The Confutation of Tyndale’s Answer
Books 1 - 4

Made by Sir Thomas More, Knight
Lord Chancellor of England

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Spelling standardized, punctuation modernized, and notes added
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Punctuation
The only punctuation marks found in the original printed version of The Confutation are the period, comma, question mark, slash, or “virgule” (⁄), and parentheses. Quotation marks, semicolons, dashes, exclamation points, italics, and suspension points have been added with the goal of making the text more readily understood by present-day readers. Many commas needed to be inserted and many removed in deference to current rules about restrictive and nonrestrictive phrases. Italic are added for titles and, occasionally, for emphasis. All bracketed words found in the text are More’s. As for the suspension points (…), these are substitutes for many of More’s slashes. He often used a slash where we would use a semicolon, a dash, or italics; but he also, quite often, used one to indicate whether a certain phrase was meant to be connected more closely with the one preceding it or with the one following it; to call attention to parallel elements in different phrases; or simply to facilitate serious reflection. He also quite often used a slash for dramatic purposes—to indicate, perhaps, a coming sly comment, or a possibly surprising conclusion. The evident thoughtfulness with which More punctuated this book leads one to suspect that he anticipated its being often read aloud, and wanted to make sure the reader got the cadence right. He writes as though he were speaking.

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The Preface to the Christian Reader

Our Lord send us now some years as plenteous of good corn as we have had some years of late plenteous of evil books! For they have grown so fast and sprung up so thick, full of pestilent errors and pernicious heresies, that they have infected and killed, I fear me, more seely simple souls than the famine of the dear years have destroyed bodies. And surely no little cause there is to dread that the great abundance and plenty of the one is no little cause and occasion of the great dearth and scarcity of the other. For since that our Lord of his especial providence useth temporally to punish the whole people for the sins of some part, to compel the good folk to forbear and abhor the naughty, whereby they may bring them to amendment and avoid themselves the contagion of their company: wisdom were it for us to perceive that, like as folk begin now to delight in feeding their souls of the venomous carrión of those poisoned heresies (of which may well be verified the words of Holy Writ “Death is in the pot”), our Lord likewise againward, to revenge it with, beginneth to withdraw his gracious hand from the fruits of the earth, diminishing the fertility both in corn and cattle, and bringing all in dearth, much more than men can remedy or fully find out the cause. And yet besides this, somewhere he sendeth war, sickness, and mortality… to punish in the flesh that odious and hateful sin of the soul that spoileth the fruit from all manner of virtues: I mean unbelief, false faith, and infidelity, and to tell you all at once in plain English, heresy. And, I say, that God now beginneth. For I fear me surely that, except folk begin to reform that fault the sooner, God shall not fail in such wise to go forward that we shall well perceive and feel by the increase of our grief that all this gear hitherto is but a beginning yet. The prophet Elijah (as it is written in the Third Book of Kings), for the infidelity and idolatry that then was used in Israel, by his hearty prayer made unto God kept that whole country from rain by the space of three years.
and a half—not of evil will or malice, but of devotion and pity;
by the pain and pinching of the bodies, to compel men to remember
their souls, which else were in peril of perishing
by false idolatry.

Now, albeit that these bold, shameless heretics have of
long while neither letted nor ceased falsely to insimulate and
accuse the church of God… calling all good Christian people idolaters
for honoring of saints and reverent behavior used at

How the Church doth honor their images: yet that have they done so
images and saints far against their own conscience—
by which themselves well wot that the
Church useth to saints and images none honor but ordinate… not
honoring images but for the saints’ sake, nor saints but for the sake
of God… and neither image as saint nor saint as God—and this knoweth,

I say, Tyndale himself so well, and thereby so far hath railed
against his own conscience… that now at the last, in his answer
to my book, he retreateth so far back that he revoketh almost all
that ever he said before… and is fain now to grant that Christian
men may have images, and kneel before them, too; as ye shall hereafter
see when we shall come to the place.

But we, on the other side, say plainly unto them that the
things wherewith they corrupt the world are of infidelity and

The chief evil in an idol faithless idolatry the very most accursed
kind. The chief evil in an idol was

that it bore the name of God, either itself or the devil that it
represented, and, being so reputed and worshipped for God, robbed
the reverence and devout honor from God.

Now, when Tyndale calleth his heresies by the name of “faith,” and
maketh men serve the devil while they ween to serve God—what
abominable idolatry is this?

If it be idolatry to put trust in the devil, and serve the devil with
faith, it is worse than idolatry to make men ween they serve
God with faith while they despite him with a false belief.

And if it be very infidelity to do as the Turks do—bid men
believe in Muhammad’s Quran—it is more infidelity to do as
Tyndale hath done: purposely mistranslate Christ’s holy Gospel,
to set forth heresies as evil as the Quran.

And if it be idolatry to do as the paynims did—make an idol “God”—
it must needs be much worse idolatry to do as these heretics do,
that call God the cause of all evil, and thereby make God not a vain
idol but a very devil.
5 And what can be worse kind of infidelity than to make books of
heresies, and call them the right faith?
And what more abominable infidelity than to abuse the Scripture
of God to the color of their false belief?
And what can be a worse belief than to believe that the sacraments
that God hath ordained by his Holy Spirit be but inventions
of man, or as Tyndale saith of confession, but invention of the
devil?
And what can be a worse belief than to believe that God’s word
is not to be believed but if it be put in writing?
6 O erroneous opinion! Or what can be a worse belief than
to believe that men's good works, be they
never so well done, be yet nothing worth, nor the man never
the better for them, nor no reward for them coming toward
man in heaven?
Or what can be a worse belief than to believe that a man doth
wrong to pray for his father’s soul?
Or what can be a worse belief than to believe that a man may as
slightly regard Whitsun Sunday as Hock Monday... and as
boldly eat flesh on Good Friday as on Shrove Tuesday?
And what can be a worse belief than to believe that none other
sin can damn a man but only lack of belief?
And if it be idolatry to do as the paynims do—give worship
unto an idol—how much is it worse than idolatry to do as Tyndale
doth: forbid us to give worship to the Very Body and Blessed
Blood of God in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar?
These pestilent infidelities, and these abominable kinds of
idolatries, far exceed and pass, and incomparably more offend
the majesty of our Lord God than, all the setting up of Bel and
Baal, and Beelzebul, and all the devils in hell. Wherefore, like as in
other places where these heresies have taken deeper root and been more
spread abroad... God hath taken more deep and sore vengeance, not
only by dearth and death, but also by battle and sword: so is it to be
feared that for the receipt of these pestilential books, our Lord sendeth

1 make God: i.e., make God out to be  // vain: worthless / futile 3, 11 be: be a 3 make: write
5 abuse: misrepresent; twist 6 the color of: i.e., make it seem to corroborate 12 but if: unless
12 put: i.e., put by him 13 opinion: notion / deviant tenet
15 never so well done: done in no matter how good a way
15–16 never the better: i.e., the least bit the better off 16 no: i.e., any 20 toward: to
20–21 as slightly regard: hold in as little regard 21 Whitsun: Pentecost
21 Hock Monday: the second Monday after Easter 22 flesh: meat
22 Shrove Tuesday: the second Monday after Ash Wednesday; i.e., Mardi Gras 23 none: no
25 paynims: pagans 27 Very: Real 29, 36 pestilent: pernicious; noxious 30 pass: surpass
31 setting up: elevating; putting up on pedestals 34 sore: severe 35 death: (inflicting) scarcity
35 death: i.e., plague 36 receipt: accepting  // sendeth: i.e., is sending
us some lack of corn and cattle for a beginning, and will not fail but if our fault be amended to send us as sore punishment as he hath sent already into such other places as would not be by like warning amended—according as he saith in the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus, where he speaketh in this wise: “If ye will not give ear unto me, nor fulfill all my commandments, but set my laws at naught, despise my judgments, and leave those things undone that are by me ordained, and break my pact and covenant: then will I againward do these things following unto you. I will hastily visit you with penury and burning heat” (or “fever”) “which shall sore vex and grieve your eyes, and consume you to the death. Over this, ye shall sow your seed in vain… for your enemies shall devour it. I shall also set my face against you, and ye shall fall before your adversaries, and be made subjects unto them that hate you. Ye shall flee where no man chaseth you. And if ye will not yet, for all this, obey me: I shall for your sins add and put to these plagues sevenfold more; and I shall tread down the pride of your stubbornness,” and so forth.

And who doth more properly fall in the danger of this commination and threat than they that despise Christ’s sacraments, which are his holy ordinances and a great part of Christ’s new law and testament! And who shall less set by his commandments… “Only faith” than they that, upon the boldness of “only faith,” set all good works at naught, and little force the danger of their evil deeds, without shrift or penance, sufficeth… and that no vow made to God can bind a man to live chaste, nor let a monk from marriage—all which things, with many pestilent errors besides, these abominable books of Tyndale and his fellows teach us.

Of these books of heresies there be so many made within these few years—what by Luther himself and by his fellows, and afterward by the new sects sprung out of his, which like the children of the viper would now gnaw out their mother’s belly—that the bare names of those books were almost enough to make a book; and of every sort of those books be some brought into this realm, and kept in hugger-mugger, by some shrewd masters that keep them for no good.

1 corn and cattle: grain and livestock 2 but if: unless 3 corn and cattle: grain and livestock 4 fault: failing / wrongdoing 5 severe 5 in this wise: thusly 6 set... naught: (will) disregard my laws 7 despise: show contempt for / flout 8 ordained: decreed; stipulated 9 againward: in turn 10 hastily: in fierce anger 11 over this: in addition to this; moreover 12 visit: afflict 13 penury: destitution 14 sore: terribly 15 when no one 16 chaseth: is persecuting / is out to get 17 join 18 properly: particularly 19 into: into 20 despire: show contempt for / brush aside 21 great: large 22 testament: covenant 23 boldness: i.e., their audacious confidence 24 of: in 25 danger: dangerousness 26 bare: mere / bare-bones 27 shift: confession 28 chast: in sexual abstinence 29 pestilent: pernicious 30 fellows: allies / cohorts 31 made: written 32 the bare: the mere; just the 33 were almost: would almost be 34 sort: set 35 in hugger-mugger: in secret; clandestinely 36 shrewd masters: wicked teachers 37 good: i.e., good purpose
Besides the books of Latin, French, and Deutsch, in which there are of these evil sects an innumerable sort... there are made in the English tongue, first Tyndale’s New Testament, father of them all by reason of his false translating. And after that, the Five Books of Moses translated by the same man... we need not doubt in what manner, when we know by what man and for what purpose.

Then have ye his introduction into Saint Paul’s epistle, with which he introduceth and bringeth his readers into a false understanding of Saint Paul... making them, among many other heresies, believe that Saint Paul were in the mind that only faith were always sufficient for salvation, and that men’s good works were nothing worth, nor could no thank deserve nor no reward in heaven, though they were wrought in grace. And these things teacheth Tyndale as the mind of Saint Paul... whereas Saint Paul saith himself that they which so misconstrue him to the depraving of men’s good works be well worthy damnation.

Then have we by Tyndale the Wicked Mammon... by which many a man hath been beguiled and brought into many wicked heresies; which thing—saving that the devil is ready to put out men’s eyes that are content willingly to wax blind—were else, in good faith, to me no little wonder; for never was there made a more foolish, frantic book.

Then have we Tyndale’s book of Obedience... whereby we be taught to disobey the doctrine of Christ’s Catholic Church, and set his holy sacraments at naught.

Then have we from Tyndale the First Epistle of Saint John in such wise expounded that I dare say that blessed apostle, rather than his holy words were in such a sense believed of all Christian people, had liefer his epistle had never been put in writing.

Then have we the Supplication of Beggars, a piteous, beggarly book wherein he would have all the souls in purgatory beg all about for naught.

Then have we from George Joye, otherwise called Cleric, a goodly, godly epistle... wherein he teacheth divers other heresies, but specially that men’s vows and promises made of chastity be not of: in Deutsch: German 2 of: from sort: bunch; lot 2, 21 made: written 3 tongue: language 4 false: deliberately inaccurate; unfaithful 4–5 Five Books of Moses: i.e., Pentateuch 7 introduction... epistle: Its full title is A Compendious Introduction, Prologue, or Preface unto the Epistle to the Romans. 10 were in: i.e., was of only faith: faith by itself 11 were always: would always be thank: credit 13 though: even if 14–16: See Romans 3:8. 15 they which: those who 16 depraving: disparaging worthy: deserving of 17 the: i.e., The Parable of the Men’s... blind: i.e., the eyes of people who are willing to go blind voluntarily were else: would otherwise be in good faith: in all honesty 22 frantic: wildly insane 23 Obedience: i.e., The Obedience of a Christian Man, and How Christian Rulers Ought to Govern. 24 doctrine: teaching(s) 24–25 set... at naught: regard... as of no avail 28 his... were: i.e., have his holy words be of: by 29 had liefer: would prefer that piteous: tear-jerking / pitiful beggarly: intellectually poor he: i.e., the author (Simon Fish) divers: several 35 specially: particularly 36 chastity: perpetual sexual abstinence.
lawful nor can bind no man in conscience, but he may wed when he will.

And this man, considering that when a man teacheth one thing and doth himself another, the people therefore with himself that he would of his preaching show himself example. And therefore, being priest, he hath beguiled a woman and wedded her—the poor woman, I ween, unaware that he is priest. Howbeit, if it be not done already... it is well likely now that (but if God be her special guide) he shall by leisure work her and win her to his own heresy.

Then have ye an exposition also upon the seventh chapter of Saint

1 Corinthians 7 Paul’s epistle to the Corinthians... by

O evangelical liberty! which exposition in like wise priests, friars, monks, and nuns be taught that “evangelical liberty” that they may run out a-caterwauling, and so woo and wed and lawfully live in lechery.

That work hath no name of the maker, but some ween it was Friar Roye... which, when he was fallen in heresy, then found it unlawful to live in chastity, and ran out of his order, and hath since sought many a false, unlawful way to live by... wherein he made so many changes... that, as Bayfield (another heretic, and lately burned in Smithfield) told unto me, he made a meet end at last and was burned in Portugal.

Then have we the Examination of Thorpe, put forth, as it is said, by George Constantine—by whom there hath been, I wot well, of that sort great plenty sent into this realm. In that book the heretic... that made it as a communication between the bishop and his chaplains and himself... maketh all the parties speak as himself liketh, and layeth nothing spoken against his heresies but such as himself would seem solemnly to assoil. Whose book when any good Christian man readeth that hath either learning or any natural wit—shall not only be well able to perceive him for a foolish heretic, and his arguments easy to answer, but shall also see that he showeth himself a false liar in his rehearsal of the matter, wherein he maketh the other party sometimes speak, for his commodity, such

1 lawful: morally licit 1–2 when he will: i.e., if and whenever he wants to 3 considering: realizing
5 set the less by: think the less of 5–6 determined therefore with himself: therefore made up his mind
7 example: i.e., as an example 7, 9 priest: i.e., a priest 8 ween: believe
9 if... done: i.e., if this has not happened // well: quite 10 but if: unless // by leisure: step by step; gradually
12, 14 exposition: commentary 14 wise: manner 16 a-caterwauling: in heat; in animalistic pursuit of sex
16 so: thusly 17 lawfully: with moral rectitude 18 hath... maker: does not bear the name of its author
20 chastity: sexual abstinence // ran out of: absconded from; left without getting a dispensation
20 order: i.e., religious order 21 false: dishonorable 22 lately: recently 23 meet: fitting
27 great plenty: a great abundance // the heretic: I.e., William Thorpe (d. 1407). 27–28 that made: who wrote
28 communication: conversation 30 layeth: alleges / presents 31 solemnly: authoritatively / definitively
31 assoil: refute 32–33 natural wit: innate intelligence / common sense 33 shall: i.e., he shall
35 false: dirty // rehearsal: recounting // matter: incident 36 commodity: benefit
manner things as no man would have done that were not a very wild goose.

Then have we Jonah made out by Tyndale—a book that whoso delight therein shall stand in peril that Jonah was never so swallowed up with the whale as by the delight of that book a man’s soul may be so swallowed up by the devil that he shall never have the grace to get out again.

Then have we, by Tyndale also, the Answer to my Dialogue… whereof I shall nothing now need to say, because the confutation of that answer is the matter of my present book.

Then have we also the book of Frith against purgatory—the errors of which book I shall hereafter, God willing, declare you. Then have ye a book of Luther (translated into English in the name of “Brightwell,” but as I am informed, the book was translated by Frith)—a book of such sort as Tyndale never made a more foolish, nor more full of false lies. And surely Frith’s prologue (if it be his, as it is said) is right suitly and a very meet cover for such a cup, as bridgethe people a draught of deadly poison.

Then have we the Practice of Prelates, wherein Tyndale had went to have made a special show of his high worldly wit… and that men should have seen therein that there were nothing done among princes but that he was fully advertised of all the secrets—and that so far forth that he knew the privy practice made between the King’s Highness and the late Lord Cardinal, and the Reverend Father Cuthbert, then bishop of London, and me: that it was devised wilily that the Cardinal should leave the chancellorship to me, and the bishropic of Durham to my said lord of London, for a while, till he list himself to take them both again. Was this not a wily drift, trow you? Which while every man well seeth there was no man so mad to tell Tyndale, no man doubteth but that Tyndale devised it of his own imagination; and then needeth no man to doubt what manner a brain Tyndale hath, that dreameth such frantic drifts.

Then have we now come forth the book of Friar Barnes, sometime doctor in Cambridge, which was for heresy before this time abjured, and is at this day come to the realm by safe-conduct, which at his humble suit the King’s Highness of his blessed disposition condescended to grant him… to the end that if there might yet any spark of grace be found in him, it might be
kept, kindled, and increased, rather than the man to be cast away. Which manner of Christian zeal and princely benignity His Grace had before used, both to Richard Bayfield and George Constantine, which came over hither without safe-conduct, upon the only trust of his gracious forgiveness, and had it. And thereupon too, by and by, both twain deceitfully did abuse his goodness, and brought in again more of Tyndale’s books and false heresies afresh; whereof as God hath of his justice since requited the one, so mote his mercy by grace amend the other.

But to speak of Friar Barnes’ book, surely of all their books that yet came abroad in English—of all which was never one wise nor good—was never none yet so bad, so foolish, nor so false as his, as it hath since his coming been plainly proved in his face… and that in such wise that when the books that he citeth and allegeth in his book were brought forth before him, and his ignorance shown him, himself did in divers things confess his oversight, and clearly acknowledged that he had mistaken and wrongly understood the places. And was in such wise finally confounded with shame… that he was in a mammering whether he would return again over the sea, or tarry still here and renounce his heresies again, and turn again to Christ’s Catholic Church. And therefore he desired that he might have a learned man then present assigned unto him for the further instruction of his conscience, which his request was granted him, and what will further come thereon, God knoweth. If God give him the grace to amend, every good man will be glad thereof. If he have so far gone against God’s truth, and thereby aggrieved God in such wise, that God have already given him over forever—or else that though God offer his grace again, the malice of the man’s will withstand it yet and reject it—it is not then to be doubted but God will find a time for him well enough to show his justice on him, as he hath done upon such others… and namely, of late, in Switzerland, upon Zwingli, which was the first that brought Barnes’ heresy thither, concerning the Sacrament of the Altar. But as for hence, he shall, I am sure, have leave to depart safe, according to the King’s safe-conduct. And yet hath he so demeaned himself since his coming hither… that he hath clearly broken and forfeited his safe-conduct, and lawfully might be burned for his

1 kept: preserved  1–2 cast away: i.e., convicted, executed, and sent to hell  3 Grace: i.e., Majesty 3 used: exercised // toward  4, 32 which: who  4 hither: here  5 the only: solely the 5 trust: confident expectation // had: received  6 by and by: right away // both twain: both of those two 7 false: vile  8 whereof: regarding which // of: in  9 mote: may  11 yet came abroad: have yet come out 11 which . . . nor: i.e., of which there is not one that’s sensible or erroneous 12 false: erroneous 12–13 as it hath: as has 13 in: to  14, 18, 27 wise: a way  14–15 citeth . . . book: i.e., in his book cites and adduces as supporting his arguments 16 in divers: with regard to several  17 mistaken: erroneously chosen // understood: interpreted 18 the places: i.e., those texts; the passages in question // confounded: overcome 19 mammering: i.e., state of doubt as to  19–20 return . . . sea: go back overseas 20 tarry still: continue to stick around  21 again: back // desired: asked  23 his request: request of his 24 thereon: of that  26, 27 have: has  27 aggrieved: offended  28 offer: i.e., offers 29 withstand . . . reject: i.e., yet withstands it and he rejects  30 but: that  31 namely: notably 33 thither: over there // Sacrament of the Altar: Eucharist / Blessed Sacrament 34 hence: i.e., his getting out of here  35 demeaned: comported  36 hither: over here // broken: violated 37 lawfully: legitimately // might: could
heresies, if we would lay his heresies and his demeanor since his coming hither, both twain, unto his charge. But let him go this once, for God shall find his time full well.

Then have we further yet, besides Barnes’ book, the *ABC for Children*. And because there is no grace therein… lest we should lack prayers, we have the Primer, and the Ploughman’s Prayer, and a book of other small devotions, and then the whole Psalter, too. After the Psalter, children were wont to go to their donet and their accidence; but now they go straight to Scripture. And thereto have we as a donet the book of the *Pathway to Scripture*; and for an accidence, because we should be good scholars shortly and be soon sped, we have the whole sum of Scripture in a little book; so that after these books well learned, we be meet for Tyndale’s Pentateuch, and Tyndale’s Testament, and all the other high heresies that he and Joye and Frith and Friar Barnes teach in all their books besides; of all which heresies the seed is sown, and prettily sprung up, in these little books before. For the Primer and Psalter, prayers and all… were translated and made in this manner by none other but heretics.

The Psalter was translated by George Joye the priest, that is wedded now; and, I hear say, the Primer too, wherein the seven psalms be set in without the litany, lest folk should pray to saints. And the Dirge is left out clean… lest a man might hap to pray thereon for his father’s soul.

In their calendar before their devout prayers, they have set *A stinking martyr* us a new saint: Sir Thomas Hitton, the heretic that was burned in Kent, of whom I shall tell you more after. Him have they set in on Saint Matthias’ Eve, by the name of “Saint Thomas the Martyr.”

A long work would it be to rehearse you all their books, for there be yet more than I know. Against all which the King’s high wisdom politicly provided, in that His Highness by his proclamations forbade any manner English books printed beyond the sea to be brought into this realm, or any to be sold printed within this realm, but if the name of the printer and his dwelling place were set upon the book.

But yet so is it, as I said before, that of these ungracious books full of pestilent, poisoned heresies—that have in other realms already
killed by schisms and war many thousand bodies, and by
sinful errors and abominable heresies, many more thousand souls—
have now a few malicious, mischievous persons brought into this
realm… and labor and enforce themselves, in all that ever they may,
to corrupt and infect all good and virtuous people.

Nor no man is there anywhere living more studious and busy
to do himself good… than those envious wretches be laborious
and fervent to do all other men harm, in body, substance,
and soul.

There be fled out of this realm for heresy a few ungracious
folk—what manner folk, their writing and their living
showeth. For the captains be priests, monks, and friars that
neither say Mass nor Matins, nor never come at church; talking
still of “faith” and full of false heresies, would seem Christ’s apostles and
play the devil’s disours; speaking much of “the Spirit” with no more
devotion than dogs—divers of them, priests, monks, and friars,
not let to wed harlots and then call them wives. And when
they have once villained the Sacrament of Matrimony—then would
they make us violate the Sacrament of the Altar too, telling us, as

O false heretic! Tyndale doth, that it is sin to do the
Blessed Body of Christ in that sacrament
any honor or reverence but only take it for a token.

Now, when their chief captains be such… we shall not need to
doubt of what sort we shall reckon the remnant. These fellows that
naught had here, and therefore naught carried hence, nor nothing
finding there to live upon… be yet sustained and maintained with
money sent them by some evil-disposed persons out of this
realm thither—and that for none other intent but to make them
sit and seek out heresies, and speedily send them hither.

Which books albeit that they neither can be there printed
without great cost nor here sold without great adventure and
peril—yet cease they not with money sent from hence to print them
there and send them hither by the whole vatfuls at once… and in some
places, looking for no lucre, cast them abroad by night; so great a
pestilent pleasure have some devilish people caught… with the
labor, travall, cost, charge, peril, harm, and hurt of themselves
to seek the destruction of others. As the devil hath a deadly
delight to beguile good people, and bring their souls into everlasting
torment, without any manner winning and not without
final increase of his own eternal pain: so do these heretics, the
devil’s disciples, beset their whole pleasure and study, to their own
final damnation, in the training of simple souls to hell by their
devilish heresies.

Much they cry out against the clergy… saying that the priests
love to reign in men’s conscience. But they themselves show that
when they have made the devil reign in a man’s conscience, so
far forth that he hath no conscience to eat flesh on Good
Friday, nor to cast Christ’s cross in the cannal, nor to throw his
Blessed Body out of the pyx—then, after that, likewise as the false

Galatians 6:13

preachers that were Jews labored to have

all Christian people circumcised, to the intent
that, as Saint Paul saith, they might “glory in their flesh”… so be
these archheretics very glad, and great glory they take, when they
may hear that any man is brought to burning through their books.
Then they boast that they have done a great mastery, and say they
have made a martyr… when their poisoned books have killed the
Christian man both in body and soul.

Thus rejoiced Tyndale in the death of Hitton… of whose burning
he boasteth in his Answer to my Dialogue, where he writeth thereof
that whereas I said that I had never found nor heard of any of
them but that he would forswear to save his life, I had heard, he
saith, of Sir Thomas Hitton, whom the bishops of Rochester and
Canterbury slew at Maidstone.

Of this man they so highly rejoice… that they have, as I said, set his name in the calendar before a book of their English
prayers, by the name of “Saint Thomas the Martyr,” in the vigil of
the blessed apostle Saint Matthias, the twenty-third day of February… and
have put out for him the holy doctor and glorious martyr
Saint Polycarp, the blessed bishop and the disciple of Saint
John the Evangelist; for that was his day in deed, and so is it in
some calendars marked.

Now, to the intent that ye may somewhat see what good Christian faith
Sir Thomas Hitton was of, this new saint of Tyndale’s canonization,
in whose burning Tyndale so gaily glorieth, and which
hath his holy day so now appointed to him that Saint Polycarp
must give him place in the calendar: I shall somewhat show you
what wholesome heresies this holy martyr held.

First, ye shall understand that he was a priest… and, falling to
Luther’s sect, and after that to the sect of Friar Huessgen, and
Zwingli, cast off Matins and Mass and all divine service… and so
became an apostle sent to and fro between our English heretics
beyond the sea and such as were here at home.

Now happed it so that, after he had visited here his holy congregations,
in divers corners and lusks’ lanes, and comforted
them in the Lord to stand stiff with the devil in their errors and
heresies—as he was going back again at Gravesend, God, considering
the great labor that he had taken already, and determining
to bring his business to its well-deserved end… gave him
suddenly such a favor, and so great a grace in the visage, that every
man that beheld him took him for a thief. For whereas there had
been certain linen cloths pilfered away that were hanging on a
hedge… and Sir Thomas Hitton was walking not far off, suspiciously
in the meditation of his heresies… the people, doubting that the
beggarly knave had stolen the cloths, fell in question with him and
searched him—and so found they certain letters secretly conveyed
in his coat, written from evangelical brethren here unto the evangelical
heretics beyond the sea. And upon those letters found…

he was with his letters brought before the Most Reverend Father
in God the Archbishop of Canterbury… and afterward as well
by his Lordship as by the Reverend Father the Bishop of
Rochester examined, and after, for his abominable heresies, delivered
to the secular hands and burned.

In his examination he refused to be sworn to say truth…
affirming that neither bishop nor pope had authority to
compel him to swear. Which point although it be a false heresy…
yet is it likely that he refused the oath rather of frowardness than
of any respect that he had either in keeping or breaking. For
never could I find heretic yet that any conscience had in any

A godly lesson, I tell you! oath. And of truth, Tyndale, in his Answer
to my Dialogue, teacheth them that they
may break their oath and be forsworn without any scruple at all. His father and his mother, he would not be acknown of what they were; they were some so good folk, of likelihood, that he could not abide the glory.

He would not be acknown that himself was priest, but said that he had by the space of nine years been beyond the sea, and there lived by the joiners’ craft. Howbeit, he said that he had always, as his leisure would give him leave, and as he could find opportunity in places where he came, taught the Gospel of God after his own mind and his own opinion, not forcing of the determination of the Church… and said that he intended, to his power, so to persevere still.

Of his teaching, these things were part. First, as for Baptism, he agreed it for a sacrament necessary to salvation. Howbeit, every layperson, he said, might as well baptize as a priest, were the child in necessity or not; and that the form of baptizing used in the Church were much better if it were spoken in English.

Of Matrimony, whether it were a sacrament or not he said he wist ne’er. But he said yet that it was a thing necessary, and of Christian people to be observed and kept. Howbeit, as for the solemnization of marriage at church, he agreed it for good, but said it needed not. The man meant by likelihood that it was good enough to wed upon a cushion when the dogs be abed, as their priests wed, I ween, where their persons be known. For else they let not to wed openly at church, and take the whole parish for witnesses of their beastly bitchery.

The Extreme Unction, or Aneling, and Confirmation… he said be no sacraments of the Church, nor be nothing necessary to the soul.

The Sacrament of Order, he said, is no sacrament of the Church, nor was never ordained by God in the New Testament, but only by man. The Mass, he said, should never be said. For he said that to say Mass after the manner of the Church is rather sin than virtue.

As for confession made to a priest, he said nothing profiteth the soul; nor penance enjoined of the priest unto the penitent confessed, is nothing necessary.

1 be forsworn: commit perjury  
2 be . . . what: i.e., reveal anything about who or what kind of people  
3 of likelihood: most likely  
4 be acknown: acknowledge  
5 himself was: i.e., he himself was a  
6 by the space: for the duration  
7 beyond the sea: overseas  
8 joiners’ craft: woodworking trade  
9 after: according to  
10 forcing of: caring about  
11 may as well: could as rightly  
12 necessity: pressing need; i.e., danger of death  
13 form of: formula for  
14 were: would be  
15 were: i.e., was  
16 wist ne’er: had no idea  
17 were: would be  
18 were: i.e., was  
19 of: by  
20 needed not: was not necessary  
21 however  
22 his . . . leave: i.e., the amount of his free time would allow him to  
23 necessity: pressing need; i.e., danger of death  
24 form of: formula for  
25 of: by  
26 forcing of: caring about  
27 Aneling: Anointing (of the Sick)  
28 nothing: in any way  
29 of: by  
30 Order: Holy Orders  
31 ordained: established; instituted  
32 nothing: not at all  
33 confess: i.e., after his or her confessing  
34 nothing: not at all  
35 of: by  
36 nothing: not at all
Purgatory he denied, and said also that neither prayer nor fasting for the souls departed can do them any good.

To vow and enter into any religion approved by the law, he said availeth not… but he said that all that enter into religion sin in so doing.

He held also that no man hath any free will after that he hath once sinned.

He held that to say any Divine Service after the ordinance of the Church availeth nothing… and that all Divine Service may be left unsaid without any sin.

He held that all the images of Christ and his saints should be thrown out of the church.

He held also that whatsoever the pope or the general council make, beside that that is expressly commanded in Scripture… every man may lawfully break it, without any manner sin at all, mortal or venial either.

He held also that it is not lawful neither for the king of England nor for any other Christian prince… to make any law or statute for the punishment of any theft, or any other crime, by which law any man should suffer death. For he said that all such laws be contrary to the Gospel, which will no man to die.

As touching the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, he said it is a necessary sacrament; but he held that after the Consecration there was none other thing therein but only the very substance of material bread and wine; and so, he said, he firmly believed, and that he would hold that opinion to the death.

Finally, holding all these abominable heresies, with yet divers others more of like suit and sort… he said that he was very certain and sure that he had the grace of God with him, and that the Holy Ghost was within him.

And so was he… after much favor shown him, and much laborcharitably taken for the saving of him… delivered in conclusion, for his obstinacy, to the secular hands, and burned up in his false faith and heresies… whereof he learned the great part of Tyndale’s holy books; and now the spirit of error and lying hath taken his wretched soul with him straight from the short fire to the fire everlasting.

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1 denied: i.e., denied the existence of
3 vow: i.e., take religious vows
5 religion . . . law: i.e., canonically approved religious order
7 after that: i.e., after such time as
9 any: i.e., any part of the
10 after: in accord with
12 availeth nothing: is of no avail
13 all: the whole
14 any: i.e., this being any
15 the general: i.e., an ecumenical
16 beside: other than
18 prince: sovereign / ruler
20 every man: anyone
22 as touching: as regards
24 suit and sort: class and variety
26 opinion: (dissident) view
28 of: from
30 error: aberrancy
And this is, lo, Sir Thomas Hitton, the devil’s stinking “martyr” of whose burning Tyndale maketh boast. Wherefore since Tyndale alloweth his cause— he must needs defend his articles. And now wot I well that some of those articles Tyndale hath himself given over at last for shame—as the article against images, and the article against the liberty of man’s free will… wherein he beareth me in hand, in his Answer to my Dialogue, that I belie Luther. But when I shall come to the place, I shall let you see Luther’s own words in that point so plain… that ye shall not marvel though Tyndale were ashamed of his master. And yet shall ye marvel that Tyndale was so shameless to deny the thing which ye shall see so plainly proved.

But ye see that of this holy “martyr” Tyndale hath not so great cause to glory but that he may scrape out his name again out of the calendar and restore the blessed bishop Saint Polycarp again into his place.

Then have ye had here burned since at London, of late, Richard Bayfield, late a monk and a priest, which fell to heresy and was abjured… and after that like a dog returning to his vomit, and being fled over the sea, and sending from thence Tyndale’s heresies hither with many mischievous sorts of books, had yet the King’s gracious forgiveness… and, as it was after proved both by other men’s and his own confession too, was occupied about two things at once: that is to wit, both in suing for remission and pardon of his offense for bringing in those books, and therewith also in selling them here still, secretly, and sending over for more—with which at last he was taken. And to rehearse his heresies needeth little; the books that he brought well showeth them, and his holy life well declareth them… when, being both a priest and a monk, he went about two wives, one in Brabant, another in England.

What he meant I cannot make you sure—whether he would be sure of the one if the other should hap refuse him… or that he would have them both, the one here, the other there… or else both in one place, the one because he was priest, the other because he was monk.

Of Bayfield’s burning hath Tyndale no great cause to glory. For though Tyndale’s books brought him to burning… yet was he not so
constant in his evangelical doctrine but that after that he was taken, all the while that he was not in utter despair of pardon... he was well content to have forsworn it again—and letted not to utter his evangelical brethren both in England and elsewhere, causing some of them to be taken—as George Constantine, ere he escaped, was ready to have, in word at the leastwise, abjured all that holy doctrine. What his heart was, God and he know, and peradventure the devil too, if he intended otherwise. But surely there was intended toward him somewhat more good than his dealing had before deserved. And so much the more favor was there minded him in that he seemed very penitent of his misusing of himself in falling to Tyndale's heresies again. For which he acknowledged himself worthy to be hanged—that he had so falsely abused the King's gracious remission and pardon given him before, and had, for all that, in the while both bought and sold of those heretical books and secretly set forth those heresies. Whereof he showed himself so repentant that he uttered and disclosed divers of his companions, of whom there are some abjured since, and some that he wist well were abjured before—namely Richard Necton, which was by Constantine's detection taken and committed to Newgate... where except he hap to die before, in prison, he standeth in great peril to be, ere it be long, for his falling again to Tyndale’s heresies, burned. And thus it seemed by the manner of George Constantine while he was here in prison... that he so sore did forthink his errors and heresies, and so perceived the pestilent poison of them, that he thought it better that such as were infected therewith might be by the means of his detection amended, and with the loss of his body the soul cured, than both twain cast away; or, if the man were peradventure of hard heart and malicious mind incurable, he thought it were then better to send him to the devil alone than let him live and draw many others with him.

This good mind it seemeth that Constantine had then, and therefore was there good hope of his amendment. And peradventure the man had amended, and stood still in grace, if some evil counsel had not come at him; of which there was left unsought no devilish invention or means to send him—insomuch that one
of the letters I fortuned to intercept myself, written unto him by one John Burt, otherwise calling himself Adrian, otherwise John Bookbinder, and yet otherwise now, I cannot tell you what.

Of truth, George Constantine, after he had confessed unto a faithful servant of mine, to be declared to me, that Necton had of his delivery many of these heretical books—he sent word forthwith to Necton that he should send the books home to me. Which if he did, and that I might have yet seen sure tokens of amendment in the man… Constantine perceived well that he had been yet likely to have had favor shown him. But when that Necton had once made Burt of his counsel… they devised between them that Necton should not do so in no wise, affirming to Constantine that it could not be done; and haply it could not indeed, for peradventure they were all sold already. Howbeit, Necton now, since he was taken, said that his wife had burned them. But it is well known that Necton had himself, and a man of his also, sold many such books of heresy, both in London and in other shires, since his abjuration. But howsoever the matter was… Burt by his letter advised Constantine, if he might possibly, to call back his confession again; wherein I think it good that ye hear his very letter itself.

Lo, in these words he wrote:

“The grace and peace of our Savior Jesus be with you, good brother Constantine. Sir, as for the matter that ye would have brought to pass, will not be, in no manner wise; the person is not at home that should receive the stuff and deliver it according unto your mind. Therefore, if ye have not spoken so far in the matter that it may be none prejudice or hurt unto you, I would ye should go no further in the matter… but even, as a man armed with faith, go forth in your matter boldly and put them to their proofs. As for one is none, you

2 Corinthians 13:1 know well, by the law of God or man. If there be anything that I can do, send word and ye shall find me ready to my power, even to death, by God’s grace, who I pray long to preserve you and comfort you in your trouble, to the confusion of all tyrants.”

Lo, here have ye heard an apostolical epistle counseling the man to go back with the truth and “arm” himself with “faith,”
and make him strong to lie loud and forswear himself if need
were; for Burt wist well I were not likely to leave and believe him
at his bare word.

Here will Burt peradventure preach, and bring us in the midwives
of Egypt that saved the children of Israel from Pharaoh, for
which God gave them new houses. Wherein Burt and I will not
much dispute. For albeit that God hath given him no house yet,
nor it is not all one with a lie to save a young innocent babe and
with perjury to defend an old pestilent heretic; and though

To lie it is not lawful. Saint Augustine saith that it is not lawful to
lie for nothing: yet I tell not my tale to
lay a lie so highly to any such men's charge as these folk be,
whose whole sect is nothing else but lies; but I rehearse you his letter
because ye should see what truth there is in such folks' words.

Howbeit, as for Constantine—as I said before, seemed in prison
here very penitent, and utterly minded to forsake such heresies
and heretics forever. In proof whereof he not only detected, as I
said, his own deeds and his fellows', but also studied and devised how
those devilish books which himself and others of his fellows
had brought and shipped might come to the bishop's hands
to be burned. And therefore he showed me the shipman's
name that had them, and the marks of the fardels by which I
have since his escape received them. And it may be, by God's
grace, that though the man fled hence for fear of such harm as
he wist he had well deserved (and yet was nothing toward him
but peradventure more good than he was aware of), he is yet amended
in his mind and hath in his heart forsaken all Tyndale's heresies;
and so I pray God it be; for I would be sorry that ever Tyndale
should glory and boast of his burning. Howbeit, in the meanwhile,
till it may well appear that he be surely turned to the
Catholic faith again, I will advise all good Christian folk, and
especially the King's subjects, to forbear and eschew his company.
For that Englishman which shall be found to be familiar with
him there, before his conversion here known and proved, may
thereby bring himself in suspicion of heresy, and haply hear
thereof at his returning hither.

I hear also that Tyndale highly rejoiceth in the burning of
Tewkesbury; but I can see no very great cause why but if he reckon it
for a great glory that the man did abide still by the stake when he
was fast bound to it. For as for the heresies, he would have
abjured them again with all his heart, and have accursed Tyndale,
eto, if all that might have saved his life. And so he gave counsel
unto one James that was for heresy in prison with him. For as
James hath since confessed, Tewkesbury said unto him, “Save you
yourself and abjure. But as for me, because I have abjured before,
there is no remedy with me but death.” By which words, if he had not
been in despair of life… it well appeareth he would with good will
have once abjured, and once perjured, again. And yet at his
examination he denied that ever he had held any such
opinions as he was abjured for—notwithstanding that there were at
his examination some persons present of much honesty and
worship, two that had been present at his abjuration before… to
which also his own hand was subscribed. And afterward being
further examined upon the same… some he denied, and some he defended
again. Among other things, he said that he used to
prayer to saints
pray to saints, and that he believed them
to be God’s friends, and that their
prayers were profitable to us, and well done to pray to
them. Whereupon I said unto him myself that I was glad to see him
in that point yet amended, and I showed him, as the truth was indeed,
that James held the contrary, and that he had so great
a trust in Tewkesbury that I doubted not but when he should hear
that Tewkesbury had revoked that point, he would revoke it too. As
soon as Tewkesbury heard that, he went from it again by and by—and
that so far that finally he would not agree that before the Day of
Doom there were either any saint in
heaven or soul in purgatory, or in hell
either. Nor the right faith in the Sacrament
of the Altar would he not confess, in no wise. For which
things and divers other horrible heresies, he was delivered at
last unto the secular hands and burned, as there was never
wretch, I ween, better worthy.

Yet is there one thing notable, and well declaring what good
and charitable mind the man died in. For after that he was
delivered unto the secular hands... neither while he was in prison
nor at the time of his death would he by his will be acknown of any
of his heresies unto any man that asked him any question, but
covered and hid them by all the means he could make, and
labored to make every man ween that he had never held any such
opinion. And by this dealing every man may see that he rought
not so much for his heresies, nor took them not in his own mind for
such things as he so greatly forced whether they went forward or
backward, as he would fain leave an opinion among the people
that his judges had borne him wrong in hand and condemned him
for such heresies as he never held. And what conscience he had that
died in that mind, there is no good man doubteth.

Now was his examination not secret, but folk enough thereat,
both spiritual and temporal, and of either party right worshipful...
sO that his malicious mind can in that point little take
effect. And yet did the same James also confess afterward that
Tewkesbury had read unto him Wycliffe’s “Wicket” against the
Blessed Sacrament. And over that was there found about him,
by the sheriff’s officers in the prison, a book of heresy of his own
handwriting: that is to wit, the book of Martin Luther wherein he
teacheth men under the name of “Christian liberty” to run into the
devil’s bondage. And in his house was found Tyndale’s book of
Obedience, which he well allowed, and his wicked book also
of the Wicked Mammon, saying at his examination that all the
heresies therein were good and Christian faith; being in deed as full
of false heresies, and as frantic, as ever heretic made any since
Christ was born. And yet, all this notwithstanding, when he was
in the sheriff’s ward, and at the time of his death... he would not
speak of his heresies anything, nor say that he had held and
would hold this point and that... but handled himself as covertly
as he could, to make the people ween that he had held no
manner opinion at all; nor never had, I think, if Tyndale’s ungracious
books had never come in his hand. For which the poor
wretch lieth now in hell and crieth out on him; and Tyndale, if
he do not amend in time, he is likely to find him, when they come
together, a hot firebrand burning at his back, that all the
water in the world will never be able to quench.

Another is there also whom his unhappy books have brought unto
the fire: Thomas Bilney, that was before abjured… which was the man of whom without name I spoke so much in my Dialogue… which, being convicted by twenty witnesses and above, did yet stick still in his denial… and said they were all forsworn and had utterly belied him.

But God, which is very Truth, and bringeth at last always the truth to light, would not suffer such obstinate untruth at length to pass unpunished… but of his endless mercy brought his body to death, and gave him yet the grace to turn and save his soul. For so was it that—after divers sermons which he had after his abjuration, and against the prohibitions given him upon his abjuration, made in sundry secret corners, and some also openly, whereof the bishop yet, because he heard of no heresy therein, had forborne to lay the disobedience to his charge—he went unto Norwich, where he had infected divers of the city before. And being there secretly kept by a certain space, had in the while resort unto an anchoress… and there began secretly to sow his cockle, and brought unto her divers of Tyndale’s books, and was there taken in the doing, and the books after found about another man, that was conveying them thence; and these things, whoso heard the whole process, came in such wise to pass that he could nothing doubt but that it came to light by the very provision of God.

When he came to examination, he waxed stiff and stubborn in his opinions. But yet was God so good and gracious Lord unto him that he was finally so fully converted unto Christ and his true, Catholic faith that, not only at the fire, as well in words as writing, but also many days before, he had revoked, abhorred, and detested such heresies as he before had held; which notwithstanding, there lacked not some that were very sorry for it… of whom some said, and some wrote out of Norwich to London, that he had not revoked his heresies at all, but still had abided by them. And such as were not ashamed thus to say and write, being afterward examined thereupon, saw the contrary so plainly proved in their faces, by such as at his execution stood by him while he read his revocation himself… that they had in conclusion nothing else to say but that he read his revocation so softly that they could not

1. that . . . abjured: i.e., that man previously having been convicted of heresy and having recanted
3. convicted by: i.e., proved again guilty, by above: more stick: keep persisting
4. were all forsworn: all had committed perjury belied: slandered very Truth: Truth itself
5. suffer: allow untruth: untruthfulness; dishonesty at length: for long pass: go turn: come back
6. divers: several abjuration: i.e., previous conviction and recanting his: i.e., that
7. kept: given living accommodations; supported by: . . . space: for a certain length of time
8. in the while: i.e., during that time cockle: injurious weed taken in the doing: caught in the act
9. after: later about: in the possession of conveying them thence: stealthily transporting them from there
10. whoso: whoever process: story wise: a way nothing doubt: have no doubt
11. provision: providence examination: trial stiff: adamant rigid in: regarding
12. opinions: dissident views / deviant tenets words: i.e., spoken words revoked: retracted
13. abhorred: abominated detested: execrated for: about still . . . them: had continued to stand by them
14. examined: interrogated in: i.e., to by: near in conclusion: in the end
hear it. Howbeit, they confessed that he looked upon a bill and read it... but they said that they could not tell whether it were the bill of his revocation or not. And yet rehearsed they themselves certain things spoken by him to the people at the fire... whereby they could not but perceive well that he revoked his errors, albeit that some of them watered his words with additions of their own—as it was well proved before them. They could not also deny but that forthwith upon his judgment and his degradation, he knelt down before the bishop’s chancellor, in the presence of all the people, and humbly besought him of absolution from the sentence of excommunication... and with his judgment held himself well content, and acknowledged that he had well deserved to suffer the death that he then wist he should.

They could not say nay but that upon this humble request and prayer... he was there, in the presence of all the people, assoiled, before that he was carried out of the Court; which themselves well wist would never have been but if he had revoked.

Yet was there another thing that they could not deny (for albeit they said they were not thereat, yet they had heard it in such wise that, as they said, they believed it to be true), and that thing was such as itself alone must needs make them sure that he had revoked his heresies.

