be as healthful, comely, and well liking as the child of a Prince, but that God blesseth as well the homely food of the poor, as the dainty fare of the richest.

Secondly, hereby we must learn Sobriety and Temperance, in the use of all God's creatures: when we use our food and raiment it is God's blessing alone that makes them do us good, the Lord as it were stands by us to put his blessing upon every morsel that we eat, and every draught that we drink, and upon our raiment when we put it on; how then dare we abuse them in surfeiting and drunkenness, in pride and wantonness? May we not fear in so doing that while the meat or drink is in our mouths, the wrath of God will fall upon us; as Psal. 78.30, 31.

Thirdly, hence we must learn to sanctify God's creatures as food and raiment which we use for our comfort, by invocation on the name of God: for we do not live by the creatures simply, but by the word and appointment of God blessing them unto us; and therefore we must not be like unto brute beasts which receive God's blessings, but yet never look up to heaven from whence they come; or like to the swine that gathereth up the mast, not looking up to the tree from which it falleth.

Fourthly, hereby we see the common error of the world, who place the staff and stay of their life in the abundance of outward blessings, whereupon they labor to enrich themselves herewith as much as possibly they can; these men do little consider that man's life standeth not in abundance, neither doth he live by bread, but by the blessing of God, which is and may be as well upon a little, as upon the treasures of a kingdom. This was the practice of the rich fool,

who spake peace to his soul for ease and pastime, because he had much goods laid up for many years. But since Christ teacheth us that man liveth not by bread only, it must needs be a flat note of unbelief, to cark and care immoderately for the things of this life.

Fifthly, hereby we are also taught, not to entangle ourselves overmuch with the cares of this world, nor to suffer our hearts to be oppressed with desire of food, raiment, lands or living: because our life and welfare consisteth not in these things, but in the blessing of God on whatsoever he sends be it more or less: the gripple mind after much is a deadly snare, wherewith many a soul is entangled to perdition and destruction; This chokes the heart in such sort as the seed of grace can take no root not bring forth any saving fruit: this made Paul to lay a charge upon Timothy for rich men, that they should trust in the living God and not in uncertain riches, 1 Tim. 6.17. Let us therefore be content with food and raiment, and rather seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then all those things whereof we stand in need shall be given unto us in the moderate use of lawful means. Indeed the worldlings excuse is, that food and raiment is his living, which he must needs look unto: but we must still remember, that our life standeth not in these things, for when death comes, these cannot save us from the grave: it is God's blessing by which we live, he can preserve us above means, nay without means, and against means, and therefore we must never give place to such thoughts and cares as show distrust in God.

Sixthly, hence we must learn contentation and patience in extreme poverty and in all other miseries of this life; If God should deal with us as he did with his servant Job: if for our religion he should bring upon us the loss of goods, of children, of health and all that we have, with banishment also from our friends and country, yet then must we labor to show the fruit of patience, and not suffer our harts to be

swallowed up of overmuch grief: because our life stands by God's word, and not in any of these things: indeed, if in these outward miseries a man should be deprived of the comfort of God's providence, then might he sorrow without measure: but seeing all such as fear God do still enjoy the blessing of God in their greatest calamities (for God's blessing is not locked up in bread, but above means, without means and against means can he manifest his power and goodness in their preservation) therefore in the extremity of evil must we comfort ourselves in the Lord our God, as David did in great sorrow, having lost his two wives and being in danger to be stoned of his own followers: and learn to say with Job, Though the Lord kill me yet will I trust in him. What if the Lord should send a famine among us, as he may justly do for the sins of this land? Should we then despair or use unlawful means for our relief? Nay, then we must learn Moses lesson, that man liveth not by bread only, and labor to depend on him that can increase the oil in the poor widows cruise and the meal in the barrels, till plenty come.

Seventhly, this must teach us moderation of our affections in all estates that do befall us; in health and plenty we must not be puffed up with pride; in weakness and in want we must not be oppressed with sorrow; for man's life standeth not in these things, neither can we hereby know love or hatred; he that is in want may have as good a portion in God's blessing as the wealthiest in the world, herein hungry Lazarus full of sores, went far beyond the rich glutton in all his riot.

Lastly, seeing our life depends upon God's word, we must hereby learn to acknowledge God's providence, and to rely thereupon in all estates. In the days of peace, wherein (as Job speaketh of himself) men wash their paths in butter, and have the rocks to pour them out rivers of oil, men will soon be brought to say so much; but we must

labor to see and feel the blessing of his providence even then when we tread (as it were) the winepress of his wrath: as well in sickness as in health: in want as in plenty; in the depth of distress as in the height of all prosperity: this is the counsel of the Holy ghost, roll thy works upon the Lord. Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you, 1 Pet. 5.7. It is a brutish property only to look upon the creatures whereon they feed, and therefore our eyes and our hearts must be fixed on him who feedeth the young ravens that cry unto him; and beareth up all things by his mighty word: we must not content ourselves with a bare speculation hereof in our heads, but labor to feel the comfort of it in our hearts, and to express the power of it in our lives. And thus much for the first conflict.

VERSE 5.

Then the Devil took him up into the holy city, and set him on a pinnacle of the Temple. And said unto him, if thou be the son of God cast thyself down a for it is written, that he will give his Angels charge over thee, and with their hands they shall lift thee up, lest at any time thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him: it is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God .- MAT. 4.5- 7

These words contain the second conflict of Satan with our Savior Christ: for howsoever by Saint Luke this is put in the third place, which Matthew here placeth in the second, yet this breedeth no difference between the Evangelists, who tie not themselves to a strict observation of time, place, and order how everything was done which

they relate; as in the story of this conflict, Saint Luke respects the substance of it only, but S. Matthew observes the order of it also. Now in this second conflict we are to observe three points: I. Satan's preparation thereto: II. The assault itself: III. Christ's answer and repulse thereof.

I. Point: Satan's preparation to this conflict is contained in the 5. verse: wherein we are to note, both the time, and the parts thereof; The time in the first word Then: that is, so soon as the Devil had received a foil of Christ in his first assault, presently he addresseth himself unto a second.

Herein behold, the exceeding malice of Satan, in that the end of one temptation with him, is but the beginning of another; he ceaseth not with one assault, but as he is a deadly foe to the Church of God, so he shows himself by his continual seeking whom he may devour; he will never make truce with any child of God, upon any condition less than the hazard of his soul; neither is he weary of his work; but day and night is either plotting or performing some mischievous attempt against the child of God. The consideration whereof must teach us, upon our victory and conquest over one temptation, presently to prepare for a new. This was the state of the son of God our head, and we his members may not look for better; our life in this vale of tears is a continual warfare against the enemies of our souls; we must not therefore here look for rest and ease, but ever keep watch and ward against their assaults. If this duty were well learned and put in practice, it would prevent much impatience and become the ground of much peace in our souls: man's nature cannot brook the doubling and renewing of sorrows; when one evil lights in the neck of another, oh then he thinketh never any was in his case; but look unto Jesus the author and finisher of thy faith, he endured no less; and herein he is an example that thou shouldest follow his steps. If therefore

thou wilt be his disciple, prepare to take up thy cross every day and follow him.

The parts of Satan's preparation are two; First, he conveys Christ from Jerusalem to the wilderness; Secondly, he placeth him on a pinnacle of the temple. For the first, in these words, The devil took him up into the holy city, that is, into Jerusalem, as Luke expoundeth it, chap. 4.9. This the Devil might do three ways; In vision; or leading him up the ordinary way; or carrying him through the air. I. It might be in vision; for that was usual with the Prophets; so Jeremiah went to the river Perath; and Ezekiel was carried from Mesopotamia to Jerusalem: but Christ was not thus transported; for then Satan's persuasion unto Christ To cast himself down, could have been no temptation. II. Christ might be led of the Devil the ordinary way from the wilderness to Jerusalem, so much the words will bear: but (as I take it) he went not so; for if Christ were led by the Devil, it was either willingly of his own accord, or by the Devils persuasion; but of his own accord he would not go; for he came into the wilderness to be tempted, which as yet was not fully accomplished, and therefore would not willingly depart thence before that work for which he came were ended, Again, he would not depart thence upon the Devils persuasion; for Christ would never gratify the Devil so much, as to do ought himself, which the Devil would have him, as in all his temptations doth appear; for this is a rule to be observed, we must not do anything which the Devil persuades us to in his temptations, though in itself the thing be lawful and good. III. The Devil might carry the body of our Savior Christ thorough the air, by his power through God's permission. This is the most likely way, and so thought to be of the best divines: and the words following confirm it much, for it is said, the Devil set him on a pinnacle of the temple: Now if he had power to set him there, why might he not also carry him thither, God ordaining this as well as his temptation?

The use. By this we see, that men may be transported by the Devil from place to place, as the records of all ages do report: this one thing yet observed (wherein the common opinion faileth) that the Devil cannot convey a man alive so far in a little time, as many men think; as a thousand or two thousand miles in an hour; for no man is able to endure such violent motion and yet live, as experience teacheth; let a man fall from some high steeple, and his breath will be gone and he dead before he come at the ground, by reason of the violence of his motion. Indeed the Devil can carry a man very swiftly, but yet for the safety of man's life he must prolong his time far more, than otherwise of himself he needs to do.

Secondly, hence we learn that by God's permission, the Devil may have power over the bodies of God's own children which are true believers, to transport them from place to place; for dealing thus with the head Christ Jesus, why may he not do so with any of his members? Besides, we find (that God permitting him) he hath done more than this to the Saints of God; he may possess their bodies, as he did the woman of Canaan's daughter, Mat. 15.22. He may torment them long, as he did exceeding grievously bow the body of a daughter of Abraham eighteen years, Luk. 13.16. Yea he may kill the body, as he did to Job's children, who no doubt were holy persons, Job. 1.19. And therefore much more may he transport them from place to place.

Here this question may fitly be answered: whether a true believer may be bewitched. Answ. He may: there is none upon earth so faithful and holy, but if God permit, Satan can afflict their bodies grievously, and therefore also they may be bewitched. It is but the fancy of presumptuous persons, when they say, their faith is so strong, that all the witches in the world cannot hurt them: for if God permit, Satan can grievously afflict man's body, as he did the body of

Job. yea he can kill the body, as hath been showed. Solomon, speaking of outward things saith truly, All things come alike to all, and the same condition is to the just and to the wicked: now the wicked man may be bewitched, as all will grant; why then may not the godly also, seeing it is but an outward evil? This therefore must abate their pride that stand so much on their strong faith: behold this fact of Satan to the holy body of Christ, and hereby learn for thy humiliation, that if God permit, Satan is able to bring upon thy body great affliction.

Further, observe the place whither Satan carries our Savior Christ, into the holy city, that is, Jerusalem. Quest. Why is it called holy, seeing now it was a polluted place full of sinful people? Answ. It is called holy for these causes. 1. because here was the Lord's temple the place of his solemn worship, wherein were the holy rites and ceremonies prescribed for God's worship. Secondly, in Jerusalem, as also in all the synagogues of Judea, was Moses chair, the law and the Prophets were read and expounded. Thirdly, Jerusalem was the mother City of all the world in respect of religion; here God ordained that his church should first be planted, and from hence must religion be derived to other nations.

