

THE
POWER OF
THE
CHRIST OF GOD,
OR

A Treatise of Power, as it is originally in God the Father, and by him given to Christ his Sonne:

And that considered, as either

1 Reserved and kept in his owne hands.

2 Committed by him to others,

whether,

1 Ecclesiasticall, for the good, and government of his Church,

or,

2 Politicall, for the guidance of Common-wealthes:

Together with,

3 The power permitted } 1 Of the Pope, and his Locusts.

2 Of the Turke, and his Armies.

In Principles and Conclusions, gathered out of Holy Scripture.

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By Richard Byfield, Pastor in Long-Ditton, Surrey.

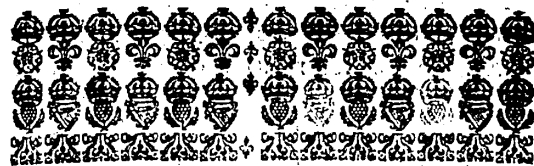
Pfal. 45. 3. 4.

*Gird thy Sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty: with thy glory and thy majestic.
And in thy majestic ride prosperously, because of truth, and meeknesse, and
righteousnesse: and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.*

L O N D O N.

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1 6 4 1.



TO
**THE RIGHT
VVORSHIPFULL**
S^r EDWARD DEARING,
Knight and Baronet, one
of the Knights of the Honourable
House of Commons in Parli-
ment now Assembled, wisdom, coun-
sell, courage, zeale and the feare of the
Lord with grace, mercy and peace
bee multiplied.

Right worthy S^r and much Honour'd,



These lines present themselves
to your gentleness, to begge
pardon for my twice-adventured
boldness: the one in
offring to your private view
this Treatise, such as it is:
the other in thrusting it un-
der the wing of your Name while it goeth pub-
liquely

The Epistle Dedicatory.

liquely abroad : your learning, love of the publique, zeale for reformation of corruptions in Religion both in persons and causes Ecclesiastike, and just detestation of Antichristian Tyranny in those that would be accounted Fathers of the Church, doe winne deservedly the hearts of those that never saw your face. These have drawne me and this little worke into your presence. Did not this Speech sparkle from some heavenly fire within ? *The more great, the more eminent our perills are of this world, the stronger, the quicker ought our care to be for the glory of God, and the pure law of our Soules.* Such beames of light are our beauty : such beames it is easy to read from *what sunne* the streame, who being once fixed in the heart maketh the path of the righteous shine more and more unto the perfect day. It was the praise of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Thou canst not indure**. Persons of a publique spirit, tending chiefly the good of the communion of Saints, are a blessing that entailes upon us blessings. And the day in which this *publique spirit* moves them, and comes upon them, is the very first day of the yeare of blessings : *from this day will I blesse you**. These are trees whose shade and suite is cooling and sweet ; these trees of knowledge and trees of life, are the choicest trees in Gods Garden, whom God thus honoureth to use as instruments of his glory, for the good of his Church ; the more they are carried with selfe-denyall, and the faster their soules are bound that they cannot depart an haire breadth from his sacred revealed truth,

* Revel. 2. 2.

* Hag. 2. 19.

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truth, the more precious are they in the eyes of the Lord and the more honourable among the Saints.

Now seeing the Lord, hath separated you from your brethren to sit in that honourable assembly, give mee leave to speake a few words to you, which by this meanes may come to all the rest. The high Court of Parliament consisting of the House of Lords, and the House of Commons, brings to minde the Gowne of *Alexander* the Great ; in which was elegantly expressed the firmament together with the fixed Starres. Your influence is the life of the State. Three Kingdomes depend on you at this present ; all the Vessels of greater and lesser quantity*. You have asked, in solemne fasting and prayer seeking the Lord, and you have beene heard and guided in a tight way for the removing every burden and undoing every yoke from the neckes of the people. herein like the *Pelican* (by your unwearied paines and great personall charge in attending the publique) who fetcheth bloud out of her owne breast to feed her young ; for the law and for the people are you all that you are. You no lesse asked of God a right way for the redresse of evils in the Churches. And now the great affaires, to cleanse the sanctuary, to gather out the stones out of Gods vineyard, that the Vines may flourish and yeeld faire clusters of pleasant Grapes, to advance Christs Scepter, that Christ may raigne, and Antichrist not winne, but lose his hopes here for ever : these, these, the weightiest

* Esa. 23. 24.

Pro lege & regis.

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tiest that ever Parliament in *England* had in hand, are your present, your chiefest worke. In this the Lord hath also heard your prayers and reacheth forth his hand to lead you. You have the greatest help, the surest light, the exactest rule, perfect and short, the holy Scripture. If you take what is there instituted, and so establish it, as it is there ordered, according to the utmost light you can attaine unto, and setting by all that is merely humane, doe roote out whatsoever cannot by all the wit and reading in the world be found out to fasten its rootes in the New Testament, and so in Heaven, then you goe surely, you stoppe the mouthes of cavillers, you take away the snares whereof men make snares and nets to catch the righteous, you sow the seeds of union, and blast all schismes and divisions. When Satan hath kept any ordinance of Christ out of the Church, wee ought by all meanes to labour the restoring thereof. The way and meanes whereby it may be done with fruite, consisteth partly in doctrine, wherein the Ministers from Christs and his Apostles authority and example may perswade with mens consciences, and may teach that it pertaines to a true and perfect reformation of Churches to enteraine the same, and partly it consists in the command of the Magistrate, chiefly of those in whom is placed the Legislative power. Kingdomes as well as particular persons should alwayes grow better, and not be of the Laodicean temper: and when the iniquity of the times

inforce

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inforce and necessitate a Reformation, then is the season to bee pressing towards perfection; neither ought wee to be ashamed of this change, for as *Ambrose* saith to the Emperour *Valentinian*, it is no shame at all to passe over to the better. Where God giveth power and authority, he may, and doth often in his wisdom place them under ignominy and bury them out of sight as free among the dead, and cut off and swept away from the land of the living: thus he dealt with Christ himselfe, thus with his adopted children, thus with his faithfull witnesses under the raigne of Antichrist. The power and authority is not to be judged of by the glory that attends it, (for then Antichrist may passe for Christ, and the mother of Harlots, for the chaste spouse of the Lambe the Lord *Jesus*) but by Gods Institution, for the office, calling and order, and by Gods unction for the person sent and called of God to that place and office. It is our part to owne that which is Gods though nayled to a Crosse, and accursed of the world. If wee consider that God is the vindicator of all lawfull power, the reliever of the oppressed, and the abaser of the usurper and of the proud, wee will take heed of partaking with the crucifiers of any institution of Christ, for where God gives power and authority, he will not alwayes lay them under contempt, but will in due time give glory becomming that power.

The christian world is moved at this day. The shaking of Kingdomes boden much. It is a sure Maxime, that (seeing the Lord that speakes in the Scriptures,

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Scriptures, he onely is God) the Divine providence ruleth all things to accomplish the word. God fulfills with his hand what he hath spoken with his mouth. Now it is a chiefe principle of Policy which the unbeleeving world is not capable of, to consider *the times* in which wee are, and to discern *the signes* of those times, that wee may have nothing to doe with the things which the cleare truth of Scripture shewes to bee fall.

These are *the times*, in which that voice hath sounded, and the shoute increaseth, *Babylon* is fallen, is fallen: the times in which Antichrist is going into perdition. The King that will now be victorious, is he that beareth his sword of two edges in his mouth, and hath on his thigh his name written, *The word of God*. Nothing will remaine sacred and safe in the Christian world, but what hath this Impresse on it, it is the word of God. Nothing will stand fast in this earthquake save what is of the *Zion* of the Lambe: now what beleeving State under Heaven is there; if not smitten with a spirit of giddinesse, but would beware that they partake not with the Romish *Babell* in either her lies, or fornications, or usurpations? It were greatest folly to come under the the poynt of Christs sword. And if there be any thing that lyeth farall upon us by reason of our communion with Antichrist former, or now present, cast which way it may be soonest and best passed over. This is one of the kingdomes that received power with the Beast one houre or the
same

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same houre. What shall wee doe in this regard? Cast the government on Christs shoulders, give up the keyes to him, lift up your heads yee everlasting Gates, that the King of glory may enter in: and for what hath beene past, in publique humiliation and nationall, let there be solemne fastings and weepings injoynd by his Royall Majestic and the high Court of Parliament, (if the Lord put it so into their hearts, for which I doubt not but all good Christians will humbly pray) and they the first and exemplary in the worke, because never yet to this day hath there been such a day of humiliation, for our shameful spirituall Adulteries with the Whore of *Rome* Or mysticall *Babylon*. Either wee must be of those that hate the Whore, or of those that lose with her and lament for her: When all the Apostles rejoyce over her, and the Heavens sound *Hallelujah's*; shall wee bewaile her? The *signes* of the Times are cleare. This is the day of severing marvellously betweene Christian and Christian, betweene Israelite and Israelite, betweene the poore in spirit that tremble at Gods word, and the proud pompous *Pharisee*, that place all Religion in a materiall Temple, in worldly glory as the best dresse of piety, in outward performances, in observations of mens traditions, in a forme of godlinesse, and under it deny, hate, and persecute the power of godlinesse. The day of severing began in the ministerie, as testify the Pulpits and the Presse, in a searching fanning ministry, rightly dividing the word of God, not Logically
A alone,

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alone, but Theologically chiefly, such as is not seen in any other of the Churches in the world, such as was never scene in the Christian world through all the ages of it, saving that of the Apostles: and this day is now begun in the handy worke of Gods light and holy providence. This is the day of returning the prayers of many yeares, of many ages *from Wickliffe* down-wardes. This is the day wherein the spirit of grace and supplications is powred out on our Churches. This is the day of visitation, in which the hand of the Lord is made knowne for his servants, and his indignation against his enemies. This is the day wherein the splendor of the truth, and the power of the spirit of God manifesting it selfe therein, shall be as fire to consume the wood, hay, and stubble built upon the foundation, not the *Papish*, but the *Papists Purgatory*: what becomes such a day, let your wisdomes consider. When the Lord proclaimeth unto the end of the world, say yee to the daughter of *Zion*, behold thy salvation commeth, joyne with the Lord and feare not; behold, his reward is with him, and his worke before him.

Sir, let mee freely say concerning this that I have now written, no conceitednesse of any word that I could say to informe *that grand Counsell*, but a heart humbly congratulating your present worke you have in hand, hath conceived and brought forth these rude thoughts. As oft as I thinke of the worke of Reformation now begunne, that prayer of *David* with a little variation,

1 Cor. 3. 12.
13. 14. 15.

Esa. 62. 11.

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zion, I remember and would faine *lift it up* even to Gods Throne, and in confidence of faith sing it, The Lord will perfect *that which concerneth us*: Thy *Psalm. 128. 8.*
mercy O Lord endureth for ever: forsake not the worke of thine owne hands.

Your Worships

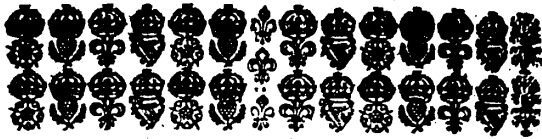
to command

in the Lord,

Richard Byfield.

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The



To the Reader.

Deare Christian,



The line of Power is of most usefull consideration, for if wee consider it in the originall and fountaine of it, which is, God in Christ, wee cannot easily cast off the authority, nor despaire of the maintenance thereof against con. emners of it, nor doubt of the efficacy of it to attaine the ends for which it was ordained, nor debase the excellency of it, though it hath lyen among the Pots, though among the skulls in Golgotha. When wee looke on the institutions of the Lord Jesus, wee are ready to say, either as the children of Belial said of Saul the King-elect, How can this man save us? how can this be the meanes to governe the Churches? or else in Pilates Language to our Saviour, Art thou a King then? art thou a branch of the Scepter of Christ the Lord of Lords? But turne them and winde them, and see if they bee not borne from above, see if they be not truly, though spirituallly, regall, see if they favor not wholly of the simplicity that is in Christ: here you may see what ye doe when ye speak against the Presbytery, the power of the Pastor in the Congregation, the power of the Church,

To the Reader.

Church, the Discipline, &c. they desire the power of Christ, they desire the armies of the living God, as David sayd to Goliath the uncircumcised Philistine.