The thing was this. He labored, and made great instance, certain days after his judgment... that he might be suffered to receive the Blessed Body of Christ in form of bread. Wherein the chancellor made a while great sticking and difficulty... to the intent that he would the better and more clearly perceive what devotion the man had thereto. And finally perceiving him to be of a true, perfect faith, and his desire to proceed of a fervent mind, it was agreed and granted. And thereupon was he houseled in so true, perfect faith, and so great devotion, that every good Christian man hath great cause to rejoice therein. And when his confessor in the end of the Mass, which Bilney full devoutly heard upon his knees, brought unto him the Body of Christ upon the paten of the chalice, with very good and godly exhortation used unto him, that except he were in heart as he was in word and outward semblance, he should else forbear to receive...
that Blessed Body… since he should then undoubtedly receive it on his own damnation—it would have gladdened any good Christian heart to have heard his faithful Christian answer… as they report and testify that were at that time by.

Moreover, where, in the presence of that holy Sacrament held yet upon the paten in the priest’s hands, Bilney before he received it said the Collect “Domine Jesu Christe”—when he came at these words “ecclesiae tuae pacem et concordiam,” he divers times repeated those words, with tunsions and knockings upon his breast… and there unto God confessed, and asked his mercy, that he had so grievously erred in that point, and so sore offended him in contemning his church. And no marvel was it though he had a special remorse of that article. For the contemning of Christ’s Catholic,

*The very foundation whereupon known church, and the framing of a secret, unknown church, that he learned of Luther and Tyndale… was the very point that brought him unto all his mischief, as the very foundation whereupon all other heresies are built. And therefore, as the goodness of God gave him grace to cast unto the devil all his other errors, so gave he him his special grace to have of that heresy that was and is the ground of all the remnant, most especial repentance and remorse; whereby we may very well hope and trust that our Lord, whose high goodness gave him such grace so fully to repent and revoke his heresies that he with glad heart was content to suffer the fire for the punishment of his offense, hath of his infinite mercy taken and accepted that pain for so far as he will exact of the poor man’s purgatory… and setting the merits of his own painful Passion thereunto, hath forthwith from the fire taken his blessed soul to heaven… where he now prayeth incessantly for the repentance and amendment of all such as have been by his means while he lived, into any such errors induced or confirmed. And I firmly trust that God’s grace to that effect with that holy man’s prayer will work; and so I pray God it may.

But thus ye see that Tyndale hath no great cause to glory of his “martyrs”… when that their living is openly naught, their opinions such as himself will abhor, they ready to abjure again if it

1 on: to 4 by: nearby 5 Sacrament: i.e., Blessed Sacrament; consecrated host 7 Collect: Mass prayer. (This is the Rite of Peace one; the prayer immediately following the Our Father.) 7 came at: got to 8 ecclesiae . . . concordiam: (grant unto) thy Church peace and concord 8 divers: several 9 tunsions: strikings 11 erred in: gone astray regarding 11 sore: seriously; terribly 11, 13 contemning: contemptuous(ly) disregarding; flouting 12 marvel: wonder 13 of that article: i.e., concerning that article of the faith 14 framing: postulating 16 of: from 17 brought … mischief: got him into all his trouble 18–19 the goodness of God: i.e., God in his goodness 19 grace: i.e., the grace 20 his: i.e., the 21 remnant: rest 24 revoke: retract 35 glory of: glory in / boast of 36 when: i.e., given; seeing 36 living: way of living 36 naught: immoral 36 opinions: statements of belief 37 abhor: recoil from with horror and disgust 37 abjure: i.e., recant
might save their life, their sects so desperate that either they
dare not at the fire set forth their opinions, for shame, or else of
malice do dissemble them to bring the people in a false opinion of
their judges, to ween that they judged wrong. And Bilney, that had
learning, and had been accustomed in moral virtues, was by God
revoked from Tyndale's heresy ere he died—and that, of likelihood, the
rather because God would not have all his good works lost.

And yet glorieth Tyndale ungraciously in their destruction…
reckoning that their painful death doth great worship to his
books—which are of such sort that never were there worse nor
more abominable written.

And yet, his books being such, some folk there are that with
such foolish favor and such blind affection read them that,
t heir taste infected with the fever of heresies, they not only cannot
discern the thing that they read (which if they could, they
were in good way toward amendment), but also are discontent
and angry with any man that would help them to perceive it… and
fain would they have them rather believed than answered.

Of which sort some have asked what have I to do to meddle
with the matter… saying that being a layman, I should leave it to
the clergy to write in… and not having professed the study of Holy
Scripture, I should leave the matter wholly unto divines. Surely, first, as
touching learning, if that these matters were very doubtful and
things of great question—or had been so cunningly handled by
Tyndale and his fellows as they might seem thereby matters of
great doubt and question—then would I peradventure let them
alone myself, to be debated by men of more erudition and learning.
But, now, the matters being so plain, evident, and clear—and
by the whole church of Christ so clearly put out of question that it is
plain and open heresy earnestly to bring them in question—I
never purpose, being in my right mind and a true Christian man, to
give a heretic so much authority as to reckon myself unable in
so plain points of the Christian faith to answer him; namely since I
have gone somewhat to school myself, and bestowed as many years in
study, and under as cunning masters, as some of them have… and
that I see not hitherto these matters handled in such wise by Tyndale,
or the best of them besides that ever have written therein, but

1 desperate: i.e., far gone in their evilness
2 opinions: deviant tenets / dissenting views
3, 30 in: into
4 ween: think
5 accustomed in: i.e., habitually practicing
6 revoked: brought back away
7 rather: more readily
8 ungraciously: disgracefully
9 worship: honor
10 such: such a
11 favor: partiality
12 affection: inclination / liking
13 discern: i.e., see clearly
14 the fever of heresies: heresy fever / the excitingness of heresies
15 discern: i.e., see clearly
16 were . . . toward: would have a good chance of / would be well on their way to
17 perceive: grasp / see through
18 fain . . . rather: much rather would they have them
19 sort: kind (of folk)
20 with: such as
21 professed: i.e., majored in / earned a degree in
22 divines: professional theologians
23 as regards: as regards
24 of great: i.e., very much open to / cunningly: cleverly
25 fellows: cohorts
26 peradventure: perhaps
27 clear and obvious: clearly
28 earnestly: seriously
29 a true: an orthodox / a true-blue
30 give: ascribe to
31 33 in so: regarding such
32 namely: especially
33 gone somewhat: done some going
34 somewhat: a way
35 cunning masters: knowledgeable teachers
36 hitheerto: thus far
37 therein: on them
that a right mean-learned man, or almost an unlearned woman
having natural wit and being sure and fast in the true
Catholic faith, were well able to answer them.

For so help me God as I nothing find effectual among them
all, but a shameless boldness and unreasonable railing—with
scriptures wrested awry, and made to minister them matter unto
their jesting, scoffing, and outrageous ribaldry—not only
against every estate here in earth, and that against them most that
be most religious in living, but also against all the saints in
heaven, and against the Blessed Body of Christ in the Holy Sacrament
of the Altar. In which things they fare as folk that trust in
nothing else but to weary all writers at last with endless and
importunate babbling, and to overwhelm the whole world with
words.

Now, as for me, the cause is, of my writing, not so much to debate
and dispute these things with them—which (though I trust
therein to give them no great place) many men may do much better
yet than I—as to give men warning what mischief is in their
books, because many good simple folk, believing that these men

neither say nor mean so evil as they be borne in hand... and
longing therefore to read their books and see the thing themselves,
be first infected with some heresies that seem not at the first
intolerable, ere ever they come at the greatest; and then, being
before infected with the less, they fall at last to bear the greater, to
which in the beginning they could never have abided.

Now if they will ask, is there nobody to give them warning but
I?—yes, there be that be meet thereto, and there be that in deed
do so; and yet, among others, that part appertaineth to me. For I
well know that the King’s Highness—which, as he, for his most
faithful mind to God, nothing more effectually desireth than the
maintenance of the true Catholic faith (whereof he is, by his no
more honorable than well deserved title, Defensor), so nothing more
detesteth than these pestilent books that Tyndale and such others
send into the realm, to set forth here their abominable heresies
with—doth, of his blessed disposition, of all earthly things
abhor the necessity to do punishment; and for that cause hath
not only by his most erudite, famous books, both in English

1 right mean-learned man: man of very little education  //  almost: for that matter
2 unlearned: academically uneducated  //  natural wit: innate intelligence / common sense
3 sure and fast: good and securely; firmly grounded  //  were: would be  //  God as I: i.e., God, I
4 effectual: cogent / intellectually compelling  //  but: i.e., but only  //  unreasonable: irrational
5 wrested: wrenched; twisted  //  minister... unto: provide them fodder for
6 outrageous: unconscionable  //  ribaldry: i.e., hurling of scurrilous insults
7 jesting: jeering  //  estate: dignitary
8 in: on  //  religious: godly  //  in: i.e., in their ways of
9 mischievous: harm / evil
10 estate: dignitary  //  hold: abided: submitted
11 place: position of advantage  //  may: i.e., could
12 weary: wear down
13❡: before  //  at: to  //  less: lesser  //  fall: come  //  bear: hold
14 be that: i.e., are some who  //  be meet thereto: i.e., are qualified to do this
15 so: i.e., in fact are doing it  //  part: i.e., duty  //  appertaineth: belongs
16 the King’s Highness: i.e., His Majesty the King  //  which: who  //  for: on account of
17 set forth: advance; propagate
18 mind to: disposition toward  //  effectually: earnestly
19 pestilent: pernicious; lethally dangerous
20 hand: i.e., anything as bad as what they’re being accused of saying or meaning
21 less: lesser
22 hold: submitted
and in Latin, declared his most Catholic purpose and intent... but also by his open proclamations (divers times iterated and renewed) and finally in his own most royal person, in the Star Chamber, most eloquently, by his own mouth, in great presence of his lords spiritual and temporal... gave monition and warning to all the justices of peace, of every quarter of his realm, then assembled before His Highness, to be by them in their countries to all his people declared... and did prohibit and forbid, upon great pain, the bringing in, reading, and keeping of any of those pernicious, poisoned books... to the intent that every subject of his, by the means of such manifold effectual warning, with his gracious remission of their former offense in his commandment before broken, should from thenceforth avoid and eschew the peril and danger of punishment... and not drive His Highness of necessity to the thing from which the mildness of his benign nature abhorreth.

Now—seeing the King's gracious purpose in this point—I reckon that, being his unworthy Chancellor, it appertaineth, as I said, unto my part and duty to follow the example of his noble Grace... and, after my poor wit and learning, with opening to his people the malice and poison of those pernicious books, to help, as much as in me is, that his people, abandoning the contagion of all such pestilent writing, may be far from infection... and thereby from all such punishment as, following thereupon, doth oftentimes rather serve to make others beware that are yet clear, than to cure and heal well those that are already infected; so hard is that

*Heresy is hard to be cured.* carbuncle, catching once a core, to be by any means well and surely cured. Howbeit, God so worketh that sometimes it is. Toward the help whereof— or if it haply be incurable, then to the clean cutting out the part for infection of the remnant—am I by mine office, in virtue of mine oath, and every officer of justice through the realm for his rate, right especially bound... not in reason only, and good congruence, but also by plain ordinance and statute.

Wherefore I reckon myself of duty deeply bound to show you, good readers, the peril of these books... whereof the makers have such mischievous mind that they boast and glory when their ungracious
writing bringeth any man to death. And yet make they semblance
as though they were sorry for it. And then Tyndale crieth out
upon the prelates and upon the temporal princes, and calleceth
them murderers and martyr-quellers—dissembling that the cruel
wretch with his wretched books murdereth the man himself,
while he giveth him the poison of his heresies and thereby compelleth
princes by occasion of their incurable and contagious
pestilence to punish them, according to justice, by sore, painful
death, both for example and for infection of others.

Which thing as sore as these heretics reprove… affirming that
it is against the Gospel of Christ that any heretic should be
persecuted and punished, and especially by bodily pain or death—
and some of them say the same of every manner crime (theft, murder,
treason, and all)—yet in Almaine now, contrary to their own
evangelical doctrine, those evangelicals themselves cease not to
pursue and punish by all the means they may, by purse, by prison,
by bodily pain, and death, divers their evangelical brethren
that vary from their sect; as there are of those counterfeit evangelicals
more sundry sorts of diabolical sects than a man may
well rehearse.

And to this, at the last, be they driven themselves, contrary to
their own former doctrine… because they find and prove well by
experience that, though their sects be but false heresies all, yet
cannot the one sort long dwell with the other… but that if they
begin once to be matches, they shall not fail at length to contend
and strive together, and by seditions the one drive the other
to ruin. For never shall the country long abide without debate and
ruffle… where schisms and factious heresies are suffered a while to
grow.

Believe me not if any man can reckon a place where ever he found
it otherwise. In Africa the Donatists; in Greece the Arians; in
Bohemia the Hussites; in England the Wycliffists; and now in
Almaine the Lutherans… and after that, the Zwinglians: what business
they have made, what destruction and manslaughter they
have caused, partly the stories witness, partly men have presently
seen. And yet hath God always maintained and continued his
true, Catholic faith, with the great fall and ruin at length of many
schismatical sects... whose fall undoubtedly the remnant will in conclusion follow, with the plain and open wrath of God shown upon their false prophets—as it fell upon the prophets both of Bel and Baal, and now, this year, upon Zwingli himself, that first brought into Switzerland the abominable heresy against the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and was, as I say, by the hand of God this year slain in plain battle against the Catholics, with many a thousand of his wretched sect; being in number to the Catholics three against one... and as proudly and with as malicious purpose invading them as ever did the Egyptians pursue the children of Israel.

But now saith Tyndale and Friar Barnes both, that I do them wrong in that I call their books seditious. For they counsel, they say, the people, in their books, to be obedient unto their sovereigns and rulers although they should suffer wrong; “and how can our books then,” say they, “be seditious?”

Surely, to make men heretics and then bid them be meek (when Heresy springeth of pride. heresy springeth, as Saint Augustine saith, of pride!) standeth as well with reason... as to make a man drunk, and bid him be sober; make him stark mad, and bid him be well advised; make him a stark thief, and bid him see he steal not.

Howbeit—besides the sedition that every schism and division must needs move and provoke among any people that are of diverse sects, although they were all obedient unto one prince... and cause them thereby, though they rebelled not against his person, yet to break the peace and quiet of his country, and run into the danger and peril of his laws—let us yet further look and consider in what manner and fashion they counsel the people to obey their princes.

They bid the people for a countenance to be obedient. But they say therewith that the laws and precepts of their sovereigns do nothing bind the subjects in their consciences but if the things by them commanded or forbidden were before commanded or forbidden in Scripture. And all the words of Scripture whereby they be commanded to obey their governors would they restrain unto those things only that are expressed already within the corps of Scripture. So that if they can beguile the laws and precepts of their

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1 the remnant: (the falls of) the rest 1–2 in conclusion: in the end 2 open: manifest // shown: visited
4 that: who 7 plain: open / literal 13, 15 wrong: an injustice 15 although: i.e., even if in so doing
17 surely: assuredly 17, 20, 21, 22 bid them/him: tell them/him to 19 standeth as well: is as consonant
21 well advised: very judicious // a stark: a hardcore; an inveterate 22 see: i.e., see to it that
23 howbeit: however // division: discord 24 move: stir up // provoke: instigate // diverse: different
25 sects: religious persuasions 25, 26 (al)though: even if 25 obedient unto one: i.e., subjects of the same
25, 29 prince(s): ruler; sovereign(s) 26 his person: i.e., him personally 27 break: disrupt
27–28 run... peril: i.e., incur the liabilities and risks connected with the breaking 30 bid: tell
30 for a countenance: for appearances’ sake 32 nothing: not at all // but if: unless 33 were: i.e., are
33 before: already 35 restrain: restrict 36 corps: body; aggregate 37 beguile: get around
sILLISECONDS unawares to other men, and thereby flee from the peril of outward, bodily punishment, their evangelical liberty should serve them sufficiently for discharge of their conscience, and inwardly make them, in their souls, clear, angelical hypocrites!

Now, when they falsely tell them that they be not bound to obey their governors’ lawful commandments… and then holily counsel them to obey their unlawful “tyranny” (for by that name call they the laws), what effect ween ye they would that their advice should have? They know themselves well enough, and the manner of the people, too… and be not so mad, I warrant you, but that they perceive full well that if they can persuade the people to believe that they be not in their conscience bound to obey the laws and precepts of their governors… themselves be no such precious apostles that folk would forbear their own ease or pleasure for the faint, feigned counsel of a few false apostates! And thus is it sure that by their false doctrine they must, if they be believed, bring the people into the secret contempt, and spiritual disobedience, and inward hatred, of the law; whereof must after follow the outward breach, and thereupon outward punishment and peril of rebellion—whereby the princes should be driven to sore effusion of their subjects’ blood, as hath already mishappened in Almaine and, of old time, in England.

Let us yet consider further a point of their good, holy counsel concerning the people’s obedience.

Friar Barnes, in his frantic book, biddeth the people that they should not rebel, in no wise. But he biddeth them therewith that, for all the King’s commandment, they should not suffer Tyndale’s false translation of the Scripture go out of their hand… but rather die than leave it. Now knoweth he well that the false, malicious manner that Tyndale hath used in the translating thereof—as I have proved both in my Dialogue and since again in this book…and as Tyndale doth himself in his own Answer openly confess in the titles of “penance” and “priest”—was done to set forth his false heresies with. And therefore it appeareth well that Barnes would have the people rather die than obey their princes in putting away that book that is falsely translated for the maintenance of many pestilent heresies. And thus ye see how fain he

1 unawares . . . men: i.e., without other people knowing about it 3 discharge of their: i.e., giving them a clear 4 clear: guiltless / complete 5 bound: obliged (by God) 6, 7 (un)lawful: morally (il)licit; (il)legitimate 8–9 ween . . . have: i.e., do you think they want their advice to have 10 manner: disposition 11 warrant: assure 12 in . . . bound: i.e., bound in conscience 13 themselves: i.e., they themselves 14 for: because of 15 faint: hollow / simulated 16 sure: i.e., a certainty 17 into the: i.e., into a 18 breach: breaking 19 princes: rulers; sovereigns 20 should: i.e., will 21 mishappened: unfortunately happened 22 Almaine: Germany 23 of old time: in days of old 24 frantick: loony 25, 26 biddeth: tells 26 in no wise: by no means 27 suffer: let 28 false: unfaithful; intentionally inaccurate 29 leave it: give it up 30 manner: approach; way of proceeding 31 confess: acknowledge; admit 32 the titles of: i.e., the sections on 33 set forth: advance 34 appeareareth well: is quite evident 35–36 putting away: getting rid of 37 pestilent: lethally harmful
Note

would glory in the people’s blood. For he wotteth very well that the King’s Highness will in no wise—nor in no wise may, if he will save his own soul—suffer that false translation in the hands of unlearned people which is by an open heretic purposely translated false, to the destruction of so many souls.

Now, no man doubteth, I think, but that Tyndale himself would no less were done for the maintenance of his false translation of the evangelists than would his evangelical brother Barnes… but that folk should against the King’s proclamations keep still his books, and rather than leave them, die in the quarrel for the defense of his glory.

Whereas I before, in my Dialogue, did say that Luther’s books be seditious, as I now say that Tyndale’s be too, and moving people, to their own undoing, to be disobedient and rebellious to their sovereigns, in affirming that they be not, nor cannot be, bound by any law made by men: Tyndale answereth me for Luther that I say untruly. And then saith he further in this wise: “A Christian man is bound to obey tyranny—if it be not against his faith nor the law of God—till God deliver him thereof.”

Now let I pass much railing that he consequently maketh upon princes… and shall for this time only counsel you to consider these few words of his which he layeth forth for a rule of people’s obedience to their prince. For his rule is that they shall obey their “tyranny” till God deliver them thereof. And in this point will I not be Tyndale’s interpreter; he may mean divers ways, but which way he meaneth indeed, he shall himself declare at his further leisure; for methinketh he meaneth not very well—saving that I will not take him to the worst.

But in the other point, I may be bold to say that no good man may take him well where he saith that a Christian man is bound to obey their prince’s “tyranny” if it “be not against his faith nor the law of God.” And yet will I well agree that if these words were spoken of a good-faithful man’s mouth, and where any need required it, they were very well said; as they were when the Acts 5:29 apostles said, “We must rather please God than man.” But when Tyndale, that is a heretic, putteth for a rule of the people’s obedience to a good Christian prince that they be bound to obey his “tyranny” if

2 wotteth: knows // the King’s Highness: i.e., His Majesty the King
3 in no wise: by no means
5 open: overt // false: inaccurately
7 but that: i.e., that
8 would no less were: wouldn’t want any less
10 keep still: continue to keep // quarrel for: fight for / cause of
14 moving: inciting
16, 19, etc. bound: morally obligated
17 for: i.e., with regard to
17–18 I say untruly: what I say is not true
18 saith . . . wise: he goes on to say this
19, 32 it: i.e., the tyrannical command // from it
21 consequently: right after this
21–22 maketh upon: does about // consider: reflect on
22 consider: reflect on // prince(s): ruler(s); sovereign(s)
25, 30 in; on; with regard to: ways: i.e., there are several ways he could mean this
27 declare: clarify // to the worst: i.e., as meaning it in the worst of those possible ways
30 be bold: venture
31 well: i.e., to have any good meaning // grant
33 agree: grant
34 of . . . mouth: i.e., by a right-believing person
35 were very: would be very // that: who
38 putteth: lays down
it “be not against his faith”—I say that this his rule of “obedience” is a plain exhortation to disobedience and rebellion. For every Tyndale’s heresies and doctrine man well seeth that Tyndale among many other abominable heresies teacheth for the right faith that friars may lawfully wed nuns… and that no man is bound to the keeping of any fasting day or holy day made by the Church… and that no man should pray to any saint, nor pray for all Christian souls… and that it is great sin to do any worship to Christ’s Precious Body in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar—and would the people should keep his false translation of Scripture for maintenance of these heresies. And therefore if any prince make a law against Tyndale’s heresies, in any of these points or such other like: Tyndale here teacheth that the people are not bound to obey it… but may and must withstand such “tyranny.” Or, at the leastwise, though they be bound peradventure openly to obey their prince’s “tyranny” in forbearing flesh on Good Friday or coming to God’s Service on Whitsun Sunday, or friars in forbearing open wedding with nuns (in all which things they be yet, by Tyndale’s godly gospel, at their “evangelical liberty” secretly to do what they list themselves, where no peace is broken nor any “weak” conscience offended): yet, for any law or commandment either of prince or pope, or general council of all Christian nations, or of any angel that would come out of heaven to command in God’s name the contrary… every man must keep still Tyndale’s false translation of Scripture, and abide by his other false books made for the maintenance of his manifold false heresies. And no man must, for no law nor commandment, pray to any saint, nor for any soul in purgatory, nor kiss any relic, nor creep to Christ’s cross, nor do any worship to Christ’s Blessed Body and Blood in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

But if any prince would by any law or commandment compel his people to any of those things—then Tyndale here plainly teacheth them that they may and must stiffly withstand his “tyranny.” So that finally, concerning obedience… Tyndale’s holy doctrine is that the people should in the defense of his false heresies not let to disobey… but stubbornly to withstand their prince.
Which if any man were so mad to do... and then were therefore in
their obstinacy burned, or otherwise in their rebellion slain:
there were the triumph, the great feast and glory of Tyndale’s
devilish, proud, dispiteous heart, to delight and rejoice in the
effusion of such people’s blood as his poisoned books had miserably
bewitched, and from true Christian folk turned into false, wicked
wretches.

Now, to the intent that ye may the more clearly perceive the
malicious mind of these men, and that their pestilent books be
both odious to God and deadly contagious to men... and so much
the more perilous in that their false heresies wilily walk forth
under the counterfeit visage of the true Christian faith—this is the
cause and purpose of my present labor... whereby, God willing, I
shall so pull off their gay, painted visors that every man listing
to look thereon shall plainly perceive and behold the bare, ugly
gargoyle faces of their abominable heresy.

And for because the matter is long, and my leisure seldom and short,
I cannot, as I fain would, send out all at once, but if I should keep
still altogether by me longer than methinketh convenient.

I send out now, therefore, of this present work, these three books
first. In the first of which I answer Tyndale’s preface made before
his Answer to my Dialogue; which preface of his is, in a manner, an
introduction into all his heresies. The second book is against his
defense of his translation of the New Testament. The third, against
two chapters of Tyndale’s Answer—the one, “Whether the
Word Were before the Church, or the Church before the Word,” the
other, “Whether the Apostles Left Anything Unwritten Necessary to
Salvation”—whereupon great part of all his heresies hang.

Now shall I (God willing) at my next leisure go further in his
book, and come to the very breast of all this battle: that is to wit,
the question, Which is the church? For that is the point that all
these heretics, by all the means they may, labor to make so dark
that, by their wills, no man should wit what they mean. But I
trust to draw the serpent out of his dark den... and as the
poets feign that Hercules drew up Cerberus, the mastiff of hell,
into the light, where his eyes dazed—so shall I, with the grace of
Jn 1:9

that light “which illumineth every man that cometh into this world,” make you
that matter so lightsome, and so clear to every man, that I shall leave
Tyndale never a dark corner to creep into, able to hide his head.

Then, after that I have so clearly confuted Tyndale concerning
that point, and shall have plainly proved you the sure and steadfast
authority of Christ’s Catholic, known church against all
Tyndale’s trifling sophistications… which he would should seem
so solemn, subtle insolubles, which ye shall see proved very
frantic follies; after this done, I say, before I go further with
Tyndale, I purpose to answer good young Father Frith… which now
suddenly cometh forth so sagely that three old men—my brother
Rastell, the Bishop of Rochester, and I—matched with Father Frith
alone, be now but very babes and, as he calleth us, insipients. But
thus goeth the world forth between Frith and us. He increaseth, I see
well, as fast as we decay. For once, I ween, the youngest of us three… three
days ere Father Frith was born… had learned within a little as much
as Father Frith hath now. Howbeit, I shall leave young Father Frith in
his pride and glory for the while. But when Tyndale is once in that article
touching the Church confuted, then hath Frith already concerning
purgatory clearly lost the field… and all his well-beloved book is not
worth a button, though it were all as true as it is false. For then is the
faith of the Church in that point infallible, or at the least inculpable,
were there Scripture therefor or not. And no scripture can there
prove the very, true church to hold an article as true faith
that were in deed damnably false.

And yet shall I, for all that, go further with young Father Frith
and touch, if God will, every part of his fresh painted book; and
so shall I pluck off, I trust, the most glorious feathers from his gay
peacock’s-tail that I shall leave him (if he have wit and grace) a little
less delight and liking in himself than he seemeth now to have;
which thing hath hitherto made him for to stand not a little in
his own light.

I pray God heartily send that young man the grace to bestow his
wit and learning, such as it is, about some better business than
Tyndale misbestoweth it now. For now is Frith’s wit and learning
nothing but Tyndale’s instrument whereby he bloweth out his
heresy.
Finally, after that I shall have answered Frith, I purpose to return again unto Tyndale’s book, and answer him in every chapter that he hath impugned in the four books of my Dialogue. Wherein I trust to make every child perceive his wily follies and false crafts, with his open, shameless lies put in and mingled among them, wherewith he fain would, and weeneth to, blind in such wise the world that folk should not espy the falsehood and folly of his execrable heresies.

I think that no man doubteth but that this work both hath been and will be some pain and labor to me; and of truth, so I find it. But, as help me God, I find all my labor in the writing not half so grievous and painful to me as the tedious reading of their blasphemous heresies; that would God, after all my labor done, so that the remembrance of their pestilent errors were erased out of Englishmen’s hearts, and their abominable books burned up, mine own were walked with them—and the name of these matters utterly put in oblivion. Howbeit, since I see the devil in these days so strong, and these devilish heresies so sore set abroach in some unhappy hearts, that they never cease in all that ever they may to spread these books abroad to such as keep them in hugger-mugger, and secretly poison themselves, weening the books were very good while they read them alone—and then of those evil books so many daily made by so many idle heretics, and by and by sent hither—it were need, as meseemeth, that divers wise and well-learned men should set their pens to the book… which though they shall not satisfy them that will needs be naught, yet shall they do good to such as fall to these folk of oversight, weening that their new ways were well.

Lk 16:8 Our Savior saith that the children of darkness be more politic in their kind than are the children of light in their kind. And surely so seemeth it now. For these false, faithless heretics whose hearts are in the deep, dark dungeon of the devil… are more wily, and more busy therewith, in setting forth of their heresies, than are the faithful learned folk in the defense of the truth.

Mt 26:36–50 And as the true disciples of Christ were in slumber and fell in sleep in Christ’s company, while Judas the traitor was waking and watching about his detestable treason: so while these Judases watch and

1 that: i.e., such time as 2 in: regarding 4 every: any 6 follies: idiocies 8 false crafts: deceitful ploys 9 but that: that 10 of truth: indeed 11 as: so 12 grievous: burdensome 13 that would God: (I find this, in fact, so burdensome and painful) that I wish to God that 14 provided 16 walked: gone / gotten rid of 16–17 the . . . utterly: i.e., what these issues even were, utterly 19 sore: extremely 20 abroach: astir 21 hi: i.e., fall prey 22 were: i.e., to be 23 made: written 24 idle: nonworking 25 kind: i.e., conducting of their own kind of affairs 31 kind: i.e., conducting of theirs 32 false: deceitful / vile 33 busy: industrious 34 therewith: as well 39 about: in his going about 40 watch: stay vigilant
study about the making of their ungracious books, good and true-believing men that were meet to answer them, and that were able in writing to much more than overmatch them, if they would wake and pray and take the pen in hand… be now so forwearied, with the sorrow and heaviness to see the world wax so wretched, that they fall even in a slumber therewith and let these wretches alone… saving that yet sometimes some good Peter in a good zeal so

\[ Jn 18:10-11; Lk 22:49-51 \]  
smiteth off Malchus’ ear that God settetth it on better again and giveth it grace to
draw back from the hearkening of false heresies, and to give itself
to the hearing of Christ’s true, Catholic faith. And sometimes,

\[ Acts 28:1-5 \]  
again, some good, holy Paul shaketh the poisoned adder into a fair fire… that
lying and lurking among the dry, fruitless faggots catcheth

good folk by the fingers and so hangeth on their hands with
the poison sting of false “only faith” that they would withhold  
them from setting their hands to any good, virtuous works.

But now, leaving other men to do as God shall like to put in their minds, I shall for my part perform that I have promised, if God give me life and grace thereto. For as for leisure, shall not, I trust, one time or other lack to suffice, for so much and for much more too. Which when I have, as I before said, altogether performed… I would, in good faith, wish that never man should need to read any word. For surely the very best way were neither to read this nor theirs…  

Very good counsel but rather the people unlearned to occupy themselves, besides their other business, in prayer, good meditation, and reading of such English books as most may nourish and increase devotion—of which kind is Bonaventure of the Life of Christ, Gerson of the Following of Christ, and the devout contemplative book of Scala Perfectionis, with such others like—than in the learning what may well be answered unto heretics.

The very treacle were well lost, so that all venom and poison were utterly lost therewith. And better were it not to be sick at all than of a great sickness to be very well healed.

1 study about: put a lot of mental effort into  
2, 25, 34 were: would be  
4 forwearied: fatigued  
5 with: by  
6 even in: i.e., really into  
8–9 settetth…again: i.e., puts it back on better than it was before  
9 grace: i.e., the grace  
10 draw back: withdraw  
10 false: delusive / vile / damn  
12–13 shaketh…fire: i.e., shakes into a good (not at all objectionable) fire the venomous snake  
14 faggots: bundles of sticks (that heretics after their post-conviction recanting had to carry in procession)  
16 only faith: faith alone  
18 like: be pleased  
19 that: that which  
20–21 shall…for so: i.e., there won’t be lacking, I trust, at some time or other, enough for that  
23 in good faith: in all sincerity  
25–24 any word: i.e., one word of  
27 business: activities  
30 Bonaventure of the: i.e., Bonaventure’s  
34 treacle: antidote  
34 so: provided  
35 were it: would it be
And if it might be provided that every man should be so well tempered that no man should by distemperance fall into disease: then were it better that the physician bestowed all his time about that part of physic that teacheth to preserve our health than to write any word of that part that restoreth it. But since it can never be brought to pass that poison will be forgotten, nor that every man shall use himself so circumspectly but that either of oversight or adventure some shall have need of cure: therefore it is necessary that treacle for the one, and other medicines for the other, be provided and had. And therefore, as I would wish that their books were all gone and mine own therewith—so, since I see well that that thing will not be... better it is, I reckon, that there be treacle ready than the poison to tarry and no treacle for it.

Howbeit, though every shop were full of treacle—yet were he not wise, I ween, that would willfully drink poison first to drink treacle after; but rather, cast the poison to the devil and let the treacle stand for some that should hap to need it. And likewise would I counsel every good Christian man, and especially such as are groundedly learned, to cast out the poisoned draught of these heretics' books which when they be drunk down infect the reader and corrupt the soul unto the everlasting death; and therefore neither vouchsafe to read their books nor anything made against them neither, but abhor to hear their heresies so much as named; according to the gracious counsel of the blessed apostle Eph 5:3 Paul against fornication, where he writeth unto the Ephesians, “Let not fornication be so much as named or spoken of among you.”

And yet—since that would not be brought to pass that he counseled, and would fain have had observed—he was fain himself to speak thereof and write thereof, to arm the people against it, in more places than one; as both he and other apostles, and all holy doctors since, have been driven to write against heresies, and yet would fain that folk would so clear have cast all heresies out of remembrance that neither themselves should have need of to read that part of their books.

And therefore, as I would advise any man neither to read these heretics' books nor mine, but occupy their minds better and, standing firmly by the Catholic faith of this fifteen hundred years, never
once muse upon these newfangled heresies: so, on the other side, if it mishap any man to fall in such a fond affection and vain curious mind that neither peril temporal, in breach of his prince’s proclamation and the laws of the realm, nor the peril spiritual, in hurting of his own soul, nor they both together, by putting himself in danger to burn both here and in hell, can hold his itching fingers from their poisoned books—then would I counsel him in any wise to read therewith such things as are written against them, and weigh them both at the leastwise indifferently; and not to fall suddenly so drunk in the new must of their newfangled newelties that the old, wholesome wine with which good folk have lived now this fifteen hundred years offend their drunken taste because it is not so wallow-sweet but drinketh more of the verdure.

Furthermore, forasmuch as, according to the words of Christ, it will none otherwise be but that some stumbling blocks will always be by malicious folk laid in good people’s way: though best were to stop your ears utterly and give no hearing to any false enchanter that would bewitch you wilily, to make you delight in those books—yet since some that be plain and simple may fortune to be secretly misled by false, wily shrews except they be well armed before… I doubt not by God’s grace but if they read first the things that are written against them, they shall themselves be able to reject and confound any devil that would draw them to them. And therefore—as I am sure that evil and ungracious folk shall ever find the means that such books shall never in some corners lack, whereby good people may be deceived and corrupted—it is more than necessary that men have again at hand such books as may well arm them to resist and confute them. Of which kind of good books, albeit I know well there may, and doubt not but there shall, be many better made than mine—and that some I see already—yet have I not so slightly seen unto mine own, nor shuffled it up so hastily, nor let it so pass unlooked over by better men and better learned also than myself… but that I trust in God it may among the better stand yet in some good stead. And that it so may to God’s honor and the profit of some good folk, I heartily beseech our Lord—without the adspiration and help of whose
especial grace no labor of man can profit… and to whom therefore
be all thank referred—which liveth and reigneth in eternal
glory. To which as he hath already brought many a blessed saint,
so mote his mercy bring with speed the souls that are in purgatory—
and give us that here live, in this wretched world, aid and help of
grace by true faith and good works to follow them, the rather by
the intercession and prayers of all his holy saints that are already
with him. Amen.

2 thank referred: credit given // which: who
4 mote: may
6 rather: i.e., sooner and more readily
The First Book

The Preface of Tyndale, with the
Answer unto the Same

Tyndale
The grace of our Lord, the light of his Spirit to see and to judge
true repentance toward God’s law, a fast faith in the merciful
promises that are in our Savior Christ, fervent love toward thy
neighbor after the example of Christ and his saints… be with thee, O
reader, and with all that love the truth and long for the redemption
of God’s elect. Amen.

More
Tyndale here beginneth with a holy salutation; and so doth
Luther too, and so doth Friar Huessgen too… and so doth every fond
fellow of any of their sects. They begin their epistles in such
apostolical fashion… that a man would ween it were written from
Saint Paul himself. But would God they would once rather follow
him truly in faith and good works than in simulation of like
sanctity with their holy salutations.

For if men consider that whereas Tyndale here prayeth holily for the
“light” of the “Spirit” to “see . . . true repentance,” he then teacheth, himself,
a sudden, slight repentance… forbidding both confession and
all doing of penance: they shall, if they be good men, set little by
his holy salutation. And when they consider that whereas he prayeth
God send them a “fast faith,” himself teacheth a false faith against
the sacraments, and meaneth that they should be fast in the same:
there will no good Christian man can him thank for that holy prayer.
And where he prayeth here so holily for the love of the neighbor… if
men look on the love that is used among all the masters of that
whole holy sect, and consider their livings, and look upon Friar
Luther, the very father of their whole sect, and see him run out of
religion and fallen to flesh and carrion, and live in lechery with a

6, 24, 25 fast: steadfast; firm  12, 18, 23 salutation(s): greeting(s)
13 fond: foolishly self-confident / full-of-himself  14 fellow: member
15 ween: think // were: was // from: by  16 would God: I wish to God
19, 23 consider: reflect on the fact  21 sudden: dashed-off // slight: unsubstantial
22 set little by: put little stock in  24 against: regarding
26 can him thank: i.e., be who gives him any credit  28, 29 (upon): at
28 used: i.e., operative // masters: leaders  29 livings: lifestyles
30–31 run . . . religion: i.e., having run away from religious life  31 live: i.e., living
nun under name of wedlock, and all the chief heads of them, late monks and friars, and now apostates and living with harlots under the name of wives: he that looketh on this and then seeth them and their scholars (as Tyndale here, and such others) come forth and speak so holy—would he not ween that it were a sort of “friars” following an Abbot of Misrule, in a Christmas game, that were pricked in blankets and then should stand up and preach upon a stool and make a mowing sermon!

And as lewd sermons as they make in such naughty games, would God that these men’s earnest sermons were not yet much worse. But surely, as evil as the others be… yet is there more harm and more deadly poison, too, in this one sermon of Tyndale’s—as ye shall hear ere it come to the end—than in a hundred sermons of Friar Frap, that first gapeth and then blesseth, and looketh holily and preacheth ribaldry to the people that stand about.

For there is not the worst thing that Friar Frap preacheth in a lewd sport, but Father Tyndale here writeth much worse in very great earnest—and much worse than doth the other, abusest the Scripture unto it.

The other, when he preacheth that men may lawfully go to lechery—he maketh commonly some fond texts of his own head, and dare not in such mad matters meddle with the very Scripture itself. But Tyndale teacheth us in good earnest that friars may walk out and wed nuns—and is neither afeard nor ashamed to draw the Holy Scripture of God unto the maintenance of abominable sin and service of the devil.

The other ribald, in his fond sermon, meddleth but with fleshly vices and worldly wantonness. But Tyndale here, with an earnest high profession of godly, spiritual doctrine, teacheth us a false faith and many mortal heresies, and would with Scripture destroy the Scripture; and amidst his earnest holiness fallooth into mocks and mows, and maketh mad, apish jesting against the holy ceremonies and blessed sacraments of our Savior Christ; and the things sanctified with the Blessed Blood of our Savior, Tyndale turneth into scorn. Never was there any scoffing Friar Frap, preaching upon a stool, that durst play the knavish fool on such a fashion as ye shall see Tyndale do here. For if any should… his
audience, were they never so wanton, would yet at such words (if any spark of Christian zeal remained in their hearts) pull down the ribald by the skirt and break the stool upon his head.

And now, whereas he saluteth us with the “light” of the “Spirit” and intendeth to bring us in darkness of the devil; whereas he speaketh of “true repentance” and then would put away two parts thereof, that is to wit, both confession and satisfaction; and whereas he speaketh of “fast faith” and then teacheth a false, presumptuous faith, with such trust put in “faith alone” that he reckoneth all good works fruitless and unprofitable, and that “faith alone” sufficeth to salvation, how devilishly that any man live beside: we may well perceive that these that so teach be with their holy salutations the false, idle prophets of whom the blessed apostle Paul

Rom 16:17-18; Lk 20:46-47 writeth (unto the Romans) that by their sweet blessings waste out and empty the poor widows’ houses. For by such holy salutation, as by sweet blessing praying for them so good things as they seem to do, they win their hearts to assent after to their heresies, and so expel and kill true faith in their hearts; and God so taken from them, they make them widows, and so waste and empty out the substantial virtues of their souls.

But, now, when he speaketh of “fervent love . . . after the example of Christ and his saints”—as earnest as the matter is, who can forbear laughing when he seeth the lecherous fleshly love of those friars and their nuns? Whereof till Tyndale can tell us some like examples of Christ and his saints, that any of them were wont to break their vows of chastity and fall to such filthy lechery—till he can tell us that, we may well tell him that his holy prayer of “fervent love” here in his prologue… goeth quite against his purpose and shameth all his whole book after.

Wherefore, good Christian readers, whoso shall happen to read his pernicious book, take wisdom with you, as I doubt not but ye will; and be not so led with a few painted holy words—as it were, with the beholding of a peacock’s tail—but that ye regard therewith his

Very good counsel fowl feet also… and look well whither he walketh and to what end he speaketh, and consider him by the headmasters and archheretics of his ungracious sect; which, when they have spoken as religiously

1 never so: no matter how // wanton: dissolute 3 ribald: i.e., sacrilegious jackass // skirt: gown
4 saluteth: greets 5 in: into 6 put away: do away with // parts: thirds 8 fast: steadfast; firm
10 sufficeth to: is sufficient for 11 how . . . beside: i.e., no matter how devilishly one otherwise lives
12, 16 salutation(s): greeting(s) 13 idle: unavailing 15, 17 sweet: good-sounding
15 waste out: impoverish 20 waste: lay to waste; destroy 23 earnest: serious // forbear: keep from
27 to: into 28 of: for 33 with: by // painted: put-on / flashy 35 fowl: foul / foul
35–36 look . . . walketh: i.e., note well where he’s going with all this // by: in conjunction with
38 ungracious: ungodly; wicked // which: who // religiously: piously
as he, yet have, as ye see well, shamefully shown themselves open
incestuous harlots… and that of the most abominable sort,
deflowering religious women.

And Tyndale himself (which thing is worse than the deed
doing) maintaineth in his book their deed for well done.

Tyndale

Our Savior Jesus (in the sixteenth chapter of John) at his Last
Supper, when he took his leave of his disciples, warned them, saying,

Tyndale is now the Holy Ghost
sent down from heaven to rebuke
the judgment of all Christendom
this fifteen hundred years past.

“The Holy Ghost shall come and rebuke
the world of judgment”; that is, he shall
rebuke the world for lack of true judgment
and discretion to judge, and shall
prove that the taste of their mouths is
corr upt, so that they judge sweet to be sour and sour to be sweet,
and their eyes to be blind, so that they think that to be very service
of God which is but a blind superstition, for zeal of which yet they
persecute the true service of God; and that they judge to be the law
of God which is but a false imagination of a corrupt judgment,
for blind affection of which yet they persecute the true law of God
and them that keep it.

More

How soon might a poor simple soul be led to think that all
those that believe not as Tyndale doth were in a wrong way and in
a false belief… when he heareth Tyndale here lay against them the
words of our Savior himself, spoken unto his disciples in his
Last Supper!

But, now, they that be learned and know the place in the Gospel
perceive very well that Tyndale here sinfully doth abuse the holy
words of Christ, and manifestly misturneth the mind and sentence
of our Savior, following the example of the devil that

Ps 91:11–12 alleged the Scripture unto Christ in
desert.

For as the devil there falsely wrested the scripture of God and
laid it against God: so doth Tyndale here wrest the word of our
Savior against himself and his whole church—I say his whole church;
not the clergy only, but the whole congregation of all Christian
people.

For it is well known that Christ spoke those words against
the Jews and paynims that refused him and his true faith—showing

1 open: (to be) overt / flagrant       2 incestuous: So considered because in canon law, monks and nuns
are regarded as siblings.       5 their deed for well done: i.e., that this thing they are doing is morally all right
9, 11 rebuke: severely chastise; castigate 10 of: concerning 11 true: right
12 discretion to judge: i.e., of discernment in judging 14 corrupt: infected / messed up
15 that to be: i.e., that thing to be // very: real; authentic 15, 17 service: worship
16 blind: meaningless 18 which: that which // a corrupt: an infected / a messed-up
19 affection: liking 23 in . . . way: on a wrong path 24 lay: adduce 25 in: during
27 know the place: i.e., are familiar with that passage 28 abuse: use wrongly 29 misturneth: distorts
29 mind and sentence: intent and meaning 31 alleged: quoted // in: i.e., in the
33 falsely: dishonestly / despicably 33, 34 wrest(ed): twist(ed) 34 laid: adduced
38 against: with reference to 39 paynims: pagans // refused: rejected // showing: stating
that the Holy Ghost at his coming should reprove their false
judgment, and their unsavory taste, that judged sweet sour and
sour sweet, and that he should teach his church and his congregation
the very truth and lead them into all truth that should be
necessary for their salvation.

And this promise hath our Savior both made in the Gospel
and also fulfilled in deed. For the Holy Ghost hath not failed to
teach his church all such kind of truth from the beginning
hitherto, nor never shall cease so to do, as well by his own holy
secret word unwritten in the Scripture and yet by himself
written in Christian men’s hearts… as by his holy Scripture either
written in tablets of stone or in beasts’ skins; according to his
Ez 11:19–20; Jer 31:31–34 own words spoken as well by the mouth
of the prophet Ezekiel as of the blessed
2 Cor 3:2–3 apostle Saint Paul.

These truths had the apostles, the martyrs, the confessors, the
holy doctors of Christ’s church, and the common Christian people of
every age from Christ’s death hitherto. And in this common-known
church of Christendom (except such as at sundry times have
fallen therefrom, as Arius, Pelagius, Donatus, Wycliffe, and Hus, and
The Church never such others… and now Luther, and Tyndale,
lost the truth. and Friar Huessgen, and their fellows)
hath ever the true judgment remained, and
the right-savored taste; and never lost any of those heretics
those necessary truths till the devil had through pride, envy,
and malice made them set naught by the Church. And then did he
cast them forthwith in such a fever that they clean lost their
taste… and then did they as Tyndale doth now—judge sweet that all
Christendom judged sour.

And by those truths and this faith always from the beginning
kept in Christ’s church… be we now very sure that this new “faith”
of Luther, Tyndale, and Friar Huessgen is very fond and false, and
that their mouths are all out of taste… since that from Christ’s
death hitherto, all holy men, all good people, all true Christian
nations, have savored always those meats to be good and wholesome
which these fond fellows affirm now to be bitter and perilous
meat; and have always affirmed for unsavory meat and evil
such as now these madmen affirm to be well-seasoned and good... and have always hitherto reputed for shameful and filthy lechery the fleshly coupling together of friars and nuns that these losels now do boldly put forth and avow for good and lawful matrimony.