The use. Hence we may observe, that at this time Jerusalem was the true church of God: indeed it was very corrupt both for doctrine and manners, as Christ's severe reproof of both doth plainly show, Mat. 5.21. &c. and Mat. 23.13, 14. &c. and yet a true Church, else the holy ghost would not have called it the holy city. Now if Jerusalem at this time were the true church of God then, then may we well say, that in England God hath his true church: for, let the corruptions of our Church be as they are; yet shall it match Jerusalem in the prerogatives of God's church. They had the law and the Prophets read and expounded; so have we, and the Gospel also which is the

power of God to man's salvation. They had the Sacraments and ceremonies of the Law; answerable thereto we have the Sacraments of the Gospel, and also a true and holy form of serving God. Their Jerusalem was a mother city; and though we cannot say so much in that behalf, yet hath our Church been a nurse to neighbor Churches in Germany, France and other places round about, for many years; in regard whereof, the Lord, no doubt, hath bestowed many blessings upon us. And therefore though our sins and abuses be many and grievous, yet in regard of Church prerogatives we may be called a holy nation, and a true member of the Church of God; so that as our Savior Christ and his Disciples joined themselves to the congregations of the Jews in their legal service, and forsook them not till they became no Church; so ought it to be among us, till we separate from Christ, none should sever themselves from our church ministry and service of God. Those therefore that make a separation from our Church because of corruptions in it, are far from the spirit of Christ and his Apostles. If any shall say, this makes well for the church of Rome, if so corrupt a place as Jerusalem, in regard of Church prerogatives were an holy city, for they have as many prerogatives for religion, as the Jews then had, and therefore are the church of God, and so we do not well to separate from them. Answ. Some indeed that are no Papists, say the Church of Rome is the Church of God: but the truth is, the present Church of Rome is spiritual Babylon, the mother of abominations, no spouse of Christ but a strumpet. But they plead their prerogatives: as first, their succession from Peter: Secondly, true baptism for substance according to the first institution: Thirdly, the Apostles Creed which they hold and believe: Fourthly, the word of God, in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles: And Lastly, that theirs is the mother church. Answ. All this is nothing when the truth appears; for first, succession in person without succession in doctrine is no note of a church: now let them show succession in the Apostles doctrine, and

we yield. Secondly, their baptism alone, though for substance true baptism, cannot prove them a true Church: Circumcision was the Sacrament of God's church, yet Samaria and Colchis were not the Church of God, though they used it: again, the thief may show the true man's purse, but that proveth him not to be true and honest; no more doth baptism justify the church of Rome to be a true church. Lastly, though they have outward baptism, yet indeed they overthrow inward baptism, the life of that sacrament, to wit, imputed righteousness and renewed holiness, which in God's Church must go together with the outward element, else it is nothing. Thirdly, for the Apostles Creed, they have it in word, but they deny it in deed; For though they say, they believe in God the father, and in Jesus Christ, yet in effect they deny both God and Christ. For the God of the Papists is an idol God, and the Christ of the Papists a false Christ, as we have showed in handling of the Creed. Fourthly, for the scripture; we must know the word of God stands not in bare words and letters, but in the true sense and meaning of the Holy ghost contained in the scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles. Now though they have the books of Scripture, yet in sundry main grounds of religion, they overthrow the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles. Again, they keep the scripture as a lantern holds a candle, not for itself but for passengers: so is the scripture with them, not for their synagogue, but for God's secret ones among them, for even in the midst of Popery hath God ever had some of his elect, who have not embraced their cursed doctrine. Lastly, for their plea to be the mother Church; we must distinguish between the ancient Church of Rome, and the strumpet that now is; the ancient Church of Rome to whom Paul writ, was a true and famous church, and a mother Church; but she is now dead and buried; and the now Roman Church is no mother Church, no spouse of Christ, but the whore of Babel the mother of abominations, from which we are commanded to depart, Revelation.

Secondly, in that Christ is brought to Jerusalem, that holy City, there to be tempted, we learn, that no holiness of place on earth can debar the Devil from his temptations; he brings Christ from the wilderness to tempt him, in the holy city even upon the holy temple he will thrust himself on Jehoshuahs right hand to resist him, though Jehoshuah stand before the Angel of the Lord to minister to the Lord. And therefore the folly of Papists is egregious, that think the sign of the cross, holy water, relics, and such Massing enchantments have virtue in them to free their houses, or their bodies from the assaults of Satan.

Lastly, hereby we see that change of place is but a silly cure for a troubled mind; indeed change of air may much further bodily cures; but a troubled mind hath conflicts with the devil, who will not leave for change of place, Jerusalem will fit his turn as well as the wilderness.

The second part of the Devils preparation to this conflict is this, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple: The word translated pinnacle, signifieth properly a wing of the temple; whereby, some take to be meant, the sharp broches and spires on the top of the temple; whereof there were diverse; but these (as I take it) are not here meant; for such a spire cannot well be called a wing; others take it for some part of the battlement, made on the top of the Temple, which was flat, as the Jews used to build, to keep men from falling; others take it for any top corner of the Temples; and whether of these it was we cannot certainly define; but this we must hold, that it was some dangerous steep down place on some corner of the Temple, or on the battlements, from which a man might easily cast himself; whereby we see the Devil will omit no advantage that may further his temptations; which should make us the more careful of our standing against him.

VERSE 6.

And said unto him, If thou be the son of God cast thyself down: for it is written, that he will give his Angels charge over thee, and with their hands they shall lift thee up, lest at any time thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone. - MAT. 4.6.

These words contain the second main point in this conflict, to wit, Satan's assault upon Christ: wherein we are to observe, first his temptation: then the reason whereby he doth enforce it. His temptation here is framed as the former was, in a kind of reasoning, thus:

If thou be the son of God, then show the same by casting thyself down from this pinnacle of the temple:

But as I see thou art certainly persuaded, that thou art the son of God: Therefore cast thyself down, and thereby declare it.

Seeing this is a distinct temptation from the former, I doubt not but it must be thus framed with this conclusion: for if it had the same conclusion with the former it should be the same temptation. Satan's meaning then is this, as if he had said; I have made trial to see expressly whether thou be the son of God or not, and it seems thou doest undoubtedly believe that voice of thy father to be true, which said, This is my well-beloved son in whom I am well pleased: Now if this be so indeed, it is convenient thou shouldst confirm the same by some miracle, and the fittest place thou canst do it in, is this;

therefore cast thy self down headlong from this pinnacle, and yet preserve thyself in safety without all hurt in the fall.

The drift of Satan in this temptation was, to bring our Savior Christ to a vain confidence in his Fathers protection, and indeed to flat presumption upon his extraordinary providence in the neglect of lawful ordinary means, as by Satan's conclusion, and the answer of Christ will easily appear. And hereby we may observe that one main drift of Satan in his ordinary temptations in God's church, is to carry men to presumption, and vain confidence in the love, favor, and mercy of God: this appears by the strange reasonings for liberty in sin which many frame to themselves, and some are not ashamed to utter; as first, God is merciful, and Christ shed his blood for their redemption, and therefore they will not be so strict and precise in hearing sermons, and reading and conferring about the word as many are, but they will take the pleasures and seek the profits of this life. Thus reasoned some in the Apostles days: Let us continue in sin that grace may abound: of such Jude complaineth, saying, They turn the grace of God into wantonness. Such there have been ever since, and at this day they do everywhere abound. Secondly, some say, they are either ordained to salvation or damnation; now if to salvation, they are sure of it how ever they live; and if to damnation, they cannot escape it, though they live never so holily, for God's decree is unchangeable; and therefore they will take their pleasure and live as they list. Thirdly others say they have ever found God's goodness towards them, and they are persuaded he will never see them want, and therefore they will not toile themselves with labor and care as others do, but take their ease and pleasure while they may have it; and so neglect their charge and calling, and give themselves wholly to their sports and pleasures, to company keeping or such like. Yea, by this temptation to presumption, Satan oft prevails with the better sort; for if a man favor the truth, and give himself to know religion in

any sort, the Devil will straight way go about to persuade him, that that which he doth is sufficient to his salvation, and thus will keep him from using further means to come by the certain knowledge of his election, and full affiance in Christ Jesus, to become a perfect man in Christ, which is the end of God's holy ministry, Ephes. 4.13. whereunto we should give all diligence, 2 Pet. 1.10. See the truth hereof in the fine foolish virgins, who carried burning lamps, but took no oil with them, never minding that till it was too late; and so do most men content themselves with the blazing lamp of an outward profession, never looking for the oil of grace, till the time of grace he past.

The use. Hereby then we are all taught, in special manner to beware of presumption; this is the common snare of the Devil wherein he entangles many a soul. It is true indeed that he oft prevails by bringing men to desperation, but a thousand perish through presumption, almost for one by desperation; for despair is a painful thing to flesh and blood, and as the Devil knows well, doth sometimes turn to a man's more sound conversion; but to presume is sweet and pleasant to the flesh, and most agreeable to man's corrupt nature: in regard whereof we ought to keep our heart with all watch and ward, as David prayeth, Keep thy servant from presumptuous sins, Ps. 19.13.

Again, observe the order of Satan's temptations by comparing this with the former. There he sought to overthrow Christ's faith and to bring him to distrust the truth of God's word uttered from heaven; but finding he could not that way prevail, here he takes the clean contrary course, and seeks to bring him to presume.

This serves to discover unto us, the deep guile and subtlety of the Devil, that can so cunningly turn himself from one extreme unto

another. And look as he dealeth here with Christ the head, so doth he continue towards all his members, if he cannot bring them to one extreme, he will assay them hard in the other. If he cannot bring a man to covetousness, and keep his heart to the love of money, then let him beware of riot and prodigality. Is a man given to pleasures and delight, and a length is deprived of them? Then let him beware; the Devil swallow him not up with overmuch grief, as he sought to do with the incestuous person of Corinth. Doth a man come to love religion, that formerly was given to looseness of life? Then if it be possible the Devil will carry him to schism and heresy. The Devil cannot abide that a man should keep the mean according to God's word, Isaiah 30.21. He would have our first parents to be God's, or nobody, Gene. 3.5. And so still he laboreth to bring a man to some extreme. We therefore in all estates during life, must labor to keep the golden mean, as Christ here did, neither doubting on the one hand nor presuming on the other, but retaining still that blessed faith, whereby his blessed heart was firmly settled in these assaults. Thus much for Satan's drift. Now come to the words of this temptation.

If thou be the son of God, then cast thy self down: that is, show by this miracle that thou art the son of God. Mark here, the Devil persuades him not, to show himself to be the son of God by doctrine in the execution of his ministry; but Cast thyself down, show a miracle: wherein we may behold the very lively image of that natural disposition which is in all impenitent persons; they affect Christ's miracles, but they care not for his doctrine. Herod longed to see Christ, and was glad of his coming, when Pilate sent him; yet not to hear his doctrine, for that he could not endure; else he would not have imprisoned John, and also put him to death; but he hoped to see a miracle. The wicked Jews desire a sign, that put Christ to death for his doctrine; yet if he will come down from the cross, and so

miraculously save himself, then they will believe, Mark. 15.32. And this venom of the old serpent hath poisoned the hearts of many students in the Scriptures, who care not at all to ground themselves in the fundamental points of religion, as faith and repentance; and yet are wonderful eager after quiddities and difficulties, wherein may appear some outward show of wit and learning; like the hypocritical Pharisees, that would tithe mint and rue, and yet pass over judgment and the love of God, Luk. 11.42. And the cause hereof is the want of sound grace, for natural men indeed cannot savor the things of the spirit of God; the knowledge of Christ crucified seems foolishness unto them.

Secondly, the Devil took occasion of his former temptation from Christ's infirmity of hunger: but perceiving Christ's sure faith in his fathers word by his gracious answer to that assault, here he borrows his temptation from that profession of his faith; as if he should say, thou seemest to be resolved of the truth of thy fathers word that thou art the son of God; and if that be true indeed, then show it by this miracle, Cast thyself down.

Here then behold another trick of Satan; if he cannot prevail by assaults drawn from our infirmities, then will he assay us by temptations drawn from God's good gifts and graces in us; If he cannot keep a man in ignorance that hath good gifts of wit and memory, then will he seek from his knowledge to puff him up with pride, and so mingling his poison with God's good gifts, doth cause many a one to become a bane to God's church, that otherwise might have proved an excellent instrument therein; as might easily be showed in sundry particulars.

Thirdly, here mark how Satan's malice is restrained, and his power limited: By God's permission he is able to carry Christ from the

wilderness to Jerusalem, and there to set him in a most dangerous place on a wing of the temple; the thing he now desireth is his destruction by casting down head long, but that he cannot do, and therefore persuades Christ to cast himself down; wherein we see the special providence of God over Christ Jesus in all these temptations, restraining his enemy in the thing he most desired. And the same providence doth he still continue over his Church for the effectual preservation of Christ's members in all their temptations. The Devils unwearied desire and drift is, to bring contentions, hurly-burlies and ruins into all societies in Church and Commonwealth; therefore the peace and tranquility of these is, and so must be acknowledged, a notable fruit of God's blessed providence restraining the spite and malice of Satan. Again, hence it is evident, that in temptation Satan cannot go beyond the permission of God: he can tempt Christ, yea transport his body, and set him in a dangerous place, for thus far God permits him to go; but to cast Christ down from the pinnacle he cannot, therein comes God's restraint. So it fareth with God's children; for the trial of his graces in them, and to chastise them for some sins, he suffers Satan to buffet them; but yet one iota of his malice beyond God's permission he cannot show, as in Job's affliction by him may notably appear. Which we must carefully remember for our special comfort in our most grievous assaults; God's will permitting Satan so far must make us patient, and yet his power restraining Satan from doing worse, must give us comfort. Thus much for the temptation itself.

The reason whereby Satan enforceth his temptation is taken from a testimony of Scripture: For it is written he shall give his Angels charge over thee, &c. Satan hearing Christ allege scripture for his defense against the first assault, comes now upon him with his own weapon, that if it were possible he might foil him, after this sort: Thou showest thyself to be the Doctor of the Church, by thine

alleging of Scripture, and that, it seems, thou makest the rule of thine actions: well then thou mayest well and safely cast thyself down hence if thou be the Son of God, for it is written, he shall give his Angels charge over thee, and with their hands they shall lift thee up &c.