If againe wee consider it in the branches of this power, it directs us, to give to God the things that are Gods, what to pray for, what to strive for by all lawfull meanes. It shewes how and where Christs power is usurped upon, that no man may take power above what is written. It shewes when wee pervert order, when wee confound the things and powers that bee distinct. Here wee may see Congregations, Churches and Pastors, spoiled, and robbed of their power, the Presbytery Gods owne Institution kept out, as a Bastard, from the Churches of Christ amongst us, Excommunication according to the Gospell never knowne here since the Reformation. The specialty of double honour placed on those that arrogated to them rule, as upon our Arch-bishops and Bishops, Deanes and Archdeacons, which should bee especially given to those that labour in the word and Doctrine. These Bishops taking on them Apostolicall power, and power of Evangelists, but neglecting their owne places and gifts, as they are Presbyters and Pastors: these many the like fruits mayest thou reape by this Draught: I will adde but this one more which is the maine scope and prayer of the Author, unity of judgment and peace: for the truth knowne and held, is the great preserver of peace.

The manner of writing which thou seest, not
A 3 fuerit

To the Reader.

fluent in style, nor clothed with words and phrase I chose purposely (though somewhat I confesse must bee needs attributed to my Geni^{us}) because I seeke the truth, and in this way the naked proposall of the thing makes it by every eye more subject to discovery if false, so perfecting if defective, so apprehension if sounding the truth distinctly and fully: whereas the floods of oratory do carry away the affections, and carry downe many things of any sort, and so hinder the judgment: that a man cannot finde where to fasten his foote. Here you are not sent to hunt the Partridge in the Mountaines, or the Doe in the Forrest, but you are brought to the very nest and seate of the thing. The brevity helps the memory: and though it may seeme to bring obscurity, yet a contrived light, if one heed it, doth more enlighten. My style is barren, but not so the Treatise: What should I deliver in two words, that which may be sayd in one?

I say no more at this time, my prayer is that the Lord would heale all the disunions in the hearts of those whose faces are set towards Zion, and give us grace to seee the manifest workes of the flesh, such as schisme is, and in these knowing times, that the Lord would incline our hearts to practise that rule of the Apostle Iames, that whosoever is (as he thinks) a wise man, and endued with knowledge amongst u., He would shew out of a good conversation his workes with meeknesse of wisdom.

Thine in the Lord

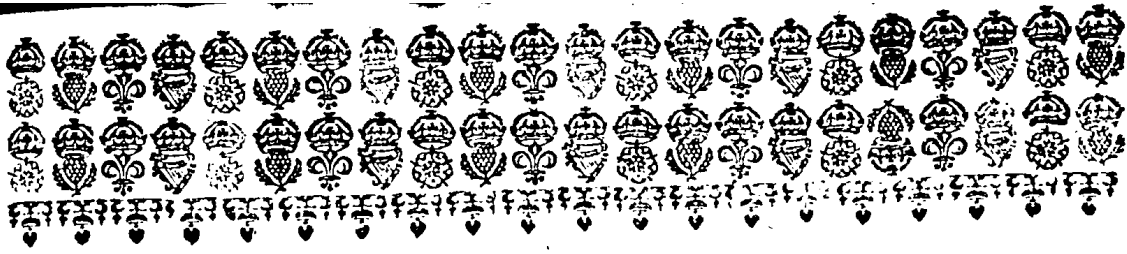
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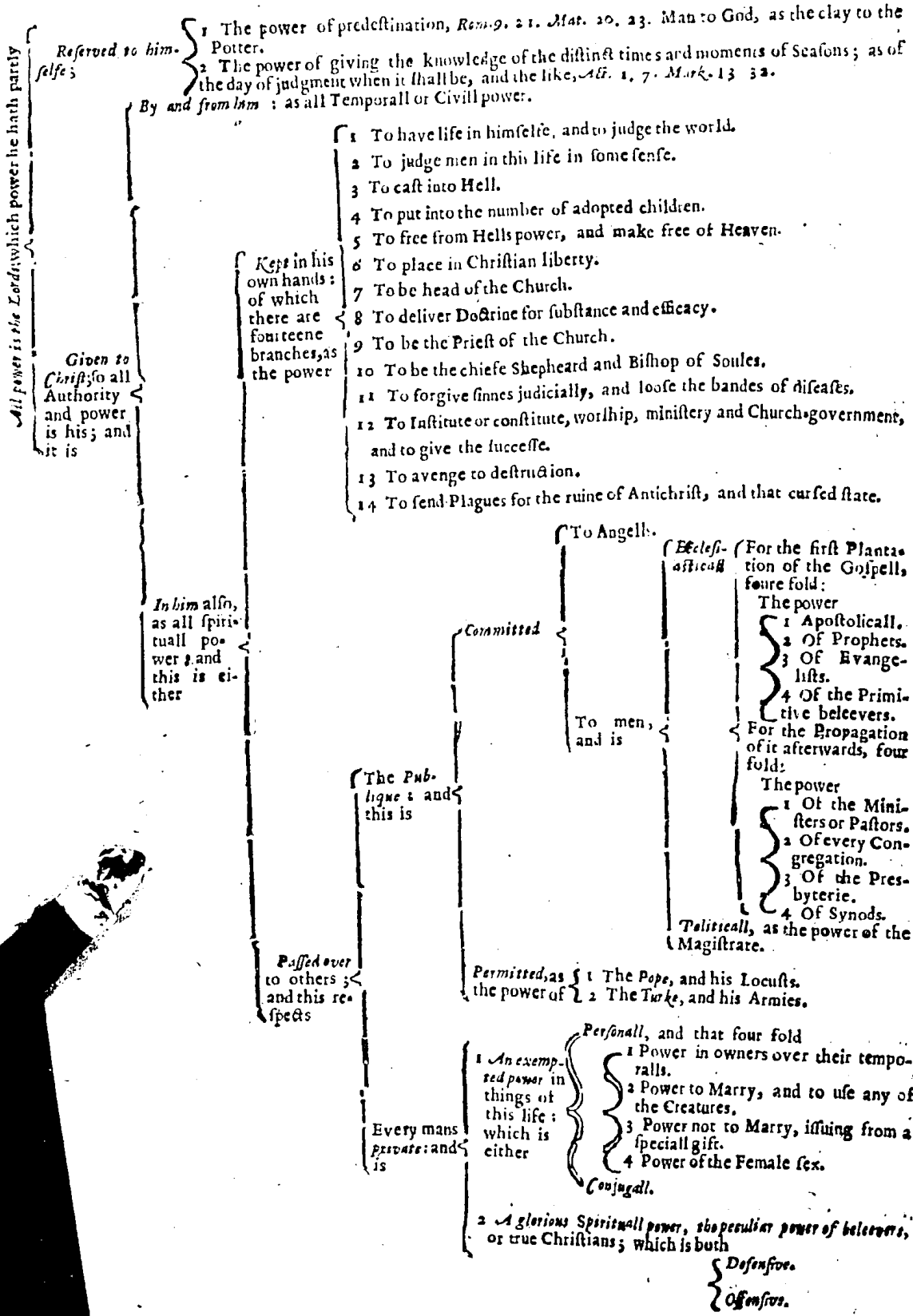
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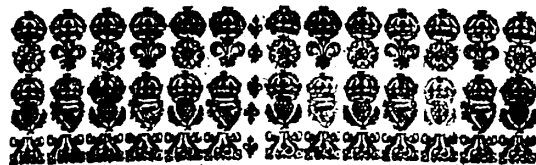
Fig. 13. line 8. for lawfull read unlawfull. p. 27. l. 22. for and r. &c. p. 29. l. 3. for present r. preserve. p. 31. l. 28. for Chron. r. Cor. l. 30. for Chron. r. Cor. p. 33. l. 4. for proceeding r. preceeding.





The Table.





THE
POWER OF
THE
CHRIST of GOD,
OR
A briefe Delineation of Lawfull
Power, in Principles and Conclu-
sions, gathered out of holy
Scriptures.



All Power is the Lords, to give
where and as he pleaseth: and
he hath given it all unto Christ
to be exercised and disposed of,
for the good of his Elect.

1 All Power is the Lords.

Thine, O Lord, is the great-
nesse, and the Power, and the
glory, and the victory, and the
majestie, for all that is in the Heaven, and in the Earth is
thine; thine is the Kingdome, O Lord, and thou art
exalted as head above all, 1 Chron. 29. 11. 12. Mat. 6. 13.

2 He hath given it all to Christ, &c.

B

All

All Power is given to mee in Heaven and Earth, *Math.* 28. 18. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternall life to as many as thou hast given him, *Job.* 17. 2.

1 By Power, here is meant, not ability, but authority; not might, but right; not *δύναμις*, but *ἐξουσία*: as those texts, *Math.* 28. 18. & *Job.* 17. 2. doe shew.

2 Christ also is here considered, not as the second person in sacred Trinity, the eternall Sonne of God: but as God-man, as Mediator, as in office, as the Lambe, *Revel.* 5. 12. 13. Worthy is the Lambe that was slaine to receive power.

3 By *All*, is meant all power over all men, *Job.* 17. 2. all things, *Ephes.* 1. 22. all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named (name of authority, note and renowne) not onely in this world, but also in that which is to come; v. 21. things in Heaven, in earth, and under the earth, *Phil.* 2. 10. the quick and dead, *Rom.* 14. 9. Lords and Lords, 1. *Tim.* 6. 15. Hell and death, *Revel.* 1. 18. and 19. 16. and 20. 14. 1 *Cor.* 15. 26. 27. All things are given into the hands of *Jesus Christ*, *Job.* 13. 3.

4 Onely the Scripture mentioneth two things which God hath reserved in his owne power: the one, the power of predestination, in Election of some, and Reprobation of others, the power like that of the Potter on the clay. Christ is to give eternall life to them that the Father hath given him, and not to them for whom it is not prepared of the Father, *Rom.* 9. 21. *Math.* 20. 23. The other is the power to give the knowledge of the times and initants of seasons precisely, as of the day of Judgment, or the like, *Act.* 1. 7. *Marke.* 13. 32.

But here wee consider this power given to Christ, as in the exercise of it, it hath respect to men on earth: and so to proceed.

2. All Power, or Authority respecting men in this world, is either Temporall, (which wee call civill) or Spirituall:

Spirituall: and both these are of God, and by and from Christ, albeit not without some difference.

1 Temporall power is first of God, *Rom.* 13. 1. 2. there is no power, but of God, *Job.* 19. 10. 11. secondly, it is also by and from Christ; for from Christ are these foure,

1 The gifts for Government: *Prov.* 8. 14. Counsell is mine and sound wisdom, I am understanding, I have strength, (meaning, for Kings, Princes, Nobles, and Judges.)

2 The Dignity and calling: *Prov.* 8. 15. By mee Kings reigne, and Princes decree justice; by mee Princes rule, and Nobles, even all the Judges of the earth.

3 Power to subdue the people under them, *Psal.* 18. 47.

4 Obedience to it. Christ first teacheth it, *Mat.* 22. 21. Render unto *Cesar* the things which are *Cesar*'s, *Tit.* 1. 3. and secondly formeth it inwardly in the heart, *2 Chron.* 30. 10. 12. bowing it by a sweet and efficacious touch, 1 *Sam.* 10. 26. 27. and thirdly subjecteth every soule unto it; *Rom.* 13. 1.

To despise Government, and teach contrary to this *Conclus.* 1. Doctrine, is not onely wickednesse, proving men to bee the *children of Belial*, 1 *Sam.* 10. 27. but also *Antichristian* wickednesse, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. *Jude*, 8.

To exalt ones selfe above all that is called *God*, is the Character; the peculiar property, and singular pride of *Antichrist*, the *m m of sinne*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 3. 4.

Yet here wee must remember, Christ hath not any Temporall Kingdome, *Job.* 18. 36. My Kingdome is not of this world: (sayd hee to *Pilate*) If my kingdome were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the *Jewes*, &c. The Father gave him not any. The Devill, that lying tempter offered it to him, but he refused it, *Mat.* 4. 8. 9. 10. Men, even the *Jewes* would have bestowed it on him; but he rejected it, *Job.* 6. 15.

But Christ requireth, that all Kings and Magistrates

use all their power to maintaine his Gospell, his worship, his Ordinances, and his people: and threatens to break them else, *Psal. 2. 8. 9. 10. 12.*

Conclus: 1.

