

DIALOGUE CONCERNING TYNDALE: BK. 4. CH. 10-13

THE TENTH CHAPTER

The author inveigheth¹ against this detestable article of this ungracious sect, whereby they take away the liberty of man's freewill, and ascribe all thing to destiny.

Surely, as I say, this world is either after the words of St. John, *Totus positus in maligno*, all set in malice,² that we be so prone, wittingly, to take so wrong a way; or else is it in a marvellous blindness, if we can neither perceive by the naughty living of the persons that their sect is nought, nor can perceive by their doctrine that their sect must make their persons nought, their heresies being such as ye have heard---whereby every man that any faith hath, and any manner knowledge of Christian belief, may well and surely perceive that Luther and all his offspring, with all those that favour and set forth his sect, be very limbs of the devil, and open enemies to the faith of Christ. And not only to the faith and manhood of our Saviour Christ, but also against the holy Ghost and the Father Himself, and utterly against all goodness of the Godhead, as those that wretchedly lay all the weight and blame of our sin to the necessity and constraint of God's ordinance, affirming that we do no sin of ourself by any power of our own will but by the compulsion and handiwork of God. And that we do not the sin ourself, but that God doth the sin in us Himself. And thus these wretched heretics, with this blasphemous heresy alone, lay more villainous rebuke to the great majesty of God, than ever any one ribald laid unto another.

For who was there ever that laid unto another all the particular evil deeds of any one other man, where these ribalds lay to the charge and

THE LUTHERANS LAY ALL MISDEEDS TO GOD

blame of God all the malice and mischiefs, from the first fault to the last, that ever was wrought or thought by man, woman or devil? And by this give they wretches great boldness to follow their foul affections as things after their opinion more verily wrought in them by God than the best minds be in good men, and that it were therefore in vain for them to resist their sinful appetites. And if they shall be damned, yet they say it shall be long or they feel it. For Luther saith that all souls shall sleep and feel neither good nor bad after this life till doomsday. And then they that shall be damned, shall be damned, he saith, for no deserving of their own deeds but for such evil deeds as God only forced and constrained them unto and wrought in them Himself, using them in all those evil

deeds but as a dead instrument, as a man heweth with an hatchet; and that God shall damn all that shall be damned for His own deeds only which Himself shall have done in them; and, finally, for his own pleasure because it liked him not to choose them as he did his chosen people. Whom they say that he chose in such wise before the beginning of the world, that they can never sin.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

The Messenger saith that howsoever Luther and his followers in Almain believe, yet he cannot think that such as be Lutherans in England, of whom some, he saith, have seemed good and honest, be so mad and unhappy to believe that all hangeth upon destiny. Whereupon the author sheweth the contrary, and that they be nought in deed, seem they never so good. And for proof that, how so ever they colour their words, they mean that all dependeth upon only destiny, he rehearseth a certain discussion^s had with an heretic detected to the bishop and examined, the author being present, where the heretic being learned and a preacher, made many shifts to make it seem that in his evil words he meant but well.

When your friend had heard all this, he said at last, that albeit the words of Luther seemed very plain toward the affirming of such opinions, yet were the things so far out of frame, that it gave him occasion to doubt lest Luther meant not all thing so evil as his words seem to weigh to. And if he so meant himself, with other of his flock and affinity in Almaine, yet thought your friend that such as here favour and follow his sect in England, of whom some seem right honest and far from his manner of living, do not so take his words nor understand them that way, but construe them to some better sense.

Forsooth, quod I, they cannot but know his open living in lechery with his lewd leman, the nun. And that all the captains of that sort, some late Carthusians, some Observants, some of other religions [religious orders], and all now apostates and wedded, live in like manner and teach other the same. And by this can they not doubt but that their doctrine is nought, except themselves allow that way for good. Now as for their own goodness, ye find few that fall to that sect, but that, soon after, they fall into the contempt of prayer and fasting and of all good works, under the name of ceremonies. And if any do otherwise, it is for some purpose for the while to blind the people and keep themselves in favour, while they may find the time by leisure to fashion and frame them better to their purpose, which in the beginning, if they shewed themselves plainly, could haply not abide to hear them. Of which their demeanour, and that in these heresies they mean here no better than Luther doth himself, I have had good experience, and among many other things this that I shall shew you.

It happed me to be lately present, whereas one in the Lutherans' books deeply learned and, of truth, neither in holy scripture nor in secular literature unlearned (as I perceive not only by the testimony of other men and the degrees that he had taken in the university, but also by his words and his writing) was in the presence of right honourable, virtuous, and very cunning persons examined. For he was at that time in ward for heresy, because that, being learned and using to hear confessions, and among many folk metely well allowed in preaching, and thereby growing in good opinion and favour of many good simple people, abused all the open and apparent good things to the secret sowing and setting forth of Luther's heresies. And had, for that intent, not only taught and written and covertly corrupted divers light and lewd persons, but also had bought great number of books of Luther, and Wiclif, Husse, and Zwinglius, and such other heretics, and of many one sort divers books, to be delivered as he could find occasion unto young scholars of the universities such as he thought of youth and lightness of likely to be soon corrupted. This

man, I say, being examined and long keeping himself close from disclosing of the matter, and more ready to go straight to the devil with lying and false forswearing, than to be known of his evil demeanour and confess the truth, at the last, perceiving the matters, partly by the confession of other folk, partly by his own hand writing so far forth comen to light that they could in no wise be cloaked, then began he somewhat plainly to confess and declare, not only what he had done for the setting forth of that sect, but also partly what opinions he and other his fellows had holden and were of, setting nevertheless all the colours he could to make it seem that, though the words which they spake or wrote were strange and contrary to right belief, yet the effect of their meaning was not much discrepant from the true faith of Christ's church.

Howbeit, when he was reasoned withal, and saw that he could not so shift it off, but that for any colour he could find one part of his tale ever contraried another, at last he shewed plainly their opinions, and laid forth as in part for his own excuse, as things inducing him thereto, all the texts of scripture by which they pretend to prove their opinions true. Among which opinions, when he came to the opinion by which they hold that only faith alone is sufficient without good works, unto that he said in the beginning that they meant nothing else thereby but that men should put their faith in God's promises and hope to be saved thereby, and that they should not put their trust in their works, for that would turn them to pride. Then was it answered him that he and his fellows could not mean so. For if they did, then could they not blame the church as they do, making as though the church had all this while hid the true faith from the people, and that themselves were now shent for preaching the gospel truly. For if this were their meaning, they then meant none other than every common preacher of the church hath always preached before Luther's days. For what preacher hath not told the people the parable of the poor publican ashamed of his sins, and the proud pharisee boasting of his virtues? Who hath

PUT NOT YOUR TRUST IN GOOD DEEDS

not bod (bidden) them do well? And albeit that God will reward them for their good deeds, yet put not their trust in themselves and their own deeds, but in God's goodness. Who hath not told them that they should, as God biddeth them in the gospel, that when they have done all they can do, yet say to themselves, we be but unprofitable servants, we have done but our duty. These things, and such other, the church hath always taught against the putting of a proud trust in our own deeds because that

MEN CANNOT SURELY JUDGE THEIR OWN DEEDS

we cannot always surely judge our own deeds for the blind favour that we bear toward ourself. And therefore was it said to him, "If ye meant but thus as the church meaneth, then would ye preach but as the church preacheth, and not blaspheme the church in your sermons, as though ye began true preaching of the gospel, and that the church had hitherto preached false. And also ye must needs mean some other thing. For Luther, whose sect ye confess that ye have leaned unto, writeth in this manner far other wise. For he saith plain that faith alone, without any good works, doth justify us and sufficeth for our salvation."