From this dealing of Satan, we are taught, not to embrace an opinion in religion, because a show of proof by testimony of Scripture may be given for it. But we must try the spirits, that is, the doctrines of men, whether they be of God, or not, 1 John. 4.1. For the Devil can allege Scripture to move Christ unto presumption, and it is his usual practice, when he carries men into schisms, errors, and heresies. Reason with a man that minds to live in sin, and tell him of that dangerous state, by reason of the shortness and uncertainty of this life: will he not tell you straight, he will do as he does, and repent when he is old? For it is written, At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sin, I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance, saith the Lord: And some think three or four good words at a man's last end will serve his turn: for the thief on the cross said no more, but, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And all such as are trained up in the school of Satan, can easily allege scripture to further them in evil.

But let us come to the scripture which the Devil doth notoriously abuse by his allegation: it is written in the 91. Ps. v. 11. In the alleging whereof he would seem very careful and precise, at the first not omitting so much as this particle [for] which might have been left out, and yet nothing have been wanting to the force of his reason: But herein is the deepness of his policy, to cause Christ not to suspect any falsehood afterward; for towards the end, he leaveth out that, on which the promise is grounded of being kept by the Angel: to wit, to keep thee in all thy ways, that is, in all the good duties of thy lawful

calling wherein thou shalt glorify God and do good to others; to such as so walk in their ways doth that promise belong.

Here then behold Satan's notable fraud and craft, that can so cunningly leave out that which makes not for his purpose, and so pervert the true meaning of scripture; this is his usual practice, in enmity against the word to deprave the true meaning by cutting off some part, when he cannot utterly overthrow the whole. The like is the dealing of all heretics, who by cutting off and leaving out, play legerdemain with the scripture. The Arian holds the Bible for the word of God; but such places as serve to prove the godhead of Christ, he doth notably abuse and pervert. The family of Love also, doth hold the bible for the word of God; but come to the true meaning of it, therein they fail, turning all into Allegories, even most true histories, as the fall of our first Parents, and such like, which are main grounds of religion in their natural sense: and the Apostatical Church of Rome, doth hold with us the books of the old and New Testament; but yet they put in and take out at their pleasure, and take from it all sense and meaning which agrees not with the determination of their holy father the Pope; and thereby they overturn the word of God, and strongly maintain their mystery of iniquity.

This dealing of Satan and his wicked miscreants with the scripture, must make all God's children willing to spend their strength in searching out the Scripture; for that is the only way to descry their fraud in depraving of it. This caused Christ to bid the people in his time to search the Scriptures, to learn to know him to be the true Messiah, which the Jewish teachers did then deny. In regard whereof we must say with Moses, oh that all the Lord's people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them! oh that all could read and understand the word of God! This is it, wherein all that either be, or intend to be ministers must labor especially, even to get

sound knowledge and judgment in the text of Scripture. The Minister must not only be able to teach the truth, but also to discern, to discover, and to confute errors and heresies, which he can never soundly do without good understanding in the text itself. The Devil knows the whole Scripture, and he will spare no text therein if he can corrupt it; therefore to rescue God's truth out of his hands who is the father of lies, the Minister must show himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ, as Paul exhorteth Timothy, giving such attendance to the word that all men may see his profiting therein; yea with Jeremiah, the Minister must eat the books of God, and digest them in his understanding, and rejoice therein, laboring to feel them the joy of his heart. The Devil knows that Scripture truly understood and well applied, is the only engine for the battery of his kingdom; and therefore, even from the beginning, but specially since the coming of Christ he hath labored by all means to keep men from the knowledge and true understanding of them: he it is that hath brought men from the reading of the Scriptures, to betake themselves to the writings of men, as schoolmen, fathers, and such; by this means he hath for many years even to this day in the Church of Rome, locked up the Scripture in an unknown tongue: yea even in God's church the Devil works mightily this way, by stealing away the affections of young students from the Bible, and ravishing them with delight in the writings of men; for thus he keeps them from the fountain of truth, that they either fall into error themselves, or be less able to discern and confute it in others. And hence come dissensions and errors into the schools of the Prophets, which cannot be avoided while men leave the text of scripture and addict themselves so much to the writings of men, for thereby he can more cunningly convey strange conceits into men's minds: and therefore everyone that would maintain the truth in purity and sincerity must labor painfully in the text.

Secondly, God's ministers must hereby be admonished, to be careful in alleging any text of Scripture, that the same be fit and pertinent: for to wrest the same from the proper meaning of the holy Ghost to serve their own conceit, is the practice of Satan, which every servant of God must be far from, and therefore must not do it hand over head. Which also may serve for a good advertisement to those that use to heap up manifold allegations of Scriptures in the doctrine of a sermon, for as in many words there cannot want iniquity, as Solomon saith; so in affected multiplicity of quotations can the abuse of Scripture be hardly escaped. If we deliver but a man's testimony, honesty will compel us as near as we can to keep both his words and his meaning; much more should conscience move us in alleging the testimony of the Lord, to have careful respect to the evidence of truth: and therefore that sparing course is very commendable, whereby in quoting of Scripture men make sure to keep themselves to the Lord's true meaning, lest by depraving his word they become followers of Satan: And thus much for the manner of Satan's allegation.

The true and proper meaning of that text is now briefly to be discussed. The ninety-one Psalm, from whence it is alleged, is a most heavenly part of scripture, penned for the comfort of God's people in the time of some grievous plague or sickness; and it contains a notable preservative against the plague, and by consequent against any judgment of God, to wit, true affiance and confidence in the Lord, that is the ground of all comfortable safety; thereto, among many other, is this gracious promise made of the protection of God's holy Angels, (which the Devil doth here allege) who shall be as careful for the safety of God's children in common calamities of famine, plague, pestilence &c. as the nurse is over her tender child to hold it in her hands, and bear it up in her arms, lest it should fall and hurt itself; always provided that the child of God keep himself in his

ways, that is, in obedience to God's commandments and in the duties of his lawful calling. It is true indeed, that judgment begins at the house of God, and the righteous are taken away from the evil to come, yea many times the same outward judgment lights upon the good, that doeth upon the bad: yet this taketh not from God's child the comfort of this protection in common calamities, for all promises of temporal blessings must be understood with the exception of the cross: as here, God's Angels shall guard his children in time of plague, famine and pestilence, unless it please God herewith to chasten them for some sin past, or to prevent some sin, or greater evil to come, or to make trial of their faith and patience: in which cases also the child of God doth greatly differ from the wicked; for through the fruition of God's love in Christ the evil of the punishment is taken away, and the outward smart thereof sanctified to the greater good of his soul: but out of this case their protection is certain: see Exod. 12.23, Psal. 105.16, 17, and Ezek. 9.4, 6.

The use. The consideration of this gracious protection of God's Angels over such as keep themselves in their ways, must move everyone to labor to know and practice the duties of his calling both general of Christianity, and particular for the state of his life, in all good conscience; so doing, let come what will, in all dangers he shall have safety; for God's angels pitch their tents about him, they are as watchful over him as a nurse over her child; but if we forsake our ways we lose the comfort of their protection, and expose ourselves to all God's judgments.

VERSE 7.

Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. - MAT. 4.7.

Here is the third general point in this conflict: to wit, Christ's answer and repulse made to Satan's assault, taken, as the Devils temptation was, from a text of scripture; for he saith, Again it is written; where yet he meaneth not to oppose scripture to scripture, but to confute the abuse of scripture by scripture; after this sort, as if he had said to Satan, It is true indeed that God hath made many worthy promises of aid and protection to his children in his word, yet they shall not be performed to those that presume to tempt God, as thou wouldest have me to do.

From this dealing of Christ with Satan we may observe; that the scriptures of God are sufficient in themselves, truly to interpret and expound themselves. The Devil alleging scripture did wrest it from the true sense; this our Savior Christ showeth by alleging another text out of Moses, which being applied to the place which the Devil abused, doth show the true meaning thereof. So Ezra, expounding the law unto the Jews, read distinctly in the law of God, and (as the words do signify) gave the sense by scripture, and caused the people to understand: much more then at this day may the scriptures be thought sufficient for the expounding of themselves, since to the Canon there of since Ezra his time there is added the whole New Testament by the hand of God, wherein the deep things of God are plainly revealed.

The Church of Rome cannot away with this, that Scripture should be sufficient to expound itself. And therefore against it they reason thus: That which must expound Scripture, must have judicial power to determine of the sense thereof: but the scriptures have no such judicial power; for they are but a dumb letter, and therefore no

sufficient judge to determine of their own sense and meaning. Answ. The Scriptures have judicial power to determine of their own true sense and meaning, for they speak evidently, to all that are enlightened by God's spirit, and thereby made able to know what the Scripture saith: we know a man may speak to his friend not only by word of mouth but also by letter, and thereby express his meaning sufficiently; even so, though God speak not now unto his Church by created voice, yet by his written word he speaks sufficiently for the clear manifestation of his will and pleasure concerning them; and therefore it is a shameful slander and blasphemy against the Scriptures to call them an inky letter and dumb judge. And let them show, if the Scripture be not, where is that speaking judge who hath power judicial to expound the scripture. Indeed their answer is, that the Church is this Judge, and that we must consult at her mouth for the true meaning of the Scripture. Answ. The church hath a ministry and dispensation committed unto her, in the execution whereof she delivereth the meaning of the Scripture unto God's people, but that is not from any judicial authority committed unto her, to determine of the sense of Scripture of herself; but only by comparing scripture with scripture, and expounding one place out of another; even as the Lawyer gives the sense of the law, not from any judicial power given unto him above the law, but by observing the words with the scope and circumstances of the law. But here I would know, if the Church must needs be judge, by what means must she determine? They answer, by the rule of faith; the consent of Councils and Fathers; and if these fail, then by the Pope; Answ. By their rule of faith, they understand, unwritten traditions, that is, such truth beside Scripture, as hath been kept by tradition from hand to hand since the primitive Church. But these are mere forgeries, and shame it were to subject the truth of God to the device of man; if these be made judge of Scripture, then shall the faith of the church depend upon the wisdom of man, and not upon the power of God, a thing abhorred of the

Apostle, 1 Cor. 2.5. The only rule of faith is the Scripture, and true faith will admit no other judge beside the Scripture to determine of that whereon it must depend. Secondly, for their consent of Fathers and Councils, that is no sufficient means to determine of the true sense of Scripture; for their several errors and contradictions one to another, and many times to themselves, show, that they wanted the immediate assistance of the Spirit. And the same is true of the Pope, as might easily be proved at large, by their gross ignorance and errors. And therefore it remains that the true judge and expounder of Scripture, is Scripture itself, as Christ himself by his practice showeth in this place.

The place alleged by Christ, is this commandment of God unto his people, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. For the understanding whereof we must search out three things, first what the tempting of God signifieth: secondly, the manner how God is tempted: and thirdly, the cause and root thereof. For the first, to tempt God signifieth, to make trial and experience of God, and to prove whether he be so true, just, merciful, provident and powerful as his word reporteth him to be. Thus did the Israelites often tempt God, as the Lord saith, When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works; which latter words show what it is to tempt God, even to seek to have proof by his works whether he be such a one as his word saith he is. If any shall say we are commanded, to taste and see how gracious the Lord is, Ps. 34.8, yea the Lord bids his people prove him, Malachi. 3.10. Answ. Those places do sufficiently expound themselves, for David's taste and sight is by the grace of true faith and affiance, for in the same verse he pronounceth such blessed; and in Malachi the Lord bids them prove him, but yet in their way of obedience in providing for his Sanctuary according to his ordinances. Therefore we must know for the second point, that every trial of God is not simply evil, but that which is needless, when

without warrant from his word we presume upon him beyond the means of his ordinary providence. Thirdly, the root of this sin, is an unbelieving heart, whereby a man doubts of the truth of God's word, of his power, presence and providence. Ps. 78.18. The Israelites tempted God in their hearts; there is this sin: the manner how followeth, in requiring meat for their lusts &c. not contenting themselves with God's present providence; the root and ground whereof is set down, verse. 22. because they believed not in God and trusted not in his help. When a man doubts of the fidelity of his servant he will lay something in his way, as a piece of silver, his purse &c., to try him withal; so when a man begins to doubt of God's goodness and fidelity towards him, he will easily be brought to make needless trial of him by some work of God beside his ordinary providence. The meaning then is this, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, that is, thou shalt not make any needless trial of God's goodness, mercy, power or providence, from a distrustful heart in the truth of his word.