The Bishop of *Rome* taking to him Imperiall power, and power to order and dispose thereof, turned Beast, (for a miniliter meddling with Civill power, turneth Beast) *Sea-beast, or Sea-monster, or else Land-beast, Leopard, Bear, Lyon-like, or Dragon-Lambe-like.* What Christ refused, he receiveth from the Devill. The Dragon giveth him his power, his seat, and great authority, *Revel. 13. 1. 2. 4. 5. 7. 12.*

2.

The ten Kings grievously sinne in giving their power to the beast, and debase their dignity in suffering the Whore of Mylticall *Babylon* to ride them, *Revel. 17. 12. 13.*

The comfort is, first, The *Lambe shall overcome them.* oh blessed victory! and when? secondly, The words of God shall be fulfilled (oh when shall they have done service enough for the Whore and to the full?) *I beseech shall hate the Whore, and shall make her naked, &c. Revel. 17. 14. 16. 17.*

2 All Spirituall power is also of God, by and from Christ alone, *2 Corint. 5. 18.* And all things are of God, (that is, as the words before and following shew fully) all things that are become new, all renewed things under the New Testament, in the Kingdome of Christ, as well as the old things of the Old Testament; The whole worke of Regeneration, the spirit and the gifts and graces thereof, and the ministry of the New Testament is of God; of God in Christ: as it followeth in verse 19. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himselfe, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of Reconciliation: God is no where to be found (mercifull to sinners, forgiving them and reconciling them to himselfe) but in Christ, and through Christ from God: are all things that can be any way usefull in the Regeneration: When the

the Apostle speakes of the Creation, he layeth downe this maxime, *All things are of God, 1 Cor. 11. 12.* The very same he avoucheth here in the Regeneration, *All things are of God: not under that notion as he is the faithfull Creator, but considered, as Redeemer, as God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God in Christ, all things, and in speciall the ministry.*

3 Notwithstanding though Magistracy and ministry bee both of God by Christ, yet they are so with this Difference.

1 Christ giveth Magistracy, and maintaines it, as the Ordinance of God as Creator, and it respecteth men as men, as creatures: and is of use without the Church, but Ecclesiasticall power is the Ordinance of Christ as the Mediator, properly and in ordinary way respecting the Church, or men as Christians; and is from God as the Father of Christ.

2 Magistracy is a humane Creation, *δυσποινικη*, it receives its institution from men, *1 Pet. 2. 13.* whether the forme of Government, as Monarchy, Aristocracy or Democracy, or variously mixt of all three, or the divers kinds of offices, degrees and callings, as Kings, Emperours, Dictators, Consuls, Triumvirs, Dukes, Marquesses, Earles, Barons, Knights, Privy Counsellors, Judges, Justices of the peace, Maiors, Sherifffes, Bailiffes, Constables, and the like: or Courts, as Councelboard, Chancery, Kings-bench, Common-pleas, and the like. But in the Church and in Christs kingdome, the ministry is, of God, of divine institution, and all lawfull spirituall power is, of God, of divine institution, neither can be called a *humane* Creation, or mans Ordinance.

3 Magistracy is with Empire, and this Empire passeth from one to another in a succession, either Ideall ^{θεο. διαδοχος.} or elective: But all spirituall power in man is *merely ministeriall*, in regard of the men under that power; (for in regard of God both Magistracy and Church-power is ministeriall,

ministeriall, *Rom. 13. 4.*) and in Christ alone and for ever remains the Empire, which he never passeth over to any; for whereas the civill power hath an arbitrary function of Lawes, and execution of rewards and punishments corporall, *Rom. 13. 4.* he beareth not the sword in vaine. And ought to be honoured not only with subjection and reverence, but also with paying Tribute, *Mat. 22. 21.* and *17. 27.* *Rom. 13. 6.* The Ecclesiasticall power hath a bare and naked opening, pleading and applying of the Law or written word of God, and the execution of those punishments and rewards, alone, which are contained in the expresse word of God. Magistracy is called Dominions, *2 Pet. 2. 10.* Dignities, *Jude 8.* Principalities, *Tit. 3. 1.* which are not attributed to the ministry; they are Ministers, Stewards, Servants, *2 Cor. 4. 1. 2.* *Heb. 3. 5.* The magistracy prescribes many things by its owne power under God. But the Church only by the power of another, that is, of Christ, can prescribe any thing.

Κυβερνηται,
 δόξαι, ἀρχαί,
 ἐξουσίαι, ἰκί-
 νοῦσι, θεοῦ
 πατρὸς.

4. Magistracy procures the common good by civill meanes, and by a Coercive power: as by mulcts, fines, imprisonment, the sword, *Rom. 13. 3. 4.* *1 Tim. 2. 2.* But the Church-power by spirituall weapons, and with spirituall meanes, the spirituall good, *2 Cor. 10. 2. 3.* *Heb. 13. 17.* as by admonition, denunciation of Gods threats, and excommunication.

All plenitude, or fulnesse of Spirituall power, and Authority is wholly in Christ the Mediatour: and disposed by him as he pleaseth, *Coloss. 1. 19.* for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulnesse dwell.

1 In him alone is the fulnesse of all things pertaining to salvation, *Job. 1. 16.*

2 In him alone is there a convenient symmetry, and futable proportion to the Church: and union and conjunction with it, *Ephes. 4. 16.* from whom (that is, from Christ) the whole body fully joyned together maketh increase.

3 From him alone is there an efficacious influence by

3.

by his spirit into the whole body of the Church, communicating all spirituall good things to her for her quickning, governing and defending both inwardly and outwardly to her salvation, and to the glory of God, *Ephes. 4. 15.* Grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ.

Christ therefore alone and only is above the Church. *Conclusif:* In all things he hath the preeminence. All others of what order, power, place soever are but members of the body, parcels and parts in the flocke and building: they are not of eminency above the Church of God, but ministers about the Church of God, *1 Cor. 3. 21. 22. 23.* for all things are yours, and yee are Christs, and Christ is Gods, *Coloss. 1. 18.*

This power spirituall is either kept in his owne hands, or passed over to others for the good of his Church, *2 Cor. 5. 19.* he hath committed to us the word of Reconciliation.

There was in Christ a power, which wee may call personall, the power to lay downe his life and to take it againe, of which in *Job. 10. 18.* that he might neither bee counted prodigall of his bloud, nor yet bee forced to die, but willingness and obedience to the commandement of his Father might be eminent in giving his life for us.

Christ keepeth in his owne hands the power following;

First, To have life (spirituall and eternall) in himselfe, (as in the well-head or fountaine, *Psal. 36. 9.* with thee is the Well of life) and to judge the World, *Job. 5. 27.*

Therefore, seing wee neither have, nor can have, no life from the first Adam but this fraile temporall life, which is but a vapour, we should, first, come to him (sensible of our dead estate in Adam, void of all hopes elsewhere, giving up our selves to the word of life, and spirit of life, which workes therein, and is given thereby

4.

5.

Conclusif:

by covenant, and belesyng: wee should thus come to him) that wee might have life, *Job. 5. 39. 40.* And wee should, secondly, abide in him (by keeping his words abiding in us) that we may continue and persevere, as ever wee meane to have eternall life, *Job. 15. 5. 6. 7.* And seeing wee mult appeare before this Judge, wee should approve our selves to him in all things according to his Gospell,

Secondly, To judge men in this life.

1 Of the secrets of their hearts, *1 Cor. 4. 5.*

2 About things indifferent, *Rom. 14. 4.*

3 Of their small estate, *Mat. 7. 1.* Judgment of *Condemnation*, Christ condemneth, *Luk. 6. 37.* but not that of *Discretion*; whereby wee discern of the waies and courses of others, without which wee cannot practice the chiefe rules of Christianity, *1 Job. 4. 1. Psalm. 1. 2. and 50.*

4 As a Master; masterlines is condemned, *Lam. 3. 1.* wee ought to judge as the word judgeth, and with charity, not of malice, envy, desire to defame, &c. wee may not for a Moate, but for beames only may we judge the present estate of our brethren to bee either under the power of unregeneracy, or dangerously fallen; yet he that hath no beame in his owne eye, ought to helpe the moate out of his brothers eye, *Mat. 7. 3. 4. 5.*

Thirdly, To cast into hell, *Luk. 12. 5.* therefore his feare should bee in us above all the feare of men or Devils,

Fourthly, To put into the number of adopted children to God the Father, *Iob. 1. 12.*

Fifthly, To free from Hells power, *Revel. 20. 6.* and to make free of Heaven, *Revel. 22. 14.* to seate in authority Spiritually-regall, *Revel. 2. 26.* & Spiritually-priestly, *1 Pet. 2. 4. 5. 9.*

Sixthly, To place in Christian liberty, *Iob. 8. 36. 1 Cor. 8. 9. and 9. 4. 5. 6.* In which therefore wee should stand fast, and not be intangled againe with the yoke
of

of bondage, *1 Cor. 6. 12. Gal. 5. 1.* I will not be brought under the power of any thing, should the Christian say.

Seventhly, To bee head of the Church: he is the alone and only head, Bridegroom, Husband, Houhold, Father, Matter, Lord, King, Monarch, and foundation of the Church of God, and Gods Vicar. It is his incommunicable glory,

1 To give Lawes: there is one Law-giver, *Jam. 4. 12.*

2 To rule over the consciences of men. *Thine arrows are sharpe in the heart. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the Scepter of thy Kingdome is a right Scepter. Harken, O daughter, consider, incline thine eare, forget also thine owne people, for he is thy Lord and worship thou him;* to subject the conscience to one is the highest worship: and to doe it to a meer Creature is the greatest Idolatry, *Psal. 45. 5. 6. 10. 11.* The whole Councells straight charge to the Apostles, *not to preach in Christs name*, which thing Christ in fulnesse of his authority had commanded them, *Mat. 28. 18. 19.* received this answer, *wee must obey God rather then men, Act. 5. 28. 29. Esai. 8. 6. 7.* God (only) is greater then the heart, and knoweth all things; *1 Job. 3. 20. 21.* the kingdome of God is within us; and it is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, *Luk. 17. 21. Rom. 14. 17.*

Therefore that part of the argument of the *Psal. 149. Conclus.* set downe in these words, *the Prophet exhortes to praise God for the power, which he hath given to the Church to rule the consciences of men,* favors of spirituall pride and Antichristian tyranny. It is the argument in our Bibles of the last translation, fit to be expunged.

Eighthly, To deliver doctrine, both for substance, *Καθ' ουσίαν.* *Gal. 1. 8. Mat. 15. 9.* and so wee may call no man, Father, Matter, or Doctor, *Mat. 23. 8. 9. 10.* And for efficacy: *Paul* may plant, and *Apollo* water, but it is God that gives the increase, *1 Cor. 3. 6.* and to open the book of Prophecies the Lambe only was found worthy, *Revel. 5. 5. 9.*

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Ninthly,

πάντα μου ἐξ-
ἔστιν, ἀλλ' ἐκ
ἐγὼ ἐξουσία-
σθαιμι ἐξ ὁ
τινος.
Rom. 12. 4. 5.
Ephes. 4. 15. 16.
Job. 3. 29.
2 Cor. 11. 11.
Ephes. 2. 19.
1 Cor. 8. 5. 6. 8.
3. 11 & 15. 27.

Ninthly, To be the Priest of the Church: he hath an unchangeable priefthood both for sacrifice and for intercession, Heb. 10. 12. 14. by one offering hath he perfected for ever those that are sanctified; Heb. 7. 24. but this man, because he continueth ever, hath a Priesthood that passeth not from one to another. Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them, verse 25.

Conclus: 1.

There is therefore no order of Priesthood under the New Testament, that hath power to offer sacrifice for the sins of quick or dead, or to doe any other office of a Priest. This Priethood is from Hell and of Antichrist.

2.

There are no Mediatours of Intercession, neither the blessed Virgin, nor Saints in Heaven, nor Angells, no more than there are Mediatours of Redemption. Christ is the one only Mediatour both of intercession, and Redemption.

Tenthly, To bee the chiefe Shepheard, 1 Pet. 5. 4. or Bishop, ἑπομέν, that Pastor, whose Sheep are his owne, Joh. 10. 11. Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος, the Arch-shepheard, 1 Pet. 2. 25. that great Shepheard, Heb. 13. 20. The Primate, or he that hath the primacy. The Arche, Coloss. 1. 18.

ἐξουσία, which is given to magistracy, Tit. 3. 1. δόξα.

κύριοι, κλειστόν, ἐνεργάται, Luk. 22.

25. 26.

κλειστόν, κατακλεισθέντες, 1 Cor. 8.

6. 1 Pet. 5. 3.