Then answered he that therein they meant none other but that faith is sufficient alone, if one happen after he have faith and baptism to die ere he have time to do any good works. Then was it said unto him, if they should teach this opinion under such words for a great secret mystery newly founden out, and thereby blame the church for misteaching the people, as though the church taught them to put less trust in God and in faith of Christ than they should do, and induced them to put their trust in themselves and their own good works, they used themselves marvellously, considering that if they meant none other, the Church and they meant all one thing. But they

could not mean so. For then why should they blame the Church, that saith not the contrary? And also, if they meant none other thing, few words would serve them. They should not need often to speak thereof. For then that tale can do little good here or anywhere else where folk be christened in their cradles. For either they die ere they have time to do good works, and then they be too young to hear that sermon, or else they live and have time to do good works. And then that sermon were not wholesome for them, that good works need not, but only faith is sufficient without them. And when the people take it, as ye speak it, that faith alone is enough for them, then is it now a bare gloss for you to say that ye meant not so but only that faith alone had been enough for them, if they had died in their swaddling clouts.

To this, he said, that they thought also that faith alone doth justify a man without any good works, not only in children, but also in every age. For whensoever a man that hath been a sinner doth repent and amend in his mind with a full faith in the promises of God, he is justified ere ever he do any of these good works, almoyses, fasting or any such other. For he cannot work well till he be good already. For as Christ saith, *Arbor mala non potest bonum fructum facere*, an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, and therefore since good works be good fruit, an evil man cannot work them. Whereby, it appeareth well that the man is justified before by his faith alone without the works, and then out of the faith groweth the good fruit of good works. But faith did justify the man before, and the man was as good before the works as he is after. For his faith did justify him. And as for that works be but things that the faith in the man or the man by the faith bringeth forth, as the tree bringeth forth his leaves and can do none other, faith being in the heart.

Then was it said unto him that in this tale *he seemed to make the good works to be much like a shadow that the body maketh of necessity while it standeth in the sun, and is never the better therefore*. And then was it asked him whether a man must not, if his faith shall serve him, have charity therewith and a purpose to do good works.

Yes, quod he, that he must if he have age and discretion thereto.

Then was it answered him that then was all gone that himself had said before. *For then did not faith alone justify the man, but the charity*

FAITH ALONE DOTHT NOT JUSTIFY MAN

with the purpose of good works, must, by his own granting, needs go therewith, or else would his faith justify nothing at all. For if he had never so great a faith and never so sure a belief in God's promises, yet if he purposed to do no good deeds therewith, but peradventure, harm, he should have little justification by his only faith. And therefore it was false that he had said a man is never the better for his good works, while his good works be so taken and reputed with God that the purpose of them, yet undone, so far forth worketh to his justification that without that purpose he cannot be justified. And *it is also false that he said that faith alone justifieth a man, when himself is fain to grant that faith without charity and purpose of good works cannot justify, which is as much to say as faith alone cannot justify*. To this he answered that he had said that faith only was sufficient, and that faith alone doth justify, because that if a man had faith, it could not be but that he should work good works. For faith, he saith, could never be idle, as the fire must needs burn and give heat. And therefore, as a man may say, the fire is enough to burn a tree, though he speak nothing of heat, and yet the fire doth it by heat; and a man may say, "The fire maketh me see by night," and yet the fire doth it but by the light, so may a man say that faith

doth save us, though faith do it not without hope and charity and other virtuous works, because that faith hath always good hope and charity with it, and cannot but work well, no more than the fire can be without heat and light and burn all combustible things that it may touch and tarry with. Then was it said unto him that albeit a man might so speak by the fire, yet would not this thing serve their sect. For he that saith fire alone is enough to burn, would not say nay to him that would say the fire could not burn but if it had heat. But your sect scorneth and blameth the church because *the church saith that faith will not suffice but if it have charity and good works*. For else ye had no cause in this matter to preach contrary to the church. Moreover, where ye say that faith hath always good hope with it, that seemeth not always true. For he that hopeth that by faith alone he shall be saved, without any good works, as Lutherans do believe indeed, he hath an evil hope and a damnable. Now where ye say that ye preach faith alone to be sufficient, because that faith hath always charity joined therewith, if this were true, why preach ye not as well that charity alone is sufficient, which were as near the truth as the tother? Now where ye make all the ground upon this, that faith hath ever charity therewith and that it cannot be but that charity which is indeed the thing that

CHARITY IS IT THAT BRINGETH FORTH GOOD WORKS

specially bringeth forth good works much more properly than faith, for faith bringeth them forth by charity, when it is joined therewith, as the apostle saith, *Fides quae per dilectione operatur*, faith worketh by charity, where ye say it can not be but that this charity is always joined unto faith, this ground will fail you, and make your foundation false, and all your building fall. The apostle Paul in many places of his epistles saith the contrary thereof. For he saith that if a man have so great faith that he might by the force of his faith work miracles, and also such fervent affection to the faith that he would give his body to the fire for the defence thereof, yet if he lacked charity, all his faith sufficed not. "

In good faith, quod your friend, he was well and properly answered, but yet methinketh he might have replied a little again to those words of saint Poule, and might have avoided them well with other words of his own. For where he writeth also to the Galathes, that if any angel would come down from heaven and preach a contrary gospel to that that he had preached already, accursed should he be and not to be believed, " he did not in the words affirm nor intend thereby that ever it should so be, or could so be, that any angel so should do indeed. For he knew right well it was impossible that any angel of heaven should come down and tell a false tale. But he said it only by a manner of speaking which

HYPERBOLE

is among learned men call hyperbole, for the more vehement expressing of a matter, nothing meaning else but that the gospel which he had preached, was the plain, sure and undoubtable truth, against which no man were to be believed. And in likewise, methinketh, the man that ye speak of might have said that though saint Poule said, If he had so great faith that he were able thereby to remove hills, except he had charity there with, it would not serve him, he meant thereby no more but to shew the great need that men have to charity, and not that it were possible that faith could be without charity, no more than he meant that an angel may come down from heaven to preach a false faith. And therefore might it yet stand right well with all those words of saint Poule, that faith cannot fail of salvation, since it cannot fail of charity. And of truth, me seemeth, as that man said, that faith cannot be idle, but it must needs work well.

Forsooth, quod I, the man lacked you there, for he found not that gloss. Which though he had,

yet would it not have served him. For between those two places of saint Poule is there great difference. For in the tone ^{is} there an impossible excess and hyperbole, in the tother is there not so. For angels of heaven never can come down and teach a false faith. But faith may be severed from charity. And in the tone place he none other thing intendeth than, as ye say, to shew by that great exceeding word, the undoubted truth of the faith which himself had preached. But in the tother place, his special purpose was to teach the Galathee that they should neither trust that any gift of nature, or gift of God above nature, or any manner virtue, almsdeed, faith or

NO GOOD WORK AVAILETH WITHOUT CHARITY

other, were able to stand them in stead without charity. And this did he specially, for that he would that no man should be in such error as to reckon that either excellent gift of cunning, great labour spent in preaching, great almoyses spent on poor people, or a very fervent faith, might suffice to their salvation, if charity lacked. Against which error he doth in such wise exhort them to charity, in avoiding the rancour which by occasion of schisms did arise among them, that he shewed them precisely that without charity they lost clearly the merit of all their other virtues and graces that God had given them, cunning, almoyses, faith, and all, putting the example by his own self, which though he were a chosen servant and apostle, yet if he were in language equal with all the whole world, and with angels too, that had all the cunning that possible could be had, and the spirit of all prophecy therewith, and would give all his goods in almoyses, and had also all the full faith so great that it sufficed to work wonders with, and so fervent that he would abide to be burned for it, yet if he lacked charity, all this would not serve him. So that ye may see now that your gloss would not have relieved this man. For though none angel could come down and teach an untruth, and therefore the words that ye allege can be none otherwise taken than, as ye say, by way of excess and hyperbole, to declare the vehemence of his mind in the matter of faith which he then spake of, yet this other place of saint Poule that was laid against that heretic that I speak of, as great and vehement as the words be, yet do they plainly prove that the