Here yet further for our instruction we are to know that God is tempted five ways, as the word of God doth manifest: first, when a man shall appoint unto God, either the time when, the place where, or the manner how God shall help him, and perform his word unto him; herein he seeks experience of the truth and power of God. Thus the Israelites tempted God in the wilderness when they wanted water; saying, Is God among us or no? God had promised to be with them in all their journey to Canaan, but that they will not now believe unless he will show his presence by giving them water in that place. And so likewise they tempted him in the want of food, Ps. 78.19. Can God prepare a table in the wilderness. The consideration whereof must teach us in all our petitions which we make unto God for the accomplishment of his promises unto us, to beware of limiting God, as the Jews did, by prescribing unto him time, place

and manner for the accomplishment thereof; but wait with patience his good leisure. For he that believeth will not make haste, but will commit his way to the Lord: Ps. 37.5.

Secondly, God is tempted when men require a sign at his hands. Thus the Pharisees tempted Christ: Matt. 12.38. Master we would see a sign of thee: meaning thereby to be certified whether he were the Messiah, and Luke saith, they tempted him, Luk. 11.16. And thus do all those tempt God, which refuse to embrace the doctrine of the Gospel, because they cannot see the ministers thereof to confirm the same by miracles. Thus do many Papists plead against our religion, embracing rather the mystery of iniquity, because: it is confirmed unto them by lying wonders; not considering that the truth which we profess was once sufficiently confirmed to be the truth of God, by his own testimony thereunto in signs and wonders through the hands of his Apostles. Quest. Is every asking of a sign a tempting of God? For Gedion asked a sign when he was to be a Judge and deliverer of gods people, Judge. 6.17. And so did Hezekiah to be assured of the lengthening of his days, 2 King. 20.8. And yet we read not that God charged them with tempting him, but did condescend to their requests. Answ. There be two causes in which we may require a sign of God and not tempt him: first, when God commands a man to ask a sign at his hands: so might Azah have asked a sign of God, for his assurance of victory according to God's promise, yea he is blamed for not asking it when the Lord commanded him. Secondly, a man may ask a sign of God, when it serveth for the necessary confirmation of an extraordinary calling, or of some special promise of God made to man: in this case did Gedion ask a sign of God for the further confirmation of his extraordinary calling to be a Deliverer unto God's people. And so did Hezekiah for his further assurance in the lengthening of his life, by an extraordinary promise, fifteen years. But out of these cases to ask a sign of God is to tempt him; as the

Pharisees did, who would prescribe unto God what kind of miracle they would have, even a sign from heaven, not contenting themselves with those miracles which Christ did ordinarily work among them.

Thirdly, a man tempts God, when he goes on in any sin against God's commandments, for hereby he makes needless trial of God's justice, mercy, and patience. The Lord saith of his people, they tempted him ten times, and have not obeyed his voice: Mal. 3.15. The people murmuringly say, they that work wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are delivered; where working wickedness and tempting of God are all one. Which serves to admonish us, that with all speed we break off the course of our sins by repentance, for while we continue in sin we tempt God, and so lie open to all his judgments, depriving ourselves of the guard and protection of God's holy Angels, nay they will become our enemies, and instead of protection, execute Gods heavy vengeance upon us.

Fourthly, they tempt God, that impose upon God's people, there religious observation of legal ceremonies abolished by Christ: Act. 15.10. Why tempt ye God (saith Peter) to lay a yoke on the Disciples necks, which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear? This is to make trial of God's power in the saving of his people. Whereby we may see how wicked and damnable the Romish religion is, which wholly stands in the observation of ceremonies, partly heathenish, and partly Judaical, whereto when men submit themselves, they do nothing else but tempt God.

Fifthly, they tempt God, that refuse or neglect the ordinary and necessary means of their preservation, either for body or soul: as he that being to go over a water, will leave the bridge which is the ordinary way, and adventure dangerously through the water: for herein he seeks a needless experience of God's power: so do they also

that neglect or contemn God's holy ordinance for the saving of men's souls in the ministry of the word. Now to this kind of tempting God doth Christ apply this commandment in this place; as if he should say, when God hath afforded unto men an ordinary means for their help and safety, they are not to refuse the same, and seek for safety from God extraordinarily. I am now in a dangerous place I confess, upon this pinnacle, yet there is some ordinary way to get down as stairs or ladder; and therefore unless I would tempt the Lord my God, I may not cast myself down and thereby seek for extraordinary preservation, as thou persuadest me. Thus also they sin that go into places of great danger without a calling: so Peter sinned in thrusting himself into Caiaphas hall, a place of temptation, as by lamentable experience he found too true. Thus David's three Worthies sinned in adventuring upon their enemies host, for the fetching of a little water out of the well of Bethlehem; and therefore when it was brought unto him, David would not drink thereof, but poured it out for a sacrifice unto the Lord, 2 Sam. 23.16.

Here some may ask, whether they do not tempt God, that adventure to clime on high places, to stand on spire steeples, to run on the ridge of high houses, and to go on ropes a great height from the ground. Answ. Men may do such things in a twofold estate, either having a lawful calling thereto, as Carpenters and Masons, who are to work upon high buildings; now they without tempting of God may clime and stand on high and dangerous places: or else having no lawful calling thereto, as they who use to do such things to make known their activity, or only to afford delight and admiration unto others for their private gain and advantage; and such tempt God fearfully; for Christ was better able to have cast himself down from this pinnacle, and have preserved himself without hurt, then these men are to save themselves in their adventures, and yet he refused so to do, because

he would not tempt the Lord his God. Thus much for the meaning of this commandment.

The doctrine for instruction hence, is to be gathered from this command applied to the text which the Devil alledgeth; and it is this: whosoever looketh for the accomplishment of God's promises unto him, must be careful to walk before God in the ways of his commandments, and in the works of his calling with all good conscience. God indeed hath made many gracious promises in his word, of blessings temporal and eternal, but they that tempt God shall not find the comfort of them; men's sins hinder these things from them; God's goodness is to be seen and tasted in the ways of faith and obedience. God hath promised the guard of his Angels to his children while they keep themselves in their ways: if therefore thou wouldest have this protection thou must keep thyself in those ways that God would have thee to walk in. And in the riches of his love God hath made a promise of everlasting life with freedom from eternal perdition, to those that believe in Christ, John 3.16. Thou therefore that wouldest enjoy the comfort of this promise to thine immortality and life, must get true faith into thy heart and thereby live all the days of thy life. The same may be said of every promise of God pertaining either to soul or body, the fruition of them doth depend upon the practice of some part of obedience; which if thou doest neglect thou doest but presume in making title to the promise: Peter tells Simon Magus plainly, he had no part with them in the gifts of the spirit, while his heart retained a purpose to live in sin, Act. 8.21. Break off therefore the course of sin, and inure thyself to the practice of obedience, so shall God's promises be sweet unto thine heart; and the more thou proceedest in obedience, the more comfort thou shalt find in God's gracious promises: but if thou do lay hold on sin, the comfort of the word will depart from thee. And thus much for the second temptation.

VERSES 8-10.

Again the Devil took him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; - MAT. 4.8, 9, 10.

9. And said unto him, all these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me:

10. Then said Jesus unto him, avoid Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

These words contain the third conflict between our Savior Christ and Satan; wherein consider three points; I. Satan's preparation: v. 8. II. Satan's assault upon Christ: v. 9. III. Christ's answer thereto: v. 10. For the first, before we come to the handling of it in particular, we are to consider that unto every assault the Devil prepares himself afresh: which should teach us to labor to furnish our hearts every day afresh to be able to repulse his new assaults. Now particularly; this preparation hath two parts: first, Satan takes Christ into an exceeding high mountain: secondly, he shows him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them all. For the first, it may be demanded what way Satan took up Christ into this high mountain? Answ. He might do it two ways; either by vision, or by real and local transportation of his body from the temple to some high mountain. Some think this was done by vision only in Christ's mind, as Ezekiel was carried by the Lord from Babylon to an exceeding high mountain in the land of Israel. But I rather think that Christ was really and

locally transported by the Devil in body from the temple to some high mountain; for Christ's temptations were not imaginary, but true and real. Again, the words import a true and real transportation without any mention of a vision.

The reasons why the Devil carries Christ to a high mountain may be these: first, the Devil hath a great desire to imitate God in his glorious works, that so he may disgrace the works of God, yea and God himself as much as he can. Now we read that God took up Moses into mount Nebo, from whence he showed him all the land of Canaan; so Satan, that he might seem to go beyond God, takes up Christ into an exceeding high mountain to show him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Secondly, he did it for the furtherance of this last assault wherewith he tempted Christ, for he meant to entice Christ with the glory of the world, and therefore brings him where he might take the fairest view thereof.

Now in that Satan transports the body of our Savior Christ this second time, we see that by God's permission, Satan may have power over the bodies of God's children, to transport the same from place to place, or otherwise to vex them, and that not once only, but sundry times. This we must observe, and remember carefully as a stay and prop against distrust and despair, if God should suffer Satan to vex us, by such transporting of our bodies from place to place, or by any outward calamity; and that not once or twice but diverse times; for that which befell the head Christ Jesus, may well befall any of his members.

The second part of the Devils preparation is this: he shows unto Christ all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. This he could not do actually, for there is no mountain so high in all the world, whereon if a man were placed, he could see one half or one

quarter of the kingdoms of the world, as they are seated and placed upon the face of the earth; nay if a man were set in the sun, and from thence could look unto the earth, yet he could not see past the half thereof. And therefore we must know that the Devil did this in a counterfeit vision, for herein he can frame an imitation of God.

Now the Devils visions be of two sorts; either in the outward senses, or in the mind and understanding. His visions in the outward senses be delusions, whereby he makes men believe they see that, which indeed they do not see; this might easily be proved by manifold examples recorded in the histories of all times, but that one shall suffice, of his counterfeit resemblance of Samuel's form and attire to the witch of Endor for the deluding of Saul; when as indeed Samuel's true body was in the grave, and his soul with the Lord.

Secondly the diue hath visions whereby he deludes the understanding. Zak. 13.4. The Lord saith hereof, the Prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision. These visions the Devil shows to men sometime sleeping, and sometime waking; even as the Lord doth show his visions to his own servants. The visions of Satan showed to men sleeping are called dreams; Deut. 13.1. the false Prophet hath his dream. His visions showed to men waking, are to such as have crazed brain, whom he persuades strange things of themselves, as some, that they are kings or princes; others, that they are Christ, John the Baptist, and such like; examples hereof in all ages are many. Now touching this vision of Satan to Christ; some think it was inward in Christ's mind; but I rather take it to have been in his outward senses only, as the words of the text do import; the Devil by his art did cunningly set forth and represent unto the eyes of Christ a notable show and representation of all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them.

Herein the Devil showeth great power and skill in that he can represent unto the eye in his counterfeit visions such strange and admirable sights. And it teacheth us, that the practices of sorcerers and magicians, undertaking to represent unto the eye, partly in the air, and partly in glasses, either the persons of men that lived long since, or actions done in far countries, or long before, are not mere fancies as some think, who deny altogether that such things can be showed: for the Devil can resemble things done long since and a far off; for if he could set such a sight before the eye of our Savior Christ in vision, as the view of the whole world, and the glory thereof, then much more can he represent unto the eye of man strange and marvelous things.

The Devils drift in this resemblance unto Christ is this; hereby he intended most cunningly to insinuate himself into the heart of our Savior Christ: for before he propounds this third assault, he shows unto Christ all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, that Christ might take a liking of them, and so desire them, and at length accept of them upon Satan's offer. Thus he dealt with our first parents; upon their first communication he shows unto Eve the outward beauty of the forbidden fruit, that it was fair to lock upon, and tells her of the good estate they should attain unto by eating of it, and so at length brings her to yield to his temptation.

Hence we must learn to have special care in the good ordering of all the outward senses of our bodies, specially the two senses of learning, seeing and hearing; for by them the Devil can cunningly convey his temptations into our hearts: the senses (specially these two) are the windows of the heart and soul, and if we keep them not well, Satan will be sure to convey some evil into us. We must therefore obey Solomon's counsel, keep thy heart above all watch and ward; this we cannot do, unless we look well to our outward senses,

for they are the doors of the heart. This made David to pray, Lord turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity: and Job to make a covenant with his eyes. And so must we make conscience of hearing and looking, lest thereby we give advantage to the Tempter.

Further, in this sight observe the deep policy of the Devil; there are in the kingdoms of the world besides glory and dignity, many troubles, hurly-burlies and vexations; now these the Devil conceals from Christ, and shows him only the glory, pomp, wealth and dignity of the world, that so he might the more easily wind his temptation into the heart of our Savior Christ. And this same course he still observeth in tempting men to sin; he hides from their eyes all the miseries, plagues and punishments which are due to sin and that will follow upon it; and shows them only all the profits and delights that they may reap thereby: thus he sugars over the poison of his temptations, that men never feel the bitterness of them till their souls be thereby deadly infected: but then he takes a clean contrary course, and shows to the wounded soul all the woes and terrors of God's wrath, that if it be possible he may bring a man to despair. And therefore we must be most watchful of being insnared with the deceitfulness of sin in the false show of profit and pleasure.