If Tyndale grant that I say true in this: then shall he be fain to grant that the words which he allegeth against us spoken by the mouth of our Savior be not spoken against us that believe as all Christ’s church hath believed ever hitherto... but that they be spoken against himself and his fellows, that believe the contrary. And on the other side, if Tyndale deny me this, and will say that all good men and God’s elects have always believed as he and his fellows do teach... and that they have always taught and done the same: let Tyndale then tell us one good, honest man—what speak we of honest man? Let him tell us of any one so very a stark ribald, in all this fifteen hundred years before Luther’s days and his, that ever taught that it was lawful for a friar to wed a nun! If Tyndale show you not this, as I well he cannot: then be ye very sure that, since every holy man before his days hath taught the contrary, and heath had it in detestation, and he now defendeth it for good against all good men that hath been ever since Christ’s days to his own—how holy a tale soever he tell you beside, and howsoever he paint it with Scripture... writhe and wrested out of all good course, ye may be sure enough that his doctrine is for all that very stark naught indeed, and that he meaneth no good... and that if he believe as he teacheth (as I verily believe he doth not), his faith is very false.
... but Tyndale feigneth the
thing to find by the search of
the cause some discharge of
the commandment.

have examples in the Pharisees), yet he cannot understand the
things of the Spirit of God; but, saith he, the spiritual “judgeth all
things, and his spirit searcheth the deep secrets of God”; so that whatsoever
God commandeth him to do, he never leaveth searching till
he come at the bottom, the pith, the quick, the life, the spirit, the
marrow, and very cause why... and judgeth all thing.

More

Ye consider well that Tyndale, in these words, would ye should
ween that these folk of whom Saint Paul speaketh in that place...
be such as cannot savor the doctrine of Luther, Friar Huessgen, and
him. But then consider again upon whom his words fall. For
ye doubt not, nor himself cannot deny, but that his doctrine is
far from the taste of Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome, Saint Ambrose,
Saint Cyprian, Saint Gregory, and all those old holy doctors of
Christ’s church unto Luther’s days and his; or else, as I said, let him
tell me which of all them did not abhor that a priest should
wed a nun. And therefore thus ye see that by Tyndale’s holy tale,
there were none of all them, were they “never so great philosophers,
never so well seen in the Law, never so sore studied in the Scripture;” that
could understand the things of the Spirit of God, because they
were but “natural” men, not “born again” nor “created anew with
the Spirit of God.”

How knoweth Tyndale that none of all these that hath been
adversaries to his doctrine—that is to wit, of all good men that ever
were in Christendom since Christ was born unto Tyndale’s time—was
born again or new-created with the Spirit of God? How himself
understandeth his high spiritual words, I wot ne’er; but I
wot well that all those holy fathers were reputed for good Christian—

Jn 3:5

and I ween they were all baptized and
born again “of water and the Spirit,”
as our Savior said unto Nicodemus... and after that, they lived well
and spiritually, and died well and spiritually, as appeareth by their
books and histories written of their lives, and miracles shown
for them of God after their deaths. And unto such simple, gross, carnal people as we be... these things seem well to show that they were born again of God and new-created with his Spirit... and so, by Tyndale’s own tale, should seem able to understand the things of the Spirit of God.

But yet will Tyndale none of that. For he liketh not their judgment... but he saith that “the spiritual” judgeth all things. And whereas Saint Paul, in the place alleged by Tyndale, saith that the Holy Ghost, the “Spirit of God,” “searcheth even the deep things of God,” because that unto that holy spirit which is God, there is nothing of God unknown: Tyndale taketh that high power unto his worshipful spiritual sort, saying “the spiritual” judgeth all things... and his spirit searcheth the deep secrets of God. And with this not satisfied... he amplifieth and enhanceth their holy search upon height... and saith that the spirit of their spiritual sort search the deep secrets of God so far that “whatsoever God commandeth them to do”... they “never leave searching till they come at the bottom, the pith, the quick, the life, the spirit, the marrow, and very cause why”... and so “judge allthing.”

What a heap of high, vehement words hath Tyndale here heaped up together! Who would not ween that he were with some place(s) alleged: adduced; claimed as support

2 Kgs 2:11; Gn 5:24 holy meditation carried up in Enoch and Elijah’s chariot! But yet, good Christian reader, for all his holy tale... remember again the friar and the nun, Luther and his wife, Tyndale’s own master and mistress, the chief head and author of his high spiritual faith. For Luther, ye wot well, if Tyndale and his fellows be “spiritual” and “elects,” must, as their first author of their new spiritual sect, be needs one of the very chief. Let not, therefore, Tyndale, good reader, with his gay glorious words carry you so fast and so far away but that ye remember to pull him back by the sleeve a little, and ask him whether his own high spiritual doctor Master Martin Luther himself, being specially born again and new-created of the Spirit, whom God in many places of Holy Scripture hath commanded to keep his vow made of chastity—when he then so far contrary thereunto took out of religion a spouse of Christ, wedded her himself
in reproach of wedlock, called her his wife and made her his harlot, and in double despite of marriage and religion both, liveth with her openly and lieth with her nightly in shameful incest and abominable bitchery—doth he the while, after Tyndale’s high words, search the deep secrets, and never leave searching till he come to the bottom, the pith, the quick, the life, the spirit, the marrow, and the very cause of that commandment why, and so judgeth all thing?

Thus, good readers, examine him… and then shall ye perceive how fondly such a high, pure, spiritual process accordeth with such a base, foul, fleshly living. But Tyndale hath a hope that while he painteth his prologue with such gay colors of spiritual virtue, there can no man in the meanwhile remember and consider what ungracious fruit their deceitful doctrine and false faith bringeth forth. And therefore, to carry the reader farther off from the remembrance thereof… he letteth go by their filthy lechery and holily speaketh of “love.”

Tyndale

Take an example in the great commandment, “Love God with all thine heart”: the spiritual searcheth the cause and looketh on the benefits of God, and so conceiveth love in his heart.

More

In this example, of the great commandment of loving of God… there can lack no causes, but without any far search there offer themselves enough at hand, except men willfully will forget them. But yet, albeit that in many things a man may peradventure well and with fruit ensearch the cause of God’s commandments, yet may the spirit of a man that were as spiritual as Tyndale is, or The spirit of a man may wade too far in God’s secrets.

Luther either, and take Friar Huessgen to them… go sometimes too far in the searching of the deep secrets of God, and wade so far therein… that he shall find these words of Holy Scripture true—“He that is the searcher of the majesty shall be oppressed of the glory”—and he shall find the deep secrets of God so deep that the secret bottom will not be found out for him… and especially in that thing in which

1 reproach of: insult to 2 despite: contempt 3 incest: See note for 44/2. 4 bitchery: sluttiness; depravity 5 search: go in search of / probe 6 leave: stop 7 come: i.e., gets 8–9 how fondly . . . accordeth: i.e., how absurdly incongruent . . . is 9 high: lofty 10 why: i.e., real reason-why of that commandment 11 who: when; since 12 gay colors: magnificent colors / plausible appearances 13 ungracious: ungodly 14 go by: pass unheeded 15 except: unless 16 willfully . . . them: deliberately choose to be oblivious to them 17 were: was 18 take: (we can) add 19 spiritual: i.e., spiritual person 20 judge: i.e., judge everything 21 searcheth: goes in search of 22 on: at 23 peradventure: perhaps 24 well and with fruit: rightly and profitably 25 may: can 26 and: with regard to 27 in: with regard to 28 all: every 29 in God’s: i.e., into God’s 30 Prv 25:27 (Vulgate) 31 save: unearthed
Tyndale and his fellows be, as I shall hereafter show you, most presumptuously busy: that is, in God’s final elects and predestinates, whereof Saint Paul crieth himself, “O altitudo divitiarum sapientiae et scientiae Dei!” (“O the height and deepness of the riches of the wisdom and science of God!”).

And as for that that Tyndale saith, that “whatsoever God commandeth the spiritual man to do, he never leaveth searching till he come at the bottom, the pith, the quick, the life, the spirit, the marrow, and the very cause why, and judgeth all things”—I say, as I said before, it may peradventure in some things do well to consider the causes of God’s commandment, so it be done moderately and with reverence. But many such spiritual persons as Tyndale is, and Luther, and Friar Huessgen… so be wont to reason and search the causes of God’s commandments with themselves as Saul did… or between the devil and themselves as our mother Eve did… that they fall upon fallacies and false causes… whereby, like as Saul was deceived in saving of the beasts for sacrifice which beasts God had precisely commanded him to destroy, and Eve was so beguiled that she thought she might well eat the apple which God had precisely commanded her to forbear—so doth, I say, too, these men that are in this new fashion spiritual; the devil (their evil spirit) and themselves, with their incessant search, find out false causes whereof they take occasion to break the commandments of God; which commandments other good, seely, simple souls without any search observe.

As for example, lo, whereas God hath in Holy Scripture evidently commanded that whoso make a vow shall perform and keep it (as is written by the holy Psalmist: “Vow ye and pay your vows to our Lord”); and whereas our Blessed Lady thought herself bound thereto, and all the holy saints since Christ’s days unto Tyndale’s time have without any variance written and affirmed the same, and not only they but also all Christian people, both good and bad, have this fifteen hundred years
abhorred as an abominable monstrosity, and accounted it in common
talking for such a prodigious crime, that ever monk or
friar should wed a nun, as they thought should never happen in
Christendom, and therefore have always jested that Antichrist should
be born between a friar and a nun: these new “spiritual men” have
now—Luther, Tyndale, and Friar Huessgen, and the devil, together—so
long ensearched the cause of this commandment of God by which
every man is commanded to keep his vow… that they have with
long search found out at last that monks, friars, and nuns
be not bound by that commandment at all… but may, for all
their vow, lawfully run out of religion and lie together when
they list, and call their filthy lechery good and lawful wedlock.
And thus, lo, good reader, these new spiritual men with their deep
search interpret and expound Holy Scripture, and find out therein
such godly virtues as this is which the old holy doctors could
never find therein—for lack of grace, by likelihood, for we see well they
lacked no wit, and had as much learning as these men have and ten
times more, too, and did their diligence, too; but they were, as it
seemeth, but natural only, not born again nor created of new
with the Spirit of God as Luther is, and Tyndale, and Friar Huessgen
and his fellows.

Take example [saith Tyndale] in the great commandment, “Love God
with all thine heart”: the spiritual searcheth the cause and looketh on
the benefits of God, and so conceiveth love in his heart.

In these words I lay no fault. But albeit a man might assign
other causes of our love toward God than Tyndale doth—as, for example,
his own excellent nature and goodness, of itself worthy to
be loved, lauded, and honored of us though we should, if it were
possible, receive to ourselves no benefit at his hand at all—yet I
very well allow the cause that Tyndale allegeth, that is to wit, the
consideration of the great benefits of God…and it is a cause of love
indeed both reasonable of itself and also by many a good and
virtuous man alleged and considered before.

But yet methinketh that this consideration of love affirmed by

Beware of this opinion. Tyndale doth confound both Tyndale
and Luther, and all their whole sect, in that
they hold that it is not lawful to love and serve God neither for avoiding of pain nor for obtaining of reward… calling this manner of love and service servile bond and mercenary. This is their common opinion, and Tyndale hath it often as well in this book as in divers others. But now remember, good reader, that Tyndale saith here the contrary—which I am glad to hear him say. For I am better content that he say sometimes well than always naught. And here he saith right well that the respect of God’s benefits is a cause of our love toward God; and surely so is it indeed. For although the very good and great, excellent nature of God be worthy to be loved of us, and worshipped, and served, too, for the sovereign and surmounting goodness of itself, though we should ourselves take no manner of benefit thereby: yet may we well have more causes of love, honor, and service joined thereunto.

Yet am I not sure whether Tyndale will say that I do him wrong in that I join service with love, whereas he speaketh not of service but of love only. But I have been bold to join our love and service toward God together… because I verily think that Tyndale will himself grant us that for whatsoever cause it is lawful for us to love God, for the selfsame cause it is lawful for us to serve God. But Tyndale agreeeth that we may love him for his benefits; whereof it followeth, except he say that we may love for some cause for which it is not lawful to serve him—else, I say, must Tyndale needs grant that for God’s benefits it is lawful for us to serve him.

Now, if Tyndale grant us that conclusion… we will then wade with him a little further, and join thereunto that if it be lawful for us to serve God for his benefits which we have received, it is also lawful for us to serve him for his benefits which we long and

Two good causes of love towards God

hope to receive. And surely as the respect of his benefits which we have received is a good cause of love, so is the belief of his promises, and hope of his benefits to come, a good and a great cause of love toward him.

Then, if we may serve God for his benefits to come… it seemeth no doubt but that we may serve him for to get to heaven, which is of all benefits the greatest.

1, 19, etc. *lawful*: morally permissible 1 *neither*: i.e., either 2 *pain*: punishment
3 *servile . . . mercenary*: In his *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, Tyndale characterizes all those who believe it possible to gain merit as “servants that seek gains and advantage, hirelings and day-laborers, who here on earth receive their rewards, as the Pharisees with their prayers and fastings.”
3 *bond*: bondage 4 *their common opinion*: i.e., something they all assert 5 *divers*: several
7 *well . . . naught*: i.e., something good . . . something bad 8, 29 *respect*: consideration
9 *surely*: assuredly 10 *excellent*: preeminent; supreme 11 *of*: by 12 *surmounting*: surpassing
12 *though*: even if 13 *well*: rightly 15 *whether . . . that*: i.e., that Tyndale won’t say
17 *been bold to join*: taken the liberty of joining 18 *verily*: really 21 *whereof*: from which
22 *except*: unless 23 *needs*: necessarily 25 *wade*: i.e., take our argument
29, 31, 32 *good*: valid; morally acceptable 35 *no doubt but*: undoubttable
At this point will Tyndale haply stick with me… and he will say stiffly that faith we may use, and serve God therewith, to the intent therewith to get heaven; for faith his fellows and he affirm to be the thing which only doth justify us. But then they say plainly that if we serve God with any other good work—fasting, prayer, or almsdeed—to the intent that we may therewith please God the better, or the rather come to heaven: this service is unlawful, displeasant to God, and plain unfaithfulness… forasmuch as we shall,

Note how fondly they speak. as they say, be “saved only by Christ’s blood,” and “by our belief in his promises of the same”… and therefore they call it plain idolatry to serve God with any good works for heaven, or to the intent that we might please God the better thereby. For that thing, they say, were as much as to make ourselves Christ, and to say that we would be our own saviors, by our own works… and not Christ, by the work of his Passion.

In this point they stick stiffly… and when they be answered that although we serve God with good works wrought, with his gracious help, to the intent to please him the better thereby… as himself hath in many places of Holy Scripture commanded us; and hope also that such good works shall the rather help us to heaven, and that we shall in heaven be rewarded for them and for the respect of God’s commandment… and for this intent also we do

Mk 9:41 them, as Christ hath also given us good occasion, where he saith that whoso give so much as a draught of cold water shall not lose his reward,

Lk 16:9; 12:33 and where he biddeth us give unto the poor to the intent that they may receive us into the eternal tabernacles, and where he showeth that at the Day of Doom men shall have heaven for their charitable almsdeeds done here in earth: now, when we tell them thus, and that we do nevertheless acknowledge and confess therewith that we neither do nor can do any good work without the special grace and help of God, and that our deeds be commonly so defective that though good deeds well done be rewardable, yet every man may find in himself great cause to mistrust his own, and that we tell them also that all the best that the best man may do is yet no
more than his duty, for every man is of
his duty bound to labor for heaven
and to serve and please God as well and as much as he may; and
notwithstanding that we also tell them that the best work that
any man worketh with God’s help and grace is not, yet, rewardable
with heaven of the nature or goodness of the work itself although
he suffered every day in a long life a double martyrdom (according
to the words of Saint Paul, “The
glory that is to come that shall be revealed and shown upon us”); and
notwithstanding that we tell them, too, that all the heavenly
reward of man’s good works cometh only of God’s own liberal
goodness, in that it hath pleased his high bounty to give so
great a rich price for so poor and simple ware as are all men’s
works; and albeit that we tell them also that God would not reward
our works in such wise were it not for the shedding of his
Son’s blood, and so we finally refer all the thank and reward
of our good works, both the beginning, the progress, and the
end, effectually to God and the merits of Christ’s Passion—when we
tell Tyndale and Luther all this, yet fare they as though they heard
us not, and still they sing us on their old song that it is idolatry
to serve God with any good works to the intent the better to please
God therewith, and the rather to come to heaven therefor… and that
we may not without sin for any help to-heaven-ward serve God
with any good work saving only faith.

Yet when we ask them whether we may not lawfully for the same
intent serve God with hope too: to that thing they care not to
grant; but then they confound the terms of “faith” and “hope,” so as
I neither wot how nor themselves neither. Then if we ask them
farther whether it be not lawful to serve God with charity too (which
now they leave and fall all to lusty love) with intent to get heaven
the rather: to that they let not to grant also… but they say the
cause is for that faith, they say, hath always charity therewith. But

albeit that in that point their affirmation

is false (as by reason and plain

Scripture hath been often proved unto them),

that is enough to me—that they grant that a man may lawfully

3, 37 may: can 5 worketh: performs; carries out 6 of the nature: by the nature 9 although: even if
9 passions: sufferings // worthy: deserving of // commensurate with // 10 shown: conferred
12 reward: i.e., rewarding 13 bounty: munificence 14 simple: lowly // ware: goods; commodities
16 wise: a way 17 finally: ultimately
17–18 refer . . . our: i.e., attribute all the deserving of credit for, and rewarding of, our
19 effectually: really
20 fare: act 21 sing us on: keep singing us
23 the . . . therefore: i.e., to be the more likely to get to heaven on account thereof 24, 26 may not: cannot
24 without: i.e., without being guilty of // to-heaven-ward: toward getting to heaven
25 saving only faith: except “faith alone” // with the one exception of faith 26, 37 lawfully: legitimately
27–28 care not to grant: i.e., have no problem assenting 28 confound: confuse 29 not: know
30 lawful: morally permissible; all right 31 leave: abandon // lusty: lustful
31–32 get . . . rather: be the more likely to get to heaven 32 let . . . also: also don’t forbear to assent
33 cause is for that: reason is that 35 plain: explicit 37 to: for
love God and serve him with charity to the intent to be the rather saved, and come to heaven, thereby.

For now seemeth me that if we lawfully may (as Tyndale will grant we may) serve God with the virtues of faith and hope and charity, or of any one of them, with respect unto God’s benefits received and also to come... and to the intent thereby the rather to be saved and come to heaven: we may then lawfully with like respect, purpose, and intent serve God with any other virtue that proceedeth of faith, hope, and charity—or of any such one of them with which it is lawful for us for such respect, intent, and purpose to serve God. Then will not Tyndale deny but that prayer, fasting, almsdeed, and continence and cleanness of body, penance, trouble of the mind, with sufferance of tribulation or affliction of the flesh willingly taken, with many other outward and inward works... may proceed of faith, hope, and charity. Wherefore I cannot see but that Tyndale, as he granteth here that we may serve God with love, intending thereby to please him and be saved the rather—so must he needs grant and agree that likewise may we with like intent and purpose serve with all other works above-remembered, proceeding of a faith-ful, working charity; whereof he and all his fond fellows in every place hold hitherto the contrary.

And thus have I now plainly deduced upon Tyndale’s own words the full confusion of his own common conclusion so many times by him and his fellows objected, and among them all never once yet well proved, nor never able to be proved, against the profit of good men’s Christian works; for Christian be their prayers, their fasting, and their almsdeeds, when they be done in faith, hope, and charity, and in the state of grace.

Tyndale

And when he is commanded to obey the powers and rulers of the world... he looketh on the benefits which God showeth the world through them, and therefore doth it gladly.

More

In this obedience Tyndale is yet content to have a respect to the benefits that God worketh and showeth the world through the powers and rulers of the world, and putteth that for either the only

1 rather: i.e., more likely to be 2 come: i.e., to get 3 seemeth me: it seems to me 4, 15 may: can 5 with respect unto: in consideration of 6 the rather: i.e., to be the more likely 7 come: get 8, 10 respect: consideration 9 or of: or from // them: i.e., those other virtues 11 but that: that // almsdeed: almsgiving 12 continence: self-restraint / chastity // trouble: exertion 13 suffering: patient endurance 14 willingly taken: voluntarily undertaken 17 saved the rather: the more likely to be saved 19 other works above-remembered: the other above-mentioned works 20 working: active; operative 21 fond: daft / imbecilic 21, 24 fellows: cohorts / followers 21 hitherto: up till now; thus far 23 confusion: confutation // common conclusion: general dictum 24 objected: asserted 25 profit: profitability; i.e., merit-earning potential 27 almsdeeds: givings of alms 30, 36 powers: authorities; governors 31 on: at 31, 35 showeth: accords 34 yet: now 34 content: willing // have a respect: give consideration 36 putteth: posits
or the chief cause of his obedience, as he putteth it for the only
Christian obedience or chief cause of God’s commandment.
In which kind of obedience
seemeth not the greatest virtue, when a man obeyeth only for his
own advantage; but the very Christian obedience is to obey
especially for that God so commandeth, and not so to search and
limit the cause of God’s commandment… as he may thereby take
himself and give to others an easy, bold occasion to disobey, resist,
and rebel against their heads and rulers—pretending that
they be not profitable.

This thing meaneth Tyndale, as it appeareth by his words here
in the cause of his obedience to the powers and rulers of the world…
and as it appeareth in divers other places of his works and Luther his
master’s too. But God, although he will that the governors and
rulers of the world should be good and profitable to the people—
yet will he not that the people shall measure the duty of their
obedience by the only rule and measure of their own profit and
commodity… but that they shall obey their princes and other
rulers and governors because that they be their governors and
rulers, and because that God hath so commanded. For if they may
measure their obedience by the measure of their own profit (as
Tyndale telleth us), they shall soon seek occasion of sedition, and
thereof do themselves also more harm in one day than should their
ruler in many years, all were he right unprofitable indeed; as
appeared by the uplandish Lutherans in Almaine which, measuring
their obedience by Tyndale’s rule (given them before by Tyndale’s
master), became all unruly and disobeyed and rebelled
against their rulers, and thereby disobeyed God’s commandment,
and brought thereby the vengeance of God upon their own heads,
to the slaughter of above fourscore thousand of them in one summer,
and the remnant the worse treated ever since; and that hath
made Luther and Tyndale a little to retreat since and set a new
gloss thereto that will but shrewdly serve them, as I shall show you
when I come to the place hereafter in his book.

Tyndale

And when he is commanded to love his neighbor as himself… he
searcheth that his neighbor is created of God and bought with
Christ’s blood, and so forth.

1 putteth: posits
4 seemeth: i.e., there seems not to be
5 very: true
6 especially for that: mainly because
7 limit: pin down
8 easy, bold occasion: i.e., easily obtained, strong pretext on which
9 pretending: claiming
10, 15 profitable: beneficial
11 meaneth Tyndale: i.e., is what Tyndale is trying to do
12 in: about
13 it appeareth: is apparent
14 he: i.e., it is his
16 will: wills
17 only: sole
17, 21 profit: benefit
18 commodity: advantage
19 princes: sovereigns
20 because: by reason of the fact
21 of: i.e., for
22 all were he: even if he were
24 right unprofitable: very unbeneficial
25 appeared: was evidenced
26 uplandish: country-dwelling
27 Almaine: Germany
28 above: more than
29 fourscore: eighty
30 remnant: rest
32 retreat: backtrack
32–33 set a new gloss thereto: i.e., give this teaching of theirs a new spin
33 shrewdly: poorly
37 searcheth: searches out
46 of: by
Lo, this is very lovingly spoken, and he saith very well; but surely many places in every book that he writeth seem clearly to declare that he hath another manner of spirit than such a spirit of love. And yet were it hard, except that God’s commandment give us that warning—else will it be somewhat hard for any man upon the other two causes, by any search, to perceive that he were in reason bound to love another as well as himself, though they may serve to love him right well.

Tyndale

“Out of” his heart, not “in” his heart. And therefore he loveth him out of his heart. And if he be evil, forbeareth him and with all love and patience draweth him to good, as elder brethren wait on the younger and serve them and suffer them… and when they will not come, they speak fair and flatter, and give some gay thing and promise fair, and so draw them, and smite them not… but if they may in no wise be helped, refer the punishment to the father and mother, and so forth. And by these judgeth he all other laws of God and understandeth the true use and meaning of them; and by these understandeth he in the laws of man which are right and which tyranny.

More

Useth Tyndale and his spiritual master this manner of love, this forbearing, and this manner of patience toward the pope and the clergy, and toward princes and other temporal rulers? We see, pardie, through all their books, in what lowly, loving fashion they serve and suffer them, and how fair they speak, and how pleasantly they flatter all holy Catholic, Christian people, saving only their own sect, with as venomous words and as poisonous speech as the devil can devise them, with all the means they may to sow division and dissension and set the people in sedition… and under color of true faith to bring them in heresies and destroy both body and soul.

But Tyndale would now that we should for the while forget all that he and his master writeth elsewhere, and himself in many places
after in this same book… and that we should only mark these holy, loving words that he writeth here in his present prologue… in which he saith that they which be spiritual do never “smite” their “younger brethren,” that is to say, such as be not in faith and virtue grown up as they be, nor will not with them come forward therein, but be evil and will be no better… but the spirituals, as their “elder brethren,” doth “flatter” them and “promise fair” and “give them gay things,” and so “draweth” them forward in grace; and finally, if that will not help them, then the spiritual elder brother “referreth their punishment to the father and the mother”—that is, as he meaneth, to Almighty God (for if he meant unto their rulers, so it is already!), for none other hath authority to correct and punish. And his mind he hath declared in that behalf in sundry places—that none man should in any wise pursue and punish any man specially for any heresy… for he that pursueth any man is no spiritual man. I let pass here that after this way the world, albeit that it be bad enough already, would yet wax then much worse; and I pass over also that as well all wise men as all good men, and Holy Scripture also itself, is openly and plainly to the contrary.

And I will for the while no more but ask of Tyndale whether he account the pope and the clergy and the temporal princes for men born again and renewed with the Spirit of God, and thereby spiritual, or not. If he reckon them for such: then by his own rule they can and do very well judge allthing, and so should he then think that the things that they do be well done; for he saith himself that the spirituals do search the bottom of God’s commandments and fulfill them gladly.

Now, if he say that they be not the spirituals, but such as Luther is, and Friar Huessgen, and himself, and such others as so search the causes that they care not, as Tyndale saith after, whether the priest say Mass in his gown or in his cope, and will as soon “gape” for sand as holy salt, and had “as lief be smeared with unhallowed butter as anointed with charmed oil,” except men can tell them the causes, which they say that no man can, and therefore they mock and jest thereat—now, if this their sort be, as Tyndale saith, the spiritual, and thereby the elder brethren—then will we say to Tyndale and ask him, “Why do not you, Tyndale, and your spiritual

1, 30 after: later
1 mark: take note of
6 evil: bad // will be no: don’t want to be any
6 spirituals: i.e., spiritual set
7 flatter: coax; cajole
7 gay: brightly colored / attractive
9 help: amend
9 referreth: i.e., leaves
12 none other: no one else
12 authority: i.e., the right
14 wise: way
14, 15 pursue(th): goes after; hunt(s) down
14 specially for any: i.e., just for some
16 after this way: i.e., if this policy was followed
17 wax: become
18 wise: sensible
20 for the while: for now // no more but: do no more than
21 temporal princes: secular rulers
24 well: correctly // allthing: everything
25 be well done: i.e., all right to do
26, 28, 36 spiritual(s): spiritual ones
26 search: i.e., by searching get to
30 search: search out
31 gown . . . cope: i.e., ordinary clothes . . . vestments
32 gape: open wide their mouths
32 holy salt: Blessed salt has traditionally been put on the tongue of a person about to be baptized. It also is used in the Asperges rite preceding the Tridentine High Mass.
32 had: i.e., would // lief: i.e., soon
32 unhallowed: unblessed
33 charmed oil: oil put under an incantation // except: unless
34 causes: reasons
35 mock: i.e., poke derisive fun // jest: jeer // their sort: i.e., group of theirs
36–37 say to: address
58/37—59/1 spiritual fellows: fellow spiritual people
fellows, according to your own words here, ‘love out of your hearts’ the pope, the cardinals, the clergy, the princes, the people, and so forth, being, as your ‘younger brethren,’ not yet ‘born again’;

Tyndale taketh great pleasure in often bringing in these words “and so forth.”

and why do you not ‘forbear them with all love and patience,’ and so forth, and ‘wait on them and serve them and suffer them,’ and so forth; and when they will not with you come forth, why do you not then ‘speak them fair and flatter them and promise them fair,’ and so forth, and so ‘draw them forth,’ and so forth? And if that for all this they will not come forth, why do you not then ‘refer the punishment to the father and mother’ and ‘smite them not,’ but, contrary to your own words, use at your ‘younger brethren’ to laugh them to scorn, to mock, to jest, to check, to chide, to brawl, and ribaldrously to rail,

calling them ‘apish,’ ‘peevish,’ ‘popish’ ‘jugglers,’ ‘thieves,’ ‘murderers,’

The venomous words of the Lutherans


‘Priapists,’ ‘idolaters,’ ‘whoremasters,’ and ‘sodomites’; ‘abominable,’

‘shameless,’ ‘stark mad,’ and ‘faithless’ ‘beasts,’ ‘hangmen,’

‘martyr-quellers,’ and ‘Christ-killers’; ‘serpents,’ ‘scorpions,’ ‘dreamers,’ and ‘very devils’—and finally, with such venomous words and other malicious ways, the worst that the devil and you devise together, busily put forth your pain to sow debate, dissension, schisms, strife, and sedition… and cause your ‘spiritual’ people, that is to wit, the ‘elder brethren’ ‘born again of the Spirit,’ to rise and rebel against your ‘younger brethren’ but ‘natural’ yet and not ‘born again’… and the one party to smite and kill the other, by thousands on a day, as ye have done in Almaine… providing always that yourselves, the chief captains and authors of such sedition and rebellious bloodshed, get up upon some hill in the meanwhile, and stand and look upon, sure and safe, a side half out of all gunshot, and come not at handstrokes in no wise, but serve for trumpeters with the blast of your words and ungraceful writings to kindle them and call upon and set them all a-work… and if it walk on your side, then to gaud and glory, and if it go against you, and your party go to wrack, then slink away from the field and make as

ye came not there nor never intended harm nor meant any such matter… or, as your master did in Almaine, to put yourself out of suspicion, cry to the contrary party to kill them down, hand-smooth, whom your own words raised up and sinfully set a-work!"

And lo, thus hath Tyndale cunningly declared the great commandment of love—and by himself and his fellows, as ye see, so lovingly put in ure that they would help the other party to all the mischief they might… and would that on the other side, whatsoever they do themselves, be it never so mischievous, no man should once chide them nor give foul words… but in their devilish deeds forbear still and suffer them, and take them then as younger brethren, little babes untaught, and give them fair words and pretty proper gear, rattles and cockbells and gay golden shoes… and if the wantons will not learn yet, but bite and scratch their fellows…

beat not the babes yet, in no wise, but go and tell their mother; and so forth.

And when Tyndale hath thus cunningly declared the great commandment of love, and hath so spiritually set it out to the show—then concludeth he well and worshipfully that by this commandment of love in such a wise way understood, his spiritual sort “judgeth all the laws of God, and understand the true use of them; and by the same, in like wise, understand they all the laws of man, which are right and which tyranny.” For by this they understand that for the love that they bear to their own will… every gloss that they give themselves is the right meaning of the word of God, and all that all other holy men have written is but fantasies and false. And in men’s law, to let them beat other men for saying truth were well ordained and right; but any man to chide once any of them for a hundred heresies—that were utter wrong, and no lawful law, but plain tyranny.

Tyndale

If God should command him to drink no wine (as he commanded in the Old Testament that the priests should not when they ministered in the Temple; and forbade divers meats), the spiritual—because he knoweth that man is lord over all other creatures, and they his servants made to be at his pleasure, and that it is not commanded for the wine or meat itself, that man should be in bondage unto

1 came . . . never: i.e., never were there nor ever 1–2 any such matter: i.e., for any such thing to take place 2 Almaine: Germany 3 cry: i.e., cry out // contrary: opposing // hand-smooth: flat; utterly 5, 17 cunningly declared: ingeniously elucidated 6 fellows: cohorts / followers 7 in ure: into practice 8 mischief: harm // might: could // side: i.e., hand 9 never so: no matter how 9 mischievous: deleterious; harm-causing 10 chide: yell at // give foul words: use foul language 10 in: with regard to 11 forbear . . . suffer: continue to bear with and put up with them 12–13 give . . . gear: i.e., speak to them politely and give them cute befitting things 13 cockbells: jingle bells 13 gay: shiny 14 wantons: little brats // fellows: companions 15 in no wise: by no means 18–19 set . . . show: showcased it 19 well and: very // worshipfully: creditably / awesomely 20 wise: brilliant 21 sort: class 22 wise: manner 24 gloss: interpretation 25 give themselves: i.e., themselves give 26 fantasies: speculations 27 truth: i.e., what is true 27, 29 were: would be 28 ordained: decreed // any . . . once: i.e., to let any man once yell at 29 wrong: injustice // lawful: legitimate 30 plain: outright 34 forbade: i.e., forbade the eating of 34 divers: various 34, 37 meat(s): food(s) 34 spiritual: i.e., spiritual man 37 for: i.e., for the sake of
his own servant, the inferior creature—ceaseth no t to search the cause. And when he findeth it is to tame the flesh, and that he be always sober... he obeyeth gladly, and yet not so superstitiously that the time of his disease he would not drink wine in way of a medicine, to recover his health, as David ate of the hallowed bread; and as Moses for necessity left the children of Israel uncircumcised ... and were yet thought to be in no worse case than they that were circumcised, as the children that died within eight days were counted in as good case as they that were circumcised; which examples might teach us many things if there were spirit in us.

More
Now cometh he to those things which he taketh for indifferent—that is to wit, of their nature neither good nor evil, but taking their goodness or their evil of commandment or prohibition and of the mind of the doer with circumstances of the deed—and in these things he speaketh as one that would we should ween that his high spiritual wisdom had a very deep insight, in that he telleth us as a new, strange tale, that never man had heard before, that the inferior creatures be subjects to man and not man to them.

But, now, this truth laboreth he to make a false ground to build his lies upon. For by this he would have us ween that we were at liberty to construe and interpret all commandments either of Christ's church or of Christ's own mouth immediate... after our own sweet will, whencesoever we can find out any false gloss of the commandment to flatter and beguile ourselves with. As here if

Lv 10:8 God should command him to drink no wine as he commanded in the Old Law while they ministered in the Temple, he would anon search for the cause. And then he saith that he should find the cause to be for taming of the flesh and to keep him sober, and then for that cause he would obey the commandment gladly, but yet not so superstitiously but that in time of his disease he would drink wine to recover his health; and thereof he layeth example of David and of Moses.

But what availeth him all this tale? For we deny not but that the word and precept of God receiveth interpretation. But we say

1, 19 inferior: lower-ranking  1 search: search for  3, 32 superstitiously: scrupulously 4, 33 the/in time of his disease: i.e., in a time of illness  4 in: by 5–9: See 1 Samuel 21:1–7, Joshua 5:5–7, and 2 Samuel 12:15–18, 23.  5 hallowed: consecrated; holy 7 were yet: i.e., yet these were // worse: less good  7, 9 case: a condition; a state  8 as: just as 8 days: i.e., days of their birth // counted: accounted; considered to be  9 might: could 12 indifferent: neutral  13 evil: bad // taking: deriving  14 evil: badness // of: from 15 and of: and from // mind: intention // with: along with the 16 in: concerning 16 one ... should: someone who would have us 16, 22 ween: think  18 strange: surprising 18 tale: assertion // never man had: no one had ever  19 subjects: in subject 21 laboreth he: i.e., he is trying // a false ground: a false basis / an unsound foundation 24 immediate: without mediation; i.e., directly // after: according to  25 find out: come up with 25 gloss: interpretation  26 flatter: buoy / gratify  29 anon: immediately 30 cause: i.e., reason (for that commandment) 31 cause: reason 36 what ... tale: of what avail to him is this whole speech // deny not but: do not deny  37 receiveth: admits of
that the authority thereof lieth not in every man’s head at adventure…

It is perilous for a man to
lean to his own wit.

and that although some things be
plain and open enough, yet it is perilous
for any man, except certain revelation of
God, to take himself for so far forth renewed with the Spirit of God
that he boldly lean in such things to his own wit, lest his will
blind his wit; but let us lean therein unto the judgment of the old

Lean to the sense of the Church,
the which cannot err.

to the sense received of the whole Catholic
Church—not the church of only elects,
which church no man can know, but unto the Catholic, known
church of all Christian people save heretics… which Catholic
church, whatsoever Tyndale say, can never fall in damnable
error.

For if a man leave these ways and boldly cleave to a cause of his
own searching—he is well likely to break the commandment.

As here Tyndale presupposeth if God would himself forbid all
men wine upon certain days, or command them certain
days to fast—here would Tyndale anon, as a man spiritual, ensarch
the cause why God would command him so; and then would
he find that the cause were but only to tame the flesh and to keep
men sober, and therefore would he obey it.

But, now, by this fashion, if God gave Tyndale a commandment
whereof Tyndale could find no cause at all… he would not do it at
all.

If our father Tyndale had been in Paradise in the stead of our
father Adam… he should never have needed any serpent, or woman
either, to tempt him to eat the apple of the Tree of Knowledge. For
when God had forbidden him the eating thereof upon pain of death
(as he forbiddeth us lechery upon pain of damnation)—then would
he have searched for the cause of the commandment. And when his
wit would have found none, because the flesh had there no
need of taming—then would he have eaten on a good pace, and have
thought that God Almighty had but played the wanton with him, and
would not be angry with him for an apple; and so would he by his
own rule of searching have found out as much mischief as the
woman and the serpent and the devil and all.

1 thereof: i.e., requisite for doing that
2, 3 perilous: dangerous
3, 6 lean: rely on
3, 6, etc. wit: intellect
3 plain and open: clear and obvious
4 except: i.e., barring of from
7 lean: incline ourselves in thought / defer
8, 9 sense (received) of: i.e., meaning accepted as the real one by
9 the which: i.e., which church
10 elects: the elect
12 save: except
13 in: into
15 ways: paths
19 anon: immediately
19 ensearch; go in search of
20 command him so: give him that command
21 were: was
23 fashion: way of proceeding
26 Paradise: the Garden of Eden
27 should: would
28 apple: fruit
31 cause of: reason for
33 on a good pace: i.e., with alacrity
34 had . . . wanton: had only been toying
35 for an apple: on account of a piece of fruit
36 found: ferreted / mischief: harm; devastation
And surely now too, by this spiritual rule of ensearching of the cause of fasting and forbearing meat, and finding the cause to be none other but for taming of the flesh and soberness... whosoever think himself to the sins of the flesh not much inclined (as some of nature are not), nor by moderate drinking of wine anything disposed to drunkenness, shall interpret himself discharged of the commandment, and shall drink wine and shall break his fast at his pleasure; or if he forbear wine or keep the fast, he shall at the uttermost keep it but for a countenance and, as they write themselves, in “avoiding the slandering” of such as have a “weak” conscience and ween themselves bound to the keeping thereof. And therefore when they have kept the fast in sight... they shall not force to break all those fasts privily, where the weak consciences of other, simple souls are absent and nobody by them but such as are all spiritual and have a conscience strong enough to break the strong fast upon Good Friday without grudge of conscience at all. And afterward, little and little, they shall, when they be suffered, amend also and make strong in the Lord the weak consciences of their sick brethren, and make them break all the fasting days too, with laud and thank given “to the Lord that by his elect preachers, in these latter days of this blind world” that could not on fasting days find their meat, “hath now illumined their eyes and given them light by which they have found the way into the Christian liberty” of eating, drinking, and honest-liking lechery, “from the bondage and thralldom” of all fasting days and all professed chastity.

For to this end we see that their spiritual doctrine hath already brought it in Saxony; for there is now the Lent all turned into Shrovetide. And there it well appeareth, although it were true that Tyndale saith (that fasting were of God ordained for none other cause but only to tame the flesh), yet was it need for the Church to do as it hath done by the Spirit of God: ordain and appoint certain common fasting days in which the people should fast together. For else, if there were no such, the most part of the people which now in the common fasts do tame the flesh together by the commandment and laudable custom of the church of God...

1 ensearching: going in search 2, 31 cause (of): i.e., reason (for the commands of)
2 forbearing: i.e., of abstaining from 5 of nature: by nature 6–7 discharged of: exempted from 9 for a countenance: for appearances’ sake
30–31 well... saith: i.e., is quite evident that, even if what Tyndale says were true 30 were of: was by 32 appointed: mandate(d) 33, 35 common: communal / universal 34 most part: majority
35 which: who
would find very few days therefor of their own mind, and many
not one through the whole year; as ye now see it in Saxony, where they
that were wont to fast many, fast now never a one.

And surely if fasting were not profitable done of any other
devotion, but only served for taming of the flesh; and then the
custom taken away of common fasting days, in which folk fast
together in obedience of the commandment; and, those common days
taken away… folk were only left to their own liberty, and private,
secret conscience, to choose their fasting days themselves, not of
any other devotion but only for taming of their flesh, when
themselves feel it begin to boil: then many wedded men should
need few fasting days to their pain, having their remedy so
pleasant and so present, always ready at hand, and then would many
an honest maiden be ashamed to fast any day at all, lest she
should seem thereby to give young men warning that she were waxen
warm and bid them if they will speed, speak now.

But Tyndale with his spiritual fellows are fallen into this folly
by the liking of their own lust, in favor whereof they sinfully
study to find out false glosses to be open gluttons without reproach…
and also with the praise of such people as their false doctrine hath
corrupted and brought in a wrong belief, contrary to all doctrine
of all the old holy doctors, and against all Holy Scripture (even
the very Gospel itself and the very words of Christ), by which
not only all Christian people hitherto but also the Jews have from
the beginning been taught to believe that man’s fasting hath been
pleasant to God for other causes than Tyndale would have it seem,
that searcheth, and seeketh, only the means to break it.

Philosophy may be well meddled Tyndale and his master be wont to
with the things of God. cry out upon the pope and upon all
the clergy for that they meddle philosophy
with the things of God—which is a thing that may in place be very
well done, since the wisdom of philosophy, all that we find true
therein, is the wisdom given of God, and may well do service to
his other gifts of higher wisdom than that is. But Tyndale here
in this place, as it seemeth, doth lean unto the old natural philosophers
altogether. For as for abstinence to tame the flesh from

1 find: come up with // therefor: for this // mind: accord 2 Saxony: A region of Germany.
4 done: i.e., when done  5, 10 devotion: i.e., religious motivation  6 taken: i.e., was taken
6, 7 common: communal  9 secret: personal  10 but: except
12 to their pain: i.e., to have to suffer through  13 pleasant: pleasurable
14 honest: chaste; virtuous  15 warning: notice  15–16 were waxen warm: had become aroused
16 bid . . . speed: i.e., to be telling them that if they wanted to score, they should
17 spiritual fellows: i.e., fellow spiritual men // folly: idiocy  18 liking: approving
19 find out: come up with; contrive // glosses: pretexts // open: flagrant  21 in: into
22 old: early / time-honored // holy doctors: theologians  24 hitherto: up till now
26 pleasant: pleasing  27 that searcheth: who goes in search of  28 may: can
28, 32 well: rightly  28, 30 meddle(d): mingle(d)  29 cry out: inveigh // upon: against
31 place: i.e., the right setting  33 of: by  35 lean unto: base himself on // old: ancient
intemperance and foul lusts also, this was a thing that many philosophers did both teach and use. But as for fasting, that is another thing, which God hath always among his faithful people had observed and kept... not only for that purpose, but also

*Why fastings are observed* for a kind of pain, affliction, and punishment of the flesh for their sins, and to put us in remembrance that we be now in the vale of tears and not in the hill of joy, saving for the comfort of hope.

And albeit that Tyndale be loath to hear thereof, because he would not that any man should do true penance with putting himself to any pain for his own sins... yet would God the contrary. And as he will that men for their sins should be sorry in their hearts... so would he that for the same cause the sorrow of their hearts should redound into their bodies... and that we should, for the provocation of God’s mercy, humble ourselves before him... and not only pray for forgiveness, but also put our bodies to pain and affliction, of our own selves, and thereby to show how heavily we take it that we have offended him.

And to the intent that we should well know that fasting not only for taming of the flesh, but also for pain to be taken for our sins,

*Lv 23:14, 27–32* was pleasant unto him—he taught his people by his prophets that they should fast, and appointed them certain days.

It appeareth also that fasting was and is pleasant unto God when men do for devotion to God not only forbear their pleasure, but also part of their necessary sustenance, in occupying the time of usual feeding of the flesh about the plenteous nourishing and spiritual pampering of the soul.

Also unto the obtaining of great spiritual gifts of God and high revelations, how special a thing fasting is... both our Savior declareth himself in the Gospel of Matthew—where he saith that that kind of devils which he did cast out of the child is not cast out but by prayer and fasting—

And of all these things we have in holy saints’ lives so many examples that it were overlong to rehearse them. But forasmuch as we see well that Tyndale maketh but mocks of all such matters, and all their holy revelations and miracles taketh but for trifles—we
shall send him to look better upon the good books which himself hath evilly and of evil purpose translated: the books, I mean, of the Holy Scripture itself. For therein shall he see that fasting serveth not only to “tame the flesh,” but for all these good uses also that we have spoken of before, and yet for many others more. And there shall he specially see the thing that he is most loath to let you see: that fasting and other bodily affliction, either taken by commandment of God and his church or willingly taken of our own good mind, done for our sins, done in true faith and devotion with purpose of amendment, is one of the very special things that obtain remission of the sin, release of the more pain, with getting greater grace and increase of God’s favor; which thing is the same that he and his fellows do so sore oppugn, that the whole church of Christ, priests and laymen both, call “satisfaction”—not meaning that we can do penance enough for our sins, nor that we could do anything thereof at all without help of grace, nor that all that we can do could be worth a fly to-heaven-ward without Christ’s Passion… but that with help of grace, and merits of Christ’s Passion, our good works well wrought… help to get remission and purchase us pardon and release of pain, and may well be done for that intent, and be by God ordained to serve us to that intent; and for that cause be they by the Church called “satisfaction,” for the devoir that we should do to punish at the full our offenses ourselves, that God thereby the rather moved with mercy should withdraw his great, heavy punishment which else he shall cause to be done unto us himself, and not so sore if we judge and amend our faults ourselves… according to the words of the blessed Apostle to the Corinthians, “If we judged ourselves, we should not be judged of our Lord.” And surely if we judge ourselves truly, we shall be content to punish ourselves.

And that fasting is one of the good works that, besides other good and great, godly purposes, serveth for satisfaction of sin and procuring of remission, grace, and pardon—and that it serveth not only for the taming of the flesh, as Tyndale here would have it seem—ye shall see too manifestly proved by many plain places in every part of Scripture.
First, the fasts that Moses fasted, first for the Law, and after for the sin of the people and the sin of Aaron also—were those fasts for nothing but for to tame his flesh?