FAITH MAY BE WITHOUT CHARITY

apostle sheweth that faith may be without charity, and that both so great, that it may suffice to the doing of great wonders, and so fervent, that it may suffer a painful death, and yet, for fault of charity, not sufficient to salvation, and that this may happen as well in faith as in almoyses, which the apostle putteth in the same case. And therefore where that man said, and ye seem to confirm the same, that faith cannot be idle from the working of good works, the apostle, to shew the contrary, and that all the works of faith, though they seem never so good, be yet nought indeed, if they be not wrought with charity, and commendeth only that faith that worketh by charity, signifying that all other works of faith be not available. And surely faith alone, without charity, may be besides this not only idle without that business of good works, but also for lack of good works it may be utterly dead. And therefore, as it was there objected unto that man, *the holy apostle James* ^{saith to them that reckon faith sufficient for salvation, without good works, that they be worse than devils. For he saith that the devils do believe and tremble for the fear of God. And that men which, by the hope and boldness of their belief, think their faith, without good works, sufficient, be worse than devils, because they stand out of dread of God that menaceth unto them the pains of hell except they do good works--without which, Saint James, for a final conclusion, saith that the faith is but dead. But here was it also said unto him yet again, that though saint James do say that faith without good works is dead, he should not thereby run to his old gloss and say that therefore he and other Lutherans meant that faith sufficeth to salvation, because they think it cannot be but that it shall needs bring forth good works, and that therefore on the contrary side if one have no good works he hath no faith, because a dead faith is no faith,}

as a dead man is no man. It was told him that this gloss would not serve him. For saint James meant not that the faith that he calleth dead for lack of good works is no faith, no more than saint Poule meant, that a widow living in delight and pleasure is no woman, though he said that she is dead even as she goeth alive. ¹⁵ But saint James meant only that such faith shall not stand them in stead. For saint James denieth not but that such a dead faith as he calleth dead,

A DEAD FAITH IS A FAITH, BUT UNPROFITABLE

because it is unprofitable, is yet a very faith indeed, though it be not quick in good works. And therefore he resembleth such a faith in a man unto the unprofitable faith that is in a devil. For he saith that where such a man is bold of his faith, the devil hath faith as well as he, for the devil doth believe such things as we believe. To this the man answered, that some right well learned men were of the mind that without a man wrought good works it was a good proof that he had no faith at all, for very faith could not but work, and that the devil had no faith but by equivocation of this word (faith). For the very faith in deed, is a faith in the promises of God. And the devil is desperate and hath not, nor cannot have, faith and trust in God's promises. Then was it answered him, that those right well learned men were Luther and Tyndale and their fellows, that take themselves for better learned than Christ's blessed apostles saint Poule, or saint James, which in their holy writing affirm fully the contrary. And where they say that the devil hath no faith but hath the knowledge of the things that we believe, and so he hath not faith, they affirm therein more than they may make good. For saint James saith, they believe, and saith not, they know. And he, when he wrote it, knew much better than Luther and Tyndale too, what manner perceiving the devils have in the articles of our faith. In which as there be some whereof the devils have peradventure not a belief, but a certain and sure knowledge, as of Christ's descension into hell and spoiling of their possession, so are they of likelihood in any other articles of our faith, whereof they have only belief and persuasion without the very knowledge and science. And where those well-learned men, Luther and Tyndale, saith that the devil hath not faith but by the equivocation of the word (faith) being indeed, as ye say, a faith in the promises of God whereby Christian men hope to come to heaven, whereas the devils be desperate and can have no such faith in God's promises, nor hope or look for heaven, these well-learned men that so say, go about to set saint James to school. For they would we should ween that saint James did speak of faith like one that wist not what faith meant, but were deceived by equivocation of the word, calling faith the thing that is not faith indeed, whereas indeed saint James speaketh of it as he should, and useth the word in his right signification, and these Lutherans abuse the word of a malicious

THE LUTHERANS DECEIVE THE PEOPLE WITH EQUIVOCATION

mind to deceive unlearned people with equivocation. For whereas *faith signifieth the belief and firm credence given, not only to such things as God promiseth, but also to every truth that he telleth his church by writing or without, which thing he will have us bounden to believe*, and whereas, of truth, the devils, as saint James saith, do believe such things and have them in a reverent dread, now would these heretics blind us with their equivocation, by which they not only restrain the faith unto the promises alone, from all other articles of the faith, of which many be no promises, as to believe that there is a God, and that there be three persons, and many such other articles, but also abuse the word (faith) altogether, turning it slyly from belief into trust, confidence and hope, and would have it seem as though our faith were nothing else but a sure trust and a faithful hope that we have in God's promises. And this sophistical handling of faith is the thing that, as appeareth by Tyndale in his book of obedience, these *Lutherans ween to deceive all the world withal, and to make men ween that faith betokeneth not belief, but hope and*

trust, and so to make men ween that saint James wist not what faith meant, when he laid against them that put their trust, as these Lutherans teach us, in their only faith, the comparison between them and devils which believe as surely as they. And therefore to reprove saint James, they would make us believe that our faith were nothing but hope, whereas every man wotteth that faith and hope be two distinct virtues, and that hope is not faith but followeth faith in him that hath hope. For no man can hope for heaven if he believe it not. But on the tother side, he may, as the devil doth, though he believe it and know it too, yet fall far from all hope thereof. And if these Lutherans will defend their heresy by that sophistical gloss, they must then change their article, and say no more that faith alone is sufficient, but they must say that hope alone is sufficient. And yet shall they then lie as loud as they do now. For hope without charity will but beguile them. After such reasoning, the man said that he and the other Lutherans, when they spake that only faith was sufficient, they mean not of a dead faith that is without charity and good works, but a very faith that is quick and worketh by charity, and that such faith, he thought, was sufficient. But then was it answered that neither they nor he could mean so. For how could they call that thing faith only that is joined with charity and good works? Or how can it stand that they mean that faith which by charity worketh good works, when they say that it is sufficient alone without good works, and that it is, as Luther saith, great sin and sacrilege to go about to please God by good works, and not by only faith? How could they say that only faith sufficeth, if they should mean that without charity and good works, no faith sufficeth? For it were a mad thing to say that faith alone sufficeth without good works, and therewith to say that without good works faith sufficeth nothing. And so was it said unto him that therefore though they colour their matters when they be examined, yet it cannot be but that he and other Lutherans where they sow their heresy, mean plainly as they speak, that folk need no more but believe and then howsoever they live shall make no matter. For nothing, as Luther saith, can damn a Christian man, save only lack of belief. For all other sins (if belief and faith stand fast) be quite absorbed and supped up, he saith, in that faith. When this man was with such reasoning, and much better than I do or can rehearse you, somewhat sore pressed upon, then brought he forth another gloss and said that they meant not but that faith, if it should suffice for salvation, must needs have with it charity and good works, or else it were no very faith, as a dead man is no very man. Howbeit, he said, that though it be no thing without good works yet when it is joined with good works all the merit cometh of our faith only, and no part thereof for our works. So that God giveth us heaven for our faith only, and nothing for our works. For though he give it not for our faith, if we lack good works, yet if we have both, he regardeth not in his reward our works anything but only our faith. And he said that for this cause they say that only faith causeth our salvation. To this it was answered that if this opinion were true, yet it well appeared that this is not the thing that they mean. For the words of Luther and Pomerane, and all the arch-heretics of that sect be very plain. For they say that it is sacrilege to go about to please God by any good works, but faith only. And then why should good works be joined to faith, or why should God exact good works of us? Whereof should they serve, if they be nothing pleasant to God? And when Luther saith that nothing can damn any Christian man but only lack of belief, he sheweth manifestly that we not only need no good works with our faith, but also that so we have faith, none evil works can hurt us. And so he meaneth plainly that faith only without any good works joined thereto, and also with all kind of evil works joined thereto, is sufficient to save us. And therefore if ye be of his sect (was it said to the man) ye cannot avoid but that this is your very doctrine, howsoever ye colour it. Then was it further asked him if their meaning should be such as he had said, what should move him and other his fellows so to think, that in faith and good works joined together,