Secondly, the devils policy doth notably appear in reserving this temptation for the last place; for he knows full well how forcible with man be the temptations of profits, pleasures and honors. From whence we may also learn, that temptations fetched on the right hand from honor, pleasure and commodity, are the most dangerous and do soonest creep into the heart of man, prevailing far more then temptations on the left hand, which are taken from adversity. The Devil foiled David worse in the time of peace and ease, then ever he could do during the time of Saul's grievous persecution against him. And he prevailed more against the Church by errors and heresies

under Constantine and other Christian Emperors, then he could do by most bloody persecution for the space of three hundred years before. Yea in these our days worldly hopes have drawn those from the sincerity of religion, whom outward violence could not move: prosperity is a slippery path wherein a man doth soon catch a fall, and therefore we must learn to be most watchful over our own harts when we have fairest weather with the world.

Lastly, S. Luke addeth this circumstance of time, that the Devil showed all these things unto Christ in as short a time as might be, even in a moment or point of time: whereby we may perceive the Devils great celerity and speed in doing anything he takes in hand, herein he goes beyond all men in the world: for being a spirit he is able to work wonders, and though he cannot go beyond the strength and compass of nature, because his power is finite, yet by reason of his agility and speed he can go beyond the ordinary course of nature in the manner of working the things he takes in hand. And this exceeding quick speed the Devil here useth, to stir up in Christ a more eager desire after those strange and goodly things whereof he had but as it were a glimpse, that so by degrees he might work in Christ a liking of them; for the nature of man doth more eagerly affect strange things when they be sudden, and the eye of man doth more intently behold them. And this also, as the former, must make us watchful against all Satan's crafty wiles, that we be not beguiled by him. Thus much for Satan's preparation.

The second point in this conflict, is the temptation itself, in these words; verse. 9. And said unto him, all these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. The drift of Satan in this assault (which we must carefully observe) is to draw Christ to commit idolatry by the hope of worldly kingdoms and the glory of them: herewith he proves him when he could neither weaken his faith by

his first temptation, nor work presumption in him by his second. And look how he dealeth here with Christ, so doth he commonly in the world; many a ones conscience and religion doth he quite overthrow by worldly hopes of riches, pleasures and preferments: hereby not only ordinary professors, but ministers and preachers of the Gospel have been drawn to abjure and renounce that truth which formerly they have taught, and to betake themselves as the Popes vassals to profess and maintain his blasphemous idolatries: hereby also Protestant merchants, are drawn to become very serviceable to the Popish Churches, by transporting among them wax and such like merchandize, which serve as necessary helps and furtherances to their idolatrous service. And what else is it that makes the people generally to change religion with the times and states, but because they would still enjoy their worldly commodities? And the more men do possess in the world, ordinarily the less courage and resolution they have for the religion of God, as experience in Queen Mary's days hath showed; which in general may admonish us how dangerous an enemy the world is to the power of true religion.

This temptation hath two parts: A promise made to Christ; and the condition thereof. The promise in these words, All these will I give thee: he saith not, I will procure God to give them unto thee, but I will give thee them: where we may see, that Satan's drift is to cause Christ to take him for his Lord, to depend and wait on him for his kingdom, and to acknowledge him to be the giver thereof: which notably bewrays his egregious boldness, that dares thus challenge to himself the Lord's own right, even in the presence of him who was true Lord and King of heaven and earth. Let no man therefore think, that Satan will lose ought for want of adventure; but in regard thereof be better armed against him.

Now that which the Devil aimed at in Christ doth he commonly effect in the world, he makes men believe that he is the giver of all things and so brings many a one to rely upon him. Indeed with their lips men will confess that God gives them their daily bread, even all things they have; but their dealings and practices speak aloud that the devil is governor and giver of all; for how do many men get their livings? Is it not by lying, fraud, and oppression? Do not most men hereby seek to enrich themselves? Well, the just Lord never approveth such means: the devil setteth such courses afloat, and him they serve, and on him they rely that walk therein.

Secondly, note a further reach of Satan in this promise of these earthly kingdoms, even to overthrow Christ's spiritual kingdom. Satan knew well that if Christ were the true Messiah he should be a King, and have a kingdom, though not earthly, yet spiritual in the hearts and consciences of men, which should be the ruin of his kingdom; and therefore he labors with Christ to entertain an earthly kingdom, that so his spiritual kingdom might not be looked after. And look as he seeks to deal with Christ the head, so he perseveres against the church which is his body; for God's Church hath it ministry, which in it nature is a sovereignty, to be exercised in the dispensation of the word: now the Devil hath labored by all means to bring this ministry wherein the Churches spiritual sovereignty doth consist, to become an earthly lordship and dominion, that by this means he might overturn it, and make it fruitless in the building and upholding of Christ's spiritual kingdom: and how he hath prevailed this way the Church of Rome doth show to all the world.

Thirdly, observe the largeness of the Devils promise: he will give to Christ, all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them: but this is more then he meant to our Savior Christ, at leastwise more then he could perform, for all these were not in his power. Now because in all

things we must be as unlike the Devil as may be, hence we must learn to be wary and watchful to our promises, that therein we be not like unto Satan, promising that which we never mean to perform, or never can perform though we meant it. In all our promises therefore we must look to two things; First, whether the thing we promise be in our power; Secondly, whether it be lawful and meet for us to perform: And thus making promises we must endeavor always to make good the same. This fidelity in keeping promise is a fruit of the spirit, called by the Apostle, faith, Gal. 5.25. and a property of him that must rest in God's holy mountain, Psal. 15.4. not to change from a man's lawful oath or promise, though the performance of it tend to his great hindrance.

Fourthly, in this promise of Satan we may observe, that he knows all the kingdoms of the world, else he could not have showed them to him which here he offers to give: yea his offering of them, with the glory of them all, which he could so speedily represent, doth show unto us that he is most expert in the policies and regiments of states and kingdoms; he goes not to and fro for naught compassing the earth, Job. 1.7. And his promise of them to Christ, was made to inflame his heart with ambition after those kingdoms and glories, that he might enjoy some of them at the least. Wherein we may note that one special practice of the Devil is to overturn states and kingdoms, by putting ambition into men's hearts after earthly kingdoms, and glories: his study is to do mischief, and in the ruin of kingdoms he overthrows many, and therefore hereunto he endeavors himself with might and main. Hence come insurrections and rebellions in kingdoms, which no time nor age could ever escape: look as he stirred up the Chaldeans and Sabaeans to enrich themselves by the spoiling of Job, so dealeth he by ambitious and covetous persons in all estates, as true records of times do fully testify. We may see the truth hereof in our own land, in the manifold

complots and treasons both at home and abroad that have been conspired and attempted against our Prince and State, by profane men stirred up by the devil through ambition and discontent: howsoever by God's mercy themselves have been taken in the snare that they laid for others. In regard whereof we are all bound to yield all praise and glory to God for his gracious preservation and defense both of our prince and state; and to show forth our thankfulness by all holy obedience unto that God who hath brought to naught the devilish conspiracies and treacheries of the ambitious instruments of Satan. Secondly, we must pray unto God continually for the preservation of our Prince and State; crying aloud unto God as the people did at the coronation of Solomon, for the safety of our Prince: yea we must daily entreat the Lord to bring to naught the counsel of Ahithophel's, and of all that think evil against the Lord's anointed among us. Quest. But how comes it to pass that any Prince or State can stand, if the Devil have such malice against them? Answ. Through the good providence of God, who gives his good Angels charge to guard and defend, not only his children in particular, but also whole Kingdoms and States. And one part of their office is for the good of God's Church to repel the rage of Satan and his instruments, yea to stand with God's church in the execution of judgments upon the enemies thereof. In the siege of Jericho a heavenly captain of the Lord of hosts came to help Joshua: and when the king of Syria sent a mighty host to take the Prophet Elisha that was in Dothan, the Lord sent for his defense horses and chariots of fire which filled the mountains. And in the days of Hezekia, for his comfort, and the joy of God's people, an Angel of the Lord slew in the host of Zenacherib, that came against Jerusalem, a hundred fourscore and five thousand in one night. And we want not sure testimony of this good providence of God, in the strange discoveries of many devilish conspiracies.

Fifthly, Satan saith, all these will I give thee. This is the voice of the great red Dragon: and the same is the voice of the Pope of Rome, both registered in their canons and daily attempted in practice, to dispose of all the kingdoms of the earth; whereby he shows evidently, that he is that beast coming out of the earth having two horns like the Lamb, but he spake like the Dragon. For the Lambs horns he shows in calling himself the servant of servants; and the voice of the Dragon, that is, of the Devil, in taking upon him to dispose of the sovereignties of these earthly kingdoms.

Lastly, Saint Luke recordeth a reason, which the Devil addeth to his promise, to prevent all conceit of impossibility in him to perform the same; to wit, for that the power and glory of all the kingdoms of the world is delivered to him, and to whomsoever he will be gives it. Wherein observe in Satan two notorious sins: first, a gross lie; for Daniel saith, that it is Jehovah, the most high God, who beareth rule over all the kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever he will. Secondly, arrogant and shameless boasting, to vaunt himself even to the Lord's own face, as though he were sovereign lord of that which belongs to God alone. The consideration whereof must move us, who in all godly conversation must be contrary to Satan, to renounce all lying, and to make conscience to speak the truth from our hearts. And also to abandon all vain boasting of ourselves what we are, or what we can do, yea rather to speak basely of ourselves that so God in all good things we do may have the glory. Lying and bragging are the properties of Satan, and therefore cannot beseem the tongue and heart of the children of God.

The second point in this temptation, is the hard condition which Satan would have Christ to yield unto for this gift; If thou wilt fall down and worship me: even to commit most abominable idolatry in

worshipping the Devil himself. Herein we may observe sundry things:

First, that it is a principal part of the Devils endeavors against God's church, to seek the overthrow of true religion, and the pure worship of God, by sowing therein the seeds of heresies and idolatries; for if he dares be thus bold with Christ the head, as to seek to draw him from the worship of his Father to such abominable idolatry, what will he not attempt with silly and sinful men? The Scriptures are plentiful in showing his endeavors this way. Michaiah saw in vision an evil spirit offering himself unto God, to become a lying spirit in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets, even four hundred at one time. When Jehoshuah the high Priest stood before the Lord, Satan stood at his right hand to resist him, he sought to hinder the building and worship of the material temple; much more therefore will he seek to hinder the building of the spiritual temple, even the work of the ministry in conversion of souls whereby they are pulled out of Satan's kingdom, and made pillars in the temple of the living God. Satan is that envious man that soweth tares of errors and heresies in the church of God which is the field of the good husbandman. He hindered Paul from coming to the Thessalonians, whereby it appears, that he did his endeavor to hinder the course of the Apostolical ministry. In the church of Smyrna, he cast some into prison, stirring up wicked men so to do, thereby to hinder the embracing of the Gospel. John saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false Prophet. These are spirits of Devils, working miracles, and going to the kings of the earth: thither they go for the stoppage of the Gospel; for if kings oppose themselves they become greatest hinderers to the Gospel of all other. And these frogs, by the common consent of Catholic expositors, are the rabble of Popish Friers, Priests, and Jesuits, who seek the infection of States

thorough all the world. By all which, the Devils enmity against the Church is most apparent.

The use. I. This shows what care and diligence God's Ministers should show for the building of God's Church and the furtherance of the Gospel: for they should seek to the uttermost of their power to countervail the envious practice of Satan against the Church.

II. Every Christian must hence learn, to pray not only for their own good estate, but also for the welfare of God's Church everywhere, in the free passage of the Gospel, in the establishing of true doctrine, and in the continuance of constant obedience thereunto. For Satan's endeavor is to subvert and corrupt the truth, and to draw men from obedience; and unto him God's children must ever oppose themselves, the rather because their welfare stands in the good of God's Church.

Secondly, in this condition of Satan's offer to Christ we may observe that his endeavor is to bring men to worship him: for if he durst attempt a demand hereof at the hands of Christ, who shall think to escape this assault when opportunity serves him? And howsoever men think it impossible, that Satan should thus far prevail with any, as to bring them to worship him; yet doubtless (though he could not prevail with Christ) herein he attains his purpose in the world, and that with the greatest part thereof: for the three religions of the Jew, Turk, and Papist, do at this day overspread the greatest part of the face of the earth; and in them all, such a worship of God is propounded unto men, wherein God is not worshipped but the Devil. For the evidence whereof mark these two rules; First, that all doctrines devised by man in the matter of religion, which either directly or by just consequence oppugn the word of God, are doctrines of Devils: 1 Tim. 4.1, 3. Doctrines repugnant to the word,

touching marriage, and meats, are doctrines of Devils; and so by proportion are all such like. Secondly, all devised worship of God by man, against God's word, is no worship of God, but of the Devil: 1 Cor. 10.20. The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto Devils and not unto God. Doubtless, the Gentiles intended to worship God in their images, but because that worship was not according to God's will, the Apostle respects not their intent, as a thing that could nothing avail in this case, but saith peremptorily, their worship was done unto the Devil. And in reason it must be so, for why should we think, that God should accept that for his worship which is not agreeable to his will, but devised by man according to the will of the Devil?