Item: In the twenty-first chapter of the Third Book of Kings, “When Ahab had heard these words, he tore his garments and put on his body a shirt of hair, he fasted and slept in a sack, and went hanging his head low down; and our Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, ‘Hast thou not seen how Ahab hath humbled him before me? And therefore, because he hath humbled himself for my sake, I will bring no evil in during his life.’” Doth it not manifestly appear by these words that King Ahab fasted not for taming of his flesh, to keep it from wildness, but he fasted for the selfsame cause for which he wore hair and slept in a sack—that is to wit, to humble himself before the face of God, and to do penance in punishing himself for his sin, to move thereby Almighty God to mercy, and to the withdrawing of his high punishment which else he feared would fall upon his head?… which punishment God, at the respect of the king’s humble penance and pain of fasting and other affliction willingly taken by himself, did mercifully withdraw from him, so that in all his days he suffered him to feel no part thereof.

And so may ye see this place of Scripture evident and plain against Tyndale, and that very repentance requireth of the repentant person not only taming of the flesh against the sin imminent, or to come, but also punishment, by fasting and other affliction, for the sin already done.

And, now, Christ hath to Christian men promised of our sins forgiveness, and of our pain release, by virtue of his pain; but this meaneth he to them that set not their own sins at so light, after his great kindness shown, but that their own selves show, by their own willful punishment, worthy to suffer pain also themselves therefor… and then his pain hath given their pain the life that maketh it quick and available—not intending, yet, that himself so should take pain that the sinners themselves should sin
at their pleasure and be saved all with ease, as Tyndale and Luther would make us ween. For that were the way to make men wanton and wax very bold in sin.

Furthermore, in the First Book of Ezra and the eighth chapter, it is written thus, in the person of the people: “We have fasted and prayed to God for this”—that is to wit, “for help against our enemies”—“and it is come prosperously to pass.”

Ye may here clearly see this pestilent opinion of Tyndale with few words confuted. For this fast was not for taming of the flesh, but for avoiding of their peril.

Again, in the Second Book of Ezra and the first chapter, thus said Nehemiah: “When I had heard such tidings”—that is to wit, how the walls of Jerusalem were thrown down, the gates burned, and the children of Israel in great affliction and misery—“I sat down and wept and mourned many days; I fasted also, and prayed before the face of the God of heaven.”

Lo, this fast was not for to tame the flesh… for the man was in heaviness far from such wanton things; but he fasted, as he wept and mourned, to move God to mercy.

Also, the great priest of God Eliachim saith in the fourth of Judith, “Know ye that our Lord shall hear your prayers if ye continue in fasting and praying in the sight of him.”

I suppose no man is of so simple wit and understanding but he may at the bare rehearsal of this brief text well perceive that Eliachim did not esteem fasting as Tyndale doth, neither took it not only for a taming of the flesh, but for a means also to purchase grace with remission and pardon, and also to obtain aid and help of God in that great necessity.

Is not the fourth of Esther also clean contrary to the doctrine of these devilish preachers of fleshly liberty? “Go and assemble,” saith that good queen, “all the Jews that thou findest in Susa, and pray ye for me. Eat ye not, neither drink not, in three days and three nights. And I likewise will fast with my maidens.”

Would she that they should forbear meat and drink to the intent that by their fasting they might tame her flesh? Nay, nor for the taming of their own, neither; but that by their devout fasting

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1 all with ease: with complete absence of pain
2 make us ween: have us believe // were: would be
3 wanton: i.e., go wild
4 First . . . chapter: See Ezra 8:23. (In More’s day the Book of Nehemiah was called the Second Book of Ezra.)
5 can: can
6 pestilent: pernicious // opinion of Tyndale: deviant pronouncement of Tyndale’s
7 avoiding of their peril: i.e., averting of the danger they were faced with 11–16: See Nehemiah 1:1–4.
8 such tidings: i.e., this news // how: i.e., that
9 lo: look
10 heaviness: i.e., his despondency
11 wanton: unchaste / sportive
12 fourth: i.e., fourth chapter (in the Vulgate). See also (in the NAB, etc.) Judith 4:13 and 8:6.
13 so simple: such meager // wit: intelligence // but: but that
14 bare rehearsal: mere quoting
15 neither: nor
16 purchase: procure // with: i.e., together with
17 great necessity: i.e., dire situation
18 forth: i.e., fourth chapter (verses 15 and 16)
19 maidens: maidservants
20 would she: did she wish // they: i.e., all those Jews she wanted assembled
21 forbear meat: abstain from food
and her maidens’ and her own... they might provoke our Lord to pity them and preserve them from that imminent peril that they were then all in.

*Tb* 12:8; *Sir* 34:31

What saith Tobias? “Prayer,” saith he, “joined with fasting is good.” He saith not this only for young lusty folk for taming of their flesh in avoiding of intemperance, for good Christian fasting goeth sometimes far above the natural temperance; but he teacheth all men, that may without harm, to join with prayer the pain of fasting, as a thing pleasant unto God in such wise as the prayer is; and it is a secret, inward, effectual prayer, when the pain of all the body repenting and punishing the sin crieth to God for mercy with voice of the mouth.

In the thirty-fourth chapter of Ecclesiasticus it is written, “The man that fasteth for his sins and again committeth the selfsame sins, what availeth him this humility?”

Whereby it is well understood that he which fasteth and amendeth himself—his fast availeth, and is profitable. And wherefor? Not only for taming of his flesh—for that may be tamed enough and yet the man bad enough—but it availeth for remission of sin and for merit in heaven. For as holy Saint Augustine saith, to say that the fast of a Christian man shall have no reward in heaven is not the opinion of a true Christian man, but of a heretic.

The prophet Joel, in the second chapter: “And therefore now, saith the Lord, turn to me with all your heart in fasting, weeping, and wailing. Tear your hearts and not your garments,” and so forth.

Lo, here the prophet exhorteth to fasting, as he doth to hearty mourning and weeping, not for a countenance of sorrow, but to be sorrowful and to take pain in deed—not in their clothes, where they feel it not, but in their bodies and inwardly in their hearts, where they feel it thoroughly—so that they may thereby not only tame their flesh, but also turn again to God, that he may take pity upon them and turn again to them.

Read we not in the third chapter of the prophet Jonah that God, seeing the Ninevites chastise and punish themselves with fasting and other afflictions voluntarily done unto themselves,
did mercifully take quite away the great and grievous punishment that was at hand, ordained by himself for their sins and offenses? Wherefor did they fast? For to tame their flesh, as Tyndale saith? Nay; they fasted and did penance for their sins, and therewith purchased *pardon*—which Tyndale will not perceive.

I could here allegre unto you Christian readers other texts out of the holy prophets and other places of Scripture—as the first chapter of Joel, the ninth of Daniel, the thirty-sixth of Jeremiah, the twentieth of Judges, with a hundred places more, very strong for us in this matter of fasting; but these few may seem too many for a thing so manifest and clear. Howbeit, I will allege unto Tyndale the words of our Savior himself, written in the seventeenth of Matthew, where he saith, “This kind of devils is not cast out but by prayer and fasting.” The holy evangelist Luke, in the fourteenth chapter of the Apostles’ Acts, writeth thus: “When they had ordained them priests in every church and had prayed and fasted, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed.”

Here may ye clearly see, good Christian reader, that the holy and blessed apostle Paul with many others more… did not fast, in this place, for the subduing of the flesh and taming of bodily lusts. For they fasted here for other folk—that is to wit, for the priests to whom they had given Holy Orders, and for the people whom they had committed unto their charge—that God, for their devout prayers and fasting, should give increase of his grace and favor among them.

Finally, what will Tyndale say to the words that are written in the sixth of Matthew and spoken by the mouth of our Savior Jesus Christ, where he saith, “When ye fast, make not yourselves sad like hypocrites, for they waste out their faces to the intent it might be perceived that they fast. Forsooth, I say unto you, they have their reward already. But when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that it appear not unto men that thou fastest, but unto thy Father, which is in secret. And thy Father, that seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”

Lo, doth not our Lord here promise to *reward* all them that for no desire of man’s praise or itch of vainglory, but of mere humility and true repentance of heart, punish their body with

\(^1\) quite: totally  \(^2\) ordained: decreed  \(^3\) wherefor: what for  \(^4\) purchased: procured  \(^5\) will not: refuses to perceiv  
\(^6\) 111: algea: adduce / quote  \(^6\) 6 out of: from  \(^7\) as: such as  
\(^8\) 9 places: passages  
\(^9\)–10 in this matter: on this issue  
\(^12\)–17: See Matthew 17:21 and Acts 14:23.  
\(^15\) them: i.e., for those people  
\(^18\) may: can  
\(^19\) place: passage (i.e., Acts 14:23)  
\(^20\) lusts: desires; appetites  
\(^27\) sad: gloomy-looking  
\(^28\) waste out: neglect the care of  
\(^29\) fast: i.e., are fasting  
\(^31\) appear not unto: i.e., not be seen by  
\(^32\) which is in secret: who is invisibly present  
\(^33\) openly: This word seems to be an erroneous scribal addition.  
\(^34\) lo: look  
\(^35\) itch: craving  
\(^35\) of mere: solely out of
fasting? Which one place—being so plain, open, and manifest for
the merit of fasting—though it might have been more than sufficient
to confound Tyndale and his master Luther with all their scholars,
yet have I been therein the longer, and have spoken of this matter
somewhat the more at large, for the manifestation of their great
blindness and, as it seemeth, malice to men’s souls; and for the
comfort of them that hitherto have had the mind to punish the
flesh with fasting, that they do not hereafter as unthrifts have in
Almaine done already: leave off their devotion to God for the fond
babbling of such sensual heretics. For if Tyndale will say that
yet all this was no thing but to tame the flesh, that the men
might pray the more quietly, without rebellious motions of the
flesh—whatsoever he shall say therein, consider the places and
his words together, and ye shall find all his process therein a

Mt 4:2  fair tale of a tub. For albeit that
Dt 9:18–20  Christ fasted forty days and “after” hungered—
yet whether Moses hungered in
his forty days or not, we be not very sure. And it seemeth well that
he did, for he would not of likelihood have told it for any great
thing that he fasted for the sin of Aaron, and also for the sin of
the people, so straitly forty days that in the while he neither
ate nor drank… if he never had in the while been neither ahungered
nor athirst.

Howbeit, if Tyndale will bring all these fasts in question—
yet of the Ninevites and the others above rehearsed, there is no manner of
doubt but that they fasted in hunger and thirst. And it were indeed a
mad thing to think that when they went about to punish
their sins and humble themselves before the face of God with
fasting… they fasted but till they were ahungered, and then got
them to breakfast. If he will say that the pain of the fasting was
only to tame their flesh that they should not sin—he cannot so
say; for it appeareth that they did it willingly as well for their sins
before passed as for divers other causes. If he will say that there was
difference between the repenting in the Old Law and the New, and
that there was cause why they should punish their sins themselves,
and not we… because Christ hath now done penance for our
sins and had not at that time so done for theirs: it will not serve
him, both because divers of the authorities for fasting be alleged
in the New Law and also because the Jews had the profit of
Christ’s Passion by their faith that it was to come and should be
done, as we have by the faith that it is past and already done; and
their repentance and our repentance were like, saving our
privilege of more abundant grace and pardon by the Sacrament of
Penance, which Tyndale goeth about to destroy. If he will say
that the fasting serveth but to keep the mind calm and quiet in
prayer, from all motions of fleshly lusts that else might
trouble the mind: to this I say that the hunger itself may trouble
the mind and make it less quiet than if the flesh were in
temperate rest, without it. And over this, his answer in that point
will not serve since it appeareth well by the circumstances in many
of the places before touched… that many which fasted were not in such
ease of heart nor lust of body that their prayers were at that
time likely to be letted with voluptuous, wanton minds. Wherefore,
let Tyndale say what he will, ye shall find for truth that besides
the taming of the body, fasting and our pain taken therein
pleaseth God done with devotion, and serveth us for obtaining
many and great gifts of grace.

Nay [saith Tyndale, in his book of Obedience], as for pain-taking,
God is no tyrant… and therefore rejoiceth not in our pain, but
pitieth us… and, as it were, mourneth with us, and would we should
have none, saving that like a good surgeon he putteth pain of
tribulation unto the sores of our sin… because the sin cannot
otherwise be rubbed out of the flesh and cured.

We say not neither that God rejoiceth in our pain as a tyrant—
albeit that Luther and Tyndale would have us take him for such
one as had more tyrannous delight in our pain than ever had any
Luther taketh away
man’s free will.
tyrant… when they by the taking away
of man’s free will would make us ween
that God alone worketh all our sin, and
then damneth his creatures in perpetual torments for his own
deed.

But we say that God rejoiceth and delighteth in the love of man’s
heart, when he findeth it such as the man inwardly delighteth, and in
his heart outwardly, to let the love of his heart so redound into the
body that he gladly by fasting and other affliction putteth the body

1–2 divers . . . in: i.e., some of the proof texts for fasting come from
2 had the profit: received the benefit  3 should: would  5 like: similar // saving: except for
6 by: via  7 goeth about: is out  8, 11 quiet: peaceful; undisturbed  9 from: i.e., free of
9 motions: stirrings // lusts: cravings 12 temperate: moderate // over this: furthermore
13 appeareth . . . in: is quite clear from the contexts of
14 places: passages
14 before touched: previously touched upon // which: who
15 last: vigor
16 letted with: obstructed by // voluptuous: libidinous // minds: thoughts
17 for truth: i.e., the truth to be 19 done: i.e., when it is done/sustained
24 surgeon: doctor
25 sores of: i.e., wounds caused by 28 such: i.e., such a 29 had: took
31 ween: believe
36 in: i.e., from in
to pain for God’s sake… and yet thinketh, for all that, that in comparison of his duty all that is much less than right naught.

We say also that God rejoiceth and delighteth in *justice*… and for that cause he delighteth to see a man so delight in the same, and to take his sin so sorrowfully, that he is content of himself by fasting and other affliction willingly to put himself to pain therefor. And I say that if God had not *this* delight—which is not a tyrannous but a good and godly delight—else would he put unto man no pain for sin at all. For it is plain false that God doth it for necessity of driving the sin out of the flesh, as Tyndale saith he doth, because that otherwise it cannot be cured. For it is questionless that God *can* otherwise drive the sin out of the flesh, and by other means cure it, if it so pleased him; and so *would* he, saving for his godly delight in justice, which he loveth to see man follow by fasting and other penance… and which delight of following God’s pleasure therein, Tyndale, in manner, by withdrawing of penance, clean goeth about to destroy.

Now, where Tyndale, as a spiritual ensearcher of the cause of every commandment of God, did, in reproving the “superstitious” manner of them that without such a deep spiritual search do keep God’s commandment straitly, bring in the examples of David and his company, which for necessity did eat of the offered, hallowed bread whereof by the Law he should not, and of Moses, also, leaving the children, contrary to the commandment of God, forty years uncircumcised in desert… he endeth that matter with this great, weighty word: “[These] examples might teach us many things if there were spirit in us.”

What things the evil spirit that inspireth Tyndale teacheth him, I cannot tell. But of any *good* spirit he learneth no further in these examples than that in *necessity* Moses, the leader of the people under God, and being also the priest of God, *dispensed* with the people in desert, in delaying the circumcision (for peril of sudden travel thereupon) till they should come where they might rest upon it. And

Jos 5:5–7; 1 Sm 21:2–7 that Ahimelech the priest in like wise for *necessity dispensed* with David and his
servants, that they might eat of offered, hallowed bread... and yet
with great difficulty: but if they were clean from any late
commixion and carnal knowledge of their wives. And of that
point might Tyndale if he had a good spirit in him... learn at the
leastwise one thing against the boldness
of his wedded harlots, monks, and
friars, that from their filthy lechery go so boldly not to the hallowed
bread, but to the Body of God in form of bread. But Tyndale’s spirit
teacheth him to be bold therein, and to bid every friar boldly break
his vow and the commandment without any necessity or dispensation
at all... saying that friars may no more live without
nuns than David might without meat.

Tyndale
And likewise of the holy day, he knoweth that the day is servant
unto man... and therefore when he findeth that it is done because he
should not be let from hearing the word of God, he obeyeth gladly...
and yet not so superstitiously that he would not help his neighbor
on the holy day and let the sermon alone for one day; or that he
would not work on the holy day, need requiring it, at such time
as men be not wont to be at church.

More
Here Tyndale teacheth us high spiritual doctrine: that Christian
men should not be too superstitiously holy on the holy day...
weening that they might do no bodily work for necessity. But the
people, for aught that I see, know that well enough and more too. But
yet to make them the more bold, he teacheth them that the holy
day is “servant unto man”... that he may therefore be bold upon the
holy day, as upon his own servant, to use it as it please him.

But yet, albeit that Christ said untō the Jews that the Son of
Man is master and lord even over the Sabbath day, to use it as
himself list, which never listed to use it but to the best: yet
can I not well see that Tyndale is in such wise master and lord
of the Sabbath day, nor no man else, that he may use it as his man—
though it was of God instituted for man
and not man for it (that is to wit,

Mk 2:27

1, 7 hallowed: consecrated  2 but: only  // clean from: ritually clean by reason of not having had
2 late: recent  3 commixion: copulation (with)  // of that: from that  4, 12 might: could
7 that: who  11 may: can  12 meat: food  14 of: concerning  15 done: established
15–16 because... let: in order that he not be prevented  17, 23 superstitiously: scrupulously
18 let... alone: i.e., miss the sermon  22 high: i.e., a high-level; an advanced
24 might do no: i.e., may not do any  // bodily: physical  25 aught: anything  27 that he: i.e., such that man
27–28 be bold upon... upon his... to use: take the liberty with... with his... of using
29 albeit: i.e., though it is true  31 list: pleases / chooses  // which: who  // listed: chose  32 wise: a way
33 his man: his manservant  34 of: by
for the spiritual benefit and profit of man), as our Savior saith also himself. But yet he calleth it not “servant unto man,”

as Tyndale calleth it. For the Scripture saith that God hath sanctified the Sabbath day, unto himself.

And that was the cause why that Christ showed unto the Jews that himself was lord of the Sabbath day: because he would that they should thereby know that he was very God… since that they had learned by Scripture that the Sabbath day was sanctified only to God himself, for man’s profit, and no man lord thereof but only God. A governor of people is made for the people, and not the people for the governor; and yet is there no man among the people wont to call the governor his man, but himself rather the governor’s man. The very manhood of our Savior himself was to some purpose ordained for mankind, as the incarnation of his Godhead was ordained for man; but yet useth no wise man to call Christ his servant, albeit himself, of his meekness, did more than serve us. But we will not much stick with Tyndale for a word somewhat wrested awry… so that we wist he meant no harm thereby.

But I fear me more of his meaning, lest he would bring holy days and working days all in one case. For as for doing our neighbor good, and also the working for our own necessity—the necessity may be such that the Church denieth it not. But whoso do interpret his necessity overlarge, or defer unto the holy day the worldly works which he might and should have done upon the working day before, or may as well do it after, and yet will work it on the holy day, and thereby will for his part bring it in custom to withdraw the reverence from the holy day and make it working day thereof: this man hath in my mind much need to consider Zelophehad, which for like using of the holy day—gathering wood on the holy day that he might have done on the working day—was by God’s own judgment stoned unto death.

And I like Tyndale in this matter the worse both for his words in his other books, and for the custom of his sect now grown in Germany, and also for the only cause that he findeth out here for
the keeping of the holy day, of which he putteth no more but the only
hearing of the word of God… so that by the cause which he findeth
unto Christmas Day or Easter Day, or Whitsuntide, to keep them for
holy days himself, than the worst day in the year, or than would a
Turk himself. And this is his high spiritual doctrine concerning
the holy day!

Tyndale
And so throughout all laws, and even likewise in all ceremonies
and sacraments… he searcheth the significations and will not serve
the visible things. It is as good to him that the priest say Mass in
his gown as in his other apparel, if they teach him not somewhat,
and that his soul be edified thereby. And as soon will he gape while
thou puttest sand as holy salt in his mouth, if thou show him no
reason thereof; he had as lief be smeared with unhallowed butter
as anointed with charmed oil, if his soul be not taught to
understand somewhat thereby; and so forth.

More
Lo, good Christian reader, this holy “spiritual” man… at last I wist
well would somewhat show himself what ghostly spirit inspireth
him. For here you see—for all his holy salutation at the beginning,
with gay words of “grace” and “light” and “faith” and “fervent love”—he
bloweth and blustereth out at last his abominable blasphemy
against the blessed sacraments of Christ, and, like the devil’s ape,
maketh mocks and mows at the holy ceremonies that the Spirit
of God hath so many hundred years taught his holy Catholic
Church.

And here perceive yet the false wiliness of the devil in uttering
of his dregs and poisoned draught. He covereth his cup a little
and shadoweth the color of his envenomed wine, that it may be
drunk down greedily ere the peril be perceived. For he
maketh here as though he found no fault but in that the significations
of the sacraments be not opened and declared unto the
people, as though if that were done, he were content… and that he
mocketh not the sacraments, but the ministers that openeth not the
betokenings thereof.
But I shall first show you that he playeth the devil’s disour even in this point, although he meant no further; and then shall I farther show you what mischief he meaneth more, and prove it you by express words of his own.

First I say it is a lewd and a knavish railing upon the sacraments of our Savior Christ to liken and compare them in any manner wise unto such scornful things, as the anointing with holy oil unto butter-smearing, with other suchlike knavish toys, which no wretch would do but such as hath the very name of the holy sacraments in hatred and despite.

Now, where he saith that his holy “spiritual” sort will always so villainously esteem the sacraments but if men tell them the reasons and betokenings of them to the edifying of their souls—it will be great business and much ado to edify and build up the souls of such a sort which the devil hath by the blast of his mouth thrown down so deep and frushed all to fitters. But I

pray God, to whom nothing is impossible, to build them once again upon the rock of his faith, from which they show themselves so far fallen down that they be full unlikely to rise. For truly if they stood thereupon, their hearts would abhor to utter such frantic fantasies.

For as touching the significations and betokenings of the blessed sacraments, the lack of knowledge whereof Tyndale would make seem a sufficient cause of his villainous blasphemy—all good people that have the use of reason and come to these sacraments with good devotion be taught, and do think and conceive in their hearts, that God was incarnated and born God-and-man for our salvation, and suffered his Passion and died for our redemption, and that we were redeemed to heaven with his blessed blood, and that without him we should never have been saved but had utterly lost heaven by the sin of Adam…and for this cause we call him our Savior, and believe that he hath promised us: that if we be christened and keep his holy commandments, and for the breaking be sorry and turn again by Penance…God will bring us to heaven, that he hath promised us and bought us to. And they believe that he hath ordained here holy sacraments which he will that we shall receive with reverence, and that every man with those sensible
sacraments, except the fault be in himself, receiveth some inward grace and aid of God by the merits of Christ’s Passion and by his holy promise and ordinance; so that unto all good Christian men the outward, sensible signs in all the sacraments and holy ceremonies of Christ’s church, by one general and common signification of them all, betoken an outward, secret gift and inspiration of grace—effused into the soul, with the receiving of that holy sacrament, by the Holy Spirit of God.

This common signification of the sacraments have all the commonalty of Christian people; and they believe not only that the sacraments be tokens of such grace and do signify it, but also be in some manner wise a means to come to the getting thereof, because God hath so ordained.

But unto Tyndale and his holy “spiritual” sort, this gear is yet too gross for their subtle, thin wits.

For that all Christian people have this faith and signification of sacraments, Tyndale cannot deny them…but if he list to belie them.

But why, trow you, cannot this signification serve Tyndale? Verily because he believeth it not; for he believeth not that any ceremony, or sacrament either, is in the work thereof any means to get any grace at all. And in almost all the sacraments he plainly saith that they neither cause any grace nor any grace do signify, nor be no sacraments at all—as by his own words I shall hereafter show you.

But in the meanwhile—forasmuch as in his preface here he maketh as though he cared but for the declaration of the tokens and sensible signs of the sacraments and ceremonies—I have shown him the great and chief signification of all: that is to wit, that they betoken the insensible grace that God giveth them into the soul through the merits of Christ’s holy Passion. And this is the very chief signification that all holy doctors note and mark in the sacraments—as appeareth by the definitions that in their books they give thereunto.
But now will not Tyndale set a straw the more by the anointing with holy oil... than by “smearing with unhallowed butter,” but if men tell him some further thing thereby that may edify his soul and make it better. For as for grace, edifieth not his soul... for God buildeth not so fast therewith as himself helpeth the devil to pull it down again and cast it quite away, so that it is never the better. And therefore he will that his holy “spiritual” sort shall set all the holy ceremonies and sacraments at naught but if men can tell them what other, special thing is meant by the water of Baptism, and by the oil in Confirmation and Aneling, and by the ceremonies of the Mass, and by the salt, and by the ashes, and by the holy water, and by the blessing of all such manner of things: upon all which, for the meanwhile, till all this be told and taught him, he thinketh that it becometh him well against Christ’s holy sacraments to jest and mock and mow and rail and scoff and royally play the ribald, resembling the salt to sand and the holy oil to smearing of some barreled butter. Ah, blasphemous beast, to whose roaring and lowing no good Christian man can without heaviness of heart give ear!

Now can men, and do also, for the more part of these things give good causes and plain, open reasons both of the significations and of the spiritual profit and bodily both. And if that of any such sacraments or ceremonies given of old by God unto his blessed apostles, and by them delivered unto his church, and therein ever since from hand to hand continued... it hath pleased the Spirit to let his people have and enjoy the profit without declaration of the special betokening other than the secret grace given them therein—is not Tyndale, ween ye, well overseen to mock the sacrament and refuse the grace because God will not make him so secret of his counsel as to tell him why he took such an outward sign rather than such another... and then ask God Almighty why he would rather have used for a ceremony salt than sand while sand is so good a scourer, and why rather ashes than earth since man was made of earth and not of ashes, and why in Baptism rather water than wine while wine will wash as clean, and why rather oil than butter while the one will smear as well as the other will anoint, and then why rather a hallowed candle than an unhallowed torch.
that will give more light, and, finally, why any bodily ceremonies
or sacraments at all, about grace to be given to the spiritual
soul, that God might as well do without; and if God list not to
make Tyndale an answer and tell him all this gear, then will he,
like a spiritual man, set all such bodily ceremonies and sacraments
at naught... and say God what he will, Tyndale will gloss his text
as it please him, and then believe as he list who shall let him!

Ex 28:4–43

When our Lord in the Old Testament
described so seriously all the apparel of
the priests... did he tell the people therewith all the causes why? Of
some we see that he did—as why he would not have Aaron ascend unto
Ex 20:26
Exodus 26—27
Leviticus 16
Exodus 29

and sanctifying of all the vessels, and consecrating of the
priests, with the rites and ceremonies of all their sacrifice—did

God did not tell the people

the signification of the
outward ceremonies.

God, I say, tell the people what all the
outward ceremonies signified? Nay; nor
what signification had the sacrament
of circumcision neither, other than that
whoso observed it not among them should fall in his indignation
and thereby perish, and whoso fulfilled it should be in his favor
and ascribed thereby into the number of his elect and peculiar
Chosen People. But why he rather willed them to have the mark and
token of circumcision than another, or why that in the tabernacle,
Ark, and altar, apparel, sanctifying, and sacrifice, our Lord
chose those outward signs and fashions that are written in Exodus,
Numbers, and Leviticus, before others, or what he signified and meant
by every of the same: that I see not that God taught the people; and
yet had they thank for the keeping, and should have been shent for
the breaking.

Now, if our spiritual father Tyndale had been there, that in every
commandment will never cease searching till he come to the very
bottom, and so judgeth allthing—when he should in all those

1, 5 bodily: physical 1, 5, 18 ceremonies: rituals 3 might: could // do: i.e., do that giving
3 list: choose 4 gear: stuff 5–6 set... at naught: regard... as of no account 6 gloss: interpret
7 believe... him: i.e., who will prevent him from believing as he pleases 9 described: specified / prescribed
9 so seriously: so painstakingly; in such detail 10 causes: reasons 12 degrees: stair steps
13 apparel: i.e., priestly apparel // all: i.e., all of // fashion: design / features
15, 20, 21 ceremonies: ritual elements 15 Testament: Covenant 16 purging: purifying
23, 24 whoso: whoever 23, 24, etc. should: would 23 fall in: incur // indignation: righteous wrath
25 ascribed: registered; enrolled // peculiar: uniquely special / uniquely-his 27 token: identifying characteristic
27 another: some other 27, 34, 36 in: concerning; with regard to 28 apparel: i.e., vestments
29 fashions: features 30 before: in preference to 31 every: each one
32 had they thank: they were given credit // shent: put to shame / punished 34 that: who
35 come: get 36 allthing: everything
things have searched and sought, and could find few things other
than allegories, of which diverse men diversely divine, and all
which he little setteth by, and saith they prove nothing; and the
very causes and significations he could not have found though
he would have mused out his brain: then would he not have set a
rush by all that God had devised, nor would have kept it at all,
lest he, being so spiritual, should have “served,” as he saith,
“visible things.” Is not here a wise work of Tyndale?

But he will haply say that in the Old Law this was less matter,
for that was the law that was all in shadows and darkness of
figures. But now—in the Law of Light, in which the veil is taken
away and all set open—Tyndale cannot abide it to be ignorant of any
sacrament or ceremony, or anything set thereby but if he search
and find the uttermost signification thereof. Surely, as lightsome as
it is, and as open as althing is now that the veil of the Temple is
withdrawn, yet will not Tyndale find out the proper causes and
significations of these sacraments and ceremonies of the Old
Law, this seven-year seventeen times told.

But go me to the New Law, and to those sacraments which Tyndale
agreeth for sacraments, which be only twain: Baptism and the
Sacrament of the Altar; in which, though he be content to call them
sacraments, yet hath he divers full erroneous opinions and very
false faiths. But begin, therefore, as I said, at Baptism, when our

\[ Jn 3:5 \]

Savior showed unto Nicodemus that

except a man were born again of water

and the Spirit, he could not enter into the kingdom of heaven:
he told him there the necessity of Baptism, but not the proper
signification of the water, why it pleased God to put it for the sacrament
by which we should enter into heaven. Nor when he sent

\[ Mt 28:19 \]

his disciples to go forth and baptize—he

showed them not, as far forth as the Gospel
telleth, for what proper signification God set the water in that
sacrament before any other thing… but only showed them that so
he would it should be, and bade them go show it and do it. Nor I find

not that in their baptizing they showed unto the people that

thing that because water washeth and cleanseth, therefore God had

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1 *could find*: i.e., been able to come up with; *allegories*: i.e., analogical interpretations
2 *divine*: which different men differently intuit; *little setteth by*: thinks little of; *very*: literal
3 *set a rush by*: i.e., attached a straw’s worth of importance to
5 *would ... brain*: i.e., cogitated his head off
6 *set althing is*: i.e., unless he searches for and finds
7 *serve*: become a slave to; *saith*: puts it; *wise work of*: brilliant thing written by; *haply*: maybe
9 *less matter*: less of an issue; *darkness*: the dimness; *figures*: emblematical representations
10 *all set open*: everything exposed to view
11 *proper*: particular; distinctive
12 *this ... told*: i.e., in the next seven years—times 17
13 *anything set thereby*: have any use for it
15 *it is*: i.e., is this Law of Light; *open*: accessible to view; *allthing*: everything
16, 27, 32 *proper*: particular; distinctive
18 *this ... told*: i.e., in the next seven years—times 17
19 *go me*: let’s go
20 *agreeth for*: i.e., agrees are
21 *Sacrament of the Altar*: i.e., Eucharist
22 *be content*: is willing; *hath*: holds; *divers*: several; *full*: totally; *opinions*: views
23 *faiths*: beliefs; *at*: with
24, 35 *showed*: stated; *except*: unless
25 *pleased God*: God saw fit
28 *put*: stipulate
31 *showed them not*: did not tell them
32 *telleth*: relates
33 *before*: in preference to
34 *show it*: communicate this; make this known
appointed it unto the sacrament that washeth and cleanseth our souls. And yet whoso shall say that the water hath for that cause a convenient similitude for the matter shall say very well. And he shall also say well that will say as doth the holy apostle Paul

Col 2:12; Rom 6:3–4 where he likeneth the baptism to a kind

of burying with our Lord in his sepulchre, and the rising out thereof to a kind and manner of rising again with our Lord in his resurrection into a new manner and kind of clean life. And when he showeth that the bread is made one of many grains, or “corns,” and the wine made one of many grapes, he took a very convenient allegory and similitude and signification whereupon he might show that all we Christian people that are made participant of that holy bread and that holy wine changed and turned in Christ’s holy Flesh and Blood (of which twain every one is evermore with the other) ought of many men to be made as one, and in Christ and with Christ our Head, incorporated all in one Mystical Body.

But yet, though these things be marvelously well said, and other things more both have been and may be found that may be well alleged for good and convenient significations of those two sacraments—yet doth not the Apostle tell us that those significations be the very things and the only properties for which God appointed those outward signs of water in the one sacrament and bread and wine in the other, before all other sensible things of which he might have made the outward signs of those sacraments if it had liked him. But as the high knowledge of God foresaw all those properties that have been found, and all that any man could find further, therein: so saw he many more, peradventure, which no man hath found yet, and whereof he hath made no man of his counsel: no more than why he would have any visible token at all in the thing which he could have perfectly done without them and in many persons hath so done and doth.

And therefore Tyndale taketh an evil way to stick upon that point so stiffly that he letteth not with open blasphemy to say that he had as lief “sand as holy salt,” and be “smearèd with unhallowed butter” as anointed with the holy chrism which he calleth “charmed oil,” because God will not show him every special

2 *whoso*: whoever // *for that cause*: on that account 3, 11, 20 *convenient*: fitting
3 *similitude*: metaphoricalness 3, 4 *say (very) well*: speak (very) rightly 4 *say as*: speak as
9–10: This was said by not Saint Paul but Saint Augustine, in his *Tractates on the Gospel of John* (26.17–18).
9 *showeth*: says 9, 10 *one of*: i.e., one same one out of 11 *took*: made use of // *allegory*: analogue
11 *similitude*: i.e., metaphor // *signification*: i.e., symbolism 14, 17 *in*: into 15 *twain*: i.e., two elements
15 *every*: each // *of*: i.e., from being 17 *one*: one same 20 *alleged*: adduced // *good*: bona fide
21 *doth...Apostle*: i.e., Saint Paul does not 22 *very*: actual // *for*: on account of 24 *before*: in preference to
24 *sensible*: sense-perceptible // *of*: i.e., out of 25 *might*: could 26 *if...him*: i.e., if he had wanted to
28 *peradventure*: perchance 29–30 *whereof...counsel*: about which he has taken no man into his confidence
31 *token*: sign 33 *an evil way*: a bad course
33–34 to ... *stiffly*: i.e., in so obdurately sticking to his guns on that point 34 *letteth*: scruples // *open*: blatant
35 *had as lief*: would as soon (be given on the tongue) // *unhallowed*: unblessed
37 *charmed oil*: oil put under an incantation // *show*: make known to // *special*: particular; distinctive
thing that they signify beside the general signification of invisible grace; for that is commonly taught already, and every special signification that the Scripture expresseth is openly preached also. And besides that, such significations as are not there expressed and may seem convenient for them be both taught and written. What will Tyndale ask more?

But no reason can content him; for he saith plainly that whosoever do not understand all the significations of all the outward signs in the sacraments, it were as good to leave the sacraments unadministered unto him as administered. Whereupon it followeth wheresoever at an Easter the people should be houseled, albeit that they be taught and do believe that in the form of bread is the very Holy Body of our Savior Christ himself, and that if they receive him with unbelief, out of hope, or out of charity, and be not in peace and Christian love with all people, or intend to keep still and continue in any deadly sin, they receive their housel to their harm and peril of damnation... and if they receive it the contrariwise, they shall receive of God great spiritual grace therewith, through God’s holy ordinance, by the merits of Christ’s Passion; and so have given them such good counsel and exhortation farther as the poor priest can—yet thinketh Tyndale that except he tell them further, other significations of the sacrament, the people were as good unhoused as houseled. But, God be thanked, he is either deceived or lieth.

Now followeth it also that if the sacrament were as good unadministered as administered to whosoever is not taught the proper significations of the outward token in the sacrament, as Tyndale here, under a blasphemous jesting fashion, telleth us—then followeth it, I say, that there was never child christened since Christendom first began but that it had been as good to have left it unchristened, and never to have let water touch it, because it could not be taught what the water signified. And let him say what he will, but howsoever he cover and color it for the while... surely so would he have it. For while he goeth about to give all our salvation to faith alone, and to take all grace and all merit utterly from all outward works, and yet seeth that he may not boldly at the beginning utterly despise Baptism nor the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar—he would go first as near it as he may. And therefore, rejecting...
the remnant by and by... he suffereth them twain to tarry for the 5 while—but he will have them serve but for bare signs and tokens, 10 and saith that they profit nothing but only by the declaration 15 of their significations. And thereby meaneth he first that wheresoever occasion of such declaration faileth, there the sacrament should serve of naught. And so ye see that as for children, he would have none baptized indeed; and that thing once obtained, within a while after no more he would no men neither.

Lo, thus ye see to what a devilish end Tyndale's tale cometh 15 with his ribaldrous railing upon the sacraments, although he meant no worse than he maketh for here in his preface... in which he would peradventure seem to mean none other but that the sacraments could serve of naught except their proper significations 20 were declared and taught to them that receive them—other significations, or otherwise declared, than they have been wont these many hundred years to be. Wherein if he meant but so... yet have I shown you manifestly that he hath a very frantic folly therein.

But to the intent that ye shall not be so deceived by him, I shall 25 show you farther that he meaneth yet much worse... and that he meaneth utterly (as he plainly saith) that of the seven holy sacraments five be none at all, and that the other twain be nothing fruitful neither. And ye shall farther well perceive that Tyndale himself in neither nother of the twain, that is to wit, neither in Baptism nor in the Sacrament of the Altar, doth believe aright. For the clear perceiving of all which things, I shall rehearse you his own words written in divers places of his abominable book of Obedience. And first will we speak of these five which he saith be no sacraments at all: that is to wit, Confirmation, Penance, Order, Matrimony, and Aneling.

Tyndale

That they call Confirmation, the people call “bishoping.” They think that if the bishop butter the child in the forehead, that then it is safe.

More

If I should here call Tyndale by another name, it were no nickname at all... and yet would there some hence say that it were not...
honest so to do; and this will some such folk say as in the villainous words of his spoken by this blessed sacrament will find no fault at all. But meseemeth surely that at the first hearing of such a shameful word spoken by the mouth of such a shameless heretic by this holy sacrament of Christ, the whole Christian company present should not be able to contain themselves from calling him “knave”—all with one voice, at once.

Now, whereas there be for the sacrament both of Confirmation and of Holy Orders open and manifest places in Holy Scripture, as well in the Acts of the Apostles as in the epistles of Saint Paul… by which places it appeareth plainly that by the apostles’ hands laid upon them which were before baptized, they had the Holy Ghost given in them… and by the hands of Saint Paul laid upon Timothy in making him priest, he received of God a special grace with that Holy Order… and likewise the deacons by the putting of the apostles’ hands upon them in the giving them that Order: Tyndale telleth us in his book of Obedience that all this is nothing, and that the laying of the apostles’ hands upon them was but a manner of the country, as a man putteth his hand here upon a boy’s head and stroketh it when he calleth him “Good son.” Were not the time well lost that were spent upon Tyndale in alleging Holy Scripture to him, that can find in his heart thus to give it a mock instead of an answer? He saith that the Scripture and the sacraments be not both of one authority; but he maketh them both alike when he mocketh them both alike.

Of Matrimony

Tyndale

[Matrimony, saith he, was ordained of God for] an office wherein the husband serveth the wife, and the wife the husband. It is ordained for a remedy and to increase the world . . . and not to signify any promise that ever I heard or read of in the Scripture. . . . It hath a promise, that we sin not in that state if a man taketh his wife as God’s gift, and the woman her husband likewise—as all manner of meat hath a promise that we sin not if we use them measurably,
with thanks to God. If they call matrimony a sacrament because
the Scripture useth the similitude of matrimony to express the
marriage or wedlock that is between us and Christ . . . so will I [make a
sacrament of] mustard seed, leaven, a net, keys, bread, water, and a
thousand other things.

More

Matrimony

This holy sacrament of Matrimony
was begun by God in Paradise . . . and
which when he began, he there instituted to signify the conjunction
between himself and man’s soul, and the conjunction
Eph 5:22–32
between Christ and his church—for which
Saint Paul saith that it is a great sacrament;
and for such evermore hath it been taken in Christ’s church.
And though in those which for his sake forbeareth it he coupleth
himself to their souls with more grace—yet in that coupling of
matrimony (if they couple in him) he coupleth himself also to
their souls with grace, according to the sign, that is to wit, the
marriage, which he hath set to signify that grace; and with that
grace, if they apply to work therewith, he helpeth them to make
their marriage honorable, and their bed undefiled. And with
that grace also he helpeth them toward the good education and
bringing up of such children as shall come between them.
Gn 1:28
And to this effect weighed that holy
blessing that God gave our first father
and mother in Paradise—which blessing reason will that we take
and understand to have been given by God according to the kind
of them that it was given to; that is to wit, to work not in the body
only, of reasonable folk, but much more effectually to exercise its
strength in the reasonable soul. Whereas Tyndale will that God’s
blessing was no better to mankind than to the kind of dogs
and cats; whereby should it almost follow that in generation
used only for respect of God’s commandment, had been toward
God no more meritorious than to those other kinds, of brute beasts,
the begetting of a whelp or a kitling.

And where Saint Paul for those holy significations saith that
matrimony is a great sacrament, Tyndale dare say nay to his
teeth . . . and saith he can make as good a sacrament of leaven, of keys, of

9, 10 conjunction: union 11 for: by reason of 14 in: in the cases of // which: who
18 set: appointed 19 apply to work: i.e., apply themselves to working
22 come: i.e., come into being 25 will: dictates 26 kind: nature
28, 29 reasonable: reason-endowed 28 effectually: efficaciously 29 will: maintains
29–30 God’s . . . to: i.e., the blessing God gave to mankind was no better than the one he gave to
30 kind: taxonomic group; creatures on the nature level 31 almost: well-nigh
31 generation: procreation 32 used: practiced // had been: i.e., there would have been
32 toward: in the eyes of 33 no: i.e., nothing // to: for // kinds: species
33 brute beasts: nonrational animals 34 whelp: puppy // kitling: kitten
35 for: on account of 36–37 dare . . . teeth: dares directly contradict him
mustard seed—or else of a net! He should rather yet, lest the grace get out, pardie, make it of a sack! “But there is no grace therein,” saith he. “And why?” say we. “Because,” saith he, “that God hath none promised.”

“Whereby wot you that?” say we. “For I never read it in Scripture,” saith he. “Where read you, then, in Scripture,” say we, “that God hath made you a promise that he never made promise, nor never none would make, but he would first send you word by writing?” What Tyndale can say to this, I cannot tell. But till he can say better to this than ever himself or his master, either, could say to it yet, or ever shall say while they live… every man may soon see what men may say to him.

Luther yet, in his book of Babylonica, where he saith as Tyndale now saith—that matrimony, whereas Saint Paul saith it is a great sacrament, hath no grace nor is no sacrament—he answereth Saint Paul well and pertly and saith that Saint Paul said it peradventure of his own head, not of God’s Spirit. Then, when the King’s Grace had answered him, and that he saw that for aught he could do, men would believe Saint Paul better than him, and that still folk took matrimony for a sacrament, and that they thought that to faithful folk God with that holy knot gave grace toward the keeping and ordained it himself so to do: he swore then in great anger and made a great vow that he would plainly prove the contrary, and ran out of religion and wedded fleeing Cate, his nun, to show to the world himself a matrimony of his own making, that was neither any holy sacrament nor had any grace therein. And till that Tyndale do the same (as he saith priests both may and must)—he shall never any other way prove his conclusion true while he liveth.

Of the Sacrament of Aneling,
these be his words.

Tyndale

[Aneling is] without promise, and therefore without the Spirit, and without profit, but altogether unfruitful and superstitious.

More
Here is a short sentence, and a false, erroneous judgment, given by Tyndale upon all Christian people that have been aneled since

2 pardie: [a mild oath equivalent to] by golly  
3 because: by reason of the fact
4 whereby wot you: how do you know  
6 made: i.e., made any
7 but . . . by: i.e., without first sending you word in  
8 better to this: to this something better
10, 26 while: as long as  
11 may soon: can readily  
15 head: thinking
16 and that: i.e., and in such a way that
17 better: rather
22 ran out of religion: absconded from religious life  
25 till . . . do: i.e., until the day comes that Tyndale does
28 of: on the  
31 Aneling: (the) Anointing of the Sick
34 sentence: pronouncement; verdict  
35 upon: about  

Christendom first began. And he is led thereto by two special motives: the one, folly; the other, falsehood. For of his folly he reckoneth himself sure everything to be false that is not evidently written in Holy Scripture; which one thing is the one half of all the false foundation whereupon Luther and Tyndale have built all their heresies. For upon this Tyndale saith, “There is not any promise of this sacrament written in Scripture: ergo, there was no promise made by God.” Which argument is so good that every boy in school laugheth it to scorn, and well they may; for all the world can never make it good. His other motive is falsehood, which is the antecedent of the same argument; that is to wit, that this sacrament hath no promise in Scripture. For it hath an express promise in the epistle of Saint James, where he biddeth that if any be sick, “he shall induce the priests to come and pray for him and anoint him with oil, and the prayer of faith shall heal the sick man . . . and if he be in sin they shall be forgiven him.” “Nay,” saith Tyndale, “here we may see that the aneling doth nothing: for Saint James saith that the ‘prayer of faith’ shall heal the man.” This is a sure argument! “Lo, because Saint James giveth the great effect to the faith-ful prayer—therefore the oil doth nothing at all.” If it do nothing at all toward the remission of sins—why would Saint James have it there that might, saving for the sacrament, as well be thence as there? Except that Tyndale ween that Saint James were so wise in natural things that he thought oil a meet medicine for every sore! This place in Saint James did so press upon Luther that he was fain to say that the epistle was never of Saint James’ making, nor nothing had in it of any apostolical spirit. But he that so said was full of an apostatical spirit.

Of the Sacrament of Penance

Tyndale

“Penance” is a word of their own forging, to deceive us with.

More

Here ye see that the Sacrament of Penance he setteth at less than naught; for he saith it is but a thing forged and contrived to deceive us with. But every good Christian man knoweth that such

1 special: main 2 pretty: admirable 2, 11 motive(s): impetus(es); driving force(s)
2, 3 folly: foolishness; idiocy 2, 11 falsehood: dishonesty / deceitfulness
3–4 reckoneth . . . be: i.e., considers himself guaranteed that everything is solid
4 evidently written: conclusively written / expressly spelled out 5 all the: the whole // false: false / unsound
7 of: concerning 9, 10 good: sound 15 any: anyone // induce: get 18 may: can // aneling: anointing
20 sure: solid // lo: see // giveth: accredits 23 have . . . might: i.e., have be there a thing that could
24 thence: not there // except that: unless 25 ween: thinks // were so wise in: was so knowledgeable about
26 meet: suitable; good // sore: ailment 27 place: passage
27 so press upon Luther: put Luther in such a tight spot; reduce Luther to such straits
28 fain: constrained // making: writing; authorship 31 of the: on the 33 forging: coining; making up
35 setteth at less: regards as worse 36 naught: nothing / worthless // forged: fabricated
folk as he is, that against the Sacrament of Penance contrive and
forge such false heresies... sore deceive themselves and all them whom
the devil blindeth to believe them. Now when he hath spoken his
pleasure of the thing—ye shall hear what he saith of the parts.