ἡ μείζων, Mat. 18. 1. 2. the greatest.

ὁ πλοῦτος, 3 Iob. 9.

ὁ ἐν ἑσπερίῳ, 1 Tim. 2. 2.

That is, the titles of principality, & Arche, of Dignities, of Lord, Dominion, Lordly, Benefactors-gracious, Great, Supreme, which are all titles denoting Magistracy in the Scriptures, they are not given, but forbidden to the ministry. And not only the Love of primacy and preeminence,

preeminence, but primacy it selfe, and preeminence in any thing is forbidden to any officer in the Church, and appropriated to Christ alone. Αὐτός ἡ καταλήξ, ἐξουσία πᾶσι αὐτοῖς ἀποστεύων, Coloss. 1. 18.

Eleventhly, To forgive sinnes judiciously, and to loose the bands of all diseases and afflictions; Mat. 9. 6.

Therefore he hath set up no such office or order in his Church as is a Confessor: nor annexed this power to any order, or office, that men should bee bound to come to confession to them, or to come to shew themselves.

Twelfthly, To institute or constitute; and to give these foure things following;

1 The worship of God under the New Testament, and every part of worship; Mat. 28. 19. 20. 1 Cor. 11. 23. I have received of the Lord, that which I deliver, &c.

2 A ministry, Mat. 28. 18. 19. Ephes. 4. 8. 9. 10.

3 The divers administrations in the Church, 1 Cor. 12. 5. there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

4 The successe, Mat. 28. 20. Lo I am with you to the end of the world.

Therefore, first, there ought to be no worship of mans Institution, for that is will-worship, Coloss. 2. 20. 21. 22. 23.

2 There ought to bee no Church-officers, or kinds of Ministers, but what Christ hath instituted, and ordained, Heb. 5. 5. no man taketh this honour to himselfe, but he that is called of God; for none can give the gift but Christ, who received all that were to bee given, Psal. 68. 18. with Ephes. 4. 8. None can set up the order or office but Christ, who is the head, from whom the whole body is fitly joynd together and compacted, Ephes. 4. 15. 16. others can but patch an office to the body. None can give the blessing but Christ.

3 There ought to be no Church-government, but what Christ hath ordained, 1 Cor. 12. 4. 5. 6. 11. 12. 27. 28. there are diversities of gifts, of administrations, of operations;

rations; but all these worketh that one spirit, for as the body is one and hath many members; so also is Christ. Now yee are the body of Christ, and members in particular, and God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, &c. *Gamaliel* a Pharisee could say it must be of God, or else it of Men it will come to nought, *Act.* 5. 38. 39.

4 It is lawfull to take away an office or power warranted by divine institution, or to misplace the same; that is, to place it where Christ hath not placed it.

5 Wee cannot looke up to Christ with faith for successe, and for a blessing in an office, worship or government that he hath not set up.

6. These Church-offices or officers, or administrations hath Christ in Scripture expressly appointed and instituted: for he hath given their distinct gifts, their names, and their employments.

First, *Extraordinary* offices, or administrations, viz: whose gifts, callings and employments were extraordinary for the first plantation of the Gospell and the setting of Christian Churches, and they are these;

1 Apostleship, *Rom.* 1. 5.

2 Prophet-shipp, which was of two sorts. First *foretelling* things to come: and these were both of men, as *Agabus*, &c. *Act.* 21. 10. 11. and of women, as the four daughters of *Philip* the Evangelist, virgins; *Act.* 21. 8. 9. Secondly, *Telling forth* the written word, by immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost, dexterously unfolding and applying Scripture, *1 Cor.* 14. 3. 29. 30. 31. 32. 36. 37. 22. *1 Cor.* 13. 2. Of both these sorts of Prophetique gifts were they furnished, whose names wee read, in *Act.* 13. 1. whom *Luke* calls, *Prophets* and *Teachers*.

Here note that no woman hath power to speake (as a Teacher, what ever her gift bee) in the publique Congregation.

3 Evangelist-shipp, which was employed in writing the Evangelicall History, or else called by the Apostles

to

to preach the Gospell together with them as their companions in travailes, and co-workers for the ordering, instructing, and setting the Churches, *1 Tim.* 1. 3. *Ti.* 1. 5. such were *Barnabas*, *Silas*, *Timothy*, and *Titus*, *Philip* and others. Three places prove that this was a distinct degree of ministry in the Church, *Ephes.* 4. 11. *Act.* 21. 8. 2 *Tim.* 4. 5.

There were also in the Primitive-apostolicall times three other extraordinary gifts, as

1 Miracles.

2 Gifts of healing.

3 Diversities of tongues, interpretation of tongues, *1 Cor.* 12. 28.

But the three first were offices in the Presbytery, and were distinct gifts received and given of Christ ascended for the worke of the ministry for the gathering of the Saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ, &c. *Ephes.* 4. 8. 11. with *Psal.* 68. 18.

There were also Brethren and Sisters in Christ, that is, godly men and women indued with a rich measure of knowledge, zeale, and piety, that laboured much in the Lord to instruct, catechise, and teach privately in the Doctrine of Christ: who though they were not of the former offices and callings, yet the Apostles gave them the name of *Helpers in Christ*, *Rom.* 16. 3. 9. *Act.* 18. 26.

Secondly, *Ordinary*: whose gifts, callings, and employments were for the propagation of the Gospell in particular Congregations, and for their good, to the end of the world. And they are these;

First, *Pastors and Teachers*. Gifts given by Christ unto men, for the gathering of the Saints, for the worke of the ministry, for the edifying of the body, *Ephes.* 4. 10. 11. whose calling is, first, to labour in the word and doctrine, to Teach, or to Prophecy, that is, to open and apply the Scripture to edification, exhortation and comfort, and to convince gainfayers, *1 Tim.* 5. 17. *1 Pet.* 4. 11. *Rom.* 12. 6. 7. 8. *Ti.* 1. 9.

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Διδασκαλία.
Παροχίας.

Tit. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 2. & 3. 16. 17. And to this end to attend to Reading, and Meditation, to take heed to themselves, and unto the Doctrine of the word, holding fast a *forme of sound doctrine, or Pattern of wholesome words*, to be wholly taken up herein, and to continue so doing, to stir up the gift that is in them, that their profiting may appear unto all: thus doing they shall save themselves & them that heare them, *1 Tim. 4. 13. 14. 15. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 13.* Their calling is also, secondly, to administer the Sacraments according to Christs institution, and to powre out prayers as the mouth of the Congregation. And lastly, it is their place, thirdly, to rule together with the other Church-officers, and with the bridle of Ecclesiasticall Discipline to keepe Christians within the bounds of obedience to God required in his word.

διακονία,
ubi
δ' ἐπιτάμειν.

Secondly, *Elders that Rule*, *1 Tim. 4. 17.* A speciall gift distinct, and differing according to the grace given to the members of the body of Christ, *Rom. 12. 5. 6. 8.* called, *Governments*; which is a distinct office, *see in the Church by God*, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* To that place in *1 Tim. 5. 17.* some except saying, that the word *κοινωντες*, they that labour, doth difference those that labour diligently from those that labour negligently: This is weake: for first, the word *κοινωντες*, that labour, is not referred to the word, *Elders*, that goeth before, but to the following words, *in the word and doctrine*: and all of them together make a member of the sentence contra-distinct to the first member, *the Elders that rule well*, *δικαίως ἐπιτάμειν*: *προεβύτατοι, οἱ κοινωνοὶ ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ*. Secondly, by their interpretation it would follow that the more negligent labourers in the word and doctrine were worthy of double honour: than which thing nothing is more absurd, nor farther off from the Apostles meaning, who requires and with deepest adjurations charges all Bishops and Pastors with the utmost watchfulness and industry, *1 Tim. 3. 3. and 2 Tim. 4. 1. 2.* Whence wee conclude, that the more negligent Pastors are

are worthy of double censure, not of double honour. Thirdly, *Deacons*: whose office and first institution wee read in *Acts 6.* their employment, *Rom. 12. 8.* he that giveth with simplicity, he that shewes mercy with abersfulness, they are called *Helpers*, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* there were of this office both men and women also, *1 Tim. 5. 9.*

Here note some things concerning the words, and some things concerning the things themselves: for the words, note that the words;

1 Elders, is common to the Apostles, *2 Job. 1.* and *3 Job. 1.* *1 Pet. 5. 1.* to Pastors, *1 Pet. 5. 1. 2. 4.* and to Governours, *1 Tim. 5. 17.*

2 Bishops and Episcopacy to Apostles, *Act. 1. 20.* his Episcopacy let another take, speaking of *Judas*; to Pastors, *Act. 20. 17. 28.* and it seemes to many great Divines, to governours or ruling Elders also in two places, *Act. 20. 17. 28.* *Phil. 1. 1.*

3 Deacon also is promiscuously used; to Apostles, *Rom. 11. 13.* to Pastors, *Coloss. 4. 7. 17.* and *1. 7. Ephes. 6. 21.* to Evangelists, *2 Tim. 4. 5.* to Magistrates, *Rom. 13. 4.* to Christ, *Rom. 15. 8.*

Again note that the words

1 Bishops and Episcopacy are appropriated to Pastors, *1 Tim. 3. 1. 2. Tit. 1. 5. 7. 9.*

2 Deacon is appropriated to that office, *1 Tim. 3. 8.*

3 Bishops and Deacons are distinct, *Phil. 1. 1.* but I doe not find the Deacon ever called an Elder.

Thus for the words: and for the things themselves or the officers, it is to be noted,

1 That, not only the Elders, but even the Deacons were so consecrated to the Church of God, that their holiness in life, fidelity in their function, and industry in the doctrine of faith, both to grow in the knowledge thereof, and instruct others therein being famous, they were promoted to the pastoral office, *1 Tim. 3. 13.* Hence it is evident that in their choice they had respect not onely to the purity of their consciences; but also to their

their solid knowledge, and their diligence, as the matter required, to exhort and admonish others.

2 That not only the Pastors, but also the Elders and Deacons function, was perpetuall, during life, and not continuing only for a yeare or two.

Conclus: 1.

The Scripture affords not the names of Universall Bishop, Patriarch, Cardinall, Arch-bishop, Deanes, Arch-deacons, Abbots, Canons, Prebends, Monkes, and the rest of the Hierarchy: nor yet the office, nor the inequality of the dignity or authority, nor their distinct Ordinations, nor lastly, their employment in the Church of Christ.

2.

The names and offices of Ostiaries, Exorcists, Readers, Curats, Acoluthits, Subdeacons, Singing-men, or Choristers; and the like doe nowhere appear in the Apostolicall descriptions of Ecclesiasticall Ministers.

Against bringing in, or introducing any devised office into the Church of Christ, consider these Axiomes, infallible verities.

1 All things (in the New Testament) are of God in Christ, 2 Cor. 5. 19.

Conclus:

Therefore whatever is not of God, it is of humane presumption, and of the Devill: for the phrase to be of God is opposed thus in the New Testament to that which is of the world, and of the Devill, Job. 7. 17, and 8. 42. 47. Mat. 16. 23. 1 Joh. 4. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 3 Joh. 11.

2 The gifts of the Spirit different, doe (intrinsically) constitute the distinct orders and callings in the Church, Rom. 12. 4. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 12. Ephes. 4. 8. 11. He gave gifts, some Apostles, &c.

Conclus:

Therefore whoever pleades for a distinct calling, and a power of administrations in the Churches of Christ, let him shew his distinct gift, and we will ratify and gratify the worke of God. If Bishops among us, and Presbyters or Priests, as wee call them, be distinct, in ordination and office, as wee make, let the Bishops shewe

shewe their distinct gifts; their distinct ordination can never be shewed out of the Scripture. Shew your unction from the holy One, and we will receive you; if not, wee must reject you as of the world, not of the Father, as of Anti-christ, not of Christ.

3 Christ ascended to fill all things, which he did and doth by giving gifts to men, for employment in the Church, Ephes. 4. 10. 11.

Therefore either Christ is faulty, and misseth of his end for which he is ascended, or else there is no roome or place for other callings Ecclesiasticall than he hath made; which is the true reason, why, as wee see by experience, these devised offices and officers, where they come, doe justle Christs owne offices, officers, and his institutions out of place. They want roome, and they cannot have it, but by thrusting out others.

4 That Christ might give gifts to men, he must first receive them of the Father for men; and that he ascended to receive them, what is it, but that he descended first, and so was the eternall sonne of God incarnate for our sakes, Psal. 68. 18. with Ephes. 4. 8. 9. 10.