the good works were nothing worth, but that all the merit should be in the faith, and all the thank and reward should be given to the faith, and right nought to the good works. Whereunto he answered, that many texts of scripture induced them thereunto, and special texts of saint Poule: *Fides justificat*, faith justifieth. ¹⁶ And, *Credidit Abraam Deo, et reputatum est ei iustitiam*, Abraam believed God, and it was accompted in him for justice. ¹⁷ *Si ex operibus, habet quidem gloriam, sed non apud Deum*, If he were justified by the works, then had he glory but not with God. ¹⁸ *Si ex operibus, Christus pro nobis gratis mortuus est*, If he were justified by the works, then did Christ die for us for nought. ¹⁹ *Gratis redempti estis*, ²⁰ Ye be redeemed freely. And thereby may we see that our works were no part of the cause. And yet specially these words of our Saviour Christ, he said, much moved them to be of that mind, where he saith, *Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit, salvus erit*, He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved, ²¹ where Christ requireth nothing but only faith. By all these texts, he said it plainly appeared that all our salvation came of faith, as Abraham was justified by faith, and not by his works. And that if our good works should be the cause of our salvation, then as saint Poule saith, Christ died for nought. For he needed not to die for us if our own works might save us. Nor we were not redeemed freely if we should redeem ourself with the payment of our own works.

To this was it answered, that those texts and all other alleged for that purpose signify none other but that after the faith of Christ brought into the world by the Incarnation and Passion of our Blessed Saviour, men are no longer bounden to the observance of Moses' law.

Nor that all the law of Moses, nor all the good works of man, were not able to save one man of himself, nor without faith; and that Christ freely redeemed us. For neither had he or ever shall have any reward of us, for the bitter pains taken in his blessed passion for us. Nor never deserved we unto him that he should so much do for us. Nor the first faith, nor the preaching thereof, nor the first justification of man thereby, nor the sacrament and fruit of our baptism, was not given to the world for any good works that ever the world had wrought; but only of God's mere liberal goodness. But yet there is never a text of them nor any other in all scripture so meant, that after the baptism the faith only

FAITH WITHOUT GOOD WORKS CANNOT SAVE US

shall save us without good works, if we live and have reason to do them. For though it be said by the mouth of our Saviour, He that believeth shall be saved, ^{cxxvi} where he nothing speaketh of any good works, yet meaneth he not that he that believeth shall be saved without good works, if he live to do them. For else why should ye not as well say that men shall be saved for keeping of the commandments without faith, since Christ saith, If thou wilt enter into the kingdom of heaven, keep the commandments. ²² And saith also, Do that and thou shalt have life. At which time he spake no word of any faith. He saith also in holy scripture, *Date elemosinam, et omnia munda sunt vobis*. Give almoyses, and all is clean in you. ²³ Which words, if men should as largely conster (construe) for the preeminence of almoysesdede as ye that are of Luther's sect conster the texts that speak of faith, they might take a false gloss and colour to say, that without faith or penance either, or any other virtue, almoysesdede alone sufficeth for salvation, how wretchedly soever we lead our life beside. But if we should so say of almoysesdede, we should say wrong, as ye do when ye say so of faith. For likewise as it is understood ²⁴ that faith must needs go with good works, if they shall be fruitful, though it be not spoken of in those texts that speak of good works, so is it understanden that in them, which after baptism, have time and reason to work well, good works must walk with faith, and sorrow at heart for fault of good works, if that faith

shall aught avail them. For if both good works and final repentance of the lack of good works do fail us, having time and reason to them, we be like to fare much the worse for our faith. And that this is thus, we may well know by the texts of holy scripture if we set them together, and take not one text for our part and set another at nought.

To this answered he that albeit these texts set together do prove that faith alone doth not suffice without good works (which thing he said that himself denied not) yet he said that none of those texts prove anything the contrary, but that when faith and good works be joined together, all the merit cometh yet of our faith only, and nothing of our works.

Whereunto he was answered that though it so were indeed, that no texts of scripture proved the contrary, yet since there is none that sayeth so, and the whole Church sayeth and believeth the contrary, what reason have ye to say so, and to give the whole merit unto faith, and no part of the reward to good works. And now have ye much less reason so to do, when the plain words of holy writ be openly to the contrary. For did not God say to Cain, If thou do well thou shalt have well? ^s Sayeth not Christ of them that doth almoyses, A good measure shaken together, heaped and running over, shall they give into your bosom? ^s Doth not our Lord shew that in the day of judgment he will give the kingdom of heaven to them that have done almoyses, in meate, drink, cloth, and lodging, because of their charity used in those deeds? ^s Which deeds though he will not reward with heaven, except faith went with them, yet if they were wrought in faith, he promiseth to reward those works, and not their faith only, and that so far forth that it appeareth by the words of our Saviour in the same places, and by his words which he said he would in the day of judgment speak to them that had by faith wrought wonders in his name without good works and charity, whom he would then bid walk [with the] workers of wickedness, and tell them that he knoweth them not: by these things, I say, it well appeareth that be a man's faith never so great, yet, if those good works fail him, his faith shall fail of heaven.

Then said he yet again that faith can never be without good works. But and if a man have faith, his faith shall not fail nor cease to bring forth the fruit of good works, as the tree bringeth forth his leaves.

Then was it answered him, that he was driven from that point before as well by the authority of saint Poule, as of saint James. And also that he wist well that faith or belief is not contrary to every sin, but only to infidelity and lack of belief, so that with other sins it may stand.

Then said he, that if men believed surely, he thought they would not sin. For who would sin, said he, if he believed verily and surely that sin should bring him to hell?