Of Confession

Tyndale

Shrift in the ear is verily a work of Satan, and that the falsest
that ever was wrought, and that most hath devoured the faith.

More

If the devil should himself sit and devise to speak spitefully...
what could he say more like himself against this part of the
holy Sacrament of Penance than he now speaketh by the mouth of
this his holy "spiritual" man?

Here hath been a shrewd sort of Christian folk this fifteen hundred
years... if every man have served Satan all the while they were
a-shriving!

Ye may see now to what perfection this gear groweth with
Tyndale.

Luther yet, that was Tyndale’s master, as lewd as he is, played
never the blasphemous fool against confession so far yet as
Confession after Luther’s

Tyndale doth. For Luther, albeit he
mind is necessary.

would make every man, and every woman
too, sufficient and meet to serve for a
confessor—yet confesseth he that shrift is very necessary and doth
much good, and would in no wise have it left. But Tyndale amendeth
the matter, and saith it is the very “work of Satan,” and they
therefore serve Satan and work his work if they shrive themselves
secretly and speak softly at the priest’s ear. But by likelihood
he meaneth that if they speak out lustily, that every man may
hear them, all is well enough. For Will Waw forbade rowning.

Of Satisfaction

He will that we shall for our sins no more but only repent.
For as for going about to punish ourselves anything for our

1, 11, 20 against: about 2 false: counterfactual / vile 3 blindeth to believe: tricks into believing
3–4 now: thing: i.e., now that he has said what he wants to about the sacrament as a whole
5 of the: i.e., about its
7, 24 shrift (in the ear): (oral) confession 7 verily: actually 8 devoured: ravaged 10 devise: plot
13 his: holy “spiritual” servant of his
16 a-shriving: doing their confessing 17 may: can 18 gear: stuff 19 lewd: bad / sorry
21–22 after: in Luther’s opinion 23 meet: suitable 24 confesseth: professes
25 in no wise: by no means 26 the matter: i.e., that stance 27 shrive themselves: confess their sins
28 secretly: in private 29 lustily: robustly
30 Will... rowning: Apparently a proverbial illustration of the pitfalls of
whispering, akin to our game of Gossip. This sentence could be heard as meaning “For Will Waugh forbade whispering,”
“Waugh arbitrarily forbade whispering,” or “For Will-the-Ocean-Wave forbade drowning.”
32 will... no: maintains that we are for our sins to do nothing
33 going about: setting out 35

own sins, by penance-doing, with fasting, prayer, almsdeed, or any other bodily affliction, that God may have the more mercy upon us, which thing all good Christian people have used to do, and which the Church calleth satisfaction: this thing

Tyndale calleth as ye shall hear…

Sin we through fragility never so oft, yet as soon as we repent and come into the right way again, and unto the testament which God hath made in Christ’s blood: our sins vanish away as smoke in the wind, and as darkness at the coming of light, or as thou cast a little blood or milk into the main sea. Insomuch that whoever goeth about to make satisfaction for his sins to-God-ward, saying in his heart, “Thus much have I sinned, thus much will I do again,” or “This-wise will I live to make amends with,” or “This will I do to get heaven with”—the same is an infidel, faithless, and damned in his deed-doing, and hath lost his part in Christ’s blood, because he is disobedient unto God’s testament and setteth up another of his own imagination, unto which he will compel God to obey. If we love God—we have a commandment to love our neighbor also, as saith John in his epistle. And if we have offended him, to make him amends; or if we have not wherewith, to ask him forgiveness, and to do and to suffer all things for his sake to win him to God and to nourish peace and unity; but to-God-ward, Christ is an everlasting satisfaction and ever-sufficient.

More

The beginning of these words seem very godly, for the magnifying of the great mercy of God. But consider the head, the midst, and the tail together, and ye shall soon perceive that he boasteth mercy but to make a man have so little care for his sin, and maketh himself so sure of sudden and short remission, that he shall force full little how soon he fall thereto, when he believeth that how often soever he sin or how sore, there needeth him no more but only bare repentance, and then all forgiven and forgotten, sin and pain and all, even by and by, a hundred times in a day.

Neither purgatory need to be feared when we go hence nor penance need to be done while we be here… but sin and be sorry and

1 almsdeed: Almsgiving 4 used: Been wont 8 never so oft: No matter how often
9 into . . . again: Back onto the right path 9, 18 testament: Covenant 10 as smoke: I.e., as smoke does
11 at: I.e., does at // as thou: Like if you 12 cast: Threw; tossed // main sea: Ocean 13 goeth about: Attempts
13 for his sins to-God-ward: To God for his sins 15 again: In recompense // this-wise: In this way
17 part: Share // imagination: Devising // will: Intends to 20 obey: I.e., give obedience
20–21: See 1 John 2:9–11 and 3:10, 23. 22 wherewith: I.e., the means to do that with // ask: I.e., ask of
24 nourish: Foster // to-God-ward: Toward God; I.e., for our sins insofar as they are offenses against God
27 beginning . . . seem: I.e., first part . . . seems // for the magnifying: On account of its extolling 28 midst: Middle
29 boasteth: Vaunts; touts 30 but: Only // care for: Concern about 31 maketh himself: I.e., to make him
31 sudden . . . remission: I.e., prompt and quick remission of it and the punishment due for it 32 force: Care
32 full: Very // soon . . . thereto: I.e., readily he falls into it 33 sore: Seriously // needeth: Is needed for
34 bare: More // all: I.e., all is 35 pain: Punishment // even: Uniformly promptly
36 purgatory . . . feared: I.e., need we fear that we’ll go to purgatory // go hence: I.e., leave this world
36–37 penance . . . done: I.e., need we do any penance 37 sin: I.e., we can just sin
sit and make merry, and then sin again and then repent a little and run to the ale and wash away the sin, think once on God’s promise and then do what we list. For, hoping sure in that, kill we ten men on a day we cast but a little blood into the main sea.

But he that setteth so much by his sin, and is so sorry therefor, that to provoke our Lord to mercy the more by punishing himself and taking pain therefor, either of his own mind or by penance enjoined—he is a stark heretic; it were even alms to burn him. For he that will take any pain for his own sin...

weeneth that Christ had not pain enough. Is not here a mad doctrine of him that would seem a Christian man?

For as for that he telleth his tale as though men did reckon their penance for a thing sufficient to satisfy for their sin—that is

Penance of itself is not sufficient for sin. but a piece of his poetry. For he is not so foolish but that he knoweth well enough that all Christian men believe that no penance is of itself sufficient for the least sin, but the Passion and pain of Christ maketh our penance available, to them that set not so little by their sin but that they be content, and think themselves well worthy, to take pain and penance for their sin themselves.

But because he will that men repent the doing of their sin, and then no more but faith… I would wit of Tyndale what calleth he repenting: a little, short sorrow, or a great sorrow and a long? If a little, pretty sorrow and very shortly done: I would as fain he said true as I fear that he lieth. If a great, fervent sorrow with grief and trouble of mind, not shortly shot over, but kept and continued long: then force I little of his heresy. For no doubt is it but that Tyndale’s tale to such a man shall seem, Got wot, full fond. For he that hath such repentance will to shrift, I warrant you, and take penance of the priest, and do much more thereto, whatsoever Tyndale tell him. And he that is christened and careth for no shrift—repenteth never a deal; but they that repent not at all be Tyndale’s repentant sinners!

Will ye see that it is so? Go me to Martin Luther, the first master of Tyndale in this matter, though now his scholar passeth him. While that friar lieth with his nun, and wotteth well he doth naught, and
saith still he doth well—let Tyndale tell me what repenting is. He repenteth every morning, and to bed again every night... thinketh on God’s promise first, and then go sin again upon trust of God’s testament... and then he calleth it casting of a little milk into the main sea.

Of the Sacrament of Order

Tyndale

By a “priest” in the New Testament, understand nothing else but an elder to teach the younger, to bring them to the full knowledge and understanding of Christ, and to administer the sacraments which Christ ordained.

More

By the words, he meaneth that the Holy Order is no sacrament, nor is nothing else but “an elder to teach the younger... and to administer the sacraments such as Christ ordained.” And in this wise, he saith, we be all priests, both men and women too. For he saith in the same book precisely, and in this book too, that women may consecrate the holy Body of Christ. Against which foolish, blasphemous babbling was very great folly to dispute, since of as many good, holy, virtuous women as hath been in Christendom since Christ’s death unto this day... was there never none yet but that her heart would have abhorred if such a high, presumptuous thought should once have fallen in her mind.

And what would it avail to dispute with him since he mocketh and scoffeth out the words of Saint Paul written unto Timothy in which the Sacrament of Order is so plainly proved that all the world cannot deny it but if they make a mock at Saint Paul as Tyndale doth!

Now, in that he saith “the sacraments that Christ ordained”... he meaneth nothing else but his plain heresies against all the sacraments save twain—that is, Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar—as ye have already seen in all the remnant. And now, since he leaveth but them twain... I pray you consider how holily he handleth them twain, and ye shall see that he might almost as well deny them both as handle them after the fashion. And first hear how he handleth the holy Sacrament of Baptism.

1 saith still: keeps saying // he doth well: he’s acting morally; what he’s doing is something good
4 of: in // testament: covenant / attestation // casting: (the) tossing // main sea: ocean // 5 main sea: on the 6, 13, 27 (the Holy) Order: Holy Orders // ordained: instituted // by the: i.e., by these
11 the sacraments such as: those sacraments that // way: i.e., Obedience
15 precisely: explicitly // may: can // 19 were: it would be a // folly: foolishness
16–17 same book: i.e., Obedience // 19, 24 dispute: argue
20 hath: i.e., there have // abhorred: shuddered with horror // 22 high: puffed-up // in: into
24 would it avail: good would it do // mocketh: makes a joke of // 25 out: off; away // but if: unless
28 make a mock at: trifle with / make a mockery of // twain: except two
32–33 Sacrament of the Altar: Eucharist // in: i.e., in the sections about // remnant: rest
34, 35 them twain: those two // pray you: ask you to // might: could // well: rightly
36 after the fashion: i.e., in the way that he does
Of the Sacrament of Baptism,  
these be his words.

Tyndale
The sacraments which Christ himself ordained, which have also promises and would save us if we knew them and believed them—they administer in the Latin tongue. So are they also become as unfruitful as the others.

And after, he saith further:

Baptism is called “voloing” in many places in England, because the priest saith, “‘Volo,’ say ye.” “The child was well voloed,” say they; yea, and “Our vicar is as fair voloer as any priest within this twenty miles.”

More
All this great scoffing ariseth only because that children be christened in Latin. For which only cause he saith that the baptism is utterly fruitless; yea, and by his tale worse than fruitless, too. For he saith they be now in like cause as are the other sacraments… which he saith have no promise in Scripture, and therefore are (he saith) superstitious. And lo, thus first ye see that as long as ever any children have in England been christened in Latin… there was never child the better for the christendom. And then if this lie be true… there is yet never a Christian man nor never a Christian woman in all England, except haply some well-Latined Jews converted, or else such English children as learned their grammar in their mother’s belly.

Howbeit, I would every other thing were as easy to amend as this is; for this matter may be soon eased. It may be, now upon this fault found… be provided upon Tyndale’s counsel that all the English children shall be christened in English, and then they shall understand all the matter well enough, ye wot well, and speak for themselves, too.

But then findeth Tyndale two great faults for which he saith that all the baptizing of the child is fruitless. One, he saith, because of the false belief that the plunging in the water saveth them; another, for that the promise is not taught them.
But there I would fain wit of Tyndale, since he saith that the baptism is fruitless for such causes, and since he must needs mean at the time of the christening—for if he should mean no more but that the child should lose the fruit at length for lack of such instruction after, then were his words false though he said therein true… for then were not Baptism unfruitful, for it were very fruitful at the leastwise to a great many that God calleth hence ere ever the lack of such learning can be laid to their charge—thus I say Tyndale must needs mean, therefore, that for these faults the fruit of the baptism is lost even at the font, and no grace gotten thereby… or else his tale were false. And ye wot well in no wise will he lie, for that were poetry.

Now, since he saith, then, that the baptism is fruitless at the font for these causes, I would wit of him whether it be void because these things be not at the font preached to the godfathers, or because they be not preached there unto the child itself. If he say that it is fruitless for lack of preaching there unto the child itself: then I deny not but that Tyndale saith right well and reasonable, and I shall speak to the parson of our parish, that he shall preach to the child at the font and tell him many good tales in his ear. But surely if he say that the baptism is fruitless at the font for lack of such things there taught unto the godfathers—therein could I not agree with him, for they come not to be christened there themselves… and so the lack of that preaching there cannot hinder their christendom. And as for the child, if neither they nor the priest neither well understood their duty, nor well believed in Baptism,

A heretic is worse than a Turk.

in the baptizing they purpose to make the child Christian, and therein do as the Church doth… all their lack cannot make the baptism lose its fruit. And if that Tyndale know not this, he is very poorly learned; and if he know this, and then say as he saith, that for lack of such teaching at the font the baptism there is fruitless—what is he then, say you?

But now is it good to see somewhat of Tyndale’s mind concerning these two things: that is to wit, the faith set on sensible tokens in the sacrament, and the preaching of the promises.

1, 14 (fain) wit: (like to) inquire 2, 14 causes: reasons 4 at length: eventually 5 were his words: his words would be // though: even if 6 true: i.e., the truth 6 were not Baptism: would Baptism not be // for it were: since it would be 7 a: i.e., the hence: out of this world // ere: before 8 can . . . charge: i.e., could be held against them 9 for: on account of // faults: defects 10 even: right there 11 tale: assertion 11, 12 were: would be 11 wot: know // in no wise: i.e., that by no means 12 poetry: creative writing / the writing of fiction 14 void: devoid of effect 15, 22 godfathers: godparents 18 but . . . well: that what Tyndale says is quite right 20 tales: i.e., things // in his ear: in his hearing 21 surely: certainly 24–25 hinder their christendom: i.e., keep them from being (fruitfully) baptized 25 they: i.e., the godparents 27 Turks: i.e., Turkish Muslims 28 Saracens: Arab Muslims // were: would be 29 stark: flagrant 29 so that: so long as; provided that 30 purpose: intend 31, 33 as: i.e., what 32 if that: if 33 learned: instructed 36 somewhat: something // mind: thinking 37 sensible tokens: sense-perceptible signs
First, for the visible signs, there be two things to be considered. The one, that Tyndale beareth us in hand that the clergy maketh us believe that the visible signs alone doth altogether… and therein he saith false; another, that himself believeth that they do no good at all… and therein he believeth false.

For the first point, these be his words…

Tyndale
They make us believe that the work itself, without the promise, saveth us; which doctrine they learned of Aristotle.

More
In this point he plainly belieth the clergy (which doctrine he learned of the devil!), who taketh Baptism but for a sacrament ordained of God for man’s salvation, by which God hath promised that he shall be saved except sin after let him, and without which he shall not be saved, except right special cases—and those be very few, neither able to be plainly proved by Scripture, and yet will Tyndale agree them, against his master’s rule.

Howbeit, Tyndale hath here another rule—and that as false as the other—by which, as I was about to say, he reckoneth the outward tokens of the sacrament to be of none effect, but only bare tokens of that grace that is wrought with the word, and that the word of Christ’s promise.

For he saith that the sacraments be, as it were, a preacher, and do only preach God’s promises… and therefore for to administer the sacraments is (he saith) nothing else but to preach God’s promises. And for this he allegeth the words of Saint Paul in the fifth chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians, “Christ cleansed the congregation in the fountain of water through the word.” And also the words of Saint Peter where he saith in the first of his first epistle, “Ye are born of new, not of mortal seed but of immortal seed, by the word of God which liveth and lasteth ever.” He allegeth also the word of Saint James, in the first chapter of his epistle, where he saith, “Of his good will begot God us with the word of truth”—“that is,” saith Tyndale, “with the word of promise.”

He saith also, “Thou seest that it is not the work but the promise that
justifieth us, through faith.” He saith also that as the priest purgeth by preaching of the promise, so do the sacraments, and none otherwise… because, he saith, that the sacraments be but signs and tokens that betoken and preach the promises. And so he meaneth that as the priest preaching the promises doth give us a knowledge of them, or putteth us in mind of them, and yet he doth but show us of the promises and of grace, and doth not give us any effect of any promise or grace, nor we by that preaching do not get no grace but by God’s work beside: so, though he administer the sacraments, yet we do not attain and get any grace neither by the priest nor by the sacraments, nor by that work or deed that is done in administering or receiving the sacraments, no more than by the priest’s preaching… but only by the promise of God through faith to the infunding—whereof the sacrament doth nothing work, nor is no cause thereof nor cooperator thereto, nor means nor instrument therein, but only a bare signifier and a shower thereof. And yet worse than thus, that likewise as if a priest standing up in the pulpit to preach… do there stand still and preach nothing at all, but so come down again and say nothing… doth unto the people no profit at all—so the sacraments, since they be but bare signs (as he saith) and serve of nothing but to signify certain things, he saith therefore that because the ministers of the sacraments do not open and declare those significations to the receivers of the sacraments, therefore the sacraments be fruitless… and men take no more profit by the receiving of them than by the standing of the priest in the pulpit that standeth there and preacheth not.

And it is to be considered that this is his opinion as well of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar as of the Holy Baptism. Whereby what mind he hath of that blessed sacrament, he leaveth little doubt to them that have either learning or wit.

If this opinion of Tyndale were true—that the priest doth in administering the sacraments no more but preach the promises… and in the administering he purgeth but as he doth by his preaching… and when he preacheth not the significations, then he purgeth not—then were there with the baptism no grace at all given unto children, for the priest preacheth not then… and though he did, we find not yet that he should sufficiently purge the child with preaching. And
yet if baptizing be nothing else but preaching, as Tyndale saith…
then after that the priest had well preached all that were to be preached,
and shown what the token and the sacrament meaneth… he might, as
it seemeth by Tyndale’s tale, send home the child again and never put
water upon him! Tyndale will have us believe nothing but
plain and evident Scripture; I would he should, therefore, prove his
tale here by plain and evident Scripture; for as for these places that
he layeth, prove it nothing at all.

Eph 5:25–27 For the words of Saint Paul to the
Ephesians, “Christ cleansed the congregation
in the fountain of water through the word,” is the thing that all we
say too; that is to wit, that by the holy words of Baptism coming
to the water, God cleanseth the soul, according to the words of
Saint Augustine
Saint Augustine, “Accedit verbum ad elementum et
fit sacrament.” But Tyndale, because Saint
Paul saith there “in the fountain of water through the word,”
weeneth that he setteth the water but for a sign. As if, that one would
say a man “doth in his body fast, watch, give alms, and pray
through the devotion of the soul,” Tyndale would then say that the
body were set but for a sign and in all these things doth
nothing at all!

His text also of Saint Peter is nothing in this world for his
purpose. For when Saint Peter saith, “Ye are born of new, not of
mortal seed but of immortal seed, by the word of God which
liveth and lasteth ever,” what meaneth he other than that by our
Savior himself (which is the living word of God, that liveth and
lasteth ever) we be born again by the sacramental water and the
sacramental word? Which both he there understandeth; for he
there expressly speaketh of neither nother, but of the word that is
God’s Son.
Jas 1:18 The words of Saint James also, that
“God of his good will begot us with the
word of truth”—how prove these words that the water of Baptism
serveth but for a sign?

“The word of truth,” saith Tyndale, “is here understood the word of his
promise.” How proveth Tyndale that? Because that Christ’s promises
be true, must it therefore needs be that Saint James in that place

1 saith: i.e., says it is 2 after that: i.e., after such time as 3 shown: explained // token: symbol (water)
3 might: could rightly 4 tale: account // home . . . never: i.e., send the child back home without ever having
6, 7 plain and evident: clear and conclusive 6 would he should: say he should / would have him 7 tale: assertion
7, 37 place(s): text(s); verse(s) 8 layeth: addsuces // prove it nothing: i.e., they prove it in no way
11–12 is . . . say: i.e., that is the assertion that all of us (Catholics) make
14–15: “The word is brought to the [material] element, and it becomes a sacrament” (Tractates on the Gospel
of John, 80.3). 17 weeneth: thinks // seettelth . . . but for: i.e., considers . . . to be only
17 that one would: were someone to 18 watch: keep vigil 20 were set but for: was posited as only
22–23 text . . . purpose: i.e., text from Saint Peter also does nothing whatsoever for his argument 23 of new: anew
26 which: who 28 which both: both of which elements // understandeth: i.e., speaks of equally implicitly
29 neither nother: neither the one nor the other // but: i.e., but only
34 but: only
35 The . . . here: By the . . . here to be 36 because that: because
meant the word of promise? As though there were no more true of all that ever Christ spoke but only of his promises! Why may not in that place the “word of truth,” with which God hath of his good will begotten us, be understood our Savior Christ himself... by whom God hath begotten us indeed, and which is the very Truth itself, as himself witnesses of himself where he saith, “Ego sum via, veritas, et vita” (“I am the way, the truth, and the life”)? Thus may ye see that this text proveth Tyndale’s purpose nothing at all.

But now suppose that the very words of Saint James were that God had “begotten us with the word of his promise”; what had this made for the matter? How had this proved that the water and the sacramental words were but bare signs and tokens? If Saint James said that God had “begotten us by his goodness”—do these words exclude all the means that his goodness used toward it? If God would say to Tyndale, “I have brought thee into this world which thou dost now corrupt, and I have made the Christendom which thou goest about to destroy, and I have bidden thee beware of hell, into which thou runnest apace”—did he therein exclude Tyndale’s father and his mother, and his sacrament of Baptism and the minister thereof, and the preachers and teachers of the others? So ye may plainly see that Tyndale’s texts serve nothing at all to prove that the sacraments serve but only for signs.

This opinion hath Tyndale taken of Luther, which giveth to the sacrament nothing at all... but he saith that God giveth all the grace by the faith alone, and not by the sacraments anything at all. Now, the Church believeth and teacheth that God hath not so bound himself to his sacraments but that where he giveth the gift of faith to any that cannot come to Baptism, there he of his power may, and of his goodness will, give unto that man the gift of such grace to come to heaven without Baptism. But where God giveth grace by the baptism—there it is hard to set the baptism so short as to say that it serveth but for a bare sign... and without the significations preached at the font standeth in no more stead than a preacher that preacheth not.

Albeit that God may cure a sore without a medicine, and do a miracle in a man’s health, and that for the regard of the man’s
good faith and his trust in God: yet if it please God to heal him by
a plaster, though his faith be the cause why God doth it... yet is the
plaster a means in the doing, and serveth not for a bare sign.

And surely when our Savior set this order therein—that whoso
were baptized in water in the name of the Father and the Son and the
Holy Ghost, he should be saved... and that except a man were born
again as well of the water as of the Spirit, he should not enter into
the kingdom of heaven—God set it to serve for a more effectual
thing than for a bare sign void of any fruitful effect. For this
were yet at the leastwise no less than if a lord would say to a poor
fellow, “Take thee here this badge” (or “this livery gown”) “of mine; and
if thou take it and wear it, I will take thee for my household servant
and in my household give thee meat and drink and wages; or else,
if thou wear it not, thou shalt not come within my doors.” This
livery gown giveth him neither meat nor money... but yet it is
more than a sign that he shall have it. For the wearing thereof
helpeth him to get it—not of any nature of the livery, but by his
lord’s ordinance.

And so, likewise, though it were true that the sacraments did
nothing work in themselves, nor had no power in themselves, no
more of God than of nature, to purge and cleanse the soul: yet were it
more than a bare token or sign of grace, in that it hath by God’s
promise his own special assistance which at the sacraments
administered doth infund his grace.

Howbeit, many good, virtuous men hath there been of old that
have had yet a much higher estimation of the sacraments than so...
and that have thought that the sacraments have not only God, by
his promise, assistant to purge the soul and to infund his grace,
but also that he hath used them therein as effectual, working instruments
in the doing thereof, by reason of a certain influence of his
power whereby he made them meet to work into the soul through
the touch of the body.

And into this mind they were led by the words of Holy
Scripture, and partly for the excellence of the sacraments of the New
Law in respect of the sacraments of the Old Law—between which
two kinds of sacraments seemeth to be as great difference as
between the two kinds of the laws themselves; and that is no less than between figures, images, similitudes, or shadows, and the very things themselves… as saith Saint Paul: “Omnia in figura contingebant illis” (“All thing unto them came in figures”).

Then, since the sacraments of the Old Law had God, by his promise, assistant with them in remission of sins (as by the plain words of many places of Scripture doth appear), it seemed to those old holy, virtuous doctors that the sacraments of the New Law, for the preeminence over them, should of God’s especial influence have some effectual virtue, force, and power as an instrument of God in the working thereof. To which mind they have been moved not only for the cause foreremembered… but also, as I said before, for that the very words of Holy Scripture seem to lead them to it… when they read in the Acts that by the putting of the apostles’ hands upon them that were christened, the Holy Ghost forthwith came into them and by miracle showed himself by their speaking in diverse tongues. And when they read Saint Paul writing to Timothy, “Neglect not that grace that is in thee, which is given thee by prophecy, with the putting upon of the hands of the priesthood”; and unto him also those words, “I warn thee that thou resuscitate and stir up the grace of God that is in thee by the imposition” (or “putting upon”) “of my hands”—these places were very plain for their mind, when they here read that grace was by God infused with the receiving of the holy order of priesthood, by the outward sacrament of putting the bishop’s hand upon him.

It seemeth also that the words of God spoken by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel soundeth to the same… where he saith, “I have washed thee with water, and I have cleansed thy blood.” By which words it seemeth to be signified that the outward washing of the water of Baptism should be an effectual instrument of the inward washing of the soul. And by the mouth of the same prophet, in prophesying of the

2, 5 figures: emblematical representations  2 similitudes: similes  3 very: actual  4 allthing: everything  7 assistant: actively present  8, 26 places: passages  8–9 doth appear: is shown  9 old: early // doctors: exeges / theologians  10 for . . . them: i.e., because of their preeminence over those of the Old Law  11 of: by  11 influence: injecting (thereof) // virtue: capability  13 mind: way of thinking  13 cause foreremembered: reason mentioned above  17 christened: baptized  18 forthwith: immediately // showed himself: i.e., made his presence in them known  19 diverse tongues: different languages  22–23 putting . . . priesthood: i.e., priesthood-conferring laying on of hands  24 warn . . . thou: remind you to // resuscitate: revivify / fan  26 were . . . mind: gave very clear support to their view  28–29 sacrament . . . him: i.e., sign of the bishop’s putting his hand upon the ordinand  31 soundeth to the same: carry the same kind of meaning  34 outward: external  34 of the: i.e., done by the // inward: internal
Sacrament of Baptism our Lord saith also, “I shall shed out upon you clean water, and ye shall be cleansed from all your filthiness.” These words show that the water shall wash the filth. And what filthiness meaneth he but the filthiness of the soul? And that doth no water wash but the water of Baptism. And whereto would our Lord by the mouth of his prophet call it clean water… but for the difference that it hath in making clean the soul by influence of God’s gift over that other waters have? For else, as for elemental cleanliness of that water in itself, other water is as clean as it.

Those holy doctors considered also the yet more open words of the prophet Zechariah. “There shall go forth,” he saith, “quick, lively waters out of Jerusalem, the one half of them to the oriental sea, the other half to the very uttermost sea.” These words verily describe the holy water of the Sacrament of Baptism, the water that weltheth out of Holy Church which stretcheth to two seas of sins, that is to wit, both of sin original and of all the actual sin that the man hath done, all were he never so old ere he were baptized. And why calleth the prophet this water “quick” and “lively”… but for the difference between it and other waters that are but dead? In token that the water of Baptism hath, by the secret sanctification of God, a certain strength of spiritual life infused into that corporeal element… whereby it is not only a bare, dead token and sign of grace and cleansing of the soul, but also a quick, lively, working medicine, means, and instrument.

By these places of Scripture and divers others… many good, holy men of old—albeit that no man otherwise thought nor thinketh but that the principal work, and the whole worker in the cleansing of the soul and infunding of grace, is God himself, and that he doth it for the merits of Christ’s Passion, as he hath promised to do, and that upon our part is required, in such as have use and reason at the time of Baptism, repentance of the evil life past, with faith and belief of the word of God, and hope of salvation with
love and charity toward God and our neighbor, and a purpose of working of good works—yet divers good holy doctors have taught, as I say, by such places of Scripture, that God in the working of such cleansing of the soul and infusion of grace useth the sacraments not as a bare sign but as an instrument with which and by which it pleaseth him to work them.

And they that think otherwise—that is to wit, they that think that the sacraments be but, as it were, the livery gown whereof I gave you the example, and hath no special power nor influence given of God by which it anything may work in cleansing of the soul—all they have none other thing for themselves, as far as I have read and could perceive, but arguments grounded upon philosophy and metaphysical reasons… by the constraint whereof, I will not say they be driven and compelled, but say that, as it seemeth me, they drive and compel themselves to find glosses to these scriptures, and unto the words of other good holy doctors, too.

For as for my part, I would not let to deny a whole heap of those reasons in matters of the sacraments, which hang all upon God’s will and pleasure and his omnipotent power. For albeit that we see no likelihood how that bodily water can work upon the spiritual

Note substance of the soul—yet God can make the fire, which is a bodily substance as well as is the water, to work not upon souls only discharged of their bodies in purgatory, but also upon that evil angels the devils, whose substance is as spiritual as is the soul—I cannot greatly see why we should greatly fear to grant and agree that by God’s ordinance the water may be God’s instrument in purging and cleansing of the soul.

Which argument, for aught that I perceive, among them is to mine understanding so simply assoiled… that till I hear either better or perceive them better, I like as yet that argument better than I like all their solutions that they make thereto.

For some of them be fain, for their solution, to grant almost their pain in the fire were but a detaining therein by some stronger power than themselves; and then were the pain but as an imprisonment and restraint of liberty, if the fire burn them not.

1 purpose: serious intention 2 divers: several 2, 16 good: orthodox / bona fide 2, 16 holy doctors: theologians 3 by: on the basis of // places: passages 5 bare: mere 7–11: See 99/9–18. 8–9 livery . . . example: i.e., servants’ garb that I gave you by way of example 9 hath no: i.e., that none of them has any // influence: agency 10 of God: by God 10 anything may work in: can be at all operative in the 11 all they: i.e., all of those people 11 none . . . themselves: i.e., no other adduced support for their position 13 reasons: considerations 14 seemeth: seems to 15 find glosses to: come up with false interpretations of 16 unto: i.e., of 17 let: scruple / hesitate // deny: reject 18 reasons: arguments 20 likelihood: indication (of) 20, 22 bodily: physical 23 not upon souls only: i.e., not only on souls 24 evil: i.e., evil kind of 27 may: can // purging: purifying 29 aught: anything 30 simply: stupidly // assoiled: rebutted 30–31 hear . . . them better: i.e., either hear from them better ones or understand better the ones they have already given 32, 33 solution(s): answer(s) 33 fain: constrained // grant almost: posit more or less 34 their: i.e., the poor souls’ // were: i.e., is 35 and . . . as: i.e., in which case the pain is only like that of suffering
And then why more in fire than in water, if they be for the
fire never the warmer? And on the other side, if that by the keeping
of them in the fire, the fire do work upon them and burn them, as
I think the truth is: then so may by God’s ordinance the water
help to wash and cleanse the soul.

And surely since experience teacheth us that the soul, which is of
itself a spiritual substance, God hath of his high wisdom and
power found the means so to put it in a body, and so to knit it
thereo, that not only by fire or frozen water put about it, but also
without any outward thing put unto it, by the only boiling
of the distempered humors within itself, the soul is in such grief,
pain, and torment that it would be as fain out of the body as the
body would be rid of it—since we find this thus, I doubt nothing
at all but that God can, by more means than men can think or
imagine, so bind the spiritual soul to the fire that he shall feel
the fervor of that fire as he now feeleth the heat of his ague here; and
yet shall not the fire and he be made one person, as the soul and the
body be now. Which thing whoso would ask me how may that
be... might as well ask me how might the world be made when there
was nothing to make it of, and a thousand mad questions more.
But to the purpose, this I say: that God may by his power make the
water in the sacrament an instrument with an effectual influence of
power given by God thereto at the time to purge the soul... as well
as the fire either to purge it or punish it. In which thing since the
scriptures seem to say that he doth so, and no scripture saith the
contrary... and many good, holy men have been of that mind... I
see not why we should think otherwise.

2 Kgs 5:9–14

When our Lord healed Naaman the Syrian by
his prophet Elisha in the water of
Jordan—no man doubteth but that God did the deed. Yet were it a
great boldness to affirm that the water there did work nothing
therein at that time; and yet had the water no such nature of itself.

No more had also the water of which it is written in the Gospel
Jn 5:4, 7 of Saint John... where at the moving
thereof, whoso next were let down
thereto was there cured by “the angel of God”; and yet is it well

1 more: i.e., rather 2 never: not at all  // side: i.e., hand  // if: i.e., if it is the case
3 do work upon: does have an effect on  // side: e.g., hand  // if: i.e., if it is the case
4, 18, 21 may: can  // knit: join  // about: i.e., on and around
8 knit: join  // about: i.e., on and around
outward: external  // the only: just the
11 distempered: disordered  // humors: inclinations / dispositions
do work upon: does have an effect on

12 as glad be: gladly be  // side: e.g., hand  // if: i.e., if it is the case
13–14 doubt nothing... but that: have no doubt... that  // think: i.e., think of
14 think: i.e., think of

16 fervor: intense hotness  // ague: acute fever

18, 35 whoso: whoever  // might: could
19 well: rightly; justifiably

20 of: i.e., out of
22 influence: influx
23, 24 purge: purify

24 thing: i.e., purifying or punishing
28 by: via
30 were it: would it be

31 boldness: rashness / overstepping  // work: effect
36 well: quite
likely that God gave an influence of his power at the time, by which
the water itself was made an instrument of that health.

And likewise where the woman was healed by the touch of
Christ’s garment, whereof Saint Luke
spokeneth in the eighth chapter—the words
of our Savior himself seem to show some influence gone forth
from himself into his garment, such as, by his might, with the
touch of his garment used as an instrument therein, was able to give
health unto that good-faithful woman.

When our Savior, as is written in the
ninth chapter of Saint John, did take the
dirt of the ground, and did spit thereupon and made thereof a
plaster, and laid it upon the blind man’s eyes and so gave him
his sight—I think that God gave an influence of his power into
that plaster, whereby he cured his eyes. Yet might he have done it
by his only word, or by his only will, without any such outward
thing laid thereunto. But it pleased him to let them see that he
not only could do it himself, but could also make the very dirt
of the street able to do such cures… as not all the plasters in all the
surgeons’ shops were able to attain unto.

Now, if they will say that it is not like, in curing the body and
cleansing of the soul—I say it is like, saving for the reason by
which they say that the bodily water cannot work upon the
unbodily soul. And therefore, thereto I say that by no natural
power, nor by no power except only God’s, could these bodies—
that is to wit, those waters, garment, and plaster—have in such wise
wrought upon the bodies wherein they were working instruments
of these marvelous cures. And then I say by his power may the
bodily water as well be a working instrument upon the unbodied
and unbodily soul—be it in cleansing, purging, or punishing—as
upon the body.

For as for that reason by which some doctors reckon the matter
the more easy in the sacraments—because the outward, sensible
things thereof work, as they reckon, upon the soul as part of the
whole man, by touching the body thereof… as the fire touching the
body paineth the soul and all—albeit I repugn not thereat, yet I
nothing ground myself thereon, since I never found among them
all one reason yet whereby methought it proved otherwise but that
Corporal water is able to work God may make the bodily, corporal water
upon the unbodied soul. able to work upon the unbodied, incorporeal
soul. Which if it may… since
God hath set the sacraments as means by which we come to
cleansing of the soul and to salvation… albeit that no man
denieth but that the power of God is chief, and that he regardeth
Christ’s Passion and our own faith, with divers other things—
yet I see not why we should take all effect of working from the sacraments
themselves, and leave them void of all grace, and call them
bare, graceless tokens. For if that any man were of the mind that he
thought the sacraments do nothing to the cleansing of the soul
because that all that ever is done is done by the power of God—so
might he think that no medicine doth anything in the cure of
any disease, because that all the nature of the medicine is given
unto it by the power of God too.

Howbeit, in this matter, whether that the sacraments have any
influence of power given them by God whereby they may be workers
and instruments in the purging or cleansing of the soul… or else
that they be but in such wise means and cause of the grace as the
livery gown, whereof I did put the example, is of the servant’s
finding in the lord’s household… is not the thing wherein I will
greatly stick. But in my mind the Scripture most serveth for that
first opinion; and good holy doctors, and of the eldest, have been of
that opinion, and nothing but philosophical reasons have drawn
others from that opinion. And since that some others hath fallen to
the other opinion, which giveth to the sacraments less force
and efficacy than doth that first opinion, there are now come these
new men—Luther, Friar Huessgen, and Hutchins, and such other lewd
fellows—that would leave the sacraments, by their wills, no manner
strength at all. And therefore so much like I the better the first
way, that most holy men held, and that furthest goeth from the
doctrine of those heretics, which make the sacraments, as they
say, to serve only for priests and preachers—and then they preach themselves
that the priesthood is no sacrament at all—and turn them all into

1 nothing ground: do not at all base 2 reason: consideration / argument // methought: I thought
3, 5, 19 may: can 3 bodily: physical 4 unbodied: nonphysical 8 regardeth: takes into account
9 divers: several 10, 27 from: away from 12 bare: mere // tokens: symbols // if that: if 13 to: toward
14, 16 because: by reason of the fact 16 disease: ailment 18 any: some 19 influence: influx
19 workers: agents 20 purging: purifying 21 wise: a way 22 livery gown: uniform
22 whereof... the: i.e., that I gave you by way of 23 finding: maintenance / making his living
23 the thing: i.e., something 23–24 wherein... stick: whereon... dwell 24 serveth for: favors; supports
25 good: orthodox / bona fide // holy doctors: theologians // eldest: i.e., earliest times
26 reasons: considerations 27 since that: since // hath fallen: i.e., have come to subscribe
28 giveth: ascribes 30 new men: upstarts // Hutchins: The surname used by some of Tyndale’s ancestors.
Sometimes Tyndale himself went by it. 30–31 lewd fellows: sorry good-for-nothings
31–32 leave... strength: i.e., not, if they could help it, leave the sacraments any kind of potency 33 way: view
33 furthest goeth: is the furthest removed 34 which make: who make out
mocks and jests, comparing sand with holy salt, and butter-smearing to the anointing with the hallowed chrism; and such other foolish blasphemy.

Now, where they say that all the salvation standeth in promise of God, and nothing in the sacraments at all... because that they be but the tokens thereof: by this reason they will within a while take away the reverence from the very promise, too. For of truth, the promise of God worketh not our salvation no more than do the sacraments, but God worketh our salvation himself... and the promise is the token whereby we know he doth so. For if he had not promised it, we had not so surely known it, nor had not had so great a cause of good hope thereof; but yet might he have saved us though he had never promised us. And now them that he saveth, he saveth not so much by the force of his promise as by reason of the selfsame goodness that made him to make the promise. So that his own liberal goodness worketh our salvation, and the promise giveth the knowledge of our salvation.

Now say these men always that God saveth us “by his promise,” as though they were sure that if he were not surely bound by his promise, he would not now do it at all... and saving that his promise is once past him somewhat, as they make it unawares, he would else, if it were now to make, take a better advisement ere he bound himself so far.

In men such change and such repentance happeth that where one of his good will sometime bindeth himself to give... the other may thank the bond if ever the promise be kept. But God’s high providence so foreseeeth what he promised... that he can never forthink it. And his inestimable goodness is so great... that he giveth not because he promiseth, but he promiseth because he will give; and would give though he never promised as he determined to give

God’s promise is not the cause of his gift. before he promised; and would yet promise if he had not promised—not that his promise should be the cause of his gift, but that we should by his promise have knowledge of his gift and comfort of the hope.

Now maketh me Tyndale the sacraments nothing but a token of the promise... and the promise he maketh the cause of the gift;

1 mocks and jests: i.e., objects of ridicule and scorn // comparing... with: paralleling... with / likening... to 
2 hallowed: blessed 4 standeth in: depends on / is predicated on 5 nothing in: in no way on 
5 because: by reason of the fact 6 reason: line of reasoning 7 of truth: in point of fact  
10 so: i.e., this 11 had... it: would not have known it with such certainty 13 nor had not had: i.e., nor would we have had 12 might: could 13 though: even if 
13 promised as: i.e., given us any promise of that 15 made: induced 19 surely: securely; inescapably  
20 saving: were it not for the fact 21 once... somewhat: now kind of beyond his control; i.e., something he can’t now undo 21 as... unawares: i.e., like one that someone makes heedlessly 
22 take... ere: give it better consideration before 23 so far: to that extent 24 repentance: remorse  
24 happeneth: i.e., does happen 25 one: i.e., one person 26 thank: credit // bond: obligation 
28 forthink: have second thoughts about / regret // inestimable: incalculable 30 though he: i.e., if he’d 
35 comfort of: encouragement from 36 the sacraments: i.e., the claim that the sacraments are 
37 maketh: asserts to be
whereas of truth, as well the promise as the sacraments be tokens of the gift... and God’s goodness is the cause of the gift. And God hath from the beginning determined that he would after the fall of Adam ordinarily not give it without the sacraments. But though he determined also to make a promise... yet never determined he that he would not give it without he made a promise. And so be both the sacraments and the promises tokens of the gift... and yet seemeth the sacrament, rather than the promise, a cause of the gift. For the sacrament, after the institution, seemeth a cause of the gift—at the leastwise in some kind of cause—and the promise seemeth no cause in no kind, neither since nor before. And thus ye may see what a wise process Tyndale maketh us.

But would God yet that this were the worst piece of Tyndale’s teaching concerning Christ’s promise. But he frameth Christ’s promises after his own fashion. He saith that we make promises in sacraments where Christ made none; but he maketh promises that Christ made never such! For Christ promiseth heaven if men labor for it; Tyndale would make us ween we need no labor at all. Christ promiseth forgiveness through the Sacrament of Penance, if men amend and will do penance; Tyndale of the sacrament putteth two parts away, and almost the third too, and promiseth forgiveness for a very short, scant repenting, at the first thought, by and by... and to do penance he taketh for idolatry. Christ promiseth us heaven if we do good works with our faith; Tyndale saith to do good works with intent the rather to come to heaven shall bring a man to hell, and lose the reward of faith. And thus Tyndale—which crieth out “Promise! Promise!” and will have nothing taught but Christ’s promise—yet in these things, and a hundred more, striveth and fighteth against God’s promises, and utterly goeth about to destroy them.

Finally, whereas Christ hath made a promise, one of the greatest, most solemn, most assuredly made, and thereto most fruitful and most necessary, that ever he made... that is to wit, that he would be with his church of Christian people all days unto the end of the world, and that he would send also the Holy Ghost unto them, that should teach them allthing and lead them into every

1 of truth: in reality  4 ordinarily: as a rule  // without: outside of; apart from
6 without he made: without having made  9 after the: i.e., after its  10 at . . . some: i.e., at least some
11 in no: i.e., of any  // may: can  12 wise process: brilliant argument
13 would . . . piece: yet I wish to God this was the worst part  14 frameth: words; couches
15 after his own fashion: as suits himself  // we: i.e, we who oppose him; we Catholics
16 in: about; regarding  // where: whereas  18 ween: think  20–21 putteth two parts away: rejects two thirds
21 almost: nearly all of  // the third: i.e., the third third  22 by and by: immediate
25 the rather to come: to be the more likely to get  26 lose: cause the loss of  // which: who
29 utterly goeth about: goes all out  31 whereas: forasmuch as / seeing that
32 assuredly made: i.e., given with assurances  // thereto: also  36 that should: who would
37 allthing: everything
truth: Tyndale first (lest he should seem to gainsay this promise) would shift it from the known church and company of all Christian people professing the name and faith of Christ, unto a secret company of such as they call “good” men and “elect”… which who they be who can tell? And yet since there can be no doubt but such as be or have been very elects have always been parties of this known Christian company… and since they were not false dissemblers… they have believed as they showed, and they have shown that they believed as we believe… in such things as Tyndale now calleth disbelief; for they have done therein as we do, and always the best have written these things that we believe… and never was there any company, till within this twenty years, that believed as Tyndale saith that he believeth. And he saith also that his belief is so necessary to salvation that the contrary belief is damnable—for else he would not, of his courtesy, cry out so sore upon the clergy for teaching the contrary. Whereupon, if Tyndale’s lie be true, there must then of necessity follow that there must be true also one of these two very plain falsehoods: that is to wit, that Christ hath never since his death till holy Tyndale’s days had in this world here any church at all; or else that if Christ have had here any church, yet from his own death till holy Tyndale’s days, the Holy Ghost, whom himself sent, never taught his church the truth. Now, then, if Christ had all this while no church in earth… his promise was clearly broken by which he promised to be with his church himself all days unto the world’s end. For how were he with his church here unto the world’s end… if before the world’s end so many hundred years together, he had here no church at all?

And on the other side, if he had here all this while any church, and then the Holy Ghost have not taught that church the truth: then hath Christ broken that promise by which he promised that the Holy Ghost should teach his church all things and lead them into all truth. For how had the Holy Ghost taught it all things if he have suffered the devil to teach it some things? And let Tyndale, when he will, answer this point. Mark well and remember that we speak here of belief and faith; not of works and deeds, lest after his customable fashion, letting the belief go by, he answer us with
railing upon men’s manners, and so lead the reader more than a mile from the matter.

And how hath the Holy Ghost led the Church all this while into all truth… if one holy truth be that friars when they list may wed nuns notwithstanding their vows, and the Holy Ghost hath almost this fifteen hundred years together suffered all his whole church (neither good nor bad except) to believe that breach of such vows is deadly sin, and such manner “marriage” plain incestuous lechery, and to damn Tyndale’s faith in that point for very false heresy?

And thus, good Christian readers, here ye plainly see what manner of fashion Tyndale teacheth Christ’s promises. For whereas he setteth all at nothing saving only Christ’s promises made to man, he teacheth men again to break their promise made to God… and so bringeth all his matters in conclusion to that point that if he lied not (as he doth!)… Christ had broken his promise made to his church; besides this, that of Christ’s promises he denieth many, and them that he granteth he believeth shrewdly, and would make them serve us only for a blind boldness of sin.