Therefore no creature, Man or Angell, (yea the son of God doth it but as he is in office of Mediator) can give any gift fitting for a Church-office unto any man, nor without presumption and sacriledge take the power to institute an order of ministry: let them first ascend and descend, and then prove their ascension to the right hand of the Father by the powring out of the Holy Ghost.

5 The gifts that Christ giveth, are of power, through his blessing, to subdue, and make anew even the Rebels, * that they may live peaceably and holly in the Church of Christ, meekly taking up his yoke and obeying his Empire, and that the Lord Christ by his spirit may dwell in and among them, Psal. 68. 18.

Therefore that Christs offices in the Church, be introduced, is the ready meanes to settle peace and godlinesse,

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* **סוּרְ**
סוּר אֶתְּרֵבֶלֶתָּא,
qui nulla disci-
plinæ regi vo-
lunt.

Conclus:



lineſſe, to prevent rebellions, factions, and ſchiſmes: but others rather make and increaſe rebels, ſeditious, and ſchiſmaticques.

6 Chriſt giveth no one new gift for kinde in any age of the Church downward, but the very ſame which he gave to the firſt Primitive Church recorded in the Scripture of the New Teſtament; thoſe onely he giveth, though not all thoſe.

7 Antichriſtianiſme is not onely *Apoſtaſie* in a body and head, and *Lyes* or *Hereſies combined* and *compacted* to the making up of a *Man of ſinne*: but alſo *Selfe-exaltation* over all dignities, and *Selfe-preeminence* in the Church and under Church-titles, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 3. 4. 7. This *Mystery of iniquity* wrought in the Apoſtle *Pauls* time, and *Anti-chriſt* in his forerunners was come in the Apoſtle *Johns* time, 1 *Joh.* 2. 18. and *the laſt time* which is the time of the great *Anti-chriſts* coming and Reigne, began in the latter dayes of the Apoſtles, they yet living 1 *Joh.* 2. 18.

Concluſ:

Therefore it is no ſufficient prooffe of the Apoſtolicall nature, or Riſe of any tradition, cuſtome, or office, to derive it from the Apoſtles times, unleſſe you can prove it founded in the writings of the New Teſtament, and free it from Apoſtaſy and Lyes, and from ſelfe-exaltation, and ſelfe-preeminence: but being found of this nature, the *Antiquity* thereof proveth it *Antichriſtian*.

This Church-government, and theſe Church-ſocieties hath Chriſt inſtituted and left to his Church upon record in the Scriptures of the New Teſtament;

Fiſt, *Standing and permaſtance*, of two ſorts:

1 *Congregationall*: which is a Church-ſociety of ſuch a number of beleevers or profeſſors as can aſſemble together in one place to uſe Chriſts ordinances to their edification. This ſociety conſiſts of officers, and brethren, or members. And their aſſembling together is either *popular*, when they all come together for the

worſhip

worſhip of God in publique, either on *the Lords day*, or at other times: or elſe *Eccleſiaſticall*, I meane, a ſellion of Church-officers (at which alſo any or all of the members may bee preſent,) yet herein it differs from the *popular aſſembly*, becauſe it is inſtituted for the *Government* of the congregation. For the popular aſſembly, ſee 1 *Cor.* 11. 17. 18. 20. 22. *Ioh* come together not for the better, but for the worſe.—*When yee come together into one place.—Deſpiſe yee the Church of God?* Heb. 10. 25. *not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together*, as the manner of ſome is: for the *Eccleſiaſticall*, ſee *Act.* 11. 15. *Mat.* 18. 20. *for where two or three* (ſpeaking of the Church binding and looſing a member thereof, v. 18.) *be gathered together in my name, there am I in the miſt of them*. This kind of Confeſſion, or Seſſion, is firſt in nature and origine, but laſt and meanest or loweſt in dignity and authority.

2 *Presbyteriall*: which is a Church-ſociety of the Paſtors, Teachers, and Elders of ſome limited place (though containing many congregations) repreſenting thoſe congregations or Churches, who ought to gather together in Chriſts name in one place to deale about the affaires of the Church to the right Government and edification thereof, and the glory of God.

This is called the *Presbytery*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. *like the *Synedrion*, or Conſiſtory among the *Jewes*. And as ſome thinke, Chriſt inſtituted it in the roome thereof; *Mat.* 18. 17. when he ſayd, *Tell it unto the Church*.

1 That this *Presbytery* conſiſts of the Paſtors and Elders of many congregations, appeareth in *Act.* 15. 2. *Paul* and *Barnabas* ſhould goe up to *Jeruſalem* unto the *Apoſtles* and *Elders*, v. 6. they were received of the Church and of the *Apoſtles* and *Elders*, *Act.* 21. 18. *Paul* 14 years after his converſion found reſident at *Jeruſalem*, *Iames*, and *Peter*, and *Iohn*, *Gal.* 2. 1. 9. now they had not ſo many Apoſtles and Elders for one congregation. Beſides the multitudes of beleevers in *Jeruſalem* be-

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* The word *Presbytery*, is thrice uſed in the New Teſtament and ſignifieth the company of *Presbyters* or *Elders*, *Luke* 22. 66. *Act.* 22. 4. 1 *Tim.* 4. 13.

ing 3120, in *Act. 2.* and increasing daily long before Saint Paul's conversion, could not assemble in one place to heare the word, receive the Sacraments, and so pray, and so to use the ordinances of Christ.

2 The Presbytery consists properly of Pastors and Elders, extraordinary gifts now being ceased.

3 It hath no one Bishop or Pastor, during life, that hath a name distinct from, or power above the rest: but only (perhaps) * one chosen by the whole to be moderator, or to sit in the chaire for the present meeting, which yet is not a thing appointed in the word, because the light of nature leads unto it.

4 This Government or externall administration of the Church is neither Democraticall, nor Aristocraticall, nor Monarchical, but if Dominion be laid aside, and Ministry placed in the room, it answereth most to an Aristocracy. It is very suitable to our Sessions of Justice of Peace, or the Session of the House of Commons in Parliament: and therefore may be very suitable to our Civill State, or to any Civill Government on earth.

5 The Circuits for this Presbyteriall Government, and their divisions together with the times, and orders of their meetings for mutuall support and ayde in any kinde (provided they be so cast that they may conveniently meet together in one, which is the thing the Scripture requires) are all of Christian prudence (as it is for the circuite of Congregations or Parishes, and the times of their meetings for Government) guided by the generall rules of Scripture.

Thus of Societies and Government standing and permanent.

Secondly, *Occasionall and Incident*: as *Synods* or *Councils*, consisting of Church-officers and Brethren selected by the severall Congregations. Wee have a most exact patterne in *Act. 15.* yet the names of *Synod* and *Council* are not in Scripture.

Hitherto of Church-officers and Church-government,

* For the Scripture doth not mention so much.

ment, and also of the 12. particularity of power spirituall, which Christ hath reserved in his owne hands.

Christ hath kept in his owne power

Thirteenthly, The power to avenge to destruction. (for to take vengeance by spirituall weapons to edification he hath committed the power to Ministers, *1 Cor. 10. 3. 4.*) He himselfe will be avenged of men.

1 For the contempt of the Gospell, *Revel. 6. 4. 8.*

2 For the abuse of Ecclesiasticall offices and authority, which vengeance he will execute

By taking away the kingdom of God, and transplanting it, *Mat. 21. 43.*

By raising armies, and sending them forth to destroy the murderers of his Ministers, *Mat. 22. 7.*

3 For formality, not receiving the love of the truth, *Revel. 13. 5. 7. 15.* with *2 Thes. 2. 10.* and for turning christianity into Imagery, & living in notorious wickednesses under the colour and cloak of the profession thereof: these things caused Christ to send and arme with power both the swarmes of Romish Locusts, and the Euphratean Turkish tyranny, *Revel. 9. 3. 10. 19.*

Fourteenthly, The power of Plagues for the ruine of Anti-christ, and the whole Anti-christian State throughout the Christian world, *Revel. 16. 9. and 18. 1.*

These 14. are the Branches of that power which Christ hath kept to himselfe.

Christ hath in some sort passed over a power to others for the good of his Church.

1 I say in some sort, for there is a twofold power first, *Helvetica confessio: Art. 18.* of more and absolute authority, which wee may call also the power of right, *potesa juris*; this is alwaies and in all things, his alone: he doth all in the Church, as the Lord of the house, *Heb. 3. 6.* he only in this sense hath the key of David, *openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, Revel. 3. 7.* *Esa. 9. 22.* secondly of ministry, or office, *potesa officii*: which is a power delegated by him that hath and useth plenary power. They who have this

this trust should doe nothing but according to their Commission, nothing out of plenary power.

2 The power passed over to others, is either, first, Committed to them, or secondly, Permitted; not without a holy and mighty ordering and ruling hand; in, and over the same.

There is for the good of the Church a power committed by Christ to Angels and to men.

To Angels, a general Commission, as wee read, P sal. 91. 11. and Heb. 1. 14. and particular commissions given, as Rev. 14. 18. another Angel came out from the Altar, which had power over fire.

To Men: this is most insisted upon in Scripture, and this power was committed to men.

First, for the first plantation of the Gospell, as

- 1 Power Apostolicall.
- 2 Power of Prophets.
- 3 Power of Evangelists.
- 4 Power of Belcevers.

Secondly, for the propagation of it in the Churches afterwards for ever; both the power of officers, and the power of Church societies before mentioned: for Christ sets up no office, institutes no order, sends none without some power, yea, and that power through him mighty and efficacious for the accomplishing of his worke.

Apostolicall power, was the greatest that ever was in the Church, even as their calling and gifts were the highest and choicest by farre. First, Apostles, 1 Cor. 12. 28.

For their power was

- 1 Power in Christs-rome to order hiskingdome. As my Father hath sent mee, even so send I you, Joh. 20. 21. words properly applicable to the Apostles, of this see, Luk. 22. 29. Mat. 19. 28. Yee shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.

So that what ever orders, or institutions, rules or directions the Apostles have left us in the writings of the

Apostolica
Eorum.

Conclusi:

the New Testament; they are all of the like authority as if Christ himselfe had delivered them to us with his owne blessed mouth, 1 The. 4. 8. he that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy spirit.

2 Power to minister to us Doctrine in all things, as the standard, as the word of God Originally, and in some sort to say, * I Paul say unto you, Gal. 5. 2. so that they * Authoritas having given it to the Church for the Canon and Rules, *Authoritas* no Angelicall, no Apostolicall, no Imperiall power may alter, pervert it, or teach otherwise, but under the dreadful curse of the Almighty. See, against such are spoken mere flames, Gal. 1. 8. Though wee or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospell, than that which wee have preached to you, let him be accursed, 1 Joh. 4. 1. 5. 6.

3 Power to give the Holy Ghost in extraordinary gifts; by imposition of hands, Act. 8. 17. and the gift 1. 2. 6.

4 Power to smite with strange punishments corporal: as Peter stroke Ananias and Sapphira dead with no other then his words alone, Act. 5. 5. 10. Paul stroke Elymas the Sorcerer with blindness, Act. 13. 11.

5 Power to abrogate the old Law, that is, the Law morall, or a Covenant, the Law ceremoniall, and judiciall, and the whole ministry of the Old Testament; and to promulgate the Law of Faith, Marke 16. 16. Mat. 28. 18. 19. 20.

6 Power of Oecumenicall pastors, the whole world, as it were, their Parish, all Churches or Congregations their See; The care of all the Churches lay continually upon them, 2 Cor. 11. 28. and therefore they had power to take to them assistants in their worke, as they also did, and they were not onely in regard of order, but in order, degree and power superiour to all other ministers.

Yet note,

- 1 That all this power was given to edification, not to

to destruction, 2 Cor. 13. 10. They were the Churches, and the Churches are Christs, and Christ is Gods; 1 Cor. 3. 22. 23. they were not Lords of the Faith, they had no dominion over the faith of the people, but were helpers of their joy, 2 Cor. 1. 24.

2. All this power was peculiar to them as Apostles, not as Pastors and Elders, with other Elders, and therefore lived and died with them, even as their gifts and their worke ceased, and the ground of their calling or office was removed on their death.

3. All this power was equal to them all: they had parity of Ecclesiasticall power and dignity: though the grace of God and the gifts of the Holy Ghost did excell in the abundant labours of some, above others, Joh. 20. 21. 22. 23. 1 Cor. 16. 19.