From these two rules it will follow, that the best of the three forenamed religions, is no worship of God, but of the Devil: for all of them have such worship as is devised by man, and not of God; The Jew worships God out of Christ; and so doth the Turk: yea and the Papists worship God, but yet out of the true Christ; for (as hath been showed elsewhere) the Christ of the Papists is a counterfeit Christ. And in many other points of their religion, there is apparent repugnancy to the word of God: yea of their sacrifice of the Mass, we may as truly say as the Apostle did of heathen idol worship, that they sacrifice not unto God, but to the Devil; for therein is as vile, accursed and abominable idolatry, as ever was devised by man. So that it is plain the Devil doth mightily prevail in causing men to worship him. Yea he prevaieth thus not only in the world, but in God's Church; for all such as (notwithstanding their outward profession) have their hearts set upon the world, more eagerly affecting the honors, profits and pleasures thereof than God and his word, do in deed and truth worship the Devil; for he is the God of this world, ruling in the heart of the children of disobedience, by the baits of honor, profit and pleasure he steals men's hearts from God,

and so herein they doing the will of the Devil, must needs worship him; for look whereon a man setteth his heart, that he maketh his God.

Thirdly, here observe that the Devil would fain make a covenant with Christ; for worship at Christ's hands, he will give Christ the glory and riches of the world; hereto is nothing wanting but Christ's consent. Whereby we see that it may be true which sundry times we hear of, and many histories do record, to wit, that some persons do make a league with the Devil, wherein the Devil covenanteth to be serviceable unto them in procuring them honor, riches, pleasures, or great renown for some strange activities, whereto he will enable them, upon condition that they for their parts give unto him, their bodies, their souls, or their blood. Some indeed are of mind, that such things are mere forgeries and delusions of the Devil, and that no league can be made between him and man; but they are deceived, for he attempted in effect such a thing with Christ, what will he not therefore do with silly and sinful men, especially when he finds them cast down with discontents? And thus much for the Devils assault.

The third point in this conflict is Christ answer. verse. 10. Then Jesus said unto him, Avoid Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve. This I will handle as the words do lie in order.

Before his answer he propoundeth a speech of indignation and detestation both of the Devil and his offer, avoid Satan, as if he should say, I have heard thee Satan to speak injuriously against my fathers word, and against myself; and now again, thou utterest blasphemy against my father, wherein thou goest about to dishonor him greatly; but I abhor thee Satan, and these thy temptations, therefore hence, avoid, and have no more to do with me.

In this detestation of Christ towards Satan, for uttering blasphemy against his father, in his challenge to have power to dispose of all the kingdoms of the world as being his own; we are taught, not only to grieve at such blasphemies as we shall hear uttered against God, but to testify our detestation and indignation towards them. The world is full of black mouthed Rabshekaes, who will not spare to blaspheme the glorious name of our God, and to scoff and deride his sacred word: now when we meet with such, we must not be like Stoics without affection, but in Christian wisdom from bleeding hearts for the reproach of God, show forth godly zeal and indignation for the rescue of his glory. The Hypocritical practice of wicked Jezebel in proclaiming a fast upon the false accusation of Naboths blasphemy against God and the king, may teach God's Church to be zealous indeed against all blasphemers. When Rabiheka railed on the God of Israel, good king Hezekiah rent his clothes, and humbled himself in great measure for that reproach against his God. Tears were David's meat day and night, while the heathen among whom he was constrained to live, said unto him where is thy God? And just Lot vexed his righteous soul from day today with the unlawful deeds of the filthy Sodomites, living among them. The practice of these godly men must be a president for us to follow, that we hear no blasphemy against God without detestation. And as all God's children must practice this duty, so especially Masters of families: David would not suffer a liar or a slanderer to come in his sight, or to abide in his house; much less would he have endured a blasphemer of God, or a slanderer of his word. The law commanded that the blasphemer should he stoned to death, who wittingly and willingly spake a word against God; and no doubt this law is perpetual. Let a man but speak a word of disgrace against an earthly prince, and it costs him his life, and that justly: how much more then should he die the death though he had a thousand lives, that shall blaspheme the king of kings? Shall one that hath been baptized into the name of Christ, say there is no

God, and that the Scriptures are but a device of man, and yet live? God forbid, for this hellish sin defiles a kingdom. And therefore the Magistrate with the sword of justice must cry out against such wretches, Away from us blasphemers.

Secondly, in this Avant of Christ given to Satan, we learn how to behave ourselves against enticers from religion and the obedience of God; we must hold them as limbs of the Devil, and in that regard have nothing to do with them, but with Christ bid them avoid from us. The Lord commanded that in this case, Parents should not spare their own children; nor children spare their Parents, if they were enticers to idolatry, but their own hands must be first upon them to put them to death: Our Savior Christ would not spare Peter when he gave him bad counsel, to spare himself from suffering that which God hath ordained for him, but saith unto him, get behind me Satan. So that we are without excuse if we shall reject this counsel of Solomon, Hear no more the instruction, that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.

Thirdly, here by we also learn how to behave ourselves towards Satan when he is violent and importunate in his temptations, to wit, that howsoever we may reply to them out of God's word when they are more mild, yet when Satan begins therein to show his force and violence we must not reason with him; for Christ would not endure his blasphemy, though he answered his temptations. In schools of learning it is counted a simple part to hold always to the conclusion; but in the school of Christ when the conscience is to deal with Satan, the safest way is by both hands of faith to lay fast hold of the conclusion; cleave fast to Christ, let the Devil say what he will, be not drawn thence one jot.

After Christ hath showed his detestation to Satan's blasphemy he answers his temptation; saying, It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, &c. And whereas he saith the third time, it is written, taking his answer from the Scripture; it teacheth us that Scripture of itself is of power sufficient to vanquish the Devil. This the Church of Rome will not admit; for they make Scripture to be of two kinds; inward and outward; By inward Scripture they mean, the universal consent of all Catholics in all ages. And by outward Scripture, they understand the written word contained in the Bible. Now they say, inward Scripture is the more excellent; for the outward Scripture they call a dead letter, of little or no power; and they make general councils equal with them for substance of doctrine. If this were true, Christ would not have alleged outward Scripture, as they call it; but he knew the written word was the powerful weapon, sufficient to vanquish the Devil. And therefore herein they do shamefully blaspheme the truth of God, and so God himself.

Secondly, this allegation of Christ teacheth us, how to behave ourselves against all enemies to the truth, that would allure us to heresy, as to Popery, Anabaptism or such like; namely to stick fast to the text of Scripture, and not to suffer ourselves by any means to be drawn from it. It may be thou art unlearned and thine enemy both learned and eloquent; yet here is thy refuge, cleave the faster to this written word, and if thou have one text for thy truth, make more account thereof, then of all the testimonies of councils, fathers, or men whatsoever. This instruction is needful, for it may be God will suffer seducers to try his children, and then, unless they keep sure this ground of faith, they shall surely be seduced.

The text which Christ alledgeth for his answer, is taken out of Deutr. 6.13. where the words are thus read; Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him. At the first, it may seem that Christ misalledgeth

that text, and corrupteth it: for where Moses saith, Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; Christ saith, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God: and to the latter part Christ addeth the word only; saying, him only shalt thou serve, for that which Moses saith, and serve him. But the truth is, here is no corruption, but a most worthy allegation, as we shall plainly see, if we consider two things: first, that Christ and his Apostles in alleging the Scriptures of the Old Testament, did not so much respect the words as the true and proper meaning of the place. Secondly, that they oft expound the places which they allege, and thereupon do sometimes vary in word, but still retain the true sense and meaning. So it is in this text alleged: Moses saith, thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, understanding by fear, religious awe and reverence: And Christ saying, thou shalt worship or adore the Lord thy God, understandeth by worship, outward adoration in bowing of the body, whereby we testify the inward awe and reverence of the heart, as when we humble ourselves to call upon God by prayer. And this change of words by Christ, serves for excellent use in this place, to wit, to let us more clearly see what this fear of God is. To fear God in that place is from a reverent awe of the heart towards God to humble a man's self in prostrating his body before the Lord, either to praise God for benefits received, or to pray unto him for gifts and graces needful. Again, for the word which he addeth, therein is no fault at all, for the full sense and true meaning of Moses text must needs include so much, as the prohibition annexed in the verse following doth plainly show: for saying thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him: and adding, Thou shalt not walk after other God's, verse. 14. is it not all one, as if he had said, thou shalt serve him only? So that we have just cause to bless God for the true and plain explaining of the words, and not to surmise the least corruption in the alleging of them.

Now then for our further instruction in this text alleged, consider two points: first, what worship and service is: secondly, to whom it belongeth. First, worship in general betokeneth, the exhibiting and giving of reverence and honor to another. This worship is twofold; Civil, or Divine; Civil worship is that outward reverence and honor which one man gives to another, as by prostrating the body, bowing the knee &c. The end of Civil worship is, to testify and acknowledge superiority and preeminence in another, either for authority and office, as the subject worships his king and governor; or for gifts and graces, or for old age; as inferiors in gifts and younger in age by due reverence must acknowledge. In this Civil manner did Jacob bow himself even times to his brother Esau, thereby acknowledging him for his superior and better, Gen. 33.3. Thus also did Abraham bow himself before the Hittites, Gen. 23.7. And Lot unto the Angels that came into Sodom, taking them to be but men, Gen. 19.1. And in this civil manner it is lawful to kneel before Kings and Princes, to testify our subjection unto them, and loyal acknowledgement of their preeminence over us under God.

Divine worship is the ascribing of Divinity to the thing we honor, whereby we make it unto us some divine thing above the order of any creature. A man may ascribe Divinity unto a thing four ways: first, by attributing the Godhead unto it, or giving unto it such honor whereby he acknowledgeth the same to be God. Secondly, by ascribing unto it the attributes of God, as omnipresence, omnipotency, to be most just, to know all things &c. Thirdly, by accepting and acknowledging it to be the Creator and Governor of all things. Fourthly, by acknowledging it to be the giver of all good things, the defender and deliverer from all evil. And to whatsoever thing in worship a man ascribes any of these, to the same doth he ascribe Divinity. This divine worship doth principally consist in

religion and piety; for by religion, which indeed is God's worship, and by piety, do men ascribe unto a thing divine and religious honor.

Divine worship is twofold: Inward in the mind; or outward in the body. Inward divine worship is, when a man gives his heart and soul to anything, devoting thereto the affections of his heart, as love, fear, joy, hope, faith and confidence, and that because he conceiveth it to be God, having divine properties, as omnipotency, infinite wisdom, justice, mercy, &c. or being the Creator and Governor of all; or the giver of all good things unto him, and his preserver from all evil. This devoting of the heart and soul unto God with the faculties and affections thereof, is the ground and substance of all divine worship, and indeed can be given to nothing but to that which is God, or conceived of as God. Outward divine worship is, when a man shall any way bow, prostrate, or cast down his body to anything, thereby to testify, that his mind and heart are devoted to it: as that he holds it to be God, to be omnipotent, &c. Creator and governor, and his preserver, and therefore he doth repose his trust and affiance therein, set his love, joy, and fear thereon above all other things. And here we may observe a difference between Civil worship and Divine. By outward civil worship we only acknowledge preeminence and superiority in another, in regard of authority, of gifts, age or such like. But by outward divine worship we acknowledge divinity to be in the thing whereto we bow or prostrate ourselves. Again, we must here also remember, that outward divine worship serves only to testify the inward, even to make known what thing it is which we conceive to be God, and whereto we have devoted the affections of our hearts.

Thus we see what worship is, and the kinds thereof. And here we must understand our Savior Christ to mean, outward divine worship, as if he should say, Thou shalt religiously submit, bow or prostrate

thy body unto God in prayer or thanksgiving, thereby testifying that thou hast devoted thy heart and soul unto him, not only conceiving him to be the divine essence, omnipotent, infinite &c. but also that thou doest rest and rely on him as on thy Creator, who doth bless thee with all good things and preserve thee from all evil.