Whereunto it was answered, whoso believed after your Lutheran faith should never let to sin, since Lutherans believe that no sin could damn them, but only lack of belief, and that no good work needeth them, but that they shall be saved, howsoever they live, for their only faith. Whereby it well appeareth that ye Lutherans have but half a faith. For ye believe God only in his promises, and in his threats, ye believe him not at all: howbeit if one believed indeed surely as ye would now seem to believe, truth is it that it would let many a man from sin, but yet not every man. For albeit that many men there be, either the more bold in sin or the more negligent in good virtues, because their faith is very faint and feeble, which would, if they had a sure and undoubted faith, be in such dread of God and love also, that it would withdraw them from sin,

and set them in the way of virtue, yet many men be there, on the tother side, that were their faith never so strong, yet should it not master the frowardness of their malicious appetites. And this would happen sometime, and daily doth, in men not deeply drowned in malice, nor folk out of the faith neither, which yet fall into the breach of God's commandment by the subtle suggestion of the devil, or by the frailty of their own flesh. Whereof it seemeth that the holy apostle was himself so sore afraid for all his faith that he thrice prayed to God to take the temptation away. ²⁸ I cannot see but that Adam believed the words of God, and yet he brake his commandment. ²⁹ And I think that King David fell not from his faith, though he fell first in adultery and after in manslaughter. ³⁰ And some examples have we seen of them that have sought the revenging of their own malicious minds by such ways as they saw, when they went about it, their own undoubted death before their eyes. And therefore it is but a tale to

FAITH DOTHTH NOT DRAW ALWAY GOOD WORKS WITH IT

say that faith draweth alway good works with it, and that ye Lutherans in that ye say that faith is sufficient alone without good works should say so because it bringeth alway good works with it. For this were a very vain doctrine, that faith is alone sufficient to save them that have the use of reason without good works, if in such as have the use of reason, faith be never without good works.

After such objections, then fell he to another point, and said that if our good works and faith be joined, yet might it well appear by scripture that all the merit was in our faith, and nothing in man's works. For all the works of man, he said, be stark nought, as things all spotted with sin. And for that he laid divers texts of scripture. But specially as the most plain proof, the words of the prophet, *Omnis justitia nostra velut pannus menstruate*. ³¹ And since that all our works, he said, be spotted and sinful and nought, how good soever they seem, it must needs follow that all the merit cometh of our faith.

To this was answered him. Lo, now by this ye have somewhat opened yourself unaware, ³² and declared your opinion in this matter to be far other than ye said before. For in the glosses that ye have used before, ye have alway said that ye and all the sect of Luther, as far as ye knew and thought, believed that faith could not save us if we had reason without good works. But ye said that faith was enough alone, because it brought of necessity good works with it. And yet all the merit and reward due to the faith only, and not to the good works that it bringeth forth. And now ye say that there be no good works at all, but all our works be stark nought. Now if ye think that there be no good works, how can ye say, as ye said before, that ye think that faith alway bringeth forth good works? Moreover the words of the prophet, though it be generally spoken, may be well understanden to be verified, in far the most part of mankind, though not of all, or of the justice of man, if it were compared with the sovereign justice of God. Or that justice of right good men is yet sore spotted with sin, for that the frailty of our nature seldom constantly standeth any while together in good works, but that the perseverance is interrupted, often spotted, and besprent ³³ with sin. And therefore is it said, *Septies in die cadit justus, et resurgit*. Seven times in the day falleth the righteous man, and riseth again. ³⁴ It may be also understood of all the righteousness of a man alone wrought of himself and his pure natural powers *without the aid and help of special grace. For surely all such justice of ours, as is only ours, is all*

ALL OUR ONLY JUSTICE IS ALL SPOTTED

spotted, and in effect all one foul spot, for any beauty that it hath in the glorious eye of God. But surely the holy prophet never meant, as Luther and his fellows would have seem, that the grace

of God is in all his people so feeble of itself, and of so little force and effect, that no man may, with the help thereof, be able to do one good virtuous deed? For Luther saith plainly that no man, though he have the help of God's grace thereto, is able to keep and observe the commandments of God. Which blasphemous words seem to signify that both saint John the baptist and our blessed Lady also were sinners, and, over all this, that God were not able by the aid and help of His grace to make a man keep his commandments, and keep him out of sin, though he would. All the old fathers that wrote against Pelagian (Pelagius), which held opinion that man is of nature, or at the leastwise with the general influence of grace, able and sufficient to do good and meritorious works without help of any special grace toward every good deed itself, misliked and condemned his doctrine, for that it minished the necessity of man's recourse unto God, for calling help of his grace. But ye that hold all men's deeds for utterly nought, though grace wrought with them, be double and treble more enemies to grace than they. For where they said we might do good sometime without it, ye say we can at no time do no good with it. And then were grace, by your tale, a very void thing. Was then all the labour and the pain the apostles took in preaching, all nought and sinful? all the torments that the martyrs suffered in their passion altogether sin? all the deeds of charity that Christ shall (as himself sayeth) reward with everlasting life at the general judgment, be they sin all together? Saint Poule reckoned it otherwise. For he said boldly of himself, *Bonum certamen certavi, cursum consummavi, et nunc superest mihi corona justitiae*. I have laboured and striven a good strife, I have performed my course, now lacketh me no more for me but the crown of justice. ³⁵

Thereunto he answered that saint Poule would not say that our deeds were sufficient of themselves, but that all our sufficiency is of God.

Whereunto it was answered that this was little to the matter. For no more is our faith sufficient of itself, but the sufficiency thereof is also

THE SUFFICIENCY OF OUR FAITH IS OF GOD

of God, in that our Lord with our endeavour giveth us grace to believe, and in that it liketh our Lord of his goodness so highly to reward it. For surely, as it is very true that saint Poule saith, that *Non sunt condigne passiones hujus vitae ad futuram gloriam quae revelabitur in nobis*, all that ever we can suffer in this world is not worthy the glory to come that shall be shewed in us. ³⁶ (For what thing could a silly wretched creature do or suffer for God, in the brief time of this short life, that might of right require to be rewarded everlastingly, with such inestimable joy, as neither eye hath seen, nor tongue can express, nor heart can imagine or conceive?) So is it also as true that all the faith we have, or can have, can of his own nature as little or much less deserve heaven as our other good deeds. For what great thing do we to God or what great thing could we ask him of right, because we believe him, as though he were much beholden unto us in that we vouchsafe to trust him, as though his worship hung in our hands, and his estimation lost if he were out of credence with us? And therefore among many foolish words of Luther, as foolish as ever heretic spake, he never spake a more frantic, than in that he saith that God hath need of our faith. For he saith that God hath no need of our good works, but he hath need of our faith, and hath need that we should believe him. Truth is it that he needeth neither our faith, nor our works. But since that he hath determined that he will not save us without both, if we be of discretion to have both, therefore have we need of both. And yet neither is there the one nor the other, nor they both together between them, that be of their own nature worthy the reward of heaven. But as we see that one

ounce of gold whereof ten pound weight were not of his own nature toward man worth one ounce of wheat, nor one hundred pound weight thereof, of the nature self, worth one silly sheep, is yet among men, by a price appointed and agreed, worth many whole sheep, and many a pound weight of bread: so hath it liked the liberal goodness of God to set as well our

FAITH AND GOOD WORKS OF THEIR OWN NATURE ARE LITTLE IN VALUE

faith, as our deeds, which were else both twain of their own nature right little in value, at so high a price, as none is able to buy them and pay for them but himself, because we should work them only to him, and have none other paymaster, nor none other chapman to sell our ware and our work unto, but only him. Except we would be so mad, and towards him so unkind, that we would sell it to another for less, rather than to him for more. As some do that had liefer travail far off, and sell for less, than they would for more sell to their neighbours at home. And as do these foolish hypocrites, which rather than they would sell their work to God for everlasting joy of heaven, sell it all to the world for the peevish pleasure of the vain praise puffed out of poor mortal men's mouths with a blast of wind.