Of the Sacrament of the Altar

Forasmuch as he seeth that the Mass is the special thing in which the Sacrament of the Altar is honored, and in which it is most fruitful,

What is received and offered up in the Mass

insomuch as there the very body and blood of our Lord is not only received by the priest himself and for himself, but is also, for his own sins and other men’s too, offered up to God as a holy host, oblation, and sacrifice… re-presenting the same sacrifice in which our Savior, both being the Priest and the Sacrifice, offered up himself, for the sin of the world, unto his Father in heaven, an acceptable sacrifice upon his painful cross: therefore doth Tyndale, after his master’s doctrine, jest and rail and make mocks at the Mass, whereof these be his words…

Tyndale

What helpeth it that the priest, when he goeth to Mass, disguiseth himself with a great part of the Passion of Christ, and playeth out the rest under silence with signs and proffers, with nodding, becking, and mowing, as it were Jackanapes… when neither he

1 upon . . . manners: about people’s behaviors  2 matter: issue  4 list: want to  6 almost this: i.e., this almost 6 together: in a row  7 neither . . . except: with the exception of no one, either good or bad 8 breach: the breaking  9 insomuch as there: as much as there  10 false: false / vile  11–13 setteth . . . saving: regards as nothing everything except  14 again: on the other hand 15 matters: contentions  16 lied not (as he doth!): weren’t lying (which he is!)  16 had: would have  18 shrewdly: poorly / evilly  19 for . . . sin: i.e., as a license for sinning recklessly and shamelessly  20 of the: on the  21 special: main; chief 22 Sacrament of the Altar: Blessed Sacrament  23 and: i.e. and the one  24 hold: expiatory victim 25 after: in accord with  26 his master’s doctrine: i.e., Luther’s teaching  27 jest: jeer 28 make mocks: i.e., hurl derisive wisecracks  29 what helpeth it: of what avail is it  30 goeth to: i.e., says 30–35 disguiseth himself with: i.e., exhibits himself in a false light by play-acting  36 proffers: gestures of offering 37 becking: bowing  38 mowing: mouthing  39 as: as if  40 Jackanapes: A quasi-proper name for a trained monkey.
himself neither any man else wotteth what he meaneth . . . [nor] whereof no man can give [a good] reason [as he saith soon after].

More
Here he mocketh—and playeth himself, as ye see, in mocking—these holy ceremonies used, as well in the apparel of the priest as in the Secrets of that Holy Sacrifice. Which he saith do no good, but much hurt, and make men superstitious . . . because, as he saith there, they have the more devotion thereby; and therefore he would have them left. As though the devotion that is increased by the beholding of those holy ceremonies were superstition because they understand them not!

If Tyndale say true in this . . . then did God by his own commandment make his Chosen People of Israel to fall into superstition instead of devotion, with the ceremonies used about the sacrifices in the Old Law, because they understood them not.

After this, he mingleth his lies therewith, saying that

[Christian men] think that they have done abundantly enough for God—yea, and deserved above measure—if they be present once in a day at such a mumming.

More
What may not such a man be bold to say, that is not ashamed to lie so shamefully? For he knoweth that all the readers well know that he lieth when they read it . . . and yet he is not ashamed to write it. What man would be so foolish to think that he hath done enough for God?

Yet layeth he another incommodity: that the infidels will “mock us and abhor us, in that they see nothing but such ape’s play among us, whereof no man can give a reason.”

Lo what a high reason hath Tyndale here found out: that such holy ceremonies whereof Christ’s church hath received many by the blessed apostles themselves, and from their days used ever hitherto (as appeareth by the writing of holy doctors far above a thousand years ago), we must now give over, for fear lest infidels as Turks and Saracens would learn of Tyndale to mock us for them . . . because we cannot tell them a good reason for each of them. Be ye sure, this is a right solemn reason! And Luther, indeed, maketh a much like; so that ye may see that they have weighed it well between them, or else
Tyndale would not after so long a leisure allege it again so solemnly.

But now would I wit of wise Tyndale whether if men could and did give a good reason unto Jews, Turks, and Saracens, and paynims... as, for example, such causes as Tyndale te lleth some for great, hidden mysteries that no man could tell but he, which he fetched out lately of a good friar’s book called *Rationale divinorum*... showing what signifieth the alb, the amice, and stole, and so forth—would then all the Jews, Turks, Saracens, and other infidels hold themselves satisfied and mock no more? If they so would... then were they all much less infidels than Tyndale is; for he hath sought out such things, and yet mocketh still. Howbeit, that is little marvel. For indeed he bringeth all such things forth but for to make mocks at them.

But then would I wit of wise Tyndale farther, whether if all these infidels that he speaketh of, as Jews, Turks, and Saracens, were present at the Mass... and no such ceremony at all used thereat but only kneeling, knocking on breasts, and holding up of hands at the sight of the Elevation, and receiving of that Blessed Sacrament... and that thereupon marveling on the manner thereof, they were told the very truth—that the cause of all this reverent behavior

*What body is under*

*the form of bread*

is because that there, under that form of bread and wine, is the very Blessed Body and Blood of our Savior himself, the same that hung upon the cross when he suffered his Passion for our redemption—would those infidels then hold themselves all content, and never mock at it more? Nay, will none of them besides the Blessed Sacrament mock at all the whole matter—both at the Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and all?

Lo, thus ye see, good Christian readers, that by Tyndale’s reason we must cast off clean all our whole faith... lest such infidels as himself is should make mocks thereat as he doth. What Christian ears can abide such blasphemous folly?

Yet would some unwise man ween, peradventure, that Tyndale doth, for all this, not mean anything against these holy ceremonies of the Mass... but only mocketh the priest because he

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1. leisure: i.e., time to think about it  //  allege: advance  //  solemnly: seriously  //  wit: inquire
2. wise: astute / brilliant  //  Jews: Jewish  //  Turks: Turkish Muslims  //  Saracens: Arab Muslims
3. paynims: pagans  //  lately: recently  //  infidels: unbelievers  //  they all: would all of them be
4. less: i.e., less bad; less reprehensible  //  sought: searched  //  however: however  //  marvel: wonder
5. but: only  //  make mocks at: make derisive fun of; ridicule  //  ceremony: ritual
6. used: observed; carried out  //  knocking on: striking of  //  marveling on: wondering at
7. make: make derisive fun of it / take derisive potshots at it  //  abide: tolerate  //  folly: idiocy
speaketh not all the Secrets of the Mass aloud… and also because he teacheth not all the parish what all those ceremonies mean.

Surely there needeth no man to doubt but he that can find in his heart to make such mocks upon the devout observances used so many hundred years about the Mass… hath a lewd, beastly mind against the very Sacrament itself.

But yet, to the end that every man may see it the more clearly—ye shall perceive by his own words that… according to Luther’s babbling in his book of Babylonica… Tyndale teacheth plainly that the Blessed Sacrament is in the Mass no sacrifice, no host, nor none oblation; by which abominable heresy he taketh quite away the very special profit and fruit of all the Mass. These be his very words…

Tyndale

There is a word called in Latin sacerdos, in Greek hierευς, in Hebrew cohan—that is, a minister, an officer, a sacrificer, or a priest… as Aaron was a priest and sacrificed for the people, and was a mediator between God and them—and in the English should it have had some other name than “priest.” But Antichrist hath deceived us with unknown and strange terms, to bring us into confusion and superstitious blindness. Of that manner is Christ a priest forever, and all we priests through him… and need no more of any such priest on earth to be a mean for us unto God.

More

By these words ye see that whereas the priests in the Old Law offered sacrifices for the people, and that of diverse kinds, as appeareth in Lev 5:1–26; Nm 5:5–8 Leviticus and Numbers and other places of Holy Scripture; instead of all which sacrifices Christ hath in his New Law instituted one only sacrifice, his own Blessed Body and Blood, to be offered up to his Father for his people by the hands of the priest in form of bread and wine… of which holy offering in the Mass now, the offering of Melchisedech,

Gn 14:18–20 that offered bread and wine, was a solemn figure: Tyndale telleth us here that because Christ is a priest forever—and that all we be priests through him, man and woman—ye must understand we need, therefore,

1 Secrets: sotto voce prayers 2 ceremonies: rituals 4 mocks upon: derisive cracks about 5 about: in connection with 6 lewd: vile 5–6 mind against: mindset against / attitude toward 8 according to: in line with 9 plainly: straight-out; explicitly 10 host: expiatory offering 10 none: i.e., any 12 special: particular / chief 6 his very: his exact 18 had: i.e., been given 20 unknown: uncomprehended / indeterminate 20 strange: esoteric 21 manner: kind (of priest that Aaron was) 22 all we: i.e., are all of us 23 to be a mean: i.e., as should be a mediator 29 only: sole 33 that: who 34 solemn: mysteriously impressive 34 figure: prefiguration 35 all we: all of us 112/36—113/1 need . . . more: i.e., have . . . more need
he saith, no more of any such priest on earth that should be a mean
between God and the people, to offer up any sacrifice to God for the
people. For he saith farther that

Christ hath brought us into the inner temple, within the veil . . . .

and unto the mercy stool of God—and hath coupled us unto God—

where we offer every man for himself the desires and petitions of
his heart . . . and do sacrifice and kill the lusts and appetites of his
flesh, with prayer, fasting, and all manner of godly living.

More

With these gay, glittering words would Tyndale so blear our
eyes . . . that he would make us to reckon ourselves taken in so near to God,
and so “coupled” with him, that even upon God Almighty’s “mercy
stool” we offer every man so sufficiently for himself the “desires and
petitions of his heart,” and so sufficiently “sacrifice and kill the lusts
and appetites of his flesh, with prayer, fasting, and all manner
of good living,” that we need now no priest as mean between God
and us, to offer up for us to God the holy host and Sacrifice of all
Sacrifices, the Blessed Body and Blood of our holy Savior Christ.

This is the goodness that he bringeth all his holy process to. And

whereas in other places all is naught among us, and all is but sin—
yet here, lest we should need the Sacrifice of the Mass, we be all
God’s good sons, and kill and sacrifice full well the lusts and
appetites of our flesh with “prayer, fasting, and all manner
of godly living.”

Howbeit, when Tyndale saith that “we” offer our desires of our
heart at God Almighty’s mercy stool . . . and that “we” kill and sacrifice
the lusts of our flesh with prayer, fasting, and all godly living—
he meaneth none of us peevish “popish” “papists,” but the lively,
lightsome Lutherans. For they, pardie, as ye see by Luther himself
and his holy nun . . . kill and sacrifice their fleshly lusts

with prayer, fasting, and much godly living, every man and
woman wotteth how.

I marvel, yet, in what place of Scripture Tyndale findeth . . . that
men sacrifice their sins. We find that men offer sacrifice for
sin, and that men kill sin . . . and then peradventure offer themselves,
clean depured from sin. But to offer up sin in sacrifice . . .
meseemeth it is a very stinking sacrifice, and of such a scriptured man not very scripturely spoken. But therefore Tyndale turneth those two words out of their right frame, to juggle and blear our eyes with. For he saith not that we “kill and sacrifice” our fleshly lusts… lest we should have spied that it were no meet sacrifice; but he saith that we “sacrifice and kill” them—as though that in the Old Law, men had been wont to sacrifice the beasts first, and burn them up whole… or else burn part and eat part and then kill them after.

But Tyndale careth not how he set his words, so that he may make us to believe that we need no priest to offer up daily the same sacrifice that our Savior offered once and hath ordained to be by the priests perpetually offered in his church. For this is his labor to take out of our belief; and this is Luther’s labor, of whom he learned it in his book of Babylonica. And for this cause be they wroth with the holy Canon of the Mass, because the Sacrament is in the Mass called, as it is indeed, a sacrifice, a host, and an offering.

This would they have us leave off for the only spite that they bear to priesthood—because they see that in this point that holy order of priesthood hath an excellent privilege, in which none angel hath the like authority.

And albeit that Tyndale telleth us many times, as the man is somewhat shameless, that we will not believe Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose, Saint Gregory, and the other old holy doctors of Christ’s church—yet knoweth Tyndale that in this one point among many others, they be quite against him every one. And because it would here make a long work to rehearse many of their words: therefore, that Tyndale shall not deny but that I therein say truth, I shall allege him Luther, his own master… which in his book of Babylonica plainly confesseth the same, and answereth it with saying that the “Gospel of God” is “plain against them all”—as though that among “them all” either never none had read the Gospel of God… or else never none had understood it but himself. And then against them all he construeth that gospel so foolishly… that, before God, a man would ween almost that a gosling had as

1 meseemeth it: it seems to me 1–2 of . . . man: i.e., by a man so steeped in Scripture 3 frame: order
3 juggle . . . eyes: i.e., con and hoodwink us 5 spied that it were: i.e., caught sight of the fact that this would be
5 meet: suitable 6 that in: i.e., under / in their fulfilling of 7 beasts: animals
10–11 so . . . make: so long as he can get 12 once: once and for all 13 his labor: what he is trying
14 labor: endeavor // of whom: from whom 15 cause: reason // wroth: furiously displeased
16 Sacrament: i.e., Blessed Sacrament 17 a host: an expiatory victim 18 leave off: drop; cut out
18 for the only: just because of the 20 excellent: superlative // privilege: unique endowment / privileged position
20 in: with regard to 21 none: no 22 authority: prestige 25 Gregory: i.e., Gregory the Great
25–26 old holy doctors: early theologians 27 quite: totally 28 rehearse: relate 29 but that: that
30 say: am telling the // allege: adduce to // which: who 31 confesseth: acknowledges
32 it: i.e., that objection // with: by // plain: manifestly 33 though that: though
33 among . . . either never none had: i.e., either among . . . not a one had ever
34 never had none: i.e., never had anyone 36 before God: i.e., honest to God
36 ween almost that: just about think // gosling: baby goose
much wit as he. And yet now would his wise disciple Tyndale have us for his pleasure (in hatred of the order of priesthood)... believe that the priest doth at the Mass make none offering of that holy Sacrifice for our sin. With which heresy he clean taketh away the very fruit of the Mass in which that blessed sacrament is both most honored of the people and is also most profitable to the people.

But yet shall ye see further that as fair as he covereth himself in his speaking of this holy sacrament in some other places, yet in some he showeth his affection full well. For these are his words…

Tyndale

Ye may here perceive that after this wise preacheth not Tyndale. The sacrament of Christ’s body after this wise preach they: “Thou must believe that it is no more bread, but the very body of Christ—flesh, blood, and bone, even as he went here on earth”—save his coat. For that is here yet, I wot not in how many places.

More

Is not here a fair mocking manner in rehearsing of that holy sacrament? But yet, to cover his infidelity, he maketh here a color as though he were angry that they teach no more. But he is angry in deed that they teach so much—or else could he never find in his heart to speak so mockishly of such a matter as he doth.

For every man well knoweth that where he maketh after as though they which teach the people this did not teach them also the profit of the receiving, nor the promise of God: he doth untruly belie them. For who is there so simply taught but that he well understandeth that the receiving of that holy Body of our Lord in such wise as men are taught to receive it… is wholesome to the soul, and that by God’s ordinance? And therefore is in Tyndale but a shameless lie, whereof every man well knoweth the contrary. Would God himself believed as well of this holy sacrament as the simplest-learned priest in a country teacheth his parish! Which if he did…

his heart, I dare say, would not serve him so foolishly to jest thereat. For he speaketh there of preaching of promise… for no other cause but only to bring in his worshipful jest of our Lord’s holy Body being in the sacrament—to say he is there, all save his coat. Of which
holy sacrament he that jesteth so… believeth of likelihood that there is no more of his body there than of his coat. I have in his book of Obedience considered his words of this holy sacrament… and I have advised them the better for certain words that I have heard of him—and I see not one word by which he may be bound to say that ever he confessed it to be the very body and blood of Christ. Howbeit, if he had—it were not yet, with that sort, much the surer. For they may

This is the saying of all heretics.
do as their master hath: say the contrary after; and when they say worse,

then tell us that they have seen more since and learned better.

Howbeit, he is in deed come to that point already, as ye shall perceive by his words in his book made against me—whereof I shall rehearse you part anon. And yet we need not much more proof when we see that he mocketh at the Mass, and would have no priest at all, nor the sacrament to be taken as a sacrifice… and now jesteth upon the doctrine that teacheth us to believe that in the sacrament is the Blessed Body and Blood of our Lord, to turn it to a mock—“Yea,” saith this fool, “all save his coat.” A worshipful jest in a Christian man’s mouth! That mouth is more meet indeed for sand than holy salt.

What availeth [saith he] to teach folk this [that the very body and blood of our Lord is in that sacrament]? The devil knoweth that Christ died on a Friday, and the Jews too… and what are they the better? We have a promise [etc.].

Why steppeth he from the example of the same sacrament? Why saith he not, “The devil knoweth this to be true, that under the form of bread is Christ’s own body, and yet the devil is never the better”? Surely because himself believeth that the devil knoweth it not at all, nor God neither. And for because he would not yet have us therein perceive his mind to the uttermost, he joined the Jews with the devil to flee from the sacrament to the Friday, whereas he might have severed them and spoken of both… or else with the Jews and the devil he might have joined himself, and have bound all three in a bundle. For he believeth less than the one… and is as malicious as any of them both.

1 jesteth so: makes such cracks  // of: i.e., in all 2–3 in… of: i.e., taken into considerations his words in his book Obedience about 3–4 advised… for: looked at them the more carefully on them on account of 4 words… him: i.e., things that I’ve heard he has said 5 may… say: can have to be saying 6 confessed: professed 6, 22 very: actual 6, 12 howbeit: however 7 were not yet: would yet not be 7 sort: set of people; lot // surer: more firmly settled 8–9 the saying of all heretics: what all heretics say 8 as: i.e., what // hath: i.e., has done 9 say worse: i.e., change what they say for the worse 12 deed: fact 13 made: written 14 rehearse: quote // anon: in a little while 15 mocketh at: makes derisive fun of 16 jesteth upon: makes wisecracks about / lampoons 17 turn… mock: make it an object of scorn 18 worshipful: fine / pious // jest: wisecrack / taunt 20–21: See 76/14–16. 20 meet: fit 22 availeth: good does it do 24 what: how 25 better: i.e., better off for that 26 from: away from 28–29 never the better: i.e., in no way the better off for this knowledge 32, 34 might: could 33 severed: separated 34–35 bound… bundle: lumped all three together 35 malicious: wicked 36 any: either
Yet to the intent that ye may perceive clearly that he is plainly of Luther’s heresy that the Sacrament of the Altar is very bread still, ye shall understand that whereas I in my Dialogue rehearse Luther’s heresies, and among others this heresy that I now speak of, Tyndale in his Answer affirmeth Luther’s heresy for good and true, saying, “That that is broken, and that the priest eateth with his teeth—is it not bread? What is it else?”

And after those words, he goeth forth in jesting and mocking, God wot, full like himself.

And soon after, in another place, he saith (in defense of Luther’s heresy), because he would have folk set less thereby and have less reverence thereunto, “It were a perilous case if men and women touched it, because the pope hath not oiled them.”

And afterward he saith, “At Oxford, about the Sacrament was no small question of late days, whether it were bread or none—some affirming that the flour with long lying in water was turned into starch.”

More

What a cankered mind this heretic hath… there can, I trow, no man doubt that heareth what foolish gauds he deviseth upon it of his own frantic head. For if ever there were any such foolish fantasy spoken there… it was by himself and one or two wretched fellows of his own sect, sitting and blaspheming God upon their ale bench.

But now shall ye yet more plainly see to what point he goeth about to bring you.

Tyndale

It is the sacrament of Christ’s body and blood, and Christ calleth it the new and everlasting testament in his blood, and commandeth that we should “so do” in the “remembrance” of him… that his body was broken and his blood shed for our sins. And Paul commandeth thereby to show or preach the Lord’s death. They say not pray to it, neither put any faith therein. For I may not believe in the sacrament, but I must believe the sacrament, that it is a true sign, and it true that is signified thereby (which is the only worshipping of the sacrament; if ye give it other worship, ye plainly dishonor it)—as I may not believe in Christ’s church, but believe Christ’s church,

2, 14 Sacrament (of the Altar): Blessed Sacrament  2 very bread still: still literal bread
3 rehearse: relate  5 for: i.e., to be  /// good: sound; valid  6 that that: that which
8 jesting: wisecracking / jeering  9 wot: knows  /// full: totally
11 set less thereby: i.e., hold the Blessed Sacrament in less regard  /// have less: i.e., show less
12 were: would be  /// case: situation  15 small question: little controversy  /// of late: in recent
15 whether . . . none: i.e., as to whether it was or was not bread  18 cankered: corrupt / sick
18 trow: trust; feel sure  19 gauds: gibes; derisive cracks
19 upon it: i.e., about the Blessed Sacrament  /// of: i.e., out of  20 frantic: deranged
21 fantasy: speculation  /// there: i.e., at Oxford  24–25 goeth about: is trying
28 testament: covenant  29 so do: do this  31 show: proclaim  32 neither: nor
34 worshipping: i.e, legitimate venerating  35 other worship: i.e., any other kind of veneration
36 but: i.e., must believe
that the doctrine which they preach of Christ is true. If ye have
any other doctrine… teach us a reason, and lead us in light, and we
will follow.

More

No man can desire better knowledge of him than he showeth of
himself in these words. For here he showeth plainly that though to
blear our eyes with, he calleth it “the sacrament of Christ’s body and
blood,” and his “new and everlasting testament in his blood,” and
saith that we be commanded by Saint Paul “thereby to preach the
Lord’s death,” yet he will not in any wise that men shall pray thereto
nor put any faith therein. And it is no doubt but he that hath that
mind believeth nothing at all that it is the very Body of Christ,
wherewith his holy Soul is coupled, and his Almighty Godhead
joined… from which, from the first assumption thereof, it was never
severed.

And therefore unto all his other gay, glorious words he hath a
false gloss… by which he meaneth that the Blessed Sacrament is
nothing else but a token and a figure ordained for a remembrance of
Christ, and not the very body and blood of himself.

It is also to be noted whereupon he groundeth this holy precept
of his, that men should not pray to the Sacrament nor put any faith
therein. He saith because that the Scripture doth not command it…
therefore it is dishonor to the Sacrament to do it. Doth not these
words alone teach us sufficiently to know the mischief of that
heresy by which they say that there is nothing to be believed without
plain and evident Scripture… when we see now that Tyndale upon
that doctrine of his forbiddeth us to honor the Holy Sacrament of
the Altar?

Ye may see now that Tyndale uttered not all his false ware at once.
For first he began with images… then with relics, then with
saints, that we may worship none of all these. And now at last
he teacheth us that we may not worship Christ’s own Body in the
Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, nor put any faith therein. Put ye no
doubt but he will say the same by his Soul within a while, and soon
after that, by his Godhead too… and at the last, by the Godhead of the
Father and the Holy Ghost both, and utterly deny all three.
God is good Lord, which maketh this blasphemous fool speak in the end of his blasphemy a few true words with which himself destroyeth all his whole abominable doctrine. For he confesseth, as ye have heard . . . that though he may not believe in Christ’s

Believe Christ’s church! church, as though the Church were his savior—yet he must believe Christ’s church . . . that the doctrine which they preach of Christ is true.

And with these words of his own, will I strain him fast and sure. For I ask no more but these few words of his own, to the confounding of all that ever he teacheth against our faith. For now hath he with these words destroyed the effect of his heresy wherewith he would draw all to an unknown church of elects. For since we must believe the doctrine and the preaching of the church of Christ, as Tyndale saith himself, and that can we never do but if we know them whom we believe; and who be elects, we cannot know: farewell the force of all that heresy, by Tyndale’s own tale!

And now, since he hath bound himself to confess that the church of Christ is and must needs be a church known here to men, and none such can he name but only the Catholic, known church of all Christian nations, from which he hath and doth labor to flit and flee unto a dark, unknown church of elects . . . the strength of which heresy his own words here have confounded: he must needs confess that Christ’s church is the church that we be of, and out of which himself is down fallen, by unfaithfulness, into the deep dungeon of the devil. And now, since of his own confession he must believe the doctrine of the church of Christ; and of the same confession of his own it followeth that the church of Christ is this

Christ’s church is the common-known church that hath from Christ’s days hitherto continued; and that it is evident also that by the doctrine of that church the doctrine of Tyndale concerning the Blessed Sacrament is false—forever hath it been by that church of Christ taught that the Blessed Sacrament should be worshipped, and faith to be put therein, whereof Tyndale teacheth the contrary—it is inevitably concluded, upon Tyndale’s own words, that Tyndale is against Christ’s own blessed Person a deadly, devilish heretic!

Now, since ye plainly perceive, good Christian readers, that this malicious man intendeth to turn poor simple souls out of the very faith . . . and of the seven holy sacraments would take five away . . .

1 is . . . which maketh: i.e., is such a . . . to have made  2 himself: he himself
3 destroyeth: demolishes  //  all his whole: his whole entire
3 abominable doctrine: i.e., abominable body of doctrine / set of abominable teachings
3, 17, 23 confess(eth): profess(es) / acknowledge(s)  7 of: about  8 strain . . . sure: bind him good and securely
9 ask . . . but . . . to the confounding: i.e., need . . . than . . . for the confuting  14 but if: unless
15 them: i.e., who they are  16 farewell: i.e., there goes  //  all that: that whole  //  tale: account
20 hath and doth labor: i.e., has been and is trying hard  21 a dark: an obscure
22 confounded: brought to naught  25 of his own confession: by his own admission
25 of the same confession: i.e., from that same admission  28, 29 common-known: common-knowledge
29 hitherto: i.e., to ours  30 by: according to  30, 31 doctrine: teaching
34 inevitably: unavoidably; inescapably  35 against: with regard to  36 deadly: i.e., mortally inimical
38 simple: uneducated / impressionable  39 very: true
and the other twain that he would seem to leave, he handleth yet in such wise as men may well see that he leaveth them as fruitless as the others… and finally, in effect, believeth neither nither: there will no good man look that we should now need to prove these holy sacraments to be true which all Christian people have this fifteen hundred years believed… because that now a fond fellow and a foolish heretic denieth them—except that any man were so mad to doubt whether there were any God at all, if he happed to hear any man so mad to say nay.

And surely there was never sect of heretics yet that there was so great madness to believe as these. For of other heretics, that have been of old… every sect had some one heresy, or else very few. Now these heretics come in with almost all that ever all they held, and yet more too. All the other heretics had some pretext of holiness in their living; these shameless heretics live in open, shameful, incestuous lechery, and call it matrimony.

The old heretics did stick upon Scripture when it was yet, in a manner, newly received; and they contended upon the understanding at such time as there had few Christian writers expounded the Scripture before them, so as they might the better say to the Catholic Church, “Why may not we perceive the Scripture as well as you?” But these new heretics be so far from shame… that in the understanding of Scripture, and in the affirming of all their heresies… they would be believed by their only word, against all the old holy doctors that have been since the death of Christ unto this day; and that in those rotten heresies, too, which they find condemned to the devil by the general councils of all Christendom a thousand years before their days; and, most mad of all, in denying the sacraments which they find received and believed, used and honored, so clearly from the beginning… that never was there heretic that durst for very shame so boldly bark against them, till that now, in these latter days, the devil hath broken his chains and of all extreme abomination hath set his poisoned barrel abroach; from the dreggy draught whereof, God keep every good Christian man, and such as hath drunk thereof, give them grace to vomit it out again betimes.

This long digression have I made you… to let you plainly see the summary purpose and effect of Tyndale’s doctrine touching the holy sacraments—which known unto good men sufficeth to
make their hearts abhor his devilish doctrine without any further argument. And as for them that at the bare hearing thereof abhor it not—they be surely so sore infected that, except the marvelous mercy of God, never shall there either reason or authority make them savor the truth.

But now that Tyndale hath commended unto you the high spiritual wisdom of unfaithful heretics... he beginneth on the other side to rebuke and reprove the true faith of all good-faithful people.

Tyndale

But the world captivateth his wit, and about the law of God maketh him wonderful imaginations... unto which he so fast cleaveth that ten John the Baptists were not able to dispute them out of his head.

More

Now that Tyndale hath done with his own “spiritual” party, and hath, as ye have heard, holily declared how high spiritual wisdom they use in searching the very bottom of the cause in every commandment that God giveth... and according to the thing which they take for the cause, so order themselves either keep the commandment or break it: now cometh he to the other party, that is, to all that are no heretics, whom he before called “natural” and not “born again” nor “renewed with the Spirit”; all which folk he calleth here “the world,” and saith that “the world captivateth his wit, and about the law of God maketh him wonderful imaginations... unto which he so fast cleaveth that ten John the Baptists were not able to dispute them out of his head.”

Here he meaneth that himself and his fellow “spiritual,” heavenly men be not captivated unto the law of God, as we poor “worldly” men of middle earth be. For they be no further bound to the law but as the cause of the law, sought out by themselves, leadeth them to and from; and therefore they be in an evangelical and, in manner, angelical liberty to do what they list... so that they give the law some cause that may serve their lust, as they have given to the law and commandment of vows—from which they have set themselves in such
a spiritual liberty that monks and friars may lawfully lie with nuns and live in lechery, and call it wedlock.

And indeed they may call it wedlock and they will... as Lollards did of late, that put a pig into the water on Good Friday and said, “Go in pig and come out pike,” and so when they had changed the name, they took it for fish and ate it. And so may these holy new “spiritual” men, when monks and friars wed nuns, they may call it wedlock and they will. But as the poor ploughman said unto the taverner that gave him water instead of wine, “God thank you, Master Winer, for your good wine, but in good faith, saving for the worshipful name of ‘wine,’ I had as lief a-drunken water”—surely so may we well say to these new holy, “spiritual” married monks and friars... saving for the worshipful name of “wedlock,” it were as good they lived in lechery as in such bitched bitchery.

But we seey souls of the world here be captivated and bound, he saith, and not in such a heavenly liberty... but make ourselves “wonderful imaginations” about the law of God; which thing much I marvel of. For the world is not often wont to muse much upon the laws of God, nor greatly to study upon them, but let them go by well and easily and think little on them... nor need not John the Baptist to dispute out of their heads any wonderful imaginations that they have studied about the law of God.

But, marry, on the other side, these new “spiritual” men have with their new liberty made themselves wonderful imaginations to which they cleave so fast that fifteen John the Baptists cannot dispute them out of their heads. For they have to the great wonder of the world made them an imagination that friars may live in lechery with nuns, and never need do penance neither for that nor for any sin else, but repent and do so still and believe that all is well, and do no penance nor take no pain for any sin at all.

Now every man well wotteth that Saint John the Baptist did dispute against these imaginations of theirs, both with his living and his teaching. For against their lechery he disputed with chastity; and against their heresy of penance, he disputed with preaching penance. For he bade them, not every boy go forth and take himself for an apostle and go preach, but he

1 may lawfully: can legitimately 
3, 8 and they will: if they want to
3 Lollards: (some) followers of John Wycliffe 
4 of late: recently 
6 water: pond
7, 12, 24 new: modern 
8 ploughman: farm laborer 
10 thank: reward 
11, 13 worshipful name of: i.e., respectability/prestigiousness of the word
11 as lief a-drunken: would as soon have drunk 
12 well: rightly
14 were as good: would be as good that 
15 bitched bitchery: i.e., licentious lewdness 
16 seely: pitiful
16 captured: enslaved / subjugated 
17 make: give 
18, 22, 25 wonderful: fantastical / bizarre
18, 22, etc. imagination(s): idea(s) 
19 of: at 
19–20 muse much upon: devote a lot of thought to
20 study: reflect 
20–21 let... easily and: i.e., to quite easilygoingly let them go by, and
21 on: about
22, 26, etc. dispute(d): argue(d) 
24 marry: indeed 
25, 28 made: given
26 cleave so fast: adhere so firmly 
27 wonder: astonishment
28 them: i.e., themselves
28 an: i.e., the 
30 repent... still: i.e., can just repent and go on doing that committing and repenting
32 wotteth: knows 
34 living: way of living 
35 chastity: celibacy / perpetual sexual abstinence
35 of: regarding
cried upon them to do penance—and not only bade them repent

Mt 3:2, 7–8 and do penance, but also bade them if they would avoid hell and the wrath that else was to come, they should do “worthy fruits of penance.” And because that they should not ween that it was but a word of office, and that it sufficed to believe well in God’s promise, and so go their way and think themselves safe: he showed them in himself and his own living—for their institution, not for the deserving of his own sin—a form and fashion of a repentant sinner, in what wise he should do penance. And therefore he lived solitary,

The penitent life of Saint John the Baptist saving that his virtues caused him to be visited. He lived in holy, vowed chastity and never wedded woman in his days, nor never would have done though he had lived twice as long as Luther. He lived in poor and painful apparel. He lived in watch and prayers, in fasting and forbearing meat. He drank no wine,

Lk 1:15, 80; Mt 3:4; 11:7–10 but was content with water. This manner of penance-doing did Saint John the Baptist teach and dispute, contrary to the false imaginations against penance, and wonderful devices of lewd, lecherous living, that these new “spiritual” men have in their fantasy framed… which neither Saint John the Baptist nor such ten Saint John the Baptists, nor our Savior Christ himself, can dispute out of their heads.

Tyndale
He believeth that he loveth God because he is ready to kill a Turk for his sake, that believeth better in God than he; whom God also commandeth us to love and to leave nothing unsought to win him unto the knowledge of the truth, though with the loss of our lives.

More
Here Tyndale followeth his master Luther, that would have all Christian men suffer the Turks and fight not with them. Howbeit, I understand by Tyndale in his book after, that Luther hath eaten up his word again afterward for fear, when he saw his country prepare themselves against the Turks. But now Tyndale, that is out of such fear, is, as it seemeth, disposed to maintain and set forth his
master’s former error again. For he layeth it to the charge of the Catholic Church, as a chief and principal fault, that we take it as a token of love to God if a man have a mind for God’s sake to go fight against the Turks. But as madly as he mocketh it… a good token is it of love to God, for all that. For he that is for God’s sake

To fight against the Turk content in the defense of other folk, his innocent Christian brethren, against the infidels, the enemies of God and them, to put his own life in pain and peril of death—we may be bold with

Tyndale’s license, while we have Luther’s leave already, to warrant that it is a token of good and ordinate love to God, and, for God, to his neighbor.

For though we should love infidels to make them faithful, and be glad to suffer for them if our sufferance would bring them to the faith, yet are we not bound to love them above the household folk of Christ, and familiares of our own Christian faith—and namely so far that while they come not to learn the Christian faith but to kill the Christian men, a prince that hath the rule of us should suffer them to kill on, and stand still by and preach.

I doubt not, therefore, but how holily soever it pleaseth Father Tyndale here preach in favor of the Turks… a prince may assemble his host, and of good zeal, with great thank of God, go against them and kill them, as well and better too than Moses killed the Egyptian that fought with the Hebrew.

And therefore we shall not, I trust, greatly need to fear the great word that Tyndale in the Turks’ favor speaketh against those that will go and fight against them… where he saith that the Turk “believeth better in God” than such a Christian man. Wherein if Tyndale said true (as, God be thanked, he lieth)—how believeth then Tyndale himself in God, which (as his charitable books well declare) would be well content that heretics and infidels should with sedition or open war kill up the clergy of the Catholic Church, and the great part of such good people besides as would be adversaries to their pestiferous heresies?

Tyndale

He supposeth that he loveth his neighbor as much as he is bound, if he be not actually angry with him… whom yet he will not help
freely with a halfpenny, but for advantage or vainglory or for a worldly purpose. If any man have displeased him, he keepeth his malice in and will not chafe himself about it till he see an occasion to avenge it craftily, and thinketh that well enough. And the rulers of the world he obeyeth, thinketh he, when he flattereth them, and bindeth them with gifts and corrupteth the officers with rewards, and beguileth the law with cautels and subtleties. And because the love of God and his neighbor, which is the spirit and the life of all laws, and wherefore all laws are made, is not written in his heart—therefore in all inferior laws, and in all worldly ordinances, is he beetle-blind.

More

All this gear is but a fardelful of lies; and that wotteth Tyndale himself well enough. For albeit that there be more than enough that in the Catholic Church of Christ, that use to commit such sins—yet use they not to think that they do well, and fulfill the law of God, in doing…but they both believe and confess the contrary, and to their confessor acknowledge it as it is: for sin.

For though men in the Catholic Church do sin…yet to take it for no sin, but for holiness and virtue—this is neither the doctrine nor manner and guise of the Catholic Church of Christ. But this is in very deed the belief, or at the leastwise the guise and custom, of Tyndale’s church and Luther’s and Friar Huessgen’s. For they have the love of God and their neighbor, the “spirit and life of all laws,” so well and wisely written in their hearts…that they cannot be but fervently taken in their lewd, lecherous love; nor be not in “inferior laws” and “worldly ordinances” so “beetle-blinded” but that a friar can find the way to a nun’s bed and it be at midnight, and after in the open day abide thereby, and avow the breach of their vow boldly for very well done and holily…and when he thus doth, “beguileth” not the laws with “cautels and subtleties,” but boldly breaketh them up like a strongman, and beareth it out bigly with shameless devilish heresy.

Tyndale

And if he be commanded to abstain from wine, that will he observe unto the death too…as Charterhouse monks had liefer die than
eat flesh. And as for the soberness and chastising of the members, will he not look for... but will pour in ale and beer of the strongest, without measure, and heat them with spices; and so forth.

More

As for the monks of the Charterhouse, would God we were no further from very, virtuous devotion than those good men be from unlawful superstition; among whom, God be thanked, we see many live to very great age, and never heard I yet that any died for lack of eating flesh... and yet heard I never that any of them have eaten any, saving some such as have come from their cloisters into Luther’s church—as Otho did in Almaine, which ran out of the Charterhouse and left fish and fell to flesh altogether, and took a wife for “soberness and chastising” of his monkly “members,” as Tyndale speaketh.

Tyndale

And the holy day will he keep so strait that if he meet a flea in his bed, he dare not kill her; and not once regard wherefore the holy day was ordained—to seek for God’s word; and so forth, in all laws.

More

Tyndale, I think, hath not known many keep the holy day so strait—that would fear to kill a flea, as it pleaseth him to jest. But yet had I liefer that men would keep it so strait as he speaketh... than keep it so loosely as they do. But they that keep it so loosely... be neither afeard, I warrant you, to kill a flea nor to do worse, neither. And whosoever would keep it so strait as to forbear the killing of a flea in his bed... would keep it better than do the friars of Luther’s church, that let not on the holy day to take a nun to bed. For as for hearing of God’s word, in many places in Almaine among their holy sects, where they were in the beginning wonderfully hot upon sermons— they be now, blessed be God, waxen cold enough.

First, in many places, they sang the Service in their mother tongue, men and women and all; and that was a pretty sport for them for a while. But after a little use thereof, the pleasure of the newelty passed, and they set somewhat less thereby than by a three-men’s
song. They changed also the Mass; and soon after that, many cast it up clean.

Then was all their lust laid upon preaching, especially because every man might preach that would... saying that they followed the counsel of Saint Paul... while one would bid the preacher hold his peace and let him speak another while, affirming that the Spirit had revealed him the right sense, and that the preacher lied. Thus turned they sermons in brawlings, so that sometimes the people parted them from pointing their preachings with fists. But now, as I hear say, that manner is well amended; they can suffer one to preach as long as it please him, and no man once interrupt him; for they be there waxen women, and all so cunning that scantly come any to hear him. And thus doth Tyndale’s church and Luther’s si t at home in their stews in honor of their holy day.

Tyndale

And in ceremonies and sacraments, there he captivateth his wit and understanding to obey “Holy Church,” without asking what they mean, or desiring to know; but only careth for the keeping, and looketh ever with a pair of narrow eyes, and with all his spectacles upon them, lest aught be left out.

More

The ceremonies and sacraments Tyndale maketh his mockingstock; but let him beware betimes, lest God mock him again.

And thus ought Christian men to do! Better is it, good Christian reader, to do the thing that Tyndale here reproveth—that is to wit, a man to captivate his wit and understanding and obey Holy Church in the ceremonies and sacraments, and keep them well without further search—than to do as Tyndale hath done, that with his curious search hath so narrowly so long pried upon them, with beetle brows and his brittle spectacles of pride and malice, that the devil hath stricken him stark blind and set him in a corner with a chain and a clog, and made him his ape to sit there and serve him and to make him sport, with mocking and mowing and potting the

1–2 cast it up clean: jettisoned it completely; got rid of it entirely 3 lust: enthusiasm 4 might: could 5 while: when 6 bid . . . peace: tell the preacher to stop talking 7 speak another while: i.e., have a turn to speak 8 him: i.e., to him // sense: interpretation // lied: i.e., was lying 9 in: into 10 pointing: punctuating 11 manner: behavior 11–12 suffer . . . please him: let one man preach for as long as he wants to 12 and . . . interrupt: i.e., with no man ever interrupting 12–13 they . . . women: i.e., the others present have come to be none but women 13 cunning: knowledgeable 13 scantly come any: hardly any come 15 stews: brothels 17, 28 in: regarding 17, 23, 28 ceremonies: rituals 17, 27 captivate(th): subjugate(s) 17, 28 wit: intellect 19 for: about 19 keeping: i.e., celebrating and receiving of them 20 narrow: squinting; intently searching 20, 32 spectacles: seeing aids 21 aught: anything 23 mockingstock: i.e., laughingstocks 24 betimes: in good time // again: back; in return 26 reproveth: criticizes 29 keep: i.e., celebrate and/or receive 30 curious: impertinently inquisitive 31 narrowly: squintingly; peeringly // upon: into // beetle: furrowed 32 brittle: unreliable 33–34 a chain and a clog: i.e., a ball and chain 35 make him sport: entertain him // mowing: caricaturing 35 potting: lampooning
sacraments, which yet the devil dreadeth himself and dare not come near them.

Tyndale

For if the priest should say Mass, baptize, or hear confession, without a stole about his neck... he would think all were marred, and doubt whether he had power to consecrate... and think that the virtue of the Mass were lost, and that child not well baptized, or not baptized at all... and that his absolution were not worth a mite.

More

This is another fardelful of lies; and that he wotteth well enough. For if the priest left off his stole... folk would then say he did lewdly, as they might well say indeed. But Tyndale knoweth full well that folk do not reckon the sacrament hurt thereby. For he knoweth well that children be sometimes christened of the midwife’s hand... and the people knoweth well that she useth no stole. And thus everybody well perceiveth how shameless Tyndale is in these lies.

Tyndale

He had liefer that the bishops should wag two fingers over him... than that another man should say “God save” him; and so forth.

More

Blessing of bishops Tyndale jesteth upon in more places than one. And forasmuch as he knoweth well that all Christian people have and ever have had a good-faithful belief in blessing, both where a man or woman bless themselves and also whereas any that hath authority over them given by God to, bless them—which is a kind of prayer and invocation of God’s grace upon the party so blessed with the Sign of the Cross... as the natural father or the godfather blesseth the child, or the curate his parishioner, or the bishop his diocesan—such things Tyndale taketh for trifles, and laugheth such blessing and crossing to scorn.

For in his book of Obedience, the laying of the bishop’s hand upon the priest in giving the Sacrament of Holy Orders he resembleth to the laying of a man’s hand upon a boy’s head when he calleth him “Good son.” And the blessing, as he calleth it here the wagging of two fingers... so he calleth it there the wagging of the hand in the air.

1 dreadeth: is very much afraid of 5 all: everything 5, 7, 8 were: was 5 marred: ruined
7 virtue: efficacy 10 fardelful: pack // wotteth: knows 11–12 did lewdly: acted badly
13 reckon: consider // hurt: impacted / impaired 14 of: by 15 useth: wears
18 had liefer: would rather 21 jesteth upon: makes derisive wisecracks about
22 forasmuch . . . well: i.e., well knowing 23 a good-faithful: an orthodox 24 whereas: wherever
29 curate: pastor 29–30 his diocesan: i.e., one of the Catholics (clerical or otherwise) in his diocese
30 trifles: game-playing nonsense 31 crossing: making of the Sign of the Cross 33 resembleth: likens
Howbeit, we need not much to marvel though Tyndale and Luther and Friar Huessgen and their fellows set little by the sign of the Cross made by a man’s hand in the air… since we see that they set so little by an image of the Crucifix, and also by Christ’s Holy Cross itself—whereof Luther writeth that if he had all the pieces, he would cast them all “thereas never sun should shine upon them.” But all Christian men since Christ’s death hitherward… hath set much by that kind of blessing in which the Sign of the Cross is made upon a man, either by himself or by another. And not a few stories are there that testify great things done in the virtue of that Sign—not only among good Christian men, but also sometimes among evil men and the very infidels themselves.

And though that I intend not to prolong this work with writing of stories, yet cometh there one to my mind so meet for the matter, and written by so great authority, that I cannot let it pass.

Saint Gregory Nazianzen

Saint Gregory Nazianzen, the great, famous old doctor, writing in his second oration made against the great emperor infidel commonly called Julian the Apostate, writeth that when that man was fallen from the faith of Christ unto paganism and Gentility… giving himself therewith not only to the persecution of Christian men, but also to the following of every kind of superstitious folly, he took with him on a time certain necromancers and went into a cave to conjure up spirits, to enquire of them certain things whereof he was very curious to know. And when he was in the pit among them with their conjurations, there appeared many terrible sights, so far forth that albeit with the trust of his conjurations he bore it out a while, yet at the last the terror and fear so sore increased that he was fain, for the surest refuge, to bless himself with the sign of the cross which he so pursued and hated. At which only sign, so made with the wagging (as Tyndale calleth it) of his hand in the air, as evil a hand as it was—yet were all the devils so sore afraid, that all their fearful illusions failed and vanished quite away.
Lo what a force and strength hath that fashion of blessing that Tyndale setteth at so light! Wherein many a man daily findeth great profit, in avoiding of temptations of our ghostly enemy the devil, and in many a sudden fear of the fiend.

And I little doubt but as Tyndale followeth Julian the Apostate in falling from the right faith, so would he at a need follow him also in blessing too. For as little as Tyndale setteth by blessing now, yet if he might once meet the devil in the dark, he would, I warrant you, cross and bless apace. And I beseech our Lord to give him grace so to bless himself betimes that he meet not the devil in eternal darkness, where whoso mishap to meet him can have no grace to cross and to bless himself... but shall instead of crossing and blessing, fall all to cursing and desperate sorrow and furious blaspheming without comfort and without end.

**Tyndale**

Wherefore, beloved reader, inasmuch as the Holy Ghost rebuketh the world for lack of judgment; and inasmuch also as their ignorance is without excuse... before whose faces enough is set to judge by; if they would open their eyes to see, and not captivate their understanding to believe lies; and inasmuch as the spiritual judgeth allthing, even the very bottom of God’s secrets, that is to say, the causes of the things which God commandeth: how much more ought we to judge our Holy Father’s secrets, and not to be as an ox or an ass without understanding!

**More**

It appeareth well that the Holy Ghost, according to the words of our Savior at his Last Supper—which words Tyndale would falsely wrest awry—did rebuke the Jews and the Gentiles for lack of judgment, and that he taught the church of Christ the true judgment... by which ever since Christ’s days, by the judgment of holy saints and all good Christian people besides, such things as now Luther and Tyndale and Friar Huessgen do teach have been always judged for heresies. And this is open before every man’s eyes... except we would willingly captivate our understanding to believe Luther’s lies. And therefore those that follow them of their ignorance... have none excuse when
they see against the whole consent of Christendom so many hundred years continued... four or five fond friars run out of religion and living in lechery take upon themselves to preach and say to the people of themselves, “We be the spirituals; we search the bottom of God’s secrets, we search the causes of God’s commandment, we understand the Scripture in its right sense; and all that have been called holy doctors and interpreters before our days, were either false or fools, and have either of evil will or of ignorance brought all Christian nations out of the right faith... till now that God hath of his high goodness sent us and our wives to preach ‘faith’ and teach heresy, and show lechery... to turn the world to grace.”