10. 4. The power of Prophets, was *appon* to use their gifts, in the Churches for the good thereof, 1 Cor. 14. 28. 29. Acts 15. 32. and the Society of Prophets had a power to judge and discern of the Doctrine and spirits of the Prophets, 1 Cor. 14. 29. 32. Let the Prophets speake two or three, and let the other judge; and the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets.

11. The peculiar power of Evangelists was, to see to many Churches, even whole Provinces (as the Apostles were pleased to employ them, and saw convenient) in the Apostles roome and stead, as *Co-workers* with them, and as it were secondary Apostles, Apostolicall men: either accompanying them in their travailes, or residing for a time in some certaine place, even till the Apostles called them thence.

And in these places they had

1. A power, to ordaine Ministers or Bishops in every City or Towne, Tit. 1. 5. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst ordaine Elders in every City as I had appointed thee, for a Bishop must be blamelesse. Not that a place might not have more then one Minister, but because no body of a people can be safe without a Pastor; he

hee was to place fit persons, and enow in every City. Neither yet that he should ordaine alone without the consent of the people, and thrust on them whom he pleased, which thing the Apostles themselves never did: but that he should as the Apostles other selfe, looke to and be chiefe in these ordinations. Nor need he say, where shall I find fit men enow for every City? Christ is in Heaven to give them, he was but to try and find them out.

2. A power to *Water* the Churches planted, and to be perfecting the worke, the Apostles began in planting them by their laborious preaching and teaching the Gospell to them. Paul *plantet*, and Apollo *wateret*, 2 Cor. 3. 6.

3. A power to commit the Doctrine of the Apostles to faithfull men, that might bee fit to teach others, 2 Tim. 2. 2.

4. A power to charge and warne the teachers and Pastors about their Doctrine, 1 Tim. 1. 3. 4. 18. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other Doctrine. This charge I commit unto thee, some Timothy, according to the Prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest warre a good warfare: Timothy, therefore was not one of the ordinary Pastors, (*unus e vulgo*) but next to the Apostle, who oftentimes when Paul was absent, did sustaine his person.

5. A power to set in order the Churches, and settle Church-affaires in the things that remained, and were left undone by the Apostles through shortnesse of time, Tit. 1. 5. For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, *invenire et reponere in modum ordinis, ut reformatione ac correctione tua, que desunt, addas*. These are the distinct branches of the peculiar power of Evangelists.

This is a rule: that where the Scripture hath made

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the callings & power of his Ministers distinct and peculiar, there they may not be confounded arbitrarily, upon the pleasure of any: unlesse wee would build Babel and not Zion, 1 Cor. 12. 29. *Are all Apostles? are all Prophets? are all Teachers, &c.*

12. In all these three Offices there was a power in common (retaining still their distinct degrees to set in, and bee of the Church-session, the Presbytery and the Synod. Therefore the name of Elders was used in common to the Apostles and other Ministers. And the Apostle Peter writing to the Presbyters or Ministers calleth himselfe *ὁ ἓν ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων*, a Co-elder. They were of Presbytery, 1 Pet. 5. 1. the history sheweth it plainly, in Acts 1. 15. and 15. 6. 23. and 13. 1. 2. 3.

13. To Believers usually was given a power of working Miracles, and- over uncleane spirits (though it were more eminently in the 72 Disciples, and most eminently in the Apostles, called therefore, *the signes of an Apostle*, 2 Cor. 12. 12. that the Gospell preached by them might be abundantly confirmed, and it might runne, and the Gentiles be made obedient, Rom. 15. 18. 19.) Mat. 10. 7. Marke 6. 7. and 16. 17. 18. *And these signes shall follow them that beleeve. In my name they shall cast out Devills; they shall speake with new tongues, &c.*

This power was committed to men for the first plantation of the Gospell. For the Churches for ever Christ hath given a power to ordinary offices, and Church-societies: of this as followeth.

14. Christ hath committed to his Churches for ever, *The keyes of the kingdom of Heaven*, which is a power given of the Lord, to edification, not to destruction, 2 Cor. 10. 8. And these keyes are either *the key of knowledge* (as wee may call it out of Luke 11. 52.) or *the key of Discipline*. *The key of knowledge* is committed to the Ministers; Mat. 16. 19. *The key of Discipline* to the whole Church, Mat. 18. 17. 18. 19. 20. *Tell the Church*.

Conclus: 1.

Both keyes must be used onely according to the rule of the

the word, not according to any other Law or Canon upon what pretence soever; for the power is wholly Ministeriall, of Servants and Stewards, in whom this is the chief requisite, even faithfulness, 1 Cor. 4. 1. 2. No use is there at all of the Popes Canons, or any others. *It is required in Stewards that a man be found faithfull.*

Therefore it is also evident, that the Ministers have a peculiar power, which none other may meddle withall: This is first to be delivered.

The Ministers, Pastors or Bishops have a peculiar power committed to them from Christ, in which power they are the Successors of the Apostles and Apotitolicall men, that is of Prophets and Evangelist; and this is;

1. A power to preach the word, in season, and out of season, publicly and from house to house, to the conversion of soules and edification of the Church: and to convince gainsayers, Tit. 1. 9. *A Bishop must hold fast the faithfull word, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers,* 2 Tim. 3. 16. and 4. 1. 2. All Scripture is profitable for doctrine that the man of God; (that is, the Minister) may be perfect—I charge therefore before God, and Preach the word, bee instant in season, out of season. Acts 20. 20. I kept backe nothing, but have taught you Publicly and from house to house. Acts 26. 16. 17. 18. I make thee a Minister—to whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, to turne them from darknesse to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

A power to administer the Sacraments: and to be the mouth of the congregations in prayer, Mat. 28. 18. 19. *Go teach all Nations and Baptize them,* 1 Cor. 14. 15. 16. I will pray with understanding, (that is, so that my understanding may be fruitfull to the hearers, v. 14.) else how shall he that occupieth the roome of the unlearned, say, Amen? And this power is to be exercised in a certaine particular Congregation or Church, 1 Pet. 5. 2. *feed the flocke of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,*



thereof, *Acts* 20. 28. Take heed to all the flocke, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, *Acts* 14. 23. They ordained them Elders in every Church, *Heb.* 13. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you: for they watch for your Soules, *1 Thes.* 5. 13. Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; which things cannot be done by one Minister to more than one Congregation.

Conclus:

A Minister may preach in any other congregation, with the leave of his fellow-minister, and doe all the good he can wherefoever God giveth the opportunity and occasion, for all the particular Churches are but one Church of Christ, and one body: and all things are theirs, whether *Paul*, or *Apollo*, or *Cephas*, *1 Cor.* 3. 21. 22. but *Pluralities* and *non-residency* God hateth.

* *Jer.* 15. 19.

2 The power of binding and loosing by preaching, that is, of Applying (with severing the precious from the vile, as Gods owne mouth, *in the publique ministry) the promises and threatnings of Gods word, pronouncing them, and denouncing them in Christs name, and by his authority according to the Gospell. And this power of an Interpreter, to shew to man his uprightnesse, and to deliver a man from Hell: and on the contrary to shew to a man his wickednesse, and to binde him, and while he will so continue, to barre him Heaven, the Minister may and ought to exercise in private, to any of his flocke severally, according to the truth of the Gospell, *Mat.* 16. 19. I give thee the keyes of the kingdome of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt binde, &c. *Job.* 20. 23. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whose soever sins ye retaine, they are retained. *Job.* 33. 19. 23. He is chastened with paine upon his bed, — Now if there be a messenger with him, an Interpreter, one among a thousand to shew unto man his uprightnesse, then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going downe to the Pit. These are spirituall weapons

of a spirituall warfare, taking vengeance on all disobedience, &c. *2 Cor.* 10. 3.

3 A power to keep and present the truthes, ordinances, worship, and Commandements of Christ from corruptions, without spot: and from corrupters, trying them and not suffering them, and reducing the congregation, from any abuse crept in, to the pure institution of Christ, *1 Tim.* 6. 13. 14. I charge thee in the sight of God, that thou keep this commandement without spot, *Mat.* 28. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, *Revel.* 2. 2. Thou canst not beare them which are evill, and thou hast tryed them which say they are Apostles and are not, &c. *1 Cor.* 11. 23.

4 A power to receive maintenance, *1 Cor.* 9. 11. 12. 14. 18. Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospell should live of the Gospell. If others be partakers of this power over you, (that is, to reap your carnall things) are not wee rather? *1 Tim.* 5. 18. the Scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the corne, and the Labourer is worthy of his reward, *Gal.* 6. 6. an honourable maintenance is due, *1 Tim.* 5. 17. 18.

Therefore the maintenance of the Ministry is not a matter of Almes, but Wages and due debt.

Conclus: 1.

Those that set up a Temple, Altar, Sacrifice, and Priesthood, and will bee Priests to serve there, have no right to partake of this power, which is due to the Ministers that preach the Gospell, *Heb.* 13. 10. Wee have an Altar whereof they have no right to eate, which serve the Tabernacle. The same is true also of every Idolatrous, hereticall and uncleane teacher, *Zach.* 13. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

2.

5 The power actually to pronounce the sentence of excommunication and of absolution, and to receive the penitent, and in this sense to use the keyes of discipline: I give unto thee the keyes of the kingdome of Heaven, *Mat.* 16. 18. for his power it is to apply personally the Church

Church censures, whose it is to apply the comforts or threats in the ministry of the word, and to give the seals of the covenant; the Sacraments.

This Spiritual power, to Prophecy, to kill their Enemies with devouring fire, to shut Heaven, that it raine not, to turne waters into bloud, and to smite the earth with all Plagues as often as they will, is eminent in Christs two witnesses, that is, the number of faithfull Ministers during the time of 1260 dayes, the time of Antichrists raigne, untill the time that they are even about to finish their testimony, though all this while they Prophecy in Sackcloth, a miserable mourners outside, much differing from the scarlet-pumpkin-Antichristian array of the whore of Babylon, Revel. 11. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. Read the place.

Thus of the appropriated and peculiar power of the Ministers: now because the power of Elders that Rule, and Deacons, so farre as those offices have in them any thing peculiar, is comprised in their name and description, I passe on to the power of the Church.

In the head of the description of the Church-power following, I lay downe this rule.

The power of the keyes of Discipline is given to the whole Church, but the execution, the exercise, and administration of that power is given to the representative Church, in the Church-session, and in the Presbytery: which power they are to use in the name and with the consent of the Church. Nothing is to be undertaken by the private authority of one alone, nor by the Ministers alone. This will appeare by the particulars following.

16. Christ hath committed power to every congregation;

1 Power to use all Christs ordinances of worship, as Preaching, Prayer, the Sacraments, and fellowship by due officers performed, Acts 2. 42. They continued stedfastly in the

the Apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and prayer.

2 Power to keep the Scriptures tabellionis instar, as a keeper and bearer of the publique tables of the two Testaments: to read and search them: to judge, not of them, but according to them, of others writings, and teachings; to approve the true and reject the false; (1 Joh. 4. 1. try the spirits.) to teach, exhort, comfort, and reprove one another mutually, 1 Thes. 5. 11. Col. 3. 16. The severall families are to be governed by the Masters and Dames of the Families in the knowledge of the word, prayer, repeating of Sermons, singing of Psalmes, conference, reading, instruction, and the like, that they may bee as so many little Churches, Prov. 31. 1. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Mat. 3. 16. Rom. 16. 5.

3 Power of Election, to look out, and choose Church-officers, as Deacons: the whole multitude chose Steven, &c. and set them before the Apostles; Acts 6. 3. 5. 6. And Elders, or Ministers, Acts 14. 22. when they (that is, Paul and Barnabam) had ordained them Elders in every Church, that is, with the suffrage of the people of those Churches respectively: for so the Greeke word signifieth, χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαν.

4 Power to preserve the orders and ordinances truly Apostolicall, that is, such as are delivered in the writings of the New Testament; as 1 Cor. 1. 12: the Epistle is written to the Church at Corinth, and to all that in every place call on Christ: and in Chron. 11. 2. they are prayed for that they kept the ordinances as he delivered them. So in Chron. 11. 16. 33. 34. and Chron. 14. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 34. 39. 4. and 1 Cor. 16. 1. 2. speciall rules are given to the Churches. The Apostle Coloss. 2. 5. saith, he joyed, and beheld their Order.