Unto this, he said, that very true it was that all our works took their value and price after the acceptance of God and as he list to allow them. But he said that God rejected, disallowed, and set at nought all the works of infidels wrought without faith. For *sine fide impossibile est placere Deo*, without faith it is impossible to please God. ²⁷ So of his faithful chosen people that believe and trust in him, he accepteth and alloweth all the deeds. And that is, said he, well proved by the words of saint Poule, *Nihil damnationis est his qui sunt in Christo Jesu*. ²⁸ And albeit that in the rehearsing of the communication had with this man, it may well be that my remembrance may partly miss the order, partly peradventure add or minish in some part of the matter, yet in this point, *I assure you faithfully*, there is no manner change or variance from his opinion, but that after many shifts he brought it plainly to this point at last, *that he, and his fellows, that were of Luther's sect, were firmly of this opinion, that they believed that God worketh all in every man, good works and bad*. Howbeit no such, as he foreknoweth to be damned, no manner works be profitable to them. For God taketh them for nought be they never so good. But on the other side, in those he hath chosen from the beginning and predestinate to glory, all works be good enough. For God accepteth and taketh them well a worth, be they never so bad.

It was asked him then, whether the forsaking of Christ by Peter was allowed and well approved by Christ. And whether the avoutry (adultery) and manslaughter was by God well allowed in David.

Whereunto he said that because they were chosen and predestinate, therefore those sins were not (nor the sins of any such men be not) imputed unto them. But God, because he hath from the beginning chosen them to everlasting bliss, therefore he arrecteth ²⁹ no blame of their deeds unto them, but *all the works of a just man, that is to say, quod he, of a person by God predestinate to glory, turn him to good, how evil so ever they be*. And this, for conclusion, he declared to be their very plain mind and opinion, for all the cloaks that he set upon the matter before, to make it seem that they meant in their words none harm. And there it clearly appeared, that he and his fellows, which in their preaching do covertly and craftily set out the damnable sect of Luther, hope and gape alway for some other time, in which they trust openly and boldly to play the ravenous wolves and devour the sheep and mar the whole flock. And, in the mean season, be content to play the wily foxes and worry ³⁰ simple souls and poor lambs, as they may catch them straggling

from the fold, or rather like a false shepherd's dog that would but bark in sight, and seem to fetch in the sheep, and yet kill a lamb in a corner. Men speak of some that bear two faces in one hood. I never saw any that more verily play that pageant than do this kind of such preachers. For in preaching to the people, they make a visage as though they came straight

THE LUTHERAN PREACHERS BEAR TWO FACES IN ONE HOOD

from heaven to teach them a new better way, and more true than the church teacheth, or hath taught this many hundred year. And then to the Church, in examination, they shew themselves as poor men of middle earth, and as though they taught none otherwise than the Church doth. But in conclusion, when they be well examined, and with much work that falsehood of their cloaked collusion is pulled off, then appeareth there all the malicious treachery, and what poison they put forth under the cloak of honey. As this man that I tell you of, labouring all that he might by many means to make it seem that in preaching that faith alone was sufficient for our salvation and that good works were nothing worth, had nothing intended but well and according to the doctrine of the Church, and that he and his fellows never meant otherwise than the Church meaneth: yet *in conclusion he plainly shewed himself, that he and his fellows intend thereby to bring the people to this point at last, that all thing hangeth only upon destiny, and that the liberty of man's will should serve of right nought, nor men's deeds, good or bad, made no difference afore God, but that in his chosen people nothing misliketh him be it never so bad, and in the other sort nothing pleaseth him be it never so good*, the very worst and most mischievous heresy that ever was thought upon, and thereto the most mad. For as it is said unto him, if this were true, whereto preach they at all, and counsel any man one thing or other? What fruit could come of their exhortation if all should hang upon destiny? There were shewed unto him many things for the reproof of that unreasonable and detestable heresy, and that the texts which he alleged, nothing made for his purpose. For as for that he alleged of saint Poule, that there is no damnation to them that be in Christ Jesu, was meant of good faithful folk that live virtuously, and therefore where he saith, that there is no damnation to them that be in Christ Jesu, it followeth forthwith in the text, those that walk not after the flesh. Meaning plainly that there is no man so planted in Christ Jesu, but and if he follow the fleshly ways of his sensual appetites, he shall be damned, for all his faith in Christ. For else it should follow upon this false opinion, if God accept well all the works of them that are predestinate, then is sin no sin but in the other sort whom God hath not predestinate. And then is it as much to say as no man may lawfully be nought, no man lawfully do theft or advoutry, nor lawfully be a manqueller, nor lawfully forswear himself, but God's good sons and his special chosen children. Now where he alleged the words of sainte Poule, *Quod justis omnia cooperantur in bonum*, To a just man all things work together to his weale, " it was sayde, that it meant that all the evils that men did unto them, turn them to good and be to good men occasion of their merit, as was to Job all the torments by which the devil assaulted his patience, and all the pains that pagan tyrants did unto the holy martyrs. And sometime the sin in which a good man is by God's sufferance permitted to fall, is an occasion to him of greater

SIN SOMETIME IS AN OCCASION OF GOODNESS

good, or of the avoiding of a greater sin. As the eschewing of an high spiritual pride, into which peradventure the continual course of his virtuous life might by the devil's subtle suggestion have brought him, whereas one foul act of lechery hath shewed him his frailty, and instead of pride brought him into penance and humility, and make him run the faster forward in virtue, because he hath letted and sitte still awhile in sin, and therefore will he run forth to win again in his way that he before cast himself behind. But it was not meant that ever their sins so turned them to good that they were accepted the more and rewarded the better for their evil deeds.

Nor God remitteth not the sins of his chosen people, nor forbeareth not to impute the blame thereof unto them, because they be his chosen people. For he accepteth not folk for their persons, but for their merits; but

GOD ACCEPTETH MEN FOR THEIR MERITS

whereas they have sinned, he punisheth as well them as other, and sometime more, because their former good living somewhat of congruence deserved that they should by punishment be called again to grace, and not be for their fault so soon cast clean away, as some other, obdurate in malice and evil custom of sin, deserve to have the grace of God and his calling on never more offered unto them; and unto some it is offered that will not receive it.

God called on David by the prophet Nathan and yet punished his offence. ⁴² Christ looked on Peter after he had forsaken and forsworn him, and Peter therewith took repentance. ⁴³ God looked on Judas and kissed him too, ⁴⁴ and he turned to none amendment. Now God from the beginning before the world was created, foreseeing in his divine prescience or rather in the (e)ternitie of his Godhead, presently beholding, that Peter would repent and Judas would despair, and that the one would take hold of his grace [and] the other would reject it, accepted and chose the one, and not the other, as he would have made the contrary choice, if he had foreseen in them the contrary chance.

THE 'TWELFTH CHAPTER

The author inveigheth against the most pestilent sect of these Lutherans, which ascribe our salvation and damnation and all our deeds to destiny.

But now for to say as that heretic said, after all his shifts at last, that all that shall be saved shall be saved only because that God from the beginning hath chosen them, and because of that choice all their deeds be good, or if they be evil yet God for cause of his eternal choice taketh them well in worth and imputeth no blame unto them, and that all other people whom God hath created shall be damned only because he would not choose them, and that all their deeds either be nought or not well accepted because God list not in the beginning to choose them, and that he worketh, both in the one sort and in the other, all their deeds himself alone, and they do nothing therein themselves, and so that God, whose goodness is inestimable, doth damn so huge a number of people to intolerable and interminable torments only for his pleasure, and for his own deeds wrought in them only by himself, this false opinion is, as the king's highness most virtuously writeth in his epistle to Luther, the most abominable heresy that ever was. And surely it is so far against all holy scripture well understanden, so far against all natural reason, so utterly subverting all virtue and all good order in the world, so highly blaspheming the goodness and majesty of almighty God in heaven, that it is more than wonder how any man earthly, that hath either one spark of wit in his head, or toward God or man one drop of good will in his heart, should not abhor to hear it. For this execrable heresy maketh God the cause of all evil, and such cruel appetite, as never tyrant or tormentor had, ascribe they to the benign nature of almighty God.