Now, he that would in the declaration and understanding of the scripture of Christ and his apostles believe such a few fleshly, blind apostates against so many holy, blessed doctors-and-saints—what excuse could his ignorance have before God? Were not he a very ox and an ass without wit or understanding?

Tyndale
Judge, therefore, Christian reader, whether the pope with his be the church.

More

When Tyndale speaketh of “the pope with his,” here useth he a little sophistry. For he leaveth us in doubt what he meaneth by these words “the pope with his.” If he mean the pope with his cardinals... then speaketh he little to the purpose. For I never called, nor no man else, the pope and the cardinals the whole Catholic Church. But if he mean by “the pope and his” the pope and all the Christian realms and countries that have not by schisms and heresies departed and severed themselves from the corps of Christendom—he that then judgeth “the pope and his” to be the church of Christ judgeth as it is indeed.

Now, if Tyndale bring in question whether the pope be of all those Christian countries the chief spiritual head under God and general vicar of Christ—this question will not help him. For if there either yet be or any time hath been that either the Greeks or any other part of true Christendom did not recognize the pope for

1 whole consent: unanimous consensus  
2 fond: foolishly self-confident  
3 take: take it  
4 of: about  
5 spirituals: i.e., spiritual ones  
6 search: i.e., get to  
7 secrets: hidden workings / inner motivations  
8 false: dishonest  
9 search... of: search out the reasons for  
10 holy... interpreters: i.e., Church theologians and biblical exeges  
11 show: exemplify  
12 in: with regard to  
13 fleshly: carnal  
14 blind: stupid / reckless / deceitful  
15 were not he: would he not be  
16 wit: intelligence / good sense  
17 were not he: would he not be  
18 evil: ill  
19 in: into  
20 question: questioning  
21 true: right-believing
their chief spiritual governor under God—yet always those that
were learned or good men among them, and the whole people with
them, in the necessary articles were of the same faith, and confirmed
themselves to the see of Rome in such things as among
them began to be disputable; as well appeareth not only by Saint
Chrysostom and other old holy doctors of the Greeks, but also by
the general councils in which the Greeks in matters of doubt and
question finally confirmed themselves to the Latins and to the See
Apostolic.

And for conclusion, both the Latin Church and the Greek
Church, and Prester John’s church, too, and every church that bore
the name of any good Christendom—yea, and every church also of any
honest heretics, too, and the church of paynims and Turks, too, and
the church of Saracens, too (since Tyndale will have them all called
churches), and finally, the church of all mankind since the earth
was well inhabited, as many as ever have known so much as the
name of God—hath ever hitherto damned the church of Luther and
Tyndale and Friar Huessgen, that care not to break their promise made
to God, and contrary to all honesty make mocks of their vows…
and void of shame avow their filthy lechery for honest wedlock
and lawful matrimony.

Tyndale

[Judge] whether their authority be above the Scripture; whether all
that they teach without Scripture be equal with the Scripture;
whether they have erred, and not only whether they can.

More

Judge here, good reader, whether that Tyndale play the part of an
honest man, when the power and authority which the Church
ascribeth unto God and his Holy Spirit… Tyndale would make you
believe that they do take and ascribe it unto themselves.

The word of God unwritten is
equal with his word written.

For no man saith that any man is
above the word of God; but we say
boldly that his word unwritten is equal
and as strong as his word written… and that he is as well to be believed
without writing as with writing… and that himself and
his Holy Spirit understandeth his own writing better than all
the creatures of the whole world. And then we say also that God by

Mt 28:20; Jn 14:16–17 the mouth of our Savior hath promised
Jn 16:13 that himself with his Holy Spirit shall
ever be assistant with his church... and that
he shall always instruct his church and lead it into every truth.

And we say that he keepeth, and ever hath kept, and ever shall keep,
that promise. And therefore we say that he teacheth his church all
God teacheth his
church all truth.

I mean all truth necessary, as
himself meant, for their salvation; that is
to wit, all such things as he will upon
pain of damnation have them bound to believe. I say also that
upon this it must needs follow that, albeit our Lord doth suffer his
The Church doth not err in
the knowledge of God's law.

church to err in the knowledge of a fact
or deed done among men, yet will he
never suffer it to err and be deceived in
the knowledge of his law to which he will have it bound,
and in the time in which he will have it bound thereto. And therefore
will he never suffer his church to take, repute, and judge a
thing for sinful and damnable that is of truth good and pleasing
to God. For then should he thereby cause his church to leave good,
virtuous things undone themselves, and also to forbid it other
folk as things vicious and displeasing to God; and then were
his promise broken, since that the Holy Ghost had not then taught
them the truth necessary, but had suffered them to be led into
damnable untruth.

Then say I further that it consequently followeth also that God
shall much less suffer his church to take for good and pleasing to
God the thing that is very naught and odious unto God and damnable

to itself. For then should his church by such error not only
leave the good undone, but also do the evil, and not know which way

to amend it. And of these things I say that it followeth necessarily
that though the Church be not above the Scripture and Holy Writ, yet
it is so taught by the Spirit of God, and his holy, secret, inward
word unwritten, that it cannot be damnably deceived in the
understanding of his holy scripture written. And thereupon yet
farther followeth that all such as so construe the Scripture that they
would make the Scripture seem to be contrary to the faith of Christ’s
church… do damnably construe it contrary to the teaching of God and his Holy Spirit. Which by his own promise doth always teach his church, and always leadeth it, and always shall lead it, into every necessary truth; and that unto the end of the world, according to the words of our Savior Christ himself.

Note these three points. Of these points Tyndale denieth us three. One is that any thing is certainly to be believed, except only the Scripture—and yet that must be, as Luther saith, evident, open, and plain; of which the contrary hath been so often proved unto him, so evidently, openly, and plainly, that if Tyndale were not evidently, openly, and plainly shameless, his heart would never serve him for very shame to speak anymore of that point. The other point is that he denieth the Catholic, known church to be the church of Christ, and putteth it in question which is the church, and finally putteth for the church of Christ here militant in earth the only secret, unknown folk that are predestinate. The third is that he putteth also in question whether the church may fall into damnable error. And thereto he saith that the church of elects doth err but yet it doth not err. And forasmuch as these things be the chief things whereof his book treateth: likewise as they that have wit and learning do already find his handling of these matters full of malice and very void of truth—so I trust, when we come hereafter to the places, to make right mean-learned folk, and mean-witted, too, perceive that all his high invention that he would have seem so sooth is in very deed a very mad man’s dream.

Tyndale
And against the mist of their sophistry take the examples that are past, in the Old Testament and authentic stories, and the present practice which thou seest before thine eyes.

More
We be well content that these things try the “mist” of both parties… so that Tyndale take with him one thing or twain more, which I marvel wherefore he now leaveth out, saving that he seeth well that they will clearly dissipate and discuss the mist that he
fain would walk in. For else why leaveth he clean out the New Testament now? We must pray him that we may take in that too.

And forasmuch as we do on both the sides agree upon the text of Scripture, and that the question much lieth whether Tyndale and his fellows understand it right, or else the whole church of all Christian nations: we shall pray him to be content that we may lay forth in that behalf the mind of the old holy doctors-and-saints which wrote of these matters so many hundred years ere ever this business began, and wrote not for the pleasure of either party. And them will we the rather allege because Tyndale, as well in his book of Obedience as in divers places of this book, is not ashamed to say that we will not believe the old holy doctors, but that they do, and be of the belief that those holy fathers were; and as I say, he is not ashamed to write this—yea, and that very often—when he wotteth well that among them all he cannot find one that ever believed other but that it was a shameful, abominable sin, a monk to marry a nun; which thing, hereafter in this book, Tyndale so foolishly defendeth that, saving for pity to see any man so mad, one that lay sore sick could not forbear to laugh at it.

Tyndale

Judge whether it be possible that any good should come out of their dumb ceremonies and sacraments into thy soul. Judge their penance, pilgrimages, pardons, purgatory, praying to posts, dumb blessings, dumb absolutions; their dumb pattering and hallowing; their dumb strange holy gestures, with all their dumb disguisings; their satisfactions and justifying. And because thou findest them false in so many things… trust them in nothing, but judge them in all things.

More

Judge, good Christian reader, whether it be possible that he be any better than a beast… out of whose brutish, beastly mouth cometh such a filthy foam of blasphemies against Christ’s holy ceremonies and blessed sacraments sent into his church out of his own blessed, bloody side. And for because we find this fellow so frantic and so false in the railing and jesting against the sacraments of Christ—ye may well judge that whoso can delight or be content with...
his blasphemous ribaldry hath great cause in himself to fear that
his Christian faith beginneth to fail and faint.

**Tyndale**

Mark at the last the practice of our fleshly spiritualty, and their
ways by which they have walked above eight hundred years; how
they establish their lies, first with falsifying the Scripture, then
through corrupting with their riches (whereof they have infinite
treasure in store), and last of all, with the sword.

**More**

Yea marry—mark, I pray you. For this is much to be marked, lo—that
Tyndale cannot bear the fleshliness of our spiritualty because
the fleshliness of their church is spiritual! For the fleshly wedded
harlots of their church be their chief holy, spiritual fathers and
holy, spiritual mothers—monks, friars, and nuns. And because
their holy church is but newly begun… Tyndale would we should
ween that this eight hundred years and more, Christ hath had no
church in the world at all. For so long, saith Tyndale, all hath been
naught… by the reason that all this while the clergy hath falsified
the Scripture, and hired men with gifts, and compelled them with
the sword to believe them; and so all this eight hundred years, saith
Tyndale, by these means all the Christian nations have instead of true
faith believed false lies, and so have been out of the faith and all
naught.

If Tyndale did not lie now (as, blessed be God, he doth), here
had been a great gap in Christendom this fifteen hundred years. And where
had Christ’s promise been, then, all this while? With his elects? Nay;
if this church have had all this while false sacraments… Christ hath
had none elects all this while. For they have used, whatsoever
Tyndale say, the same sacraments that their neighbors did.

I would also that he had told us how much more than eight hundred years
the Church hath had false sacraments… lest that that he calleth now
“more,” he shall hereafter call it “much more.” For thereto shall he be
fain to fall, or else to call these eight hundred back again and confess the
sacraments true… or finally (which he is most likely to do), babble
on still, against all reason, against all good men, and against all

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1 ribaldry: scurrilous ridiculing  2 beginneth . . . faint: is beginning to break down and fade
4, 10 mark(ed): note(d)  4, 12 fleshly: carnal / worldly  4, 11 spiritually: clergy
4–5 their . . . walked: i.e., the ways they have been operating / the tactics they’ve been using
5 above: for over  6 with: by  10 yea marry: yes indeed  // pray: beseech
11, 12 fleshliness: carnality / worldliness  13 harlots: loose-living people
15–16 would we should ween: would have us think  16 this: for this last  17 so: i.e., for that
17 all: everyone  18, 23 naught: bad  19 hired: bribed  22 false: counterfactual / despicable / damn
22 out: outside  24 did not lie . . . doth: i.e., were not lying . . . is  25 had: would have  // great: huge
25 this: in this  26 had . . . been: would . . . have been  27 have: i.e., has
27, 31 false: spurious; bogus  28 none: no  // used: i.e., received; availed themselves of
30 would: wish  31 that he: that which he; what he  32 thereto: to that  33 fain: forced
33 fall: resort  // call: i.e., take  33–34 confess . . . true: admit that . . . are authentic
Scripture... and so that he be talking, never care what, whereof, nor how. For I am sure that in the sacraments and in the knowledge of the church, his malicious folly is reproved by the old holy doctors above his eight hundred years almost as many more, and over that, by plain Scripture, too.

Tyndale

Have they not compelled the emperors of the earth, and the great lords and high officers, to be obedient unto them, to dispute for them... and to be their tormentors... and the Zamzummim themselves do but imagine mischief and inspire them?

More

Here is all the great anger that grieveth this good man: that either lord, king, or emperor meddleth anything for the maintenance of the faith, or set to their hands to the repressing of heresies.

But if Tyndale find this for a fault... he must go far above his eight hundred years. For it is far above a thousand since that, as evil lords, princes, and emperors have helped and maintained heretics... so, likewise, good lords, princes, and emperors have set to their hands to subdue them. And their maintainers have vanished away with them, and their amenders and punishers God hath maintained and favored; and good, godly men have called upon princes for their aid and assistance in such case, and at their instance and pursuit have princes and emperors both punished them and made many good laws against them.

Tyndale

Mark whether it were ever truer than now. The scribes, Pharisees, Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas, and Annas... are gathered together against God and Christ; but yet, I trust, in vain... and that he that broke the council of Ahithophel shall scatter theirs.

More

Mark now, good Christian reader, when Tyndale hath told us that the right faith is heresy and heresy right faith... and when he weeneth that he hath made men so wise and we would at his word take white for black and black for white, and God for the devil and the devil for God: then, when he weeneth that he hath made men
so blind, he biddeth look and “mark” that all emperors, kings, princes, lords, and prelates, and every kind of Christian people, that anything do or say against heretics—all they be Pilates, Herods, Caiaphases, and Annases, and are gathered “against Christ,” saith Tyndale; that is to wit, in deed against heretics that labor both with false heresies to destroy the true faith of Christ and also with their traitorous setting forth of seditions to raise rebellions, as they did in Almaine, and thereby destroy Christ’s good Christian people.

1 Cor 13:2 For surely, good reader, though men may have faith and yet lack charity (as Saint Paul saith, and Saint James too, every one of which two is worthy more faith and credence than fifteen hundred thousand Tyndales that telleth us the contrary)—but though a man may, as I say, have faith and lack charity—yet if he lack faith, he may well have love, but he cannot have no charity.

Jas 1:26–27; 2:14–17, 25–26

And therefore, since Tyndale is thus run out of the right faith… never trust his false love lacking charity. For surely to win his conclusion, and bring in his heresies, and to get thereof the vain glory to be taken for an apostle—he would see seven cities burn and warm himself by the fire.

And even in this place he maketh a manner of motion thereof, showing himself to have some trust to work wonders at length. For he maketh as though the princes that would repress heresies were as Absalom with his army, and Ahithophel therein, that persecuted King David; as though Friar Luther and his “wife,” with his fond fellows and their lemans, were like to King David and his host. And then hath Tyndale a trust that some Hushai that is some chieftain of Luther’s council, which he meaneth, as it seemeth, shall be himself… shall by his high wisdom make as though he were a faithful friend and beguile all the company, and so scatter them and make them to be taken and slain, as Absalom was and his folk. But likewise as Tyndale’s whole story serveth here all against his purpose, because that here the truth doth of good mind labor to put down falsehood…
and Tyndale with his master and his fond fellowship, with their feigned fair, holy speech, like Absalom with his fair hair, enforce themselves to bring in false heresies and destroy the true faith—why Tyndale should be like to Hushai, that can I nothing see, saving only for one thing: that for policy Hushai made a lie; and therein

2 Sm 15:34–36; 16:15–19 Tyndale overmatcheth him far, for he saith never true.

Tyndale

Mark whether it be not true in the highest degree, that for the sin of the people hypocrites shall reign over them. What shows, what faces and contrary pretenses are made—and all to establish them in their theft, falsehood, and damnable lies; and to gather them together for to contrive subtlety, to oppress the truth, and to stop the light, and to keep all still in darkness.

More

Tyndale is a great marker; there is nothing with him now but mark, mark, mark. It is pity that the man were not made a marker of chases in some tennis play. For in good faith, he should be therein much better occupied than he is in this… when he sitteth and marketh all other men’s faults and leaveth his own unmarked… which every other man marketh well enough.

He biddeth the people mark that their princes are “hypocrites” in the “highest degree”… and so he teacheth their subjects to have them in good opinion and reverence. But I am glad, as help me God, on the other side, that the holy “spiritual” heads of Tyndale’s heresies, as Friar Luther and Friar Huessgen, and all the whole pack of the principal fathers of all their frantic sects, have left off a piece of their hypocrisy and by their filthy “wedding” shown themselves plain, open ribalds.

Tyndale

Wherefore it is time to awake and see, every man with his own eyes, and to judge, if we will not be judged of Christ when he cometh to judge. And remember that he which is warned hath none excuse if he take no heed. Herewith, farewell in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose Spirit be thy guide, and doctrine thy light, to judge with.

Amen.
More

Tyndale never spoke better than he doth even here. For of truth, good Christian reader, it is high time to awake and look, every man with his own eyes… and that time was never so convenient as now. For in all other heretics before this time… every man was not able to perceive them with his own eyes. Heresies were commonly somewhat subtle, and had apparent texts in Scripture that, falsely taken, seemed to make for them. And then had their living such a pretense of honesty and cleanness… that these things so bleared the unlearned people’s eyes that they were not able to judge these men and their matters every man himself with his own eyes; but they followed the judgment of wiser and better and better-learned… and by their teaching and good, holy doctrine, they saw and perceived the other feigned and false.

But marry, now God hath (laud and thank be to him!) brought these fellows and their heresies in another case. For he hath suffered them, of his high goodness, to show themselves at last, and to fall into such open, beastly faults, friars and nuns creeping to bed together, and then to preach and teach their shameless lechery boldly about for good and lawful matrimony, that they have thereby now set out their gear so sightly that every man may well and plainly see such open ribaldry with his own eyes, and well and easily judge the thing for sin and beastly bitchery, and the defense thereof for a shameful shameless heresy, and the preachers thereof for more than monstrous heretics. And therefore of this be Tyndale’s words well verified… that every man may and must awake and see with his own eyes this abominable bitchery of these bold beastly preachers that lay friars and nuns abed together and call them man and wife. This must every man judge for abominable heresy… if we “will not be judged of Christ when he cometh to judge.”

And therefore when Tyndale closeth up his preface with a solemn threat… bidding men to remember now that “he which is warned hath none excuse if he take no heed”—he saith as true as the Gospel, but all against himself. For this open heresy of friars’ filthy “matrimony” giveth us so plain and open warning of their worldly, fleshly, devilish spirit—so plain against all Holy Scripture and all good, honest men—that we never could have excuse.

2 even: right // of truth: truly  4 convenient: right  5 in: i.e., in the cases of  // every . . . not: not every man was 7 subtle: abstruse // falsely: incorrectly  8 make for: support // living: i.e., way of living 8–9 a pretense of: an ostensible / a pretext-giving appearance of  9 honesty: uprightness / respectability 9–10 bleared . . . eyes: blurred the vision of the uneducated people  11 matters: contentions 12 followed: went along with // wiser: more intelligent // learned: educated  14 feigned: (to be) fabricated 15 marry: indeed // laud and thank: praise and thanks  16 fellows: good-for-nothings 16 in another case: into a different situation // suffered: allowed  17 themselves: i.e., their true colors 18, 22, 34 open: manifest  18 faults: iniquities // creeping to: crawling into  20 good and lawful: valid and licit // thoroughly legit  20–21 set . . . sightly: so brought their doctrines/doings/genitals into view  21, 26 may: can 21 well and: readily  22 ribaldry: debauchery // well and: quite // judge: discern 24–25 more than monstrous: exceedingly aberrant  25, 30 of: by  30 will not: do not want to 31 solemn: stern / portentous  33 none: no // he saith: i.e., what he says is 35 so . . . of: i.e., so clear and obvious an alert to  37 honest: honorable / respectable
before God if we would give such preachers, so bold in such ribaldry, either faith or credence or favorable hearing; namely since there was never in all Christendom, since the faith first began, any holy doctor, nor doctor good or bad before Luther’s days, that anything hath written… but he hath abhorred and detested it to the devil of hell that ever any person, either man or woman, that hath vowed themself monk, friar, or nun, should afterward run out of their religion, cast their vow at their back, and fall to flesh and “wed.”

And therefore, good Christian readers, since Holy Scripture hath warned you of such teachers as Tyndale is, that teacheth such beastly “wedding” with contempt of their holy vows made before to God; and since that all holy men that have written upon Scripture have given us warning that it is plainly prohibited, as well by the true sense of Scripture as by the plain, open words; and all good, honest people of Christendom this fifteen hundred years have had such beastly “wedding” in great abomination; and now ye see that all the captains of these pestilent heresies which Tyndale now teacheth you have given you warning themselves—by their own deeds in their named wedlock, their very sinful lechery—that they themselves be such as, all this fifteen hundred years before, the Scripture hath reproved and all the world hath wondered on; and since ye see Tyndale now teach and allow their lechery and avow it solemnly for good and lawful matrimony: I nothing fear your judgment in this matter. For I make me bold in our Lord that ye be so wise in the wisdom of God, and so fastened in his faith, that when ye hear a high holy word come out of such a mouth as praiseth monks’ “marriages” and mocketh Christ’s sacraments, and then preacheth like a player in a fond interlude—and playeth sometimes the friar, sometimes the fox, sometimes the fool, and sometimes the outright ribald—ye will not be so unwise to ween that he were a holy man and therefore hearken to him… but take him such as ye see he is, and let the devil’s disour go. Delight not in his devilish doctrine, that ye see yourselves is naught, whatsoever he set therewith to make it seem solemn; but cleave ye fast to the faith of Christ, which Tyndale goeth about to destroy… and believe the old fathers that ye see be saints in heaven. For as Tyndale’s interpretation of Scripture, and the vices built thereupon, is

2 ribaldry: debauchery // namely: especially 4 (holy) doctor: (sainted) theologian
7–8 run . . . religion: abscond from their religious order 8 cast . . . back: toss their vow behind them
12–13 since that: since; given that 13 upon: i.e., commentaries on 14, 19 warning: (advance) notice
15 plain: straightforward // open: explicit 15, 27 word(s): statement(s) 15 honest: honorable / respectable
16 had: held 17 captains: masterminds / spearheaders 19 deeds: acts // named: so-called
20 very: actual 21 reproved: condemned 22 wondered on: found shocking 23 allow: approve
23 solemnly: seriously; with a straight face // good and lawful: valid and licit; bona fide and legít
24 nothing fear: have no apprehensiveness at all about
25 make . . . Lord: i.e., have the confidence in our Lord to say // wise: learned 26 high: lofty
29 fond: silly // interlude: skit performed during a play’s intermission 30 fool: clown
30 ribald: sleazeball / sacrilegious jackass 31 to: i.e., as to // ween: think // were: was
31 hearten: pay heed 32 take him: i.e., will take him for // disour: professional storyteller
33 naught: worthless / evil 34 solemn: authoritative / seriously holy // cleave: hold; adhere
35 fast: steadfastly; firmly // faith of Christ: Christian faith // goeth about: is out
the very broad way to lead men to hell: so is those holy
saints’ expositions, with the virtues that they taught and showed,
the very strait path that leadeth folk to heaven. In which our Lord,
for his painful Passion, give us all grace so to walk… that we come together
to that place where we may find our charity not changed but
increased and perfected, our hope turned into having and possession
of bliss, and our faith converted and changed into clear and lightsome
knowledge; of which faith Tyndale so preacheth us the name that
whoso believe him well is likely to lose all the fruit.

Thus endeth the First Book.

1–3: See Matthew 7:13–14.  1 to lead: i.e., that leads   2 expositions: commentaries
2 showed: exemplified  3 strait: narrow  5 changed: i.e., changed into something else
7 lightsome: radiant
The Second Book

Which confuteth the defense of Tyndale
for his translation of
the New Testament

An Answer unto the First Chapter of Tyndale’s
Book: Why He Translateth This Word “Church”
into This Word “Congregation”

Tyndale’s translation of the New Testament showed that Tyndale’s translation of the New Testament was well worthy to be burned... because it well showed in itself that he had of an evil mind translated it in such manner of wise as it might serve him for a principal instrument toward the setting forth of all such heresies as he had learned of Luther and intended to send over hither and spread abroad within this realm; the truth of which my saying, Tyndale and his fellows have in such open fashion testified and declared themselves that I need for myself in that point to use no farther defense.

For every man well seeth that there was never English book of heresy sent hither since (as there hath been many, some particularly against the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, as was the devilish Dialogue of the Father and the Son, and the blasphemous book of The Burying of the Mass, whereof, our Lord be thanked, the maker is graciously turned again to God; and some were against purgatory, and some against almost altogether that good is in Christ’s church—as are the books of Tyndale himself: his Wicked Mammon, his Obedience, and divers others)—in all these, evermore one piece of their complaint hath been the burning of Tyndale’s Testament. For surely first his false translation, with their farther defense.

2–3 defense . . . for: Tyndale’s defense of 8 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies
9 showed: stated 10 well worthy to be: quite deserving of being 12 mind: intent
12 manner of wise: a kind of way 13 setting forth: promoting 14 of: from 15, 20 hither: (to) here
15 abroad: around 15–16 the . . . saying: the trueness of which thing I said 16 fellows: cohorts
17 testified: borne witness to 18 declared: made known 19 in: on
19 never English: i.e., never any English-language 21 Blessed . . . Altar: Eucharist / Blessed Sacrament
(Both it and The Burying of the Mass were written by William Roye.) 24 maker: author
24 graciously: i.e., by God’s grace 25 turned again: converted back 27 altogether: everything
26 Wicked Mammon: i.e., Parable of the Wicked Mammon 27 Obedience: i.e., Obedience of a Christian Man
27 divers: several 27–28 one . . . complaint: i.e., one of the things they complain about
29 Testament: i.e., edition of the New Testament 30
false construction… they thought should be the bass and the tenor whereupon they would sing the treble with much false descant. And therefore very hot they take it that the goodness of the King’s Grace, with the lords of his honorable Council and the clergy of the realm, have burned up their false-pricked books.

So was it, now, that among other tokens of Tyndale’s evil intent in The untrue alteration of certain words his translation… I showed as for example that he changed commonly this word “church” into this word “congregation,” and this word “priest” into this word “senior,” and “charity” into “love,” and “grace” into “favor,” “confession” into “knowledge,” and “penance” into “repentance”… with many words more which he changeth, and useth, daily, as in turning “idols” into “images,” and “anointing” into “smearing,” “consecrating” into “charming,” “sacraments” into “ceremonies,” and the ceremonies into “witchcraft,” and yet many more.

Now showed I there the causes why Tyndale did evil in translating the Scripture into our tongue with such manner changes… and showed also the things that might well make every man perceive that he meant therein the setting forth of some heresies, as appeareth in my said Dialogue. Which things if I should here again rehearse and repeat, and in like wise all other things against which Tyndale doth object—it were too long a work, and as much as to plant and set into this book my whole Dialogue again. Wherefore in all such things I must needs remit the reader unto the Dialogue itself.

Now cometh Tyndale, and for answer thereof, and to disprove all that I lay against him in the translating of divers of these words, showed that the Latin text and the Greek may be his excuse and defense… forasmuch as the words in the Latin text and the Greek do, as he saith, signify such things as he hath expressed in his English translation by those English words that I find the fault in. But first, to what purpose serveth all his defense, when he hath since himself proved, by his own other books, that he is a heretic, and that his heresies be such as it must needs make it clear that though another man translating the Testament, and being good and faithful, might have used haply those changes among without evil meaning or any suspicion thereof—yet he, since those changes so served for his heresies, must needs be, not suspected, but manifestly
detected and perceived to have used them, being such so many and so often, not of any chance or good intent, but of very plain purpose to give his heresies in the ears of unlearned men some color of proof in the text of the New Testament! And so might I now pass over six or seven of the first chapters of his book, as things that serve him of right naught.

But yet, to the intent ye may the better perceive how wisely the man defendeth the matter—in such wise as he showeth both lack of learning and more lack of wit, and most lack of grace—he doth at the last confess himself that he made the changes for the setting forth of his heresies; which was the point that I laid to his charge as the very thing for which his translation was very well worthy to be burned.

Now let us first consider how he defendeth his change of this word “church” into this word “congregation.”

First, to induce the matter as though he went about to make everything very open and plain, he telleth us a long tale of little weight: that this word “church” hath divers significations. And then he maketh as though he would tell how many; wherein when he hath all done, he leaveth out one of the very chief. For he telleth us that a “church” signifieth a “place” or a “house” where Christian men “were wont” to resort in “old time” to “hear the word” of God—and, he saith, not “to pray”… but to learn “how and what to pray."

Then, he saith, it hath a second signification—but that is, he saith, but “mistaken” and “abused”—by which it signifieth the clergy; whom it pleaseth to him in his railing manner to call a “multitude of shaven, shorn, and oiled,” in mockery and reproof not so much of the priests as of the holy order of priesthood.

A third signification, he saith, it hath… by which it betokeneth “a congregation, a multitude, or a company gathered together in one, … as a man [may call] ‘the Church of London,’ meaning not the spiritualty only . . . but the whole body of the city, of all kinds, conditions, and degrees.” And “in this third signification” he saith that, though it be “little known among the common people nowadays,” yet in this signification is, he saith, “the ‘church’ of God or Christ taken in the Scripture”—for “the whole multitude . . . that receive the name of Christ to believe in him.” And for the proof of this he layeth
many places of Saint Paul. Finally, yet, he remembereth himself at
last and addeth unto this, as it were, a note, and saith…

Tyndale
Notwithstanding, yet it is sometimes taken generally for all that
embrace the name of Christ, though their faiths be naught, or though
they have no faith at all. And sometimes it is taken specially
for the elect only… in whose hearts God hath written his law with
his Holy Spirit, and given them a feeling faith of the mercy that is
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

More
Lo, now ye have heard how many manner of wise Tyndale teacheth
us that this word “church” is taken. In which yet he hath left out one
signification or twain that this word plainly signifieth. One is
that this word “church,” besides all the significations that Tyndale
hath here shown us, doth signify that part of the Church that in
synods and councils do represent the whole Church. As when we
say that there is a law made by “the Church” that heretics shall not
be suffered to preach; likewise as a parliament representeth the whole
realm, and is by the common speech so called, too… as when we say that “the
realm” hath made a law that heretics shall be burned.

“The Church” also signifieth sometimes a much less number: that is
toit, the only rulers or heads of the Church; as where we be
Mt 18:17 commanded to complain to “the Church”…
it is not meant to all the whole town, nor to
all the clergy thereof, but to rulers and governors. Since Tyndale hath
taken upon him to show us here his high doctrine—how many
manner of wise this word “church” is taken—it belonged rather unto
him to have taken in these significations than some of them that
he hath taken, as ye shall see anon.

But first, I marvel me much that Tyndale hath either clean left
out or else put in so darkly, that he would not have it perceived… that
signification of this word “church” that is one of the principal
significations thereof, and whereupon the greatest weight of all our
matter dependeth. And that is that signification by which “the
Church” signifieth not, as Tyndale taketh it in his third signification for, all a multitude, gathered together in one, of all kinds, conditions, and degrees of people… but of such only people as be Christian people—and them not in one city only, but that whole number of every city, town, and village throughout all the whole world. This signification Tyndale leaveth out clean, because it toucheth most the matter.

For as for that he saith in his foreremembered note—he seemeth but to set a specification of his third signification, as though he would mean it for the whole number of citizens, or else for the only number of the elects, within some one city, as he there putteth London for his example. And if he would there name, in his note, the whole Catholic Church, I marvel why he saith that it is called so “sometimes”—as though that signification were very rare and seldom, whereas of truth there is of “the Church” no signification neither more great nor more common than that by which it is meant and taken for the Catholic church and universal.

Howbeit, of truth Tyndale handleth his third signification very secondly, and fareth as one that would fain walk in the dark. For the places of Scripture seem to speak of only Christian people in this place and that. But his description of “the Church” in that signification goeth far otherwise. For when he saith that it signifieth not only the clergy but the whole “congregation, multitude, or company gathered into one… as a man would say ‘the Church of London,’ meaning not the spirituality only… but the whole body of the city,” and “all that pertain unto the town generally,” “of all kinds, conditions, and degrees”: of this signification surely few folk have heard. For though he name a Christian city for an example—yet may there be some cities and have been, and yet be some such in some other places, that of the citizens and of the whole body of the city, and of such as pertain unto the town generally… not only be there Christian priests and Christian laypeople…but open, cast-out heretics also; yea, and peradventure Jews, Turks, and Saracens too, that be not christened at all. And in some cities, few Christian people and the remnant infidels; and such were the cities to whom the Apostle wrote. And then I am sure when Saint Paul spoke of “the church” of the Corinthians or of the Ephesians, he meant
not in this Tyndale’s third signification after his description—all the whole body of the city, and all such as pertained thereto generally—but the Christian people only.

Nor now also, if Tyndale would speak of “the Church of London,” where all the whole town is Christian people—there would no man understand thereby the whole body of the city, but the clergy only; nor no man, Tyndale except, in speaking would so mean. But this darkness useth Tyndale… because he would have it seem that this word “church”—which in the English tongue hath ever had a good signification and a holy in men’s hearts—should seem to have sometimes the contrary. Out of which darkness I shall draw Tyndale anon, I trust, and… according to my “poetry,” wherein he mocketh me… pull up Cerberus into the light.

But now let us first consider a little his first signification, where he saith it signifieth a place whereunto “Christian people were wont in the old time to resort at times convenient, for to hear the word of doctrine, the law of God, and the faith of our Savior Christ, and how and what to pray, and whence to ask power and strength to live godly.”

Why saith Tyndale here “in the old time”? For all this we do in the new time too, howsoever Tyndale list to lie.

Then goeth he further and lieth on lustily, saying that of Christ’s promises nor of his mercy “we” know “nothing at all”; as though no man had here heard ever anything spoken that mankind is redeemed by Christ’s Passion, and that he hath ordained his holy sacraments, and promised men grace that with faith and devotion receive them.

Is not this man shameless so boldly to bear us all in hand that we never hear word of such things as every boy better believeth than he?

For every child that is of competent age… hath heard that God giveth by his holy ordinance (which ever includeth his promise!) grace with all his seven sacraments… whereas Tyndale of seven taketh it away from five, and from almost one and a half of the other twain too.

Every boy believeth, and believeth true… that God hath promised reward to good works. And Tyndale will not believe that promise at

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1 after his description: according to his definition
2 pertained: belonged // generally: collectively
3 all the whole: the whole entire
4 darkness: obfuscation
5 tongue: language
6 ever: always
7 9–10 good . . . in: i.e., good signification, and a holy one, in
8 draw: drag
9 anon: presently // poetry: mythologizing // wherein: i.e., about which
10 it: i.e., “church”
11 times convenient: appropriate times
12 how . . . pray: i.e., how to pray and what for
13 whence: from what source
14 hand: assert to us all
15 is of competent age: has reached the age of reason
16 ordained: instituted
17 men grace that: i.e., grace to those who
18 anything: i.e., it in any way
19 list: chooses
20 lastly: vigorously; with gusto
21 anything: i.e., it in any way
22 hand: assert to us all
23 list: chooses
24 lastly: vigorously; with gusto
25 men grace that: i.e., grace to those who
26 hand: assert to us all
27 list: chooses
28 lastly: vigorously; with gusto
29 is of competent age: has reached the age of reason
30 twain too: two also
31 true: correctly
32 reward to: i.e., to reward
all... but denieth it plainly, as plainly as God saith it himself in
many places of the very Gospel.

But then, on the other side, Tyndale telleth us that God hath
promised always to every man the bliss of heaven for only faith
alone. And here every boy believeth, and wotteth well, he lieth.

Now, touching the mercy of our Lord—who can speak of Christ’s
Passion and speak nothing of his mercy? This man is too mad to
talk with! God’s mercy is so great that no man can speak
enough thereof. But the world waxeth such, nowadays, that as it
is need to pray for mercy... so were it need to preach of God’s justice,
and put the people in mind of his wrath and indignation likely to
fall upon us if we give ear to such deadly doctrine as Tyndale
teacheth; and I pray God of his great mercy to give that man a
better mind.

Yet goeth he further and saith that “of the law of God we think as
did the Turks and the old heathen people—that it is a thing which
every man may do of our own power.”

What careth Tyndale what he say... that careth not to write this,
wherein every man’s ears that would him well, glow for very
shame that hear him! Where heard he ever any man say that any
man may fulfill the law of God of his own power? Marry, this we
say, and say truth: that man hath such power given of God that he

Man worketh with God’s grace. may work with God’s grace in the
keeping of the law. But this cannot Tyndale

bear; for their heresy is that man toward the keeping of
God’s precept hath no free will at all; and now, dissembling his
own heresy, he deadly believeth us.

Now of prayer, he saith we “think that no man may pray but at
church... and that it is nothing else but to say a Pa ter Noster to a post”; and
that the observances and ceremonies of the Church are “vain” things of our
own imagination, “neither needful to the taming of the flesh nor profitable
to our neighbor, neither honor to God.”

Those lies come in by lumps, lo! I dare say he never heard in his
life man nor woman say that no man may pray but at church.

As true is it also that men say their Pater Noster to the “post”—by
which name it pleaseth him, of his reverent Christian mind, to call
the images of holy saints and our Blessed Lady, and the figure of Christ’s cross, the book of his bitter Passion.

Thought we reverence these in honor of the things which they represent… and in the remembrance of Christ do creep to the cross and kiss it and say a Pater Noster at it—yet say we not the Pater Noster to it, but to God; and that wotteth Tyndale full well, but that he listeth to rail.

As for that he saith of the Service, ceremonies, and observances of the Church, which he calleth here “vain imaginations,” “howling,” “buzzing,” and “crying out like halloing of the foxes or baiting of bears”—and thus he saith it is now; but of “old” time he saith that “the officers appointed thereunto preached the pure word of God only, and prayed in a tongue that every man understood.”

As for preaching of the pure word of God—I must wit of Tyndale whether he mean the word written or unwritten, or both. If he say they preached the word of God both written and unwritten, and only that: then I say so do we now too. Peradventure he will say that the preachers now lay thereto the old holy doctors: I say that therein they lay but God’s word; for they lay them for the better understanding of God’s word written, and for the better knowledge of God’s word unwritten. For we be very sure that it is his word when we see that all the holy doctors that spent their life in the study of his word—and in the keeping of his word, and the preaching of his word—do testify from age to age, by their holy writing, that those words unwritten which the Church believeth,

*The Church believeth God’s words written and unwritten.* verily as those that be written in any part of Scripture.

Then if Tyndale will say that our preachers preach Aristotle, philosophers, and poets: thereto I say that they sometimes speak of philosophers in things of nature or of moral virtues. And if this new apostle now, Saint Tyndale, take this thing for so great a heinous crime—then is he surely much more apostolical than was Christ’s old apostle Paul. For he letted not in his epistle to the Romans to allege and allow the philosophers’ cunning, though he disproved and dispraised the folly of their fall and wretchedness of their
Rom 1:18–32; 2:14–16; Ti 1:10–16

living. And in his epistle to Titus he took it for no sin to allege the poets’ verses... but in the dispraise of them of Crete for using of Tyndale’s fashion in lying; and also in giving the world warning to beware of such as Tyndale is... whose evil words and sermons do corrupt and mar men’s good manners—as his doth where he would make men ween that good manners were nothing worth. And thus if Tyndale grant the one part—that is to say, that of old time they preached both the word of God written and unwritten—then he winneth nothing: for even so do they in the new time too.

Now, if he will not say they preached both of old time... but that of old time they preached only the one, that is to wit, the word of God written: then must we wit of Tyndale which he calleth the “old” time. For this I wot well, and so doth Tyndale too: that, first of all, Christ our Savior himself preached more than his word written, and promised also without writing—and was believed then without writing—that he would send the Holy Ghost, that

Jn 16:13... should teach his church all truth without writing; and Christ full truly fulfilled his promise without writing (and yet will not Tyndale now believe him without writing); and after Christ’s death did his apostles preach much more of God’s word than was written. And therefore, if Tyndale ground his argument upon the “old” time and say that they preached only God’s word written—I have driven him onward one step down; for I have shown him here the oldest time, and the best time, of Christendom, in which he can never wrest out but that he shall confess that all the Christian preachers, that is to wit, all the evangelists and all the apostles of Christ, and Christ himself also... besides the Scripture preached God’s word unwritten as long as ever they lived. For I trust that Tyndale, as mad as he is, is not yet so mad... as to think that after that some of the apostles had written either gospels or epistles, that then they alleged their own writings for their authority, or their own fellows’ either... as though their own words and their own writing were not all of one credence.
But, now, if Tyndale be not content to stand to that old time... and will say that he spoke of old time but not of so old: then, since he compareth the “old” time with this time that is now, we must ask him which time is that which he taketh for the old time in respect of this new time now. We call an “old” man, ye wot well, at fourscore years, and at a hundred years “very old.” Will Tyndale stand to that time? Will he stand at two hundred? Three hundred? Four, five, six, seven, eight? Nay, surely he will none of all those hundreds. For he saith in his preface that all this eight hundred years and above, the preachers have been false and have falsified the Scripture. Now seemeth me that eight hundred years is, in respect of now, a meetly old time. And since he saith that by all this old time they have not preached God’s word well—I would know which is that old time in which they preached God’s word well, and the word only written, without any preaching of any word of God unwritten, and took for vain and false all that ever were called “God’s word” but if they found it written. Let Tyndale now tell us that old time. For this must he tell us, or else he taketh a foul fall.

Now will he make many shifts... and at the last he shall be fain to fall both into his own poetry and also into his grammar again... and come forth with his three degrees of comparison: old, elder, and eldest. And since neither the eldest time, of Christ and his apostles, may serve him (because they preach besides Scripture the word of God unwritten), nor the old time of eight hundred years now last past (because they preached, as Tyndale saith, divers sacraments, ceremonies, and promises as the words of God unwritten, in which he saith they preached false); but he will take an elder time than this and not so old as that—that is to wit, the time next after the apostles’ days—and he will say that all the words of God were then already written by the evangelists and the apostles... so that there was none of God’s words left unwritten... and therefore after their days by a certain time, the true preachers preached purely the bare word of God written in Holy Scripture: well, now be Tyndale and I come at last to some point. For he saith a thing here with which he answereth me well, and with good grammar, saving for his poetry, for that marreth all his matter. For I say surely that he saith not truth; but that of God’s words they wrote not all... but divers things were by God to them and by them to

1 be not content: is not willing  1, 6–7 stand to: accede to; go along with  2 so: that
4–5, 11 in respect of: in relation to / in comparison with
5–6 call . . . old: i.e., call a man “old,” you well know, when he’s eighty, and when he’s a hundred, “very old”
7 stand at: agree to / abide by  8 will: i.e., will agree to  9 above: more  10 false: mendacious; deceitful
11 seemeth: it seems to  12 by all: for all; throughout  13, 14 well: rightly
13 would: want to  14 the word only: only the word  15, 17 written: i.e., written in Scripture
15, 24 unwritten: i.e., not (as yet) written there  16 vain: worthless  16–17 but if: unless
18 foul: nasty  19 shifts: maneuvers  // fain: constrained  20, 36 poetry: creative writing
20, 35 grammar: grammaticizing; semantics  23 may: can  26, 38 divers: some  26 ceremonies: rituals
27, 31 unwritten: i.e., not written in Scripture  27 in: i.e., in doing  29 next: i.e., right
32 true: truth-telling / orthodox  // the bare: just the / the unvarnished  34 point: meeting point; agreement
36 saving: except  // marreth all his matter: destroys his whole case  37 surely: with certainty
37 he saith not truth: what he is saying is not true
others taught by mouth, and by Tradition from hand to hand
delivered, and from age to age hitherto continued in Christ’s
church. And that I say truth in this point… I have divers good
and honest witnesses to bring forth when time requireth: Saint
Augustine, Saint Jerome, Saint Cyprian, Saint Chrysostom, and a
great many more… which have also testified for my part in this
matter more than a thousand years ago. Yet have I another ancient,
sad father also: one that they call Origen. And when I desired
him to take the pain to come and bear witness with me in this
matter, he seemed at the first very well content. But when I told him
that he should meet with Tyndale—he blessed himself and shrank
back, and said he had liefer go some other way many a mile than
once meddle with him. “For I shall tell you, sir,” quoth he, “before this
time a right honorable man, very cunning and yet more virtuous,

Doctor Fisher
the good Bishop of Rochester, in a
great audience brought me in for a
witness against Luther and Tyndale even in this same matter, about
the time of the burning of Tyndale’s evil-translated Testament.
But Tyndale as soon as he heard of my name… without any respect
of honesty fell in a rage with me and allto berated me, and called me
stark heretic, and that the starkest that ever was.” This tale
Origen told me, and swore by Saint Simkin that he was never so
said unto of such a lewd fellow since he was first born of his
mother—and therefore he would never meddle with Tyndale more.
Now indeed, to say the truth, it was not well done of Tyndale to
leave reasoning and fall a-scolding, chiding, and brawling… as it
were a bawdy beggar of Billiter Lane. Fie, for shame! He should have
favored and forborne him somewhat, and it had been but for his age.
For Origen is now thirteen hundred years old, or thereabout… and
this was not much above seven years since.

Now, if this made Tyndale bold to set Origen as short as his old
shoes—because Saint Jerome found some faults in his works—he
must remember again that many a good man (and among those,
Saint Pamphilus, the blessed martyr) found in Origen’s doctrine
so much erudition, devotion, and virtue, besides that they verily
thought those errors none of his… nor never were there any such
faults found in his writing while himself lived, nor no man offended with him, and many places in his books plain that seem to say the contrary. And therefore many good men thought and yet think, albeit Saint Jerome thought otherwise (as he might well enough, while that point nothing pertaineth to the faith), that

*Origen’s books corrupted* those heresies were put into his books after his death by some that were heretics indeed... and would, for the great estimation that Origen was in through all the Church, advance their own heresies forward under the name and standard of his famous authority.

But granted now that those faults were his which were imputed unto him, yet is *this* none of them; but Saint Jerome, that so narrowly did examine his works, and so straitly marked and condemned his errors, did reckon this for none, but did in this matter like and allow him well... and, as he hath in many other things approved him, and by his commendation caused of his works divers to be reverently read in the Divine Service of the Church, so in *this* matter he hath well declared that he well approved him, both by this—that he hath not noted it among such as he found faulty himself—and also in that it otherwise appeareth in Saint Jerome’s works that he was of the same mind himself. And therefore I doubt not but that he shall be, for all Tyndale’s scolding, accepted and taken before all good and indifferent judges for a right substantial witness... if I can entreat him to bear and abide the brabbling of Tyndale’s tongue, as I trust yet to entreat him hereafter. And then will I bring in with him some others that I have named—and yet others more besides—that shall, as I said, testify with me before this book be done... that God hath taught his church many things whereof in the Scripture his word is yet unwritten.

But now will I for the meanwhile, touching this point whereupon the great weight of all the matter hangeth, go nearer unto Tyndale another way.

It is, ye wot well, agreed between us—or if he would be so mad to say nay, ye will yet yourselves agree this in his stead—that once of old time, Christ himself and his apostles did teach and preach many words of God unwritten.
Now, thus I say, since many things were taught first unwritten: if any of them be yet left unwritten… then say I that Tyndale is at the leastwise temerarious and overbold so certainly to affirm that any sacrament that the Church useth and so long hath used, or ceremony either, is idolatry; forasmuch as if we lacked sure proof upon our side—which indeed we lack not, by reason of God’s

\[ Jn 14:16-17 \]
Spirit by Christ’s own promise ever

\[ Jn 16:13 \]
abiding with his church and teaching it all truth—but if we lacked, I say, that proof for our part, yet were he too presumptuously bold so precisely to affirm the contrary… since he cannot say nay but that they might be some of those that were sometime taught unwritten, and yet remain observed unwritten… as that others that now be written were taught and kept without writing before.