5 Power of Admonition according to Christs rule, privately and more publicly as the difference of faults and offenders requireth, Mat. 18. 15. 16. (not only of the

the members, but even of the Ministers (say to Archippus, take heed to the ministry, Coloss. 4. 17.) 1 Thes. 5. 14. Wee exhort you brethren, warne them that are unruly:) and if admonition prevaile not, then they ought to note that man, to with-hold their former familiar society, as the words are in 2 Thes. 3. 6. 10. 14. and at last with much condoling of their obstinacy in wickednesse to proceed with prayer to excommunication: herein seeking the greatest consent and weight of authority that may be, even of the whole Presbytery. As the Apostle Paul sayd, 1 Cor. 5. 3. 4. 5. I have judged already that in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when yee are gathered together, and my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such a one to Satan. See here the Presbytery, even Paul, and all the chiefe of the Church at Corinth, which was a Society of many congregations in all probability as appears by the multitude of factions among them siding to their multitudes of teachers 1 Cor. 1. 11. 12. and by the multitude of false Apostles and false teachers that were amongst them in that Church, 2 Cor. 11. 13. 23. and lastly the greatnesse and populousnesse of the City Corinth; however, it is cleare that the Presbytery was the greatest confession they could have, because the Apostle would have it done not without his presence and authority represented by this Epistle: and they had, besides their Pastors, many Prophets, who also were of this Presbytery, 1 Cor. 14. 29. Let the Prophets speake two or three, and let the other judge. So Mat. 18. 17. Tell the Church, that is, the representative Church in a Presbytery, which was to come in the roome of the Sanhedrim.

6 Power to Order the communication of spirituall helps and comforts to the members of their owne Church (1 Thes. 5. 27. I charge you by the Lord, that this Epistle. bee read unto all the holy brethren.) and to other Churches by commending & conveying them, Col. 4. 16.

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When this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans.

7 Power to assemble together both for the use of Christs ordinances, and for the use of all the protesting power, Mat. 18. 20. for where two or three be gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Every Presbytery hath power given of Christ to be exercised in the Church or Churches and congregations, whose representative body they are, the Pastors and teachers with the counsell of the Elders, and the consent of the whole Church, ordering and censuring those that are named brethren, for the impieties of doctrine and life, that are, leavening, poisoning, and scandalous. The object of this power are the brethren 1 Cor. 5. 13. If any bee called a brother; and not onely those of the focke, but the Pastors themselves, Acts 20. 28. 30. 31. the Apostle speaking to the community or body of the Elders assembled, v. 17. requires them to take heed to themselves and to all the focke, and because of themselves evil-teachers should arise; he requires that therefore they should and remember his example of three yeares paines in warning the Elders of that Church. The cause is either scandalous life, as 1 Cor. 5. 11. 2 Thes. 3. 6. 1. or perverse Doctrine, as Tit. 3. 10. and verily after the first and second admonition reject; Rom. 16. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Joh. 10. both are leaven, Mat. 13. 6. 12. and 1 Corinib. 5. 6. Gal. 5. 9.

The power of the Presbytery lyeth,
1 In ordination of Church-officers chosen by the severall congregations, 1 Tim. 4. 14. the gift given with the laying on of the bands of the Presbytery, Acts 13. 1. 2. 3. A famous Presbytery in the sacred story, Barnabas, Symeon, Lucius, Mamen and Saul, ministering to the Lord, were commended to separate Barnabas and Saul, which they did, with laying their hands on them. Election and ordination are distinct things, Acts 6. 3. 5. 6. ordination belongs onely to the Presbytery, and the imposition

sition of hands to the Pastors and Teachers in the Name of the Presbytery before the face of the congregation, 1 Tim. 5. 22. Before ordination there ought to be a triall of the Pastor for life and doctrine; the Presbytery herein is a fit judge according to the Apostles Canon, 2 Tim. 2. 2. *These things commit thou to faithful men, which may be fit to teach others also.*

All this must be understood of a Church already constituted fully, but for Churches that are in constituting, the worke is to be done as the matter it selfe will give it, *pro re nata*; the like conceive in the rectifying of a Church *dis-constituted* or fearefully decayed.

They have the maine essentials of an outward call, who giving the probation and specimen of their ministeriall abilities, and sanctification, and speciall desires with aptnesse to the worke of the ministry, are approved, and as it were voted by the godly, and the learned, and expert in the word; though there may be many complements desirable in a well-constituted Church of Christ wanting; and many supplements corrupt and burdensome redundant in a corrupt Church-government.

2 In *judiciall cognition* and censures in matters Ecclesiasticall, where they have power,

1 Of Admonition, *Mat. 18. 17. Tit. 3. 10.*

2 Of Excommunication; 1 Cor. 5. *Mat. 18.*

Which hath two degrees,

First, *Abstention from the Lords Supper*; grounded upon the practise in the Old Testament, when for legall impurities they were to abstaine from the sacrifices and the Paschall Lambe, *Numb. 9. and 19. and 2 Chron. 30.* and upon the Apostles precept, 1 Cor. 11. 28. that a man examine himselfe, and so eat, &c. which tryall though it be to be performed by every one privately, yet in publique faults it sheweth that by the Church-governours the same ought to be done publicquely; besides the Scripture commands them *to attend to the whole flocke;*
and

and so separate the cleane and uncleane, to take away scandall, and to judge them within.

Secondly, *Exclusion from the outward communion* of the whole Church: *Mat. 18. 17.* this is called a *delivering up to Satan*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 1 Cor. 5. 6. 11. *The purging out of old leaven.* The excommunicate is cut off from all Ecclesiasticall communion, and from that familiarity of conversation that ariseth from the force of *Christian fraternity*, but yet he is to be admonished as a brother, and afforded all offices of neighbourhood, and of naturall and civill relations commanded in the fifth Commandment.

The power of Synods, being in matters meerly Ecclesiasticall, and those too such as are common to all the Churches whose representative body they are, is conversant about those matters which could not be dispatched in inferior Church-sessions & Presbyteries, as we see in *Acts 15. 2.* when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissention with teachers of false doctrine, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, &c. should goe up to Jerusalem.

Their power is,

1 To assert the pure doctrine comprehended in the word against *Heresiques* whether the doctrine respect faith, or worship, or life, *Acts 15. 1. 5. 6.*

2 To settle Ecclesiasticall policy, according to the diverse circumstances of times, persons and places, against *Schismaticques*; and for a remedy of evils that might disturb the quiet state of the Church, as in Saint Pauls case, *Acts 21. 18.* and in the toleration of things indifferent out of the Law of Charity, *Acts 15. 28. 29.*

Thus truth and peace are preserved.

3 To judge persons according to the word, as their cause requireth, *Acts 15. 24.*

The rule and Judge in Synods is the Scripture, *Mat. 23. 5. Acts 15. 14. Job. 5. 45.* In a Synod, in its order and degree; is the Apex, and eminency of the Ecclesiasticall power of the whole Church of God, as it is externall:

yet no Synod can have the like authority to the Apostolical Synods, for the members of those Synods being Apostles many of them; and many Apostolical men, because of the immediate and perpetual assistance of the Holy Ghost in their determinations they could not erre: and therefore their authority was simply and every way divine. Whereas others are so but in some certaine respect, and in no wise are they free from errors. They are of divine authority so farre forth as they are gathered together in Christs name, and doe deliberate and decree any thing according to the word of God in the Scripture, from which they borrow and receive whatever authority they have.

Concerning all this power committed to the Church, to her Pastors, and Societies, I further propose these rules and observations.

1. That by Church is sometimes meant a society of professors of Christ, parcelled into many congregations or assemblies, Acts 8. 1. and 11. 2. *The Church which was in Jerusalem,* Acts 15. 4. *of the Church and of the Apostles and Elders,* Acts 2. 47. This Church in Jerusalem was the first particular Church of Christ: the first that ever bare the name of a Church in Scripture, * and it was but one Church, we never read, *the Churches in Jerusalem.* Now, before the dispersion of the members of this Church by that cruell persecution, of which we read in Acts 8. 1. the multitude was so great that it must needs make many congregations. In one Assembly in Acts 1. 15. were 120. To them, in Acts 2. 41. were added 3000. in one day. And to them the Lord added more daily, v. 47. In chap. 4. 4. *the number of them was about 5000.* which the ancient Fathers and others doe conceive are to be reckoned by themselves, as a new accession to the former thousands. And the Greeke text in that place speaks of Men expressly (ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἀνδρῶν) distinguishing them from women. In Acts 5. 14. the Evangelist noteth that *miracles* both of men and women

Acts 2. 47.

ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἀνδρῶν.

men * were added to the former thousands. In ch. 6. 1. the Disciples still multiplied. In they v. 7. yet increased & the number multiplied greatly*. And moreover (πολὸς τῆς ὄχλος) a great company of the Priests were obedient to the faith. What one assembly could hold all these to heare one man preach, to communicate at one time (for they were all communicants) at the Lords Table? set aside the last great and happy increase instanced in v. 7. of chap. 6. and the text in v. 2. is apparently cleare that the twelve Apostles were not able to distribute the Almes to the poore Saints, but they must leave the word in respect of the full discharge of the ministry thereof requisite and behoovefull unto that Church, and when they ordained Deacons, no lesse than seven men were designed to that worke for the service of that one Church. In Acts 12. 12. 17. when Peter was in Prison, the Church prayed for his deliverance incessantly: but this Church was in many Assemblies and Congregations; as in v. 12. one congregation in the house of Mary the mother of John Marke, a set place knowne among the Disciples, used for the publike and solempne meeting: yet in v. 17. James was not there, but with another congregation praying, therefore Peter said, *Goes shew these things to James:* that as he joynd in the worke of prayer, so he might in the duty of praise. In the same, v. 17. Saint Peter bids them to shew those things to the brethren also; upon which words reverend and judicious Calvin saith, understand by brethren, not men of any sort that were of the Church, but the Apostles and Elders. And in the same v. it is further said, that Peter departed and went into another place.

Of this Church of Jerusalem spake James and the Assembly of the Elders thereof * unto Paul in this manner, *I have seest, brother, how many ten thousands of Jewes* there are which beleave; besides Gentiles in the same Church, and Jewes that were not thus weake, as those ten thousands were, who were all zealous of the Law.

* Πλῆθος ἀνδρῶν τε ἡ συναικιδόν. * Ἐπληθύνετο ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν σφόδρα.

* Acts 21. 20. Πόσων μιλίων.

Of these ten thousands there were divers Pastors, for, besides *James*, there was a great company of Presbyters, who were assembled with *James*, to advise and persuade *Paul* to such a carriage amongst them as might winne the weak Disciples among the *Jewes* to a good opinion of him: this Assembly was the Presbytery of the Church of *Jerusalem*, which the Evangelist storieth in these words, *Paul went in with us unto James, and all the Elders or Presbyters, were there assembled.*

Acts 21. 18.

The first persecutions began in Cities; as in *Jerusalem*, and in *Damascus*, *Acts* 9. 2. & 26. 11. there *Saul* first preached. *Acts* 9. 20. * *Acts* 16. 12. 17. v. 1. 10. *Acts* 18. 16. 1. 19.

The first foundation of Churches was in Cities populous & of great concourse; for in them the Gospel was first preached, *Acts* 8. 1. 5. and thither the Apostles went as the places most convenient to propagate the word of the Gospel, *Acts* 8. 40. *Philip* passing through, preached in all the Cities till he came to *Cæsarea*. *Paul* preacheth * in *Philippi*, in *Thessalonica*, in *Berea*, in *Athenis*, in *Corinth*, in *Ephesus*, great Cities. And in *chap.* 19. 10. he continued in *Ephesus* by the space of two years, so that all they which dwell in *Asia*, heard the word of the Lord *Jesus*, both *Jewes* and *Greeks*. From Cities was the Gospel carried to the regions round about. And all the Churches that we read of in the New Testament are distinguished by the Cities: the Villages and places adjacent with the Christians in them and their congregations not mentioned as Particular Churches, but reckoned with their Cities as making up particular Churches. The first Church of the *Gentiles* was at *Antioch*, where when the Gospel was preached to the *Gentiles* as well as the *Jewes*, there was such a miraculous increase of the multitude of Converts, that the Disciples were first called *Christians* in *Antioch*. The Church of the *Thessalonians*, in which were many Pastors: the Church at *Colosse*: the Church at *Corinth*: the Church at *Philippi*, where were many Bishops: the 7 Churches of *Asia*, distinguished by Cities, of which the Church of *Ephesus* had many Elders or Bishops to feed the Church there; These Churches were every of them a Society of Congregations or Assemblies

Acts 11. 20. 24. 26. *1* *Thes.* 5. 12. *Phil.* 1. 1. *Revel.* 2 & 3. *Acts* 20. 17. 28.