For whereas our Saviour Christ took upon himself all our sin and, of his endless pity, bare the pain of them for our sake, this damnable heresy holdeth, that God should be first so untrue that he should lay unto us the wite (weight) and blame of his own faults, that is to wit, the evil works which, as they say, be not wrought by us, but in us by God, and thereunto they make him so despituous and cruel, that for his own deeds so done, he shall have a perpetual delight and pleasure to torment us. Now turn they the tryacle * of holy scripture quite into poison. For this false error once taken for truth, whereof should all scripture serve? Whereof should serve the exhortations to good works, if men neither any do, nor any can do, neither of themselves, nor with help of grace? Or if any be done by them which be not chosen, their deeds be not accepted of God because he hath not chosen their persons, whereof shall serve the preachings and exhortations to the faith, if the hearers have no liberty of their own will, by which they may, together with God's grace, labour to submit and subdue the rebellion of their reason to the obedience of faith and credence of the word of God? Whereof shall serve all the dehortations and comminations and threats in scripture, by which God calleth men from sin and evil works, if the world were once of the mind that they believed after Luther, that no man doth any evil deed himself, but God doth them all himself; and that every man is either chosen or unchosen. And that if we be of the chosen sort, none evil deed can damn us. And if we be of the unchosen sort, no good deed can avail us. He that thus believeth, what careth he what he doth, except for the fear of temporal laws of this world? And yet if his false faith be strong, he forceth * little of them also.

For he shall think dying in his bed or on the gallows cometh not after his deserving but hangeth all upon destiny. And therefore all laws they set at nought. And they hold that no man is bounden to obey any, but would be at liberty to believe what they list, and do what they list, as they say that God doth with us, not what we deserve, but what himself list. Whereof shall reason serve if man had no power of himself toward the direction of his own works, but that all our works were brought forth of us without our will, worse than the works be, indeed, out of a brute beast by the appetite of his sensual motion? For ours should be by this opinion brought forth, as the leaves come out of the tree, or as a stone falleth downward, and the smoke upward, by the power of nature, so should, I say, all our deeds, good or bad, ascend or descend by the violent hand of God, in spite of † our minds, and thus the beasts be not ashamed to say, when they prove hourly by their own experience in themselves, that when they will do a thing they do it. And when they list they

THE ASSISTANCE OF GOD IS ALWAYS AT HAND

leave it. I say not by themselves alone without God. But his assistance is always at hand, if we be willing to work therewith, as the light is present with the sun, if we list not wilfully to shut our eyes and wink.

Whereof should serve all laws? And where were become all good order among men, if every misordered wretch might allege that his mischievous deed was his destiny? If free-will serve for nought, and every man's deed is his destiny, why do these men complain upon any man, except they will say they do it because it is their destiny to do so? And why will they be angry with them that punish heretics, except they will say because it is their destiny to be so? For if they will hold them to their own sect, and say men do them wrong to burn them for their heresies, because it was their destiny to be heretics, they may be then well answered with their own words, as one of their sect was served in a good town in Almayn, which when he had robbed a man and was

brought before the judges, he could not deny the deed, but he said it was his destiny to

A CONVENIENT ANSWER

do it, and therefore they might not blame him; they answered him, after his own doctrine, that if it were his destiny to steal, and that therefore they must hold him excused, then it was also their destiny to hang him, and therefore he must as well hold them excused again. And undoubtedly among men these takers away of free will, may never avoid that answer by reason. But then fall the wretches to the desperate ways of devils and damned souls. Then fall they to railing and reproving the justice of God and say that himself he wrought their evil works, and wrongfully punished them, and cruelly created them to wretchedness. Our mother Eve laid the wit of her sin to the serpent, and God was offended that she took not her own part to herself. But these wretches excuse themselves and the devil and all, and lay both their own faults, and the devil's too, to the blame of Almighty God. But since what so they say, they little care indeed of hell or heaven, but would in this world live in lewd liberty, and have all run to riot. And since they see that they cannot so be suffered, nor their sect allowed in judgment, they devise by all the ways they can to get so many to fall into their sort, that they may be able to turn the world upside * down and defend their folly and false heresy by

WHAT THE LUTHERANS CALL THE LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL

force. And this they call the liberty of the gospel, to be discharged of all order and of all laws, and do what they list, which be it good, be it bad, is, as they say, nothing but the works of God wrought in them. But they hope that by this mean God shall for the while work in them many merry pastimes. Wherein if their heresy were once received, and the world changed thereby, they should find themselves sore deceived; for the laws and orders among men, with fear of punishment once taken away, there were no man so strong that could keep his pleasure long, but that he should find a stronger take it from him. But after that it were once come to that point, and the world once ruffled and fallen in a wildness, how long would it be, and what heaps of heavy mischiefs would there fall ere the way were found to set the world in order and peace again?

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER

The author sheweth his opinion concerning the burning of heretics and that it is lawful, necessary, and well done, and sheweth also that the clergy doth not procure it, but only the good and politic provision of the temporality.

The fear of these outrages and mischiefs to follow upon such sects and heresies, with the proof that men have had in some countries thereof, have been the cause that princes and people have been constrained to punish heresies by terrible death, whereas else more easy ways had been taken with them. And therefore, here, will I somewhat (said I to your friend) answer the points which ye moved at your first meeting, when ye said that many men thought it an hard and an uncharitable way taken by the clergy, to put men convict of heresy sometime to shame, sometime to death, and that Christ so far abhorred all such violence, that he would not any of his flock should fight in any wise, neither in the defence of themselves or any other, not so much as in the defence of Christ himself, for which he blamed Saint Peter, * but that we should all live after him in sufferance and patience, so far forth that folk thought, as ye said, that we should not fight

in defence of ourself against the Turks and infidels. These objections be soon answered.

For neither doth the clergy therein any such thing as is laid and imputed unto them, nor the temporality neither, albeit with good reason they might yet, had they never indeed fallen so sore to force and violence against heretics, if the violent cruelty first used by the heretics themselves against good catholic folk, driven good princes thereto, for preservation, not of the faith only, but also of the peace among their people. For albeit that forthwith upon the death of Christ in the beginning of the church many sects and heresies began (as well appeareth by the Apocalypse of saint John the evangelist, and the epistles of the apostle Paul) and after, almost continually, divers heresies sprang in divers places (as we plainly see by the story of the church, by the books of saint Hierome, saint Augustine, saint Eusebie, saint Basile, sainte Ambrose, saint Gregory Nazianzenus, saint Chrysostome, and many other doctors of the church) yet in all this time by a long space of many years was there never other punishment done upon them in effect but only redargucion^s and reproving by discussions,^s either in words or writing, or condemnations of their opinions in synods and councils, or finally excommunications and putting out of Christ's flock, saving that they were put some tune to silence upon pain of forfeiture of certain money.

But as I said before, if the heretics had never begun with violence, though they had used all the ways they could to allect^s the people by preaching, though they had therewith done as Luther doth now, and as Mahomet did before, bring up opinions pleasant to the people, giving them liberty to lewdness, yet if they had set violence aside, good Christian people had peradventure yet unto this day used less violence toward them than they do now. And yet were heresy well worthy to be as sore

NO FAULT OFFENDETH GOD MORE THAN HERESY

as any other fault, since there is no fault that more offendeth God. Howbeit while they forbare violence there was little violence done to them. And surely though God be able against all persecution to preserve and increase his faith among the people, as he did in the beginning, for all the persecution of the paynims and the Jews, yet is it no reason to look that Christian princes should suffer the Catholic Christian people to be oppressed by Turks or by heretics worse than Turks.