Besides this worship, Christ doth mention a serving of God, which being distinguished from worship must needs import some other thing. Service in general, is nothing else but the giving and performing of obedience to the commandment of another. This service is twofold; absolute, or in part. Absolute service is, when a man obeys the commandment of another without any condition or exception, and that not only in body outwardly, but in soul and conscience, in thought, will and affection. And this absolute service is proper to God alone, for we must never call his commandments into question, but look what God commands and as he commands it, so must we simply and absolutely yield obedience thereto, not only outwardly in body, but inwardly in soul and spirit with the powers and faculties thereof, and in all the affections of our heart. Service in part, is that which is due to governors and superiors from their inferiors in the Lord: for God hath given power to magistrates here on earth to make laws for the good of civil estates, in yielding obedience whereunto, their inferiors must do them service; yet not absolutely, but with restraint, to wit, in the Lord, so far forth as their commands agree with the will of God, and cross not his command. Again our obedience unto them is in body and outward conversation: indeed we must from the heart yield service and obedience unto them: but yet the conscience properly cannot be bound by men's laws, they only concern the outward man in speech, gesture and behavior. Now of these two kinds of service, our Savior Christ speaketh here, of simple and absolute service, whereby both soul and

body with all the powers and parts thereof yield absolute obedience and subjection to the will and commandment of God.

We see what worship and service is here required: Now we must observe the person to whom the same is to be given, in these words: The Lord thy God: Divine worship whether inward or outward, and absolute service of the whole man, must be given to no creature, Angel or man, be they never so excellent, but to the true God alone. The scope and drift of the first and second commandments, is to bind every man to give so much to his God, and to beware of giving the same to any other besides the Lord. And the practice of the good Angel that talked with John, doth show the same thing, for when John fell before his feet to worship him, the Angel said, see thou do it not: —worship God. Where we see the good angels do strive for the furtherance of God's right in these duties, howsoever this wicked spirit tempting Christ, doth herein seek God's great disgrace. And thus we may perceive that Christ's applying of this text against Satan's temptation is most pregnant; for Satan requiring of Christ the prostrating of his body before the Devil, in token that he did worship him as the giver of those kingdoms which he offered unto Christ, is justly repulsed by this text, which bindeth every man to give outward divine worship, whereby the inward worship of the heart is signified, to God alone and not to any creature.

Here then we may learn, that it is not lawful to give to Saint or Angel, or any creature whatsoever, outward divine worship or adoration, whereby the inward devotion of the heart is testified. This text is plain to the contrary, and the reason we have heard, because divine prostrating of the body to any thing, is a testification that we ascribe divinity unto it some way; which without the guilt of idolatry cannot be done to any creature: for let a man worship Saint or Angel by prayer or thanksgiving, and therein he doth ascribe unto them some

propriety of the divine nature, as, to know the heart, to be able to hear, to help or such like. The Papists here say, they do not think the Saints to whom they pray, to be God, neither do they worship them as God. But this will help them little: for the Devil moving Christ to yield unto him outward divine worship, never meant, that Christ should adore him for God, but only desired, that by this outward adoration of prostrating his body before him, Christ would acknowledge him to be the giver of those kingdoms, (for he durst not be so bold as absolutely to desire to be worshipped for God) and yet Christ tells him, that outward divine worship even in respect of the acknowledgement of such a gift is proper to God alone. And yet the church of Rome do give unto Saints, that which the Devil demands and Christ denies by appropriating it unto God: for they make several saints deliverers and protectors from several diseases and dangers: as the Virgin Mary from shipwreck; S. Roch from the pestilence; Raphael from sore eyes; Apollonia from the toothache; And Catharine for all manner of afflictions. Yea they make them patrons and protectors of whole countries and kingdoms, as Saint James for Spain; Saint Denis for France; Saint Patrick for Ireland, &c. Now since many a one may give a kingdom that cannot defend it let all men judge whether they do not give more unto Saints, than Satan demanded to be acknowledged unto him by our Savior Christ: yea they make them intercessors for the procuring of the savor of God and life everlasting: they call the Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven, and pray to her, that by the authority of a mother, she would command her son to hear their prayers; which is to make Christ a punie and underling unto her; which are greater matters then the disposing of earthly kingdoms. Here they say, that they may do that to the glorious saints in heaven, which is done to earthly Princes; for men adore them and in their absence fall down before their chair of estate. Answ. The adoration given to Princes, is but a civil acknowledgement of their preeminence: and kneeling before their

chair of estate, is only a civil testimony of loyalty and subjection; it is not directed to the Princes person being absent, but only serveth to testify his subjection to that authority and power which is set over him in the Lord; there is no divine propriety ascribed by either of these unto the person or authority of the Prince. But now in bowing down to pray to Saints, there is religious adoration given them, for therein be ascribed unto them these divine properties, that they can know the heart, hear and help afar off, pray for them in particular, and such like; by all which God is robbed of his honor.

And though we condemn the Papists for giving to Saints divine worship, yet we must beware of despising the Saints of God in Heaven: for there is due unto them a threefold honor: first thanksgiving to God for them, who enabled them by his gifts and graces, to be in their times, special instruments of good unto God's church. Secondly, we are to carry a reverent estimation of them being now in heaven, as of the friends of God and temples of his holy spirit. Thirdly, we are to follow the example of their godly conversations in the duties of godliness: But from giving unto them divine worship we must carefully abstain.

Again, if the divine worship of saints be here condemned, then much more is the worshipping of their relics: then also is their instituting and observing fasting days and holy days unto their saints here justly reprov'd. Neither can our Church herein be condemned with them, though we retain the names of such days among us, because it is for another end; our fasts are merely civil on such days; and our holy days turned from the adoration of saints to the service of God, whereon also our conscience knows her liberty given of God for honest labor in a lawful calling as need requires.

Further, observe how Christ here joins the worship of God and the service of God together: teaching us not to content ourselves with doing the duties of God's worship, but withal we must yield unto him absolute service and obedience. Men commonly think they have done enough, if on days appointed they come to the Church and there perform outward worship unto God in hearing the word, in prayer, and receiving the Sacraments; these, I confess be worthy works if they be well performed: but herein is the common error, that when they have performed this outward worship they make no conscience of absolute service, the thing which Christ here joins to worship; they think that in their callings they may live as they list, either idly or unjustly, by fraud and dissembling: but sever not thou service from worship, which Christ hath joined together, lest God say unto thee for thy worship as he did once to the Jews, My soul hateth your new moons and your appointed feasts, they are a burden unto me, &c. What, doth God hate that worship himself appointed? No, but he hates the severing of it from service and obedience wherein they should show forth to their brethren, love, justice and mercy: he rejects all service at their hands, because their hands were full of blood, v. 15. Read Micah. 6. v. 6, 7, 8. The offering of sacrifice was a special part of worship under the Law, and yet though a man should bring for his sacrifice thousands of Rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil, nay though he brought his first borne, the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul, yet all is nothing without justice, mercy, humbling himself and walking with his God, verse. 8. Let us therefore serve God sincerely in our conversations, as we seem to honor him in duties of religion; let us show the fear of God in our lives; for worship without service, is like the cutting off of a dogs head, or offering swine's flesh &c. as I say 66.3. which is abomination to the Lord.

Thirdly, observe that Christ addeth only to Moses words, for the better clearing of Moses meaning; which may serve for our just

defense against the Papists; they blame us greatly for teaching that a man is justified by faith only, saying the word only, is not in any place ascribed to justification by faith. We answer, in all the old testament this word only is not joined to this command, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and serve him, and yet Christ saith, it is written, him only shalt thou serve, because the restraint and inhibition annexed, from giving this worship and service to any other, doth in effect include only; even so, though in letters and syllables we do not find this word only, adjoined to this sentence, man is justified by faith; yet because of the exclusion of works usually annexed to that phrase, as that, we are justified by faith without the works of the Law, Rom. 3.28. and are justified freely by his grace, v. 24. and that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by faith, Gal. 2.16. hereupon I say we may hold and teach, and that truly, according to the true sense thereof, following Christ's example in this place, that the scripture saith, a man is justified by faith only.

Lastly, from this commandment we must learn our duty touching God's service: in word we will all acknowledge ourselves to be his servants, but if herein we will approve ourselves to be his servants, we must resolve and labor to yield unto him absolute obedience, as well in heart, mind, will and affection, as in outward conversation. The end of the ministry of the word is not only to reform the outward man, but to cast down the inward holds of sin in the Imagination; and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And this is done when after true repentance a man endevoeth to yield unto God total obedience, and that from the whole man in soul and body and spirit, not for a time, but continually.

VERSE 11.

Then the Devil left him, and behold the Angels came and ministered unto him. - MAT. 4.11.

These words contain the third part of this description of Christ's temptation; to wit, the happy event and issue thereof, in Christ's glorious victory over the Tempter; which is the principal part, wherein consists the main comfort of God's church; for as in temptation Christ stood in our room and stead, so is this victory not his alone, but the victory of his Church. This issue contains two parts. First, Satan's departing from him. Secondly, the ministry of good Angels unto him.

For the first, Then the Devil left him: that is, after that by temptations he could nothing avail, then he betakes himself to flight. In this appears the unspeakable mercy of God unto his Church, in mitigating, and in due time putting an end unto the afflictions and temptations thereof; for the case of Christ the head in this conflict, is the case and condition of all his members. Now here we see what a gracious issue, the Lord put to these great assaults of Satan; in due time his enemy flies: and so will the Lord deal in all the miseries of his Church, and children: God promiseth to David concerning Solomon, that if he sin, he will chastise him with the rods of men, and with the plagues of the children of men: that is, with such punishments as he shall be able to bear, but his mercy he will not take from him. The Prophet Habakkuk in his complaint against the wrong and violence of the wicked done to the just, is somewhat impatient towards God for his delay. Hab. 1.2, 3. Therefore in the vision afterward showed unto him, he is bid to wait for deliverance, for though it tarry, yet it shall surely come and shall not stay, Cha. 2.3. Thus Paul comforteth the Christian Corinthians, God is faithful,

and will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able to bear, but will give an issue with the temptation that ye may be able to bear it; 1 Cor. 10.13. The bodies of the two Prophets who were slain for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, are suffered to lie in the streets unburied, for three days and a half, that is, for some short time; which being expired, the spirit of life coming from God shall enter into them and revive them; then fear shall take their enemies, but they shall ascend up to heaven, and their enemies shall see it. All these do plainly manifest God's great mercy in giving a gracious issue to the troubles of his children, yea by good experience we may see the truth hereof in the happy issue that the Lord hath put to the most fearful temptations of sundry in our time, who have been exercised therein, some for a year or two, other for longer time even many years together, and yet in the end have sung the song of joyful deliverance: it may be some of God's children bear the Cross to their dying day, yet the Lord sustains them in it by his grace, and in the end shows them mercy and peace.

Secondly, in this departure of Satan from Christ, we may observe a notable difference between the first Adam, and the second. The first Adam was tempted and overcome therein; Satan prevailed in that conflict, and brings him captive into his kingdom, having spiritually taken possession of him. The second Adam is tempted also, but the Devil can find no means whereby to prevail with him: the prince of this world cometh, but hath naught in me, saith Christ, John 14.30. But after his assault is fain to fly away.

Further, in this departure of Christ note two circumstances: when Satan departed, and for how long a time. First, when he departed is noted in this word then, that is after the third temptation; when Christ in indignation for his blasphemy against God had said, Avoid

Satan; and withal had answered his temptation out of the written word, then he departs. Hence we learn:

First, that the best way to vanquish Satan is to give him no ground, but to withstand him manfully at the first: Jam. 4.7. resist the Devil and he will fly. Now Satan is resisted, when from our hearts we cast our souls on the promises of God contained in his word, and in the whole course of our lives pray for strength of grace to stand against all his assaults: whereby we may see the great error and deceit of those, who accompt of Satan's temptations as of fits of melancholy, and think they may be removed by music, merry company and such like; but these are no weapons to drive away the Devil. Secondly, this also shows their dangerous course who yield to Satan's temptations for a time, taking their pleasure in their youth, purposing to resist him when they are old and then to repent: too many take this course, but it is fearful: for thus doing, they set open all the doors of their heart to the Devil, and suffer him to take quiet possession, little considering that it is beyond their power to dispossess him at their pleasure: For indeed hereby they become like to a man that is sick of the dropsy, who the more he drinks, the more he desires; so he that willingly gives place to Satan's temptation, the more he sins, the more he may; for the longer he is tempted, the more by yielding is he weakened, and the greater is the danger of his endless confusion: therefore learn of Christ to resist betimes.