Assemblies under many Pastors. The Churches in *Judea*: or in *Galatia*, are to be understood according to the use of this phrase in the New Testament; what the meaning of this phrase is, appears by the Churches in *Asia*. These Churches in *Asia*, (as the Church of *Ephesus*, the Church in *Pergamur*, &c.) were every one a Church, not constituted of a particular Assembly or Congregation under a Pastor, but of a Society of all Christians (were they never so many, constituting never so many Congregations or Assemblies that had every one their particular Pastor) I say of all the Christians that lived in such a City, and in the Villages in the region round about. The Churches being thus reckoned by the Cities in a Countrey, in a Kingdome, in a Province, or in an Iland; so many Cities, so many Churches. Thus it was in *Asia*. And if we hold the same reason of the phrase, thus it was in *Judea*: the Churches in *Judea* were not reckoned by the Assemblies or Congregations, and their Pastors, but by the Societies of Christians in Cities and Villages adjacent: so the Churches in the Ile of *Crete* were distinguished by Cities: for Elders were ordained *ἐν πόλει*, according to the severall Cities, in every City. From hence it followeth that the Presbytery or company of Elders spoken of, *1 Tim.* 4. 14. was a Society of Presbyters, as the Society of Elders or Bishops of the Church of *Ephesus*, the Society of Elders or Bishops of the Church at *Jerusalem*; with the rest. Likewise by the Phrase of the Holy Ghost, these Churches seeme to be distinguished by the liberties of such Cities. Therefore we read some of them called thus, *The Church of the Thessalonians*, of the *Laodiceans*, of the *Smyrnians*. I desire it may be shewed out of the New Testament that any one Congregation did ever bear the name of a Church, a particular constituted Church: or that any Church constituted by Apostolicall men, and named a Church did signify one single Congregation.

Tit. 1. 5.

2 Thes. 1. 1. *Coloss.* 4. 16. *Revel.* 2. 8.

* Rom. 16. 5.

tion. I deny not but the name of a Church belongs unto it, and so it doth unto a Society of Christians in a Family*: but this is my demand, whether the Churches wee read of in the history of the New Testament, were such Churches?

And here it may be a *Quere*, according to the former ground, whether every Society or body Politicke, or distinct Kingdome, if the Gospell be received there, whether that Kingdome may not be as well one particular Church of Christ, as it is one particular Kingdome, Common-wealth, or civill Society of men: and the Society of Pastors and Elders of such a Church, governe them? Again, whether if the whole world were Christian, and if there could be found out a way to hold intelligence and outward communion, and to meet in one by their designed Pastors and Officers, whether this association did not constitute one visible Church of Christ? and this Church to be governd by the Society of this Pastors and Elders meeting together? This is the ground, as I conceive, of the lawfulnessse, venerable authority, and usefulnessse of a generall or Occumenicall councill.

2 All Churches are equall in power and authority, and nothing can bee imposed on one of them by another, but onely by the common consent and counsell of the Presbytery or the Synod, where the Elders whom they choose and delegate doe sit and doe all, not in their owne, but in the Churches Names, by and from which they are sent.

3 The Presbytery is greater in authority than the Church-session of one Parish or Congregation, and the Synod than the Presbytery, 2. Cor. 8. 19. And not that onely, but who was also chosen of the Churches, v. 23. the messengers or Apollies of the Churches.

4 There may be no Ordination, or Church-censures administr'd by one alone; this is condemned in *Diotrephes*, 3. *Iob.* 9. 10. I wrote unto the Church, but *Diotrephes*

trephes who loveth to have the preeminence receiveth us not, he receiveth not the brethren, & forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the Church. While the distinct orders and degrees of Apollies, &c. were in the Church, there was a superiority kept in the exercise of the power of Ordination and censures, 1 *Tim.* 1. 20. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. *Tit.* 1. 5. and 3. 10.

5 Primacy or Prelacy of one over others of the same office or degree is condemned, as of one Apostle over another, &c. *Mat.* 18. 1. and 20. 21. *Luke* 22. 24. 25. 26. 29.

6 Christ hath given to no one all power in the Church: for he hath given to none all fulnesse and perfection of gifts: but a certaine kinde or kinds, and a certaine measure of those kindes, to some greater, to some lesser, *Rom.* 12. 3. 4.

7 From those gifts of diverse kindes arise the distinction of members, and the designation of their places in the mysticall body of Christ, *Rom.* 12. 3. 4. 5. 1 *Cor.* 12.

8 All gifts are given to profit withall, that the gifts may be serviceable to the Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 7.

9 If the gifts bee used as of the ability that God giveth, they will bring much glory to God, and profit to the Church, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. 11.

10 The chiefeit Apollies have beene appointed to employments, for the good of the communion of Saints by the Church, *Acts* 15. 2.

Christ hath committed to the chiefe Magistrates also, within their severall Dominions, a power over all persons and in all causes of the Church for the good thereof.

First, Over all persons, *Rom.* 13. 1. Let every soule be subject to the higher powers, Not to compell infidels to the faith by force and armes: (such power they have none) but that they oppresse not the faithfull, nor hinder the propagation of the faith in their Dominions,

nor openly professe a false Religion, yea, the Magistrate should hinder to his utmost the private exercise of a false Religion.

Secondly, *In all Causes* of the Church: *Deut. 17. 19.* he is enjoyned the study of the word that he might rule thereby, *Psal. 2. 12.* Kisse the sonne lest he be angry, *1 Pet. 2. 13.* To the King as Supreme, *1 Tim. 2. 2.* for all that are in Supremacy.

20. The power the Magistrate hath in Church affaires is a power to *set up* and *preserve* the true faith, worship, institutions and discipline of Christ, and to *prohibit* the false: *to take away* whatever might be a hinderance to true Religion after the example of *Hezekiah, Josiab,* and *Nebuchadnezzar;* *2 King. 18. 4.* and *23. 2. 4.* *Dan. 3. 29.* To *helpe* the Church both with advise and counsell and with goods and revenues, *Psal. 122. 9.* as *Nursing-fathers* and *Nursing-mothers,* *Esa. 49. 23.* But if the Magistrate should command and decree unrighteous decrees, wee ought to *pray* for them, *1 Tim. 2. 1.* but to obey God rather than man, *Act. 5. 29.* *Dan. 3.* and *6.*

21. Besides this, Christ hath given and granted to some an *exempted power,* exempt after a sort from the power of Magistracy or ministry: which power is either *Personall,* or *Conjugal.* Personall is foure-fold,

1 The power in men that are owners, over their *Temporalls:* *Act. 5. 4.* *Whiles it remained, was it not thine owne,* and *when it was sold, was it not in thine owne power?*

2 A power to marry; (being single persons,) onely in the Lord it ought to bee, *1 Cor. 7. 39. 36.* and *9. 5.* And a power to eate and drinke, to use any Creature of God, and to live of their labours, *1 Tim. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 4.*

3 A power not to marry, where there is a power over their owne will; this issueth from the gift of continency, *1 Cor. 7. 37. Mat. 19. 12.* *There are some that make themselves Eunuchs for the kingdome of Heavens sake;* he that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

4 A power

4 A power appropriated to the Female sexe; the woman hath power over her head in the publique assemblies, and other where, *1 Cor. 11. 10.*

This is the Personall power that is exempt.

The Conjugal power is the power that the married persons have over each others bodies, as *pertaining to due benevolence,* or the marriage-bed. *The woman hath not power over her owne body, but the man; likewise the man hath not power over his owne body, but the woman.* *Deferre ye not one another,* *1 Cor. 7. 3. 4. 5.*

Thus of the power *Committed to others,* the power *permitted* followeth.

Christ hath *permitted* and *ordered* in just judgment a power to wicked ones: such is to Antichrist,

1 The power of the bottomlesse pit, the key of Hell (not to send whom he will thither, or to fetch soules thence, Christ onely hath the key of Hell and death, *Revel. 1. 18.* but) to let out the smoake of Hell, prepared to darken the Sunne, and apt to engender Locusts, *Revel. 9. 1. 2. 3.*

2 The power of the Romane Empire permitted to him, and in the strength thereof power to make warre forty two Moneths, yea to make warre with the Saints and overcome them, and power to put life or a spirit into the Image of that Empire, *Revel. 13. 5. 7. 12. 15.*

Antichrist also, *the beast that ascends out of the bottomlesse pit,* shall make warre with the *two witnesses:* (but here wee read not of any power or authority of any sort, no not permitted, but the thing the Beast shall do toward the latter end of his raigne, being scorched, vexed, tormented and plagued by the lawfull power of the two witnesses lively exercised, he shall make warre with the two witnesses) and overcome them, and slay them; and they shall lie dead through the streets of the Antichristian Dition threedayes and a halfe, *Revel. 11. 7. 8.*

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Thus of the power permitted to Antichrist; there is also permitted to Antichristian Locusts power as the Scorpions of the earth have power, and this power is to indure five moneths, *Revel. 9. 3. 5. 10.*

Another branch of this permitted power to wicked ones, is the power permitted to the *Siracens* and *Turkes*, whose Horses have their power in their mouthes and in their tayles; they kill the third part of men, *Revel. 9. 14. 15. 18. 19.*

The comfort of beleevvers is this.

1 That all this permitted power is bounded, that it cannot hurt the Saints in respect of their Salvation, or their cause, which is the truth. None are seduced by all this power of Antichrist, that are written in the Lambes booke of life, *Revel. 13. 8.* Christ hath power over all flesh, committed to him of the Father, *that he might give eternall life to as many as the Father hath given him, Ioh. 17. 2.*

2 That its all under the power of the Christ of God, ordered by him for the speciall good of his people: *Revel. 19. 16.* he hath on his Vesture and on his thigh a name written, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

3 That Christ in every beleever, be he but a babe, is mighty in him, and he victorious through the power of faith, the might of Christs spirit, and the graces and comforts thereof, *Coloss. 1. 11. strengthened with all might through his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness: I Ioh. 4. 4. Wee are of God, little children; and have overcome them, for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: Revel. 12. 11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lambe, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives to the death.*

4 That there is some branch of authority also, given to every particular beleever, to use a spirituall power both Defensive and offensive. Defensive, the Lord himselfe and the power of his might, whereby they wrestle
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not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, &c. armed with the whole armour of God, *Ephes. 6. 10. 11. 12.* By making the most high their habitation, no evill can besfall them, no plague come nigh their dwellings; *Psal. 91. 9. 10.* Offensive also is their power; to tread upon the Serpent and Scorpion, and over all power of the enemy. Compare these places, *Gen. 3. 15.* I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed: it shall breake thine head, and thou shalt bruise his heele, with *Psal. 91. 13.* Thou shalt tread upon the Lyon and Adder, the yong Lyon and Dragon shalt thou trample under feete; *Luke 10. 18. 19.* he sayd to the 70. Behold I give unto you power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any meanes hurt you; and *Rom. 16. 20.* And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. *Psa. 149. 6. 7. 8. 9.* Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged Sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people, to binde their Kings with chaines and their Nobles with fetters of Iron, to execute upon them the judgment written, *This honour have all his Saints:* Not the meanest person sanctified by faith which is in *Iesus Christ*, but by the praises and shoutes of faith, and the prayers of faith, that is, the praises and prayers which come from the heart by beleevving the promises, propheties, and threatnings of the word, he brings from Heaven vengeance, punishments and executions of judgment upon the greatest and stateliest of the adversaries of the truth and people of Christ; and by this faith taking hold of vengeance-written fetches from God chaines and Iron-fetters, and claps them on hands and heeles of the sonnes of strength. What should hinder, but that they may say with *Deborah, O my Soule thou hast trodden downe strength, Iudg. 5. 21. Wee are more than Conquerours through him that baib loved us, Rom. 8. 37.*

Wherefore all to whom the Gospell is come in power, and all who are a *willing people in the day of Christs power*, ought to sing the song of *Triumph*: being no lesse by faith in Christ than *Heaven-dwellers* and *Victors*.

Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and *the power of his Christ*: for the accuser of our brethren is cast downe, which accused them before our God day and night.

Δόξα τῷ θεῷ, καὶ τῷ ἀρνίῳ.

F I N I S.