By my soul, quod your friend, I would all the world were all agreed to take all violence and compulsion away upon all sides, Christian and heathen, and that no man were constrained to believe but as he could be by grace, wisdom, and good works, induced, and then he that would go to God, go on a God's name, and he that will go to the devil, the devil go with him.

Forsooth, quod I, and if it so were, yet would I little doubt but that the good seed being sown among the people, should as well come up and be as strong to save itself as the cockle, and God should alway be stronger than the devil. But yet be heretics and heathen men in two divers cases. For in case the Turks, Saracens, and paynims would suffer the faith of Christ to be peaceably preached among them, and that we Christian men should therefore suffer in like wise all their sects to be preached among us, and violence taken away by assent on both the sides, I nothing mistrust that the faith of Christ should much more increase than decay. And albeit that we should find among us, that would for the lewd liberty of these sects draw to the devil, yet so should we find I doubt not, among them also many a thousand that should be content to leave that beastly pleasure and come to the faith of Christ, as came in the beginning to Christendom out of the

paynims, that lived as voluptuously as the Turks do now. But since violence is used on that part, and Christ's faith not there suffered to be preached and taken, he that would now suffer that sect to be preached or taught among christian men, and not punish and destroy the doers, were a plain enemy to Christ, as he that were content to suffer Christ [to] lose his worship in many souls on this side, without anyone won in their stead upon the other side. But now if violence were withdrawn on that side, then this way that ye speak of were peradventure between christendom and Turkey or pagans if the world were assented thereunto and could hold it none evil way. For since we should nothing so much regard as the honour of

WHAT THINGS WE OUGHT MOST TO REGARD

God and increasing of the Christian faith, and winning of men's souls to heaven, we should seem to dishonour God if we mistrusted that his faith preached among other indifferently without disturbance should not be able to prosper. And, believing that it were, we should hinder the profit if we would refuse the condition, where there be many more to be won to Christ on that side, than to be lost from him on this side. But yet, as for heretics rising among ourself, and springing of ourself, be in no wise to be suffered, but to be oppressed and overwhelmed in the beginning. For by any covenant with them Christendom can nothing win. For as many as we suffer to fall to them we lose from Christ. And by all them we cannot win to Christ one the more, though we won them all home again for they were our own before. And yet, as I said, for all that in the beginning, never were they by any temporal punishment of their bodies anything sharply handled till that they began to be violent themselves.

We read that in the time of Saint Austin, the great doctor of the church, the heretics of Africa, called the Donatists, fell to force and violence, robbing, beating, tormenting and killing such as they took of the true christian flock, as the Lutherans have done in Almayn. For avoiding whereof, that holy man saint Austin, which long had with great patience borne and suffered their malice, only writing and preaching in the reproof of their errors, and had not only done them no temporal harm, but also had letted and resisted other that would have done it, did yet at the last for the peace of good people both suffer and exhort the Count Boniface and other, to repress them with force and fear them with bodily punishment.

Which manner of doing holy saint Jerome, and other virtuous fathers, have in other places allowed. And since that time hath thereupon necessity perceived by great outrages committed against the peace and quiet of the people in sundry places of Christendom, by heretics rising of a small beginning to an high and unruly multitude, many sore punishments been devised for them, and especially by fire, not only in Italy and Almayn, but also in Spain, and in effect in every part of Christendom. Among which in England, as a good catholic realm, it hath been long punished by death in the fire. And specially for as much as in the time of that noble prince of most famous memory, King Henry V, while the

LORD COBHAM

lord Cobham maintained certain heresies, and that, by the means thereof, the number so grew and increased that, within a while, though himself was fled into Wales, yet they assembled themselves together in a field near unto London in such wise and such number, that the king with his nobles were fain to put harness on their backs for the repression of them, whereupon they were distressed and many put to execution; and after that the lord Cobham taken in Wales and burned in London. The king, his nobles and his people thereupon considering the great peril and jeopardy that the realm was like to have fallen in by those heresies, made at a Parliament very

good and substantial provisions beside all such as were made before, as well for the withstanding as the repressing and grievous punishment of any such as should be founden faulty thereof, and by the clergy left unto the secular hands. For here ye shall understand that it is not the clergy that laboureth to have them punished by death. Well may it be, that as we be all men and not angels, some of them may have sometime either over fervent mind or indiscreet zeal, or, percase, an angry and a cruel heart, by which they may offend God in the selfsame deed whereof they should else greatly merit. But surely the order of the spiritual law therein is both good, reasonable, piteous and charitable, and nothing desiring the death of any man therein.

THE ORDER OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL LAWS AGAINST HERETICS

For at the first fault, he is abjured, forswearth all heresies, doth such penance for his fault as the bishop assigneth him; and is, in such wise, graciously received again into the favour and suffrages of Christ's church. But and if he be taken eftsoons with the same crime again, then is he put out of the christian flock by excommunication. And because that, being such, his conversation were perilous among Christian men, the Church refuseth him, and thereof the clergy giveth knowledge to the temporalty, not exhorting the prince, or any man else either, to kill him or punish him, but only in the presence of the temporal officer, the spirituality, not delivereth him, but leaveth him to the secular hand, and forsaketh him as one excommunicate and removed out of the Christian flock. And though the church be not light and sudden in receiving him again, yet, at the time of his death, upon his request, with tokens of repentance, he is absolved and received again.

¹ inveyeth.

² I *John* 5. 19.

³ dispicion.

⁴ put to shame.

⁵ *Luke* 18. 10.

⁶ *Luke* 17. 10.

⁷ alms.

⁸ *Luke* 6. 43.

⁹ *Gal.* 5. 6.

¹⁰ 1529, 'not'; 1557, 'no.'

¹¹ I *C or.* 13. 2.

¹² *Gal.* I. 8.

¹³ the one.

¹⁴ *James* 2. 19.

¹⁵ *Tim.* 5. 6.

¹⁶ *Rom.* 5. I.

¹⁷ *Rom.* 4. 3.

¹⁸ *Rom.* 4. 2.

¹⁹ *Gal.* 2. 21.

²⁰ *Rom.* 3. 24.

²¹ *Mark* I6. I6.

²² *Matt.* I9. I7.

²³ *Luke* II. 4I.

²⁴ understande.
²⁵ *Gen.* 4. 7.
²⁶ *Luke* 6. 38.
²⁷ *Matt.* 25. 34, 35.
²⁸ *2 Cor.* 12. 8.
²⁹ *Gen.* 3. 6.
³⁰ *2 Kings* II.
³¹ *Is.* 64. 6.
³² unaware.
³³ besprinkled.
³⁴ *Prov.* 24. 16.
³⁵ *2 Tim.* 4. 7, 8.
³⁶ *Rom.* 8. 18.
³⁷ *Heb.* II. 6.
³⁸ *Rom.* 8. 1.
³⁹ imputeth.
⁴⁰ wirry.
⁴¹ *Rom.* 8. 28.
⁴² *2 Kings* 12.
⁴³ *Luke* 22. 61.
⁴⁴ *Mark* 14. 45.
⁴⁵ remedy, antidote.
⁴⁶ takes little account.
⁴⁷ ma[u]gre.
⁴⁸ up so.
⁴⁹ *Matt.* 26. 52.
⁵⁰ disproof, refutation.
⁵¹ dispicions.
⁵² attract, seduce.