Secondly, in this circumstance, note that when Christ rebuketh Satan and bids him avoid, he departs and is presently gone. Was this any virtue in Satan that he doth thus readily depart at Christ's command? No verily, though he obey, it is not praise worthy: for obedience is twofold, voluntary, and constrained; voluntary, when the creature doth God's command without compulsion, thus Adam did before his fall, and all holy ones that are justified and sanctified do thus in part

in this life: Constrained obedience is, when the creature is made to obey God, will he nil he. This is like to the obedience of rebels, who being attached and arraigned for their treasons, in suffering are made to obey the Princes laws. And such was this obedience of Satan, forced upon him by the powerful command of Christ, who is Prince and Lord of all creatures. And this is to be marked, that when Christ gives forth his powerful command, then Satan must obey whether he will or not. This is evident by his manifold dispossessions of unclean spirits, who came forth at his command, though they accounted him as their tormenter. Now that which here befalls the Devil, shall one day be verified of all wicked men; if they will not now obey God willingly, while in the ministry of the word he bids them repent, and believe the Gospel; they shall one day be compelled, even at the dreadful day of Judgment, will they, nil they, to obey that woeful voice of Christ, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, Mat. 25.41. In regard whereof, we must ever be careful, now in the day of grace, to yield unto Christ voluntary and cheerful obedience, unto all his commandments both of the Law and Gospel, lest one day we be constrained to obey in going to our endless woe: Satan who is a thousand-fold stronger than man, could not resist his power; how then shall we that are but dust and ashes stand before so great a God?

This circumstance of time is more fully noted by S. Luke, saying, and when the Devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him: whereby thus much is signified, that look what knowledge, craft, or power the Devil had, that did he employ to the uttermost in these temptations before he left our Savior Christ. Whereby it appeareth that Christ was tempted in the highest degree and measure that Satan possibly could attain unto: herein did the Devil show the extremity of his fraud and malice against Christ; which further appears by this, that the Angels of heaven came and ministered unto

him for his comfort; so as though Satan could not taint the sacred heart of our Savior Christ with the least spot of sin; yet in these temptations Christ was troubled with the same sorrows, griefs and vexations, which God's children usually feel in their temptations: The consideration whereof serves for special use.

First, to keep all God's children from despair in the greatest extremity of their temptations, even when they shall feel their conscience (as it were) set on an Iron rack, and the slashings of hell fire already kindled in their soul: for Christ Jesus the head of the Church was tempted by Satan in the highest degree, so as the Angels came to minister comfort unto him, and yet he still remained the well-beloved son of God; and so may any of God's children remain God's deer elect, even then when the violence of Satan shall seem most to prevail against them.

Secondly, this teacheth us to suppress all rash judgment in ourselves, of all such as shall be exercised by Satan in extreme temptations: for oft it will fall out that the conscience of God's child shall be so exceedingly tormented in temptation, that he shall cry out, he is forsaken of God, and shall be damned; when as indeed he still remains the dear child of God, as Christ our Savior did God's well-beloved in the deepest assaults of Satan. And therefore the relation published of Francis Spira his desperation, doth inconsiderately tax him for a cast-away; considering that nothing befell him in the time of his desperation but that which may befall the child of God: yea our own land can afford many examples which match Francis Spira, whether we regard the matter of his temptation, or the deepness of his desperation, who yet through the mercy of God have received comfort. And therefore in this case Christian charity must ever bind us to think and speak the best.

Lastly, Satan's departing upon the ending of these three temptations, gives us to understand, that howsoever the Devil abound with temptations of all sorts, yet these three are the ground of all, and the most principal temptations that Satan hath; for in this combat he did his worst, and showed the violence of his rage and wrath. And therefore it will needful for us to take special notice of them, as also of Christ's repulses given unto them, that so we may be the better armed against them and the like. Thus much for the time when Satan departed.

The second circumstance touching his departure is, for how long the Devil left him, noted by Saint Luke, not for ever, but for a season. Some may say, we do not find that Satan tempted Christ ever after this, save only upon the cross, where he spoiled principalities and powers, Coloss. 2.15. Answ. The Devil tempts men two ways: sometime by himself, as he did our Savior Christ in this place and upon the cross, and our first mother Eve in the garden, Gen. 3.1. sometime by men whom he useth as his instruments; thus he tempted Adam by Eve; and Job, by the Chaldeans and Sabaeans that robbed him, and by his friends who sought to draw him from his integrity, Job. 27.5. now though Christ were not often after this tempted immediately by the Devil, yet by Satan's instruments he was many times sore assaulted to the grief of his heart, as by the Jews, the Scribes, and Pharisees, Herod, and Pontius Pilate, who required signs of him, mocked and persecuted him.

Here we may see a notable pattern of the state of God's Church and children in this world, for look as Christ their head is sore tempted, and then let alone, and yet but for a season, being tempted again by Satan's Instruments; so fareth it with them, one while they are exercised with outward temptations, and another while with inward assaults; then through God's mercy they have freedom for a season;

but afterward Satan comes upon them again, either by himself or by his instruments: which must teach us wisdom in regard of the state of our own Church in particular, town, that we must not dream of a perpetual freedom from trials and temptations, howsoever through God's mercy we have enjoyed admirable peace and tranquility for many years together; for being a part of Christ's mystical body we must look for the same condition with our head Christ Jesus, who being sore tempted of Satan was left but for a season, and after tempted again: and therefore we must resolve ourselves undoubtedly that trials will come; what way, God only knoweth; but the winter of affliction will follow our harvest of joy and peace: and the yearly visitations, by plagues and famine, are symptoms, that is, signs and forerunners of more heavy judgments, unless we prepare to meet our God in the practice of speedy and unfeigned repentance. And as this is the state of our Church in general, so is it the particular condition of every Christian, whose life is a continual intercourse of trouble and peace, and therefore every child of God must be watchful against security, and with the end of one assault, join his preparation for a new: This was the state of Christ, and the servant must not look to be above his master. And thus much for the Devils departure.

The second part of the Issue of this conflict is the ministry of the angels unto Christ; And behold the Angels come and ministered unto him. In saying Behold, the Evangelist commends to our consideration the view of a great wonder, to wit, that that person whom the Devil would have had to have worshipped him, is here worshipped and served of the holy Angels of God. Let no man therefore judge of himself, by that which Satan would persuade him to in temptation; Christ's estate doth now appear far different from that which Satan would have brought him to, and so shall all God's children find it to be with them after temptation, if therein they fight manfully after the example of Christ.

Touching the ministry of these Angels, here observe three points. First, the bond that causeth the good Angels to minister unto Christ. Secondly, their number. And thirdly, the time of their ministry.

I. Point. The bond of their Ministry, is Christ's sovereignty over the Angels, not only as he is God their Creator, but as he is mediator God and man, even the man Christ, (I say not the manhood of Christ) but Christ (as I may say) the man-God, is Lord of all Angels, and they do him homage and service. And though the man-hood of Christ be not Lord of Angels, yet being received into the unity of his God-head, it is thereby exalted above all Angels by many degrees. Wherein we may behold the endless goodness of God, in advancing our nature, which by sin was made more vile then all earthly creatures, far above the Angels in degree, by reason of this conjunction which it hath with the nature of God in the person of Christ.

Now as by this bond the Angels are made ministers unto Christ, so by virtue of the same, they become ministers to all his true members. Jacob's ladder is thus expounded by our Savior Christ: verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man. This son of man is Christ, who being God and man reacheth from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven; to him the Angels minister, and by him they descend to minister to all the saints of God here on earth.

The use. 1. This teacheth us to admire the endless goodness of God unto his Church and children, not only in bestowing heaven and earth upon them, but even giving his glorious Angels to become ministering spirits for their protection, defense, and comfort. II. This their ministry, must admonish us to carry ourselves reverently and holily in all manner of conversation. If we were in the presence of an earthly Prince, oh how careful would we be to our behavior both for

words and actions? Much more then should the presence and attendance of God's glorious angels, who pitch their tents about us if we be God's children, make us circumspect to all our ways; and the rather, because their ministry is for our comfort and protection, while we keep ourselves in the straight ways of God.

II. Point. Their number. It is not said one Angel, but angels came and ministered unto him. Indeed when he was in his Agony in the garden a little before his passion, one Angel came and ministered comfort unto him: so that sometime one, sometime more attended on him; even as the evil spirits come to tempt, sometime one alone, as Satan did here to Christ, and sometimes more, as they did when he was upon the Cross. And as it befell Christ, so doth it to God's children, they have sometime one good Angel to attend upon them, and sometime many: so likewise have they sometime one evil spirit to assault them, and sometimes many, as the man in whom the legion was. And hereby falleth to the ground this common opinion, that every man hath one good Angel and one bad attending upon him, the one to protect him, the other to tempt him. But this opinion doth not well stand with the tenor of the scripture, which thus sets out the state of men in regard of his attendance by Angels, that there are sometimes more about him, and sometime fewer; whether we speak of good Angels, or of evil spirits.

III. Point. The time when these good Angels came and ministered unto Christ, is noted in this word Then; that is, when the Devil had done all he could against our Savior Christ: they came not in the time of his assaults, but when Satan had ended his temptations and was gone. There is no doubt, but the good Angels were always about our Savior Christ attending on his blessed person, but at this time it is like they took upon them some visible shape, that so their ministry

might be the more comfortable unto him; as it is like, the devil appeared in some shape for Christ's greater terror in his temptations.

In this circumstance of time, we may observe a work of God's providence which he pleaseth to exercise in the time of temptation upon his own children; to wit, for a time to hide his mercy from them, withdrawing the sensible feeling of his favor. Thus he dealt with his beloved some Christ Jesus, during the time of Satan's violent temptations he concealed from him the sensible assistance of the ministry of his Angels, they show not themselves till Satan is departed. And so fareth it many times with God's dear children upon whom he bestows the good graces of his spirit, as a nursing-mother to try the affection of her child, will sometime hid herself from it, leave it alone, and suffer it to take a knock or a fall; so will the Lord leave his children to themselves and conceal from them the signs of his favor, suffering them to be buffered in temptation for a time, that they may find thereby what they are in themselves without God's grace, and by feeling the bitterness of that estate, the more to hunger and thirst after his grace and favor, the more joyfully and thankfully to embrace it when it is renewed, and the more carefully to keep it all the days of their life. What made David to accompt so highly of the courts of God's house, as that he esteemed the silly birds happy that might build their nests by God's altar, but his banishment thence, by the persecution of Saul wherein he was constrained to remain in Meshech, and to dwell in the tents of Kedar? And so when the people of God were in Babel, remembering Zion they wept; oh then, let my right hand forget to play, if I forget thee O Jerusalem; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chief joy.

But unto many this doctrine of temptations will seem to small purpose, nay altogether needless, for that they never felt any such

conflicts with the Devil, they defy him from their hearts, and they trust to God never to be troubled with him: this is the common estate of most men (those only excepted who have felt how hard a thing it is truly to repent and believe) thus to bless themselves in a carnal peace; but silly souls, they know not their own hearts nor the fearful case in which they stand; for all the true members of Christ must be made conformable unto their head; now he was consecrated the prince of their salvation through afflictions, Heb. 2.10: his soul was heavy unto the death, before he could finish the work of our life: yea he is tempted by Satan before he is comforted by the Angels; those therefore that were never tempted have yet no fellowship in his afflictions, they have not begun any conformity with Christ, so as it is like they are still bondslaves unto Satan, for if they had escaped out of his snare, they should feel his assaults to get them in again: in regard hereof the child of God is constrained to buckle hard with Satan in temptation, and to pray many a time to be delivered from his buffeting. And indeed howsoever for the present this be not joyous, yet they may count it exceeding great gladness, as the Apostle saith, not only for this trial of their faith which bringeth forth patience, but also because herein they become like unto Christ in his humiliation, which may give them assurance that they shall be like him in glory: for if we be dead with Christ we shall also live with him, and if we suffer we shall also reign with him. Add further that these men that never felt the assault of Satan, are as yet under a most fearful judgment of God in hardness of heart. When Christ fed five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, he distributed it by the hands of his disciples; But after it is said, they perceived not this matter of the loaves, and this reason is rendered, because their hearts were hardened, verse. 52. And so it is with them that never feel the temptations of Satan, for he goeth about continually like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour, as they whose hearts are not hardened do well perceive. To conclude therefore, let these men

who yet never felt in themselves these assaults of Satan, unfeignedly endeavor to change the course of their lives by the practice of true repentance in eschewing evil and doing good; let them give themselves sincerely to the exercise of prayer for the removal of their stony hearts, and the renewing unto them hearts of flesh, let them hear the word and do the same; and then they will shortly sing another song, to wit, that whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer temptations and be assaulted by the Devil; and then will they find that this doctrine is needful, yea they will bless God for this work of his spirit that caused these temptations of Christ's to be so particularly recorded, with his happy issue and victory over them all, not only for himself but for all his members, that in their temptations they may look unto Jesus, lest they should faint in their minds, for in that he suffered and was tempted he is able to succor them that are tempted, Heb. 2.18.

ROM. 16.20.

The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

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