To this will Tyndale answer that since that time, all God’s words, promises, and sacraments that he would have kept and believed in Christendom, he hath caused to be written, by his evangelists and apostles, and left none unwritten, to the intent that his church shall not stand in any doubt nor fall into any error of any necessary point for lack of writing… but may know, by that he hath caused all to be written, that all be false and feigned, and men’s mad inventions, that they believe and observe unwritten. For why should he cause some to be written and suffer some left unwritten… to make men sure of some, and to leave some in doubt?

In this tale Tyndale telleth us two things. One, that God hath thus done indeed; another, the cause why. If he prove that indeed God hath so done—I never care for the cause… for he seeth why well enough; and therefore I will give no reckoning why God hath caused some to be written and some to be left unwritten. But this will I be bold to say: that he was not of any necessity compelled to write any one sacrament or ceremony, or weighty point of belief, for any fear lest it should fall away… and that he could not with his own Spirit keep it in men’s hearts and usage without writing, as well as he kept in the good generations the knowledge of his promises and his laws long and many ages before the Law was written—and yet wrote them not all therein neither, but the people had a faith of Christ among them more large than was written in

2, 13 yet: still  2, 12, 13 unwritten: i.e., unwritten in Scripture  3 temerarious: rash
3–5 that . . . is: i.e., of . . . that it is  4 useth: i.e., practices (the celebrating and receiving of)
5, 31 ceremony: rite / ritual  10 part: side (of the argument)
10 yet were he . . . bold: i.e., it still would be . . . bold of him // precisely: in such definite terms
11 say nay but: deny  12 they: i.e., those sacraments and rites // those: i.e., those things
12 sometime: at one time  13 as that: just as // written: i.e., written there
14 without writing before: i.e., before without being written in Scripture  16 words: pronouncements / mandates
17, 21, 23, 29 written: i.e., written in Scripture  18, 23, 29 unwritten: i.e., not written there  19 of: regarding
20 necessary point: essential article (of the faith) // that: the fact that
21 all to: i.e., all of God’s actual mandates, promises, and sacraments to // all be: i.e., all his purported ones are
21 false: spurious // feigned: made up; fabricated  22 unwritten: i.e., that are not written there
23 suffer some: i.e., allow some to be  23–24 to make: i.e., so as to make  25 tale: speech  26 cause: reason
27 never care for: don’t care at all about
28 give no reckoning: give no consideration to // make no attempt to account for  30 be bold: dare; venture
31 any: so much as  33 usage: practice  34 generations: progeny; descendants  37 faith of: belief in
their law… which went from hand to hand, I think from
Adam’s days, to whom it is likely that God made after his fall some
larger promise and revelation of his redemption again than we
find made unto him written in any place of Scripture. But we shall
not need much proof for this matter; for that God was able to keep all
his sacraments and articles of the faith without writing, Tyndale,
I ween, will not deny me.

Now, to say that if he should have left some unwritten, it would
have made doubts and debates and be occasions of errors and
heresies… and the writing doth put all things out of doubt, and
therefore God hath left none unwritten: we see that this maketh
neither more sure nor less. For as well did men believe before the
writing those things that are now written, as ever they did since;
and we believe now the promises as well that are unwritten as any
that are written. And the writing taketh not away all the doubts…
but as many rise thereupon, and many more than upon those
things that we believe unwritten.

For first, the credence to be given to the whole book in which
they be written… hangeth all upon the same faith upon which
depend the things that are unwritten. For as I believe the one, so
believe I the other. And as one may by his own frowardness lack
the grace to believe the things unwritten—so may another by his
own malice lack the grace to believe any part of the whole book of
Holy Scripture that is written… and take it all for fantasies. And in
good faith, I am afeard that so do they which say they believe nothing
else but it. For as for part of that book, they bring in question: as the
Book of the Maccabees, because it maketh against their purpose
concerning purgatory. And part they let not much to deny: as
Luther doth the Epistle of Saint James, because it speaketh plainly
against his idle, workless faith.

Now, in that parts which they grant for Scripture—yet taketh
it not away all the doubts; but unto such folk as Tyndale is and
Luther, that be so contentious, it ministereth, rather, much matter
of doubt and of debate—and that much more than do the things that
are observed without writing.

For first they refuse to observe them because they say they find

1 which . . . to hand: i.e., which belief got handed on down 3 redemption again: i.e., future restoration
4 place: passage 5 keep: preserve 6 writing: i.e., having them put in writing 7 ween: think
9 made: created // debates: dissensions // be occasions of: i.e., those give rise to
11–12 maketh . . . sure: i.e., makes for neither more certainty 15, 32 doubts: questions; uncertainties
16 rise: arise 17, 22 unwritten: i.e., (that are) not written in Scripture 20 unwritten: i.e., not written therein
21 one: i.e., one person // frowardness: contrariness / obstreperousness 24 fantasies: i.e., fairy tales
24–25 in good faith: in all honesty 25 I . . . which: i.e., I’m afraid that’s what they do who
26 bring in: i.e., bring it into // as: such as 26–28: See 2 Maccabees 12:42–45.
27 maketh: militates; goes // purpose: contention 28 let: scruple 31 parts: i.e., set of parts
33 ministereth: provides; supplies 33–34 matter . . . debate: i.e., fuel for questioning and for dissension
35 without writing: i.e., that are not in Scripture

40
them not there written; and so riseth that question first upon the
writing.

Then, if it be found there—then dispute they whether it be fully
found there: as whether we find there both the token and the
thing betokened. For the sacrament take they but for a bare sign…
and the thing that is signified they call nothing but Christ’s
only promise. And here make they upon the writing many
great battles to beat down almost all the sacraments, saving
scant one and a half. Then upon the letter raise they many great
errors, and say the Scripture is plainly upon their side. And this
say not only Luther, Tyndale, and Zwingli, with Friar Huessgen and
his fellows, against the interpretation of all holy-doctors-and-
saints, and the common faith of all true Christian people, fifteen hundred
years before them; but each of themselves also against others among
themselves say and swear that the Scripture is plainly for their part.

So that as for necessity of writing all or any part concerning
the sacraments, ceremonies, or articles of the faith, God was not
driven thereto… nor by the writing be taken away the doubts. But
as I wot it well that God had good and great causes why he caused
some things to be written—so had he causes as good why he left
some unwritten. But neither can Tyndale tell why he should write
all nor I give the reckoning why he left some unwritten.

To this will Tyndale haply say (for else cannot I see what he
can say) that God hath caused all his words spoken to his church
to be written in Holy Scripture… and hath in the same Scripture given
us plain warning that he so hath done… and thereby hath he
delivered us from divers doubts, though not from all. For albeit
that divers doubts yet rise upon the writing, we, by his express
warning in writing showing that all is written, be put out
of all doubt that we shall believe nothing as his word whereof there
is no writing.

Surely, if Tyndale tell me this tale—as indeed he doth, for both
Luther and he, and Friar Huessgen and Zwingli and all the rabble
of that rascal, never cease to say this (and they find fools that
believe them better upon their bare words than they would more
honest men upon their obligations)—but, now, as I say, if Tyndale
tell me this tale: I shall by his leave be bold to deny it him… and
pray him once to prove it, if he can find how. For this I wot well:
they have among them made great boast a great while… and always
promised that they will build up that tower… and make it very
strong and sure—and surely so have they great need to do, for therein
lieth all the store of all their gunpowder, brimstone, pitch, and
wildfire that they shoot out at the blessed sacraments of our
Savior Christ. And as for hitherto, brought they never yet so much
good stuff as would make a tile-pin to fence their fortress
with. And whatsoever they bring hereafter—they shall make poor
paper walls.

But to the intent that they shall not beguile you, let us with one
word or two put them in remembrance what things they be that
they must needs prove—and that by plain Scripture, too; for other
proof themselves will none admit.

**Two hard points to be proved** Tyndale must prove me first, therefore,
by plain and evident Scripture, that all
the words necessary to remain and be known, which our Savior
himself and his apostles taught once without writing—all those—
he hath caused to be by them and his evangelists written, preserved,
and kept, in plain and evident Scripture. When Tyndale hath
proved this, for which I dare give him respite till Doomsday, then
must he yet, by plain and evident Scripture, prove me farther, lo; and
for the proof thereof, though the points be but easy, let him take yet
his time fifteen days after, within which he must, I say, by
plain and evident Scripture, prove me farther yet, of these two
things one: that is to wit, either that every necessary word which
God hath spoken by himself and his Holy Spirit unto his church
since the death of his four evangelists and his twelve apostles…
he hath caused to be also secretly set in and written to these books
which Tyndale agreeth for Holy Scripture; or else must he prove
me, by plain and evident Scripture, that notwithstanding his
promise made unto his church in his apostles’ days—that he would
with his Holy Spirit speak to his church himself and dwell therewith
and teach it all truth from time to time all days even to the Day
of Doom—yet as soon as he saw his apostles dead, and no man that heard
him left to bear us witness what he said… he began to go from his
word again, and swore that he would either no longer dwell here with

1 pray . . . it: ask him to prove it already // find: figure out // wot: know
7 hitherto . . . yet: i.e., what they’ve done thus far toward building that tower, they’ve never yet brought
8 good: workable; viable 15 to be proved: i.e., to prove
16, 20, etc. plain and evident: clear and conclusive 17 words: i.e., communications / things
18 once: at one time // without: i.e., without their having been put in
29 secretly: imperceptibly; in some mysterious way // set . . . to: put, in writing, into
34 time to time: age to age 34–35 the Day of Doom: Judgment Day
36–37 go . . . again: go back on his word
his church… or if he came, it should be but a-guestwise… and yet would he play mum, too, and neither by himself nor his Holy Spirit vouchsafe to speak any one word unto them that were at the leastwise aught worthy the writing, but some wanton trifle.

Remember now, good reader, that these be the things which Tyndale hath to prove. And when he proveth these few things… then believe hardily, and so will I do too. But surely whoso believe him with any less… understandeth nothing what the matter meaneth.

Now, yet once again, let us consider Tyndale’s “old” time in which he saith the true, pure preaching was used that is now quite gone. I would ask him when ended that old time of his… and when began his new. He saith it hath been thus as it is, more than this eight hundred years; and methinketh eight hundred is a very long “now.” But yet consider, good reader: if the true preaching was left and gone eight hundred years ago and more, then can he not say nay but that the true faith went quite away therewith… without which can be no church of Christ, neither Catholic nor of elects. And thus doth Tyndale tell us that this eight hundred years at the last, our Lord hath broken his promise… by which he promised to be with his church all days to the world’s end. This man maketh high boast of Christ’s promises… and would with them destroy all virtue save faith. And now ye see that plainly he denieth Christ’s promise too… and will, I ween, at last deny even Christ and all. For as ye see at your eye, he draweth very fast toward it.

Now, till Tyndale, therefore, have proved us these few points that are for their falsehood impossible to be proved, the Church shall not need for his fond railing anything to fear to use the devout sacraments and ceremonies taught and delivered them by God and his Holy Spirit. For spite whereof the devil and his damned spirits cry upon to have them left off… and bear us in hand that they be fruitless. For Tyndale saith that they neither tame the flesh nor do good to thy neighbor, nor be honor to God.

But now doth all good Christian people very well perceive—by Christ’s own promise, in the very written Gospel—that the church of Christ is taught by his Holy Spirit that these sacraments and ceremonies do please God. And they perceive and see also that the

3 *vouchsafe*: deign // any; i.e., so much as 3–4 *were . . . the*: i.e., was the least bit worth writing
4 *but*: i.e., but only perhaps // *wanton*: offhand / purportless 7 *hardily*: boldly / by all means
8–9 *understandeth . . . meaneth*: i.e., has no understanding of what is at issue here 11 *used*: practiced
11, 17 *quite*: entirely 15 *yet*: also // *left*: abandoned / discontinued 16–17 *say nay but*: deny
19–20 *this . . . last*: for this last eight hundred years 21–22 *maketh . . . of*: i.e., does a lot of touting of
22 *all virtue save*: i.e., every virtue except 24 *ween*: think // *at last*: in the end // *even*: totally
24–25 at *your eye*: with your own eyes; for yourself 25 *draweth . . . it*: is very quickly moving toward that
26 *have proved*: has proved to 27, 28 *for*: on account of 27 *falsehood*: falseness
28 *fond*: silly / imbecilic // *anything*: at all // *devour*: holy; sacred 29, 37 *ceremonies*: rites / rituals
29–30 *God . . . Spirit*: i.e., God the Holy Spirit 31 *cry upon*: loudly demand
31 *left off*: jettisoned; done away with // *bear us in hand*: try to convince us
holy saints which have used them before our days... be now long ago rewarded in heaven with God. And they perceive also that in the use thereof... their minds rise and be lifted aloft in devotion to God; and by these things and suchlike, they perceive well that Tyndale doth but belie them. For since God’s Spirit hath taught them... they must needs be honor to God. And when men come together to honor God, each of them is profitable to other; for else were their assembly together in prayer no difference from the

Their prayers that pray together do profit each other: prayer of one man alone. But when they come together to God’s service... the whole company prayeth for the whole presence, and so is every each the better for other’s prayer... and all people the better both for the prayer and the sacrament, and every devout observance used in the church at the Divine Service.

And it is, thirdly, very profitable to the very taming of the flesh also. For what thing is there that better tameth the flesh than the grace of God? Did not God answer Saint Paul, when he thrice prayed unto him to withdraw the “prick of the flesh” with which our Lord suffered the “angel of Satan” to vex him lest his heart might grow too high and wax proud in beholding the marvelous greatness of his revelations—which though some good men take for some other kind of tribulation, I see not why it might not be the very fleshly motion against his vow of chastity—did not then our Lord, I say, make him answer in this wise: “Sufficeth unto thee my grace”? Now, then, since nothing can better tame the flesh than the grace of God... which not only can tame it, but also make the rebellion thereof so resisted by the soul that the fight shall turn the man to merit and reward: why shall not, then, such observances as the Spirit of God hath taught us to serve him with—and which, obediently done with devotion and with desire of grace, do stand in the stead of one of the most effectual kinds of prayer—be profitable to the taming of the flesh, and either cause it the less to rebel... or else (which is yet haply better) strengthen the soul in such wise against the rebellion of the flesh that by the valiant resisting thereof, it may have the more glorious triumph of the victory? And for experience (let Tyndale say what it please him)

1. which: who // used: celebrated / received / observed
2. long ago: i.e., as of long ago / long since
3. by // use: celebrating / receiving / observing
4. but belie them: i.e., simply lie about the Church’s sacraments and rites
5. were... alone: i.e., would there be no difference between their assembling together in prayer and their each praying alone
6. Their... other: i.e., Those who pray together do profit from one another’s prayers.
7. God’s service: i.e., for liturgical prayer
8. company: assembly
9. the whole presence: everyone present (in it)
10. prayer: i.e., every one of them the better off for each other’s prayer
11. better: better off
12. and: i.e., and for
14. prick: thorn // suffered: allowed
15. grow too high: get too puffed up
16. wax: become
17. might: could
18. make... wise: answer him thusly // sufficeth unto thee: i.e., sufficient for you is
19. also: i.e., also can
20. stand... one: i.e., stand in the position of being one; constitute one
21. yet haply: maybe even
22. wise: a way
23. what: i.e., whatever
24. him: he pleases / he likes
good folk find this in deed: that when they be at the Divine
Godly ceremonies delight Service in the church, the more devoutly
that they see such godly ceremonies observed,
and the more solemnity that they see therein… the more devotion feel they themselves therewith in their
own souls, and their flesh the more tame and less rebellious, and
far the better in temper; so that although they were at other
times and places in right great rage, yet in the church, at the voices
of Christ’s ministers in the choir… with organs and altogether,
and beholding the solemn, godly sacraments and ceremonies in
their sight, they feel their passions appeased… as did King Saul,
I Sm 16:14–23 in his rageous fury, at the sound of
David’s harp.

Now, where he saith that of old time the officers appointed
thereto prayed in a tongue that all folk understood—of which point
Tyndale maketh much ado, and many times he speaketh thereof,
because he would fain have his false translation brought into the
church to be there said and sung on God’s behalf—I will not say
nay but that in Greece and great part of Italy, they both said in
the beginning the Service of the Church in their own tongue. But
so did they not neither in Africa nor in Almaine, nor in Spain,
nor in France, nor in England, nor, as I trow, in any place almost
else, and yet were they good men that brought the faith about, into
all these countries. And soon after, also, when the tongues changed
both in Greece and Italy—then left they still the Service in the old
language, which after the change the people did not understand;
which would not have been by so many good men so long suffered so,
if the contrary had been required of necessity. And Saint Paul, in his
I Cor 14:6–19 epistle to the Corinthians whereof Tyndale
so much speakeyth, did but use the commodity
of the guise that then was among the Corinthians… for the
confirmation of his reason against them that could but read and
speak and yet would smatter in preaching—willing the Corinthians
to labor first for better understanding… and not thereby
meaning that of necessity the people must needs answer all together
unto the blessing of the priest or the bishop. Which
manner hath, peradventure for something that in progress of time

1 find . . . deed: i.e., actually find this
2, 3, 10 ceremonies: rituals / (other) liturgical services
2 Service: Office
7 in temper: under control; regulated // although: even if
8 in: i.e., in a // rage: heat of passion
9 altogether: everything
14 of old time: i.e., in the early days (of Christianity) // officers: functionaries; officials
15, 20, 24 tongue(s): language(s)
17 would fain: would like to // false: intentionally inaccurate; falsified
18–19 say nay but: deny
19 they both: i.e., in both of those places people
20, 25 Service (of the Church): liturgy / Divine Office
21 Almaine: Germany
22 as I trow: I feel sure
22–23 in . . . else: i.e., in any other place, just about
23 about: around
27 suffered so: so borne with
30–31 did . . . that: i.e., only took as suitable the practice there
32 the confirmation: i.e., corroboration
32 his . . . that: i.e., what he says regarding those of them who
33 smatter: dabble // willing: enjoining
34 labor: strive
35 answer all together: i.e., answer all together “Et cum spiritu tuo” // manner: praxis
37 peradventure: perhaps // for: on account of // progress: the course
they found abused therein, been changed into better... as have been divers other things and not without the secret working of God.

And surely if all the Service were in English—yet would it not thereby be much the more understood; which was all the matter that Saint Paul spoke. For many that now do understand the Latin tongue do little yet understand the sentence, farther than the bare stories and Collects.

But likewise as in some words that remain still untranslated into Latin... men use them with devotion, as “amen” and “alleluia,” that

Note never know more of the signification than that they be holy words: so do there many a good man and good woman both say and hear the Service of God in the church with full great reverence and full great devotion... and therefore with great thank of God... though they have it not in their own vulgar tongue; which thing what it would do here, God knoweth. But as for Almaine, thereas it is so already... we see well enough that it doth no great good there. For whereas the people were fallen already to manifold heresies, they now turn all the sweet honey that they find in the Service quite into the poison that hath taken up their hearts before.

And therefore whereas Tyndale saith that there is nothing heard in the church among us but “howling,” “buzzing,” and “crying out, like hallooing of the fox or baiting of bears”—it may well seem so to Tyndale and such as he is; but unto good, devout folk it seemeth far otherwise.

But in their church in Almaine, there is another manner of howling and hallooing and crying out. For whereas we with holy words and true faith hail and halloo out the false fox, and bait out the rugged bear the devil—you, Tyndale, in your churches of heretics, cry out as loud as we, and louder too; for ye cry out men and women and all. But ye with your heresies halloo out all saints and bait out all holy sacraments, and drive out God and all.

If Tyndale had found fault with anything that is, peradventure, misused in some places... where haply the fashion is more ruffling, and in less moderation and soberness, than were convenient for moving men to devotion—as evil as I like the man in such things as he saith naught, that is almost in all... yet

1 abused: wrongly done 2 divers: several // secret: hidden; unpereceivable 3, 4 all the: the whole 3, 12–13, 19 Service (of God): liturgy / Divine Office 4 matter: issue 5 spoke: i.e., was speaking of 6, 15 tongue: language 6–7 sentence... bare: i.e., meaning of what is said in the liturgical services, beyond just the 7 stories: (scriptural) readings // Collects: i.e., the short prayers preceding those readings 8–9 in... men: i.e., it is with... that men 9 as: such as 9–10 that never know: who know absolutely no 10 the signification: i.e., their meaning 14 thank of: approbation from / credit given them by 15 vulgar: vernacular 16, 26 Almaine: Germany 16 thereas: wherever there 17 whereas: since 19 quite: entirely 20 taken up: taken over; taken possession of 23 hallooing of the fox: i.e., calling out “halloo” to spur on the dogs in their fox hunting 23 baiting of: i.e., the shouting done in encouragement of dogs attacking 28 hail: accost // false: vile / mendacious 28, 32 hail: shout 30–31 ye... men: i.e., you all cry out, men 34 peradventure: misused: wrongly practiced // hapy: maybe 35 ruffling: unsettling; discomposing 35 in... soberness: less restrained and dignified 35–36 were convenient: i.e., is suitable 36 as evil as I like: i.e., as little as I approve of 37 in such: with regard to such // naught: i.e., that are bad
would I find no fault with him in that he said well. But now he 5
saith not that some such things be misordered somewhere... but
that there is none other.

As for song, I see not why he should utterly dispraise in God’s
New too, as well appeareth by Saint Paul in his first epistle to the
Corinthians. As for harps and instruments of music... the Scripture
shows it openly—both in the Psalms and
Ps 150
1 Chr 13:8
2 Sm 6:14–15
many other places of Scripture—besides
dancing, too, which is more than men
use here now.

But Tyndale can be pleased with no fashion, neither cathedral
church nor parish church nor chapel, nor monks nor friars nor
nuns, neither Greenwich, Syon, nor Charterhouse. If the choir be
loud—then they “cry out.” If they sing anything—yet they “halloo”
and “bait.” If they do but say soft—yet they “buzz.” So that I see well
no fashion can please Tyndale but his own, for as he neither
crieth out nor hallooth, nor baieth, nor buzzeth, in any Service
saying. For as they say that know him, he saith none at all—neither
Matins, Evensong, nor Mass—nor cometh at no church but
either to gaze or talk.

But good Christian people, whom he belieth and saith that they
ween no man may pray but at church—they pray both at church and
home... but yet more gladly at church. For though they know well
Mt 6:5–6; 21:13
that in avoiding of vainglory Christ
taught us to pray in our chamber—yet
showed he, for all that, that the common church is his house and
specially deputed to prayer. And it is no hypocrisy to pray
there, as it is to pray in the street. For when they pray in the
church, they do but as other folk.

Mt 21:12–13
But now doth Tyndale’s “congregation,”
and the captains of his heresies, make it, as
Christ said to the Jews, a very den of thieves—and worse than ever
did the Jews that bought and sold therein, whom Christ beat out
therefor. For these heretics now not only rob the church in an
allegory sense—that is to wit, rob and steal away the chief prayers
out of many great churches in Almaine—but also in the plain,

in... well: i.e., regarding whatever he said that he was right about
misordered: out of right order; done amiss
there is none other: i.e., there is none that ever is not
Ps 150
1 Chr 13:8
2 Sm 6:14–15
Ps 150
1 Chr 13:8
2 Sm 6:14–15
4–5 dispraise... service: i.e., disapprove of its use in the liturgy
which... in: i.e., its being something made use of in not only
well appeareth: is made quite apparent
halloo: i.e., holler
bait: shout
say soft: i.e., say it softly
for as: forasmuch as
any Service saying: liturgical praying / the praying of any part of the Divine Office
Evensong: Vespers
cometh at no: i.e., ever goes to a
gaze: gawk
baieth and saith: i.e., slanders in saying
ween: think
in: i.e., for
chamber: bedroom
showed: said
common: communal; shared space that is the
deputed: assigned
in: i.e., out on
captains: masterminds / spearheaders
therefor: for doing that
an allegory: a figurative
Almaine: Germany
literal sense rob out the relics and ornaments of the church, to... pollute and misspend them in profane uses; to fill their bellies and cover their pocky, scabbed skins with, much worse than King Belshazzar abused the hallowed vessels of the Temple. 

Dn 5:1–4 to serve his own proud, execrable gluttony.

And when they have thus robbed the churches: then lodge they, for more despite, their friars and their nuns in them... and of a hallowed church they make a stinking stews. And this is yet one signification more that Tyndale's master hath made a “church” to signify: scilicet, a bordel for brothels—anglice, a stews—which signification also Tyndale hath here left out.

The Second Chapter: Why Tyndale Used “Congregation” for “Church”

In the second chapter Tyndale saith that he changed this word “church” into this word “congregation” in the New Testament where he found this word ecclesia in Latin... because that the clergy had, he saith, brought the people into the ignorance of the true signification of this word “church,” making them understand thereby nothing but the clergy.

First, this is undoubtedly false, whatsoever Tyndale say. For albeit that men call the clergy by the name of “the Church,” as the part ordained of God to be the more spiritual part thereof—yet is there no man, I suppose, so rude but that he knoweth, and so heareth the clergy preach also themselves, that of the church of Christ is every Christian man... and that the whole Church is the whole Christian people... and therefore they call it the Catholic church, that is, universal... by which word never man was, I ween, so mad to mean only the priests, how boldly soever Tyndale against his own conscience report himself to every other man’s. I would also, because he reporteth him so much to other men’s conscience, fain wit of Tyndale by his own conscience... where he had ever heard any priest either preach or write—

1 ornaments: liturgical accoutrements; sacred vessels and utensils, and vestments 2 pollute: desecrate (them) 2 misspend: misemploy 3 scabbed: scabby 4–5 abused... to: defiled... in using them to 4, 9 hallowed: consecrated 8 despite: insult 9, 11 stews: brothel 10, 12, 19 signification: meaning 10 Tyndale’s master: i.e., Luther 11 scilicet (Latin): namely // bordel (French): bordello 11 brothels: worthless wretches / prostitutes // anglice (Latin): in English 18 because: by reason of the fact 22 undoubtedly: undoubtedly; definitely 24 of: by 25 rude: uneducated; ignorant 27 man: i.e., person a member 30 man... to: was anyone, I think, so demented as to 31 conscience: conscience / consciousness // report himself: appeal 32 man’s: i.e., man’s consciousness 32 reporteth him so much: does so much appealing 33 men’s conscience: men’s consciousness 33 fain wit: like to inquire // own conscience: own consciousness / own conscience
or so much as say the word—that only the clergy is the Church
and none of the Church but they. I suppose themselves have
not given themselves the name. The word is English… and they
teach not every man his mother tongue, as men teach children their
ABC’s. But the good people have of old time—though they know
themselves also for part of the Church—yet because “the Church”

That priests are called “the Church,” it cometh of
humility of the laity. signified a holy name of a Christian company
gathered together in God, have
therefore, of humility on their own part
and reverence toward them, used to call
the clergy by that name… accounting them for the more godly
part of that whole godly company.

And the spirituality, againward, do plainly declare and ever
have declared in their preaching… that the name is general and
common both to the temporalty and them… and at large they declare
the diverse parts of the Church, and therein reckon themselves but for
one. And this name so used by the temporalty of their own
humility and reverence toward the spirituality—is not a thing
new-found, but begun of old… at such time as both the
parties were, I ween, somewhat better than, I fear me, they be both
now.

But now, that thing that good folk have of good mind begun,
and many hundred years continued… Tyndale, as one of another sort,
would have utterly changed… and rather than laymen should have
any such reverent mind to priests as to call them “the Church,” he
would take it from them both… and, putting away from both that
holy name of “church,” would call them both by the name of “congregation”—
a word without any signification of Christendom any
more than of Jews or Turks.

Tyndale
[To this answereth Tyndale and saith if this word “congregation”
were a more general term than this word “church,”] it hurteth not,
for the circumstance doth ever declare what thing is meant thereby.

More

If the setting of the circumstance make all well enough, he
needeth not much to care what word he changeth, nor how. For he
may set such circumstances, of his own device… that he may
make men perceive what he meaneth. For so he may translate the
"world" into a "football," if he join therewith certain circumstances
and say, "This round, rolling football that men walk upon and
ships sail upon, in the people whereof there is no rest nor
stability," and so forth, a great, long tale; with such circumstances
he might, as I say, make any word understood as it like
himself, whatsoever the word before signified of itself. But
surely the word "congregation" with the circumstances in the text
would not have served when he translated it, first, to make the
English reader to take it for the church; no more than "idols" for
images, or "images" for idols, as he translateth in like wise, or "repenting"
for doing penance, which he changeth too. But marry, he
hath added unto his translation such circumstances since, that the
Every man and woman is a
priest with Tyndale. that every man, woman, and child is as
very a priest as a priest indeed... and that
every man and woman may consecrate the Body of Christ and say
Mass as well as any priest, and hear confession and assoil as well as
may a priest; and that there is no difference between other folk
and priests, but all one congregation and company without any
difference save an appointment to preach; and also that the
common-known people of all Christian realms—clergy, laypeople, and
all—be not "the church," nor be no part of "the church," because they
use sacraments and ceremonies and Divine Service in churches... but
that "the church" is a secret congregation of unknown chosen heretics
scattered abroad in corners and studying to destroy the
Church.

These circumstances indeed make men to perceive and understand
what Tyndale meaneth by this word "congregation" put in
his translation in the stead of "church." And they perceive clearly by
these circumstances that he changed that word of purpose to set
forth those heresies of his with... as boldly as he now saith nay.
But all his gloss is, therein, that he will say he taketh them for no
heresies. But on the other side, all good-faithful people do, and
therefore they call the Church "the Church" still, and will not agree to
change the old "church" for his new "congregation," but burn up
his books that so calleth it... and whoso would so begin to call it,
would and well might begin to call him “heretic,” for his delighting in the invention of heretics and his evil appetite to speak after a heretic’s phrase.

Tyndale yet, to defend his change of “church” into “congregation,” saith that I do not say truth in that I say that this word “congregation” is a more general term than this word “church.”

Tyndale
For wheresoever [saith he] that I may say a “congregation”... there I may say a “church” also... as “the church of the devil,” “the church of Satan,” “the church of wretches,” “the church of wicked men,” “the church of liars,” and “a church of Turks” thereto.

More
This is lustily said of Tyndale, and like a man. But it pleaseth him not to consider that I said that this word “congregation” is indifferent unto Turks and Christian men, and unto all other companies and a company of Christian men, so that it as well signifieth a company of Turks as of Christian men; and that this word “church” doth signify a company of Christian people, and is not indifferent to a company of Turks and of Christian men. And I said, and yet I say, that this is true of the usual signification of these words themselves in the English tongue, by the common custom of us English people that either now do use these words in our language or that have The common usage of speech used before our days. And I say that this common custom and usage of speech is the only thing by which we know the right and proper signification of any word; insomuch that if a word were taken out of Latin, French, or Spanish, and were, for lack of understanding of the tongue from whence it came, used for another thing in English than it was in the former tongue—then signifieth it in England none other thing than as we use it and understand thereby, whatsoever it signify anywhere else. Then say I now that in England this word “congregation” did never signify the number of Christian people as Christian people, with a connotation or consideration of their faith or Christendom—no more than this word “assembly,” which hath been taken out of the French and now is by custom become English... as “congregation” is out of the Latin. And yet I deny not but under those words, both twain, may be Christian men spoken of.
For every assembly and congregation in Christian realms is commonly made of Christian people. But they be not there called “congregation” or “assembly” because they be christened, but should be so called though they were Jews or Saracens, though they were so known and dwelled in Christendom. I say now, in like wise, that this word “church” never hath been used to signify other company than christened, in common speech of this realm. And for this cause—and yet, most especially, because of Tyndale’s evil intent—I said and yet say that he did naught in the change of “church” for “congregation,” a holy word for a profane as far forth as they both signify in our English tongue, into which Tyndale made his translation.

This was and is the thing that I said and say. Now, in saying this… I do not say untrue, though Tyndale be at his liberty to call a “church” what him list. For never said I the contrary but that Tyndale, wheresoever he may say a “congregation,” there he may say a “church” too. For though none Englishmen be wont to speak so, nor in the common speech the word signifieth not so, nor of the church that he should in his translation have meant of, no good man will say so—yet may Tyndale say so: “the church of Satan,” “the church of wretches,” “the church of wicked men,” “the church of liars,” and “a church of Turks” too; and yet, and he list, he may set to it “the church of heretics,” and “the church of devils” too.

But, now, though Tyndale may thus say for his pleasure, which I deny not—yet can he not say that this is the proper signification of that word, which is the thing that a translator must regard; but it is a certain figure, and manner of speaking, by which men use among to express a thing by its contrary… as a man might say, “This is the wisdom of a fool,” “This is the truth of a false shrew,” “This is the faith of a heretic.” Thus may Tyndale abuse the holy name of “church” to any lewd thing that he list; but this is not the part of a translator.

But Tyndale now—to convict me clearly by learning and reason doubly confirmed with Scripture—showeth himself in few words that he both lacketh learning and reason and shamefully abuseth the Scripture. These are his words…

Tyndale

M. More must needs grant (if he will have ecclesia translated throughout all the New Testament by this word “church”) that “church”

2 made: i.e., made up 3 should: would 4 though: even if // Saracens: Muslims 4–5 so known: known to be such 5 dwelled in Christendom: i.e., were living in a Christian country 5–6 say . . . this: i.e., say now that, likewise, this 6–7 other . . . christened: i.e., any community other than one of baptized people 7, 18 common speech: i.e., (the) common parlance 7 cause: reason 8 yet: also // evil: ill 9 yet: still // naught . . . of: i.e., a bad thing in exchanging 10 profane: i.e., profane one 11 tongue: language 12 true: i.e., something untrue 15 what him list: whatever he wants to 17 none: no 18 so: thusly 19 meant of: had in mind 20 so: i.e., such things 22 Turks: i.e., Muslims // yet: moreover // and he: if he 22, 31 list: wants to // 22–23 set to it: i.e., add to this list 24 say: speak 25 proper: normal 27 figure: linguistic device 28 use: are wont // among: on occasion 29 truth: veracity 29 false shrew: lying scoundrel 30 abuse: misapply 31 lewd: vile 32 the part of a translator: the act of a translator / what a translator should do 33 convict me clearly: vanquish me completely 34 with: by 35 abuseth: distorts 38 M.: i.e., Master / Mr.
is as common as *ecclesia*. Now is *ecclesia* a Greek word, and was in use before the time of the apostles, and taken for a congregation among the heathen, where no congregation was of God, or of Christ. And also Luke himself useth *ecclesia* for a church or congregation of heathen people, thrice in one chapter, even in . . . the Acts—where Demetrius the goldsmith, or silversmith, had gathered a company against Paul for preaching against images.

More

Let us now begin at the first piece, and ye shall see what he hath:

“M. More must needs grant that ‘church’ is as common as *ecclesia*, if he will have this word *ecclesia* throughout all the New Testament translated by this word ‘church.’”

First I say that Master More must *not* needs grant this to Tyndale, never a whit. For if he turn it from a conditional proposition into an affirmative antecedent and consequent, it shall soon be shown him that his consequent were possible to be false and his antecedent true. For it might be that this word *ecclesia* did signify more things than the writers of the New Testament had occasion to speak of within the same. And then though I would grant unto Tyndale that this word *ecclesia* should throughout the New Testament be translated by this word “church,” yet must I not needs be driven to grant him, for all that, that “church” were as common as *ecclesia*, because it should not, yet, signify those other significations of *ecclesia* that were not spoken of within the New Testament. And thus whereas Tyndale would upon such an antecedent bind me by and by, of necessity, to his consequent, it appeareth that though I granted him the one . . . I must not needs, for all his great word, grant him the other at all.

But, now, though I must not needs, yet will I grant him of courtesy . . . that if I will have *ecclesia* translated throughout all the New Testament by this word “church,” that then I must needs grant this term “church” to be as common, and signify as large and as many things, as this term *ecclesia*. But, now, when I, that must not needs, grant this to Tyndale, Tyndale may not choose but must needs grant me this again: that if I will *not* have *ecclesia* throughout the New Testament translated by this word “church,” that then Tyndale in all his gay tale telleth us nothing to purpose, but that argument is now like as if he would have argued thus—“If Master More will grant me that every horse is a goose, then must he needs grant . . .”

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3 *no . . . Christ*: i.e., there was no congregation of God’s, or of Christ’s; 5 *even*: right there
5–7: See Acts 19:32, 39, and 40. 6 *a company*: an assembly 7 *for*: i.e., for his
9 *at*: with 11 *// piece*: i.e., part of this 10, 13, 31, 34, 39 *needs*: of necessity; necessarily
14 *never a whit*: not one bit 16 *his . . . possible*: i.e., it would be possible for his consequent
17 *might*: could 18, 23, 32 *signify*: denote 19, 26 *though*: even if 19 *would*: were to
20 *that*: i.e., that I’m saying that 21 *yet . . . needs*: i.e., I yet would not of necessity
22 *were as common*: i.e., is of as general application 23 *should*: would 25–26 *by and by*: immediately
26 *appeareth*: is evident 27 *must not needs*: wouldn’t of necessity have to 27 *great*: grand
29 *word*: pronouncement 29 *must not needs*: don’t out of necessity have to
29 of courtesy: i.e., as a favor, for the sake of argument 32 *large*: extensively
33–34 *that . . . grant*: i.e., who do not of necessity have to do so, do grant 35 *again*: in turn
37 *gay*: glitzy / plausible-sounding 37 *tale*: speech
me that every mare must have a gander to get her with foal.” For I need not to grant him the thing that he supposeth.

Now tell I Tyndale that, in no wise, I will not have it so; and that I never told him that I would have it so; but I say plainly that if he should throughout all the New Testament translate this word ecclesia by this word “church,” I say that he should translate it very naught.

And for because that Tyndale either evil perceiveth my words or else evil remembered them… or, finally, which is most likely, would willingly make the reader to take them wrong: I will desire the reader to look upon the place himself (which is the eighth chapter of the Third Book), and there shall he find that I find the fault not in that he translateth this word ecclesia sometimes into this word “congregation,” but that he changeth this word “church” into this word “congregation”—that is to say, that he translateth this word ecclesia into this word “congregation”—in such places as he should have translated it into this word “church”; that is, wheresoever he hath put this word “congregation” for the company of Christian people; for that company is in English signified, and of old hath been, by this holy word “church,” and never by this word “congregation.”

This is the fault that I find, and tell Tyndale in that chapter good and plain causes wherefore, which Tyndale here letteth slip.

But I would in no wise that, as Tyndale taketh me, ecclesia should always be translated by this word “church”; for that were also wrong. For truth it is that ecclesia signifieth in the Greek tongue a congregation, without respect of either good or bad, Christian or un-Christian. For Tyndale saith therein truth, that the word ecclesia was used a thousand years before Christendom began, as the books prove. But it will be hard to prove and warrant that this word “church” was used for any congregation before Christendom began, or that ever it signified any congregation other than Christian. And therefore his reason grounded upon this word ecclesia is little worth… since it proceedeth not in like wise in this word “church.”

And yet, touching this word ecclesia… as cunning as Tyndale would seem therein, with his Greek and all… he seemeth but poorly to
“Ecclesia” perceive it. For ye shall understand that this word ecclesia in the Greek tongue did not signify every manner company or congregation—nor signified not all the citizens of any city with that respect that they were citizens of that city, or that they were gathered for playing or fighting, or any such other cause—but only those congregations that were gathered together to common upon matters of judgment or policy, either about the common affairs of the town, concerning peace or war or some other commodity, or for private folks’ business in such places as all the common people were judges, as much was used in Greece and sometimes in Rome too, and was, as ye would say, the assembly of the court, or the common council.

Now—forasmuch as Christian people did resort together among themselves to prayer and preaching, and making of good ordinances delivered them by the apostles—this name of ecclesia was applied unto the congregation of the Christian company. And though it began of such assemblies together, yet afterward it obtained also, both among the Greeks and Latins christened, to signify the Christian folk whether they were at church or at home, and to signify also the universal number of all Christian people throughout all the world; whereas it signified no such manner of thing among the paynims before, but only their several assemblies such as I before Contio described you, and which was in Latin called contio. And yet took the Latin Church the Greek word ecclesia—of the Greek Church, that began before them—and never used this word contio, which signified among the Latin paynims both the congregation, or assembly, and the oration also that any man pronounced among them in the same assembly.

Now may ye perceive that Tyndale with all his Greek told you but a lame tale. For he telleth you not what manner of congregation ecclesia did signify in the Greek… but mistaketh it to signify every manner of congregation at adventure.

And by this ye may also perceive how little it maketh for his purpose that Saint Luke, whereof Tyndale so boasteth, calleth “ecclesia” thrice in one chapter, of the Acts, the congregation that was gathered in Ephesus against Saint Paul. For that was such a congregation as I tell you that ecclesia properly signified among the paynims… saving

1 perceive it: grasp its meaning 2 tongue: parlance 3, 22, etc. manner: kind (of)
3, 17 company: assembly / community 4 respect: regard 5 playing: a sports activity / having fun
7 common: commune 9 commodity: interest 11 used: i.e., the practice 12 or: i.e., or of
14–15 resort . . . to: regularly come . . . for 16 delivered: i.e., as per instructions sent
18 obtained: i.e., came 19 Greeks . . . christened: i.e., Greek-speaking and the Latin-speaking baptized
23, 28, 39 paynims: pagans 23 several: disparate 26 of: from // that: which
28 Latin: Latin-speaking 29 pronounced: delivered 32 mistaken: wrongly takes
33 at adventure: i.e., whatever 34–35 maketh for his purpose: contributes to his argument / works in his favor
39 properly: normally // saving: except
that they gathered together upon a rumor, and not after their
customable calling.

   Now, though the Church was then newly begun to be called by
the same name of ecclesia, and that after the example of the other
assembly, and the name not taken from the other assembly, nor
their assembly for such matters called by none other—how would
Tyndale have had Saint Luke tell the tale but by such words as
then represented the matter? But that maketh nothing for his purpose,
but utterly against it. For since that this word ecclesia
did there signify that congregation of the Ephesians which were
paynims—and therefore in that place ought not to be translated by this
word “church,” which signifieth only a Christian congregation and not
a congregation of paynims—so should ecclesia in like wise wheresoever
it signifieth a Christian congregation be translated by this
word “church”… which is and ever hath been the word that since
Christendom first began among Englishmen hath always
served therefor… and not be translated by this word “congregation,”
which word of “congregation” is a word of Latin, and signifieth a
sort gathered together into one flock; as they speak, “in gregem ovium,"
“gregem gruum,” “gregem anserum.” And so when Tyndale hath all said and
all done… this word “congregation,” except some special places
where they have by custom appointed it to signify some sort of
men—as in some universities it signifieth their assemblies—else,
where no such custom hath appropered it to any special manner of
congregation… the term “congregation,” absolutely set, signifieth
no more a company of Christian men than a fair flock of un-Christian
geese.

   But yet the change of the word, if Tyndale had done it either
of chance or of purpose for his pleasure, and for none evil purpose—
I would never have spoken word against it. But forasmuch
as I perceive that he hath been with Luther—and was, too, at the same time
when he so translated it—and that I knew well the malicious
heresies that Luther began to bring forth: therefore must I needs
mistrust him in the change.

   And now I say that even of his own words spoken here… ye
may in his translations perceive his cankered mind. For he saith
that Demetrius “had gathered a company against Paul for preaching
against images.” Here may the Christian reader well perceive the
poison of this serpent. It is to no man unknown that all good Christian

1 upon: on the occasion of / because of   // rumor: riot
2 their . . . calling: being summoned as they customarily were   5 from: away from   6 none: any
3 tell the tale: tell the story / relate the incident   8 matter: i.e., respective things in it
7 tell the tale: tell the story / relate the incident   9 since: i.e., given; seeing
8–9 that . . . but: i.e., that passage does nothing for his argument, but works   9 since: i.e., given; seeing
10 sort: i.e., number of people or animals   13 place: passage   13 wise: manner   17 therefore: for that
11 paynims: pagans   14 place: passage   15 wise: manner   17 therefore: for that
12 except: i.e., except in // special: particular   16 place: passage   17 wise: manner   18 of Latin: from Latin
13 except: i.e., except in // special: particular   16 place: passage   17 wise: manner   18 of Latin: from Latin
14 excepted: designated   17 wise: manner   18 of Latin: from Latin
15 aproopered: restricted // special manner: specific kind   25 absolutely set: written without qualification
16 aproopered: restricted // special manner: specific kind   25 absolutely set: written without qualification
18 in . . . anserum: i.e., into a flock of sheep, . . . cranes, . . . geese
19 of chance: by accident   29 of chance: by accident   30 spoken: i.e., said a
20 of . . . pleasure: i.e., on purpose just because he felt like it   31 perceive: understand   32 spoken: i.e., said a
21 except: i.e., except in // special: particular   33 began: i.e., was starting   34 mistrust: be suspicious of
22 appointed: designated // sort: group   33 began: i.e., was starting   34 mistrust: be suspicious of
23 aproopered: restricted // special manner: specific kind   25 absolutely set: written without qualification
24 aproopered: restricted // special manner: specific kind   25 absolutely set: written without qualification
25 absolutely set: written without qualification
28 un-Christian: non-Christian
29 of chance: by accident   30 spoken: i.e., said a
30 spoken: i.e., said a   31 perceive: understand   32 spoken: i.e., said a
31 perceive: understand   33 began: i.e., was starting   34 mistrust: be suspicious of
32 appointed: designated // sort: group   33 began: i.e., was starting   34 mistrust: be suspicious of
33 began: i.e., was starting   34 mistrust: be suspicious of
34 in: regarding   35 even of: just from   36 may: can // cankered mind: corrupt intent
35 even of: just from   36 may: can // cankered mind: corrupt intent
36 may: can // cankered mind: corrupt intent
37 a company: an assembly   38 for: for his   39 poison: poisonousness
38 for: for his   39 poison: poisonousness
39 poison: poisonousness
people do both abhor the idols of the false, paynim gods and honor also the images of Christ and our Lady and other holy saints. And as they call the one sort “images”—so call they the other sort “idols.” Now—whereas Saint Paul preached there against

Acts 19:24–40  idols—cometh this good man and saith he
1 Cor 5:11  preached against images.

And as he speaketh here—even so he translateth. For in the fifth chapter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, where Saint Paul saith, “I have written to you that ye company not together if any that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous or a worshipper of idols”—there translated Tyndale, “...or a worshipper of images”... because he would have it seem that the Apostle had in that place forbidden Christian men to worship any images... and that whoso worshipped any images, men should not company with him. Here ye may see the sincerity and plain meaning of the man’s translation. Now seeth he well enough that Saint Paul spoke not of images but of idols; and he perceived both that he so did, and also wherefore he so did, by his other words—written in the tenth chapter of the same epistle—where Saint Paul, speaking of the meat offered unto idols, which he would that Christian men should forbear, saith in this wise: “What say I, then? That the idol is anything? Or that it which is offered to idols is anything? Nay; but I say that those things which the paynims offer... they offer to devils and not to God, and I would not that ye should have any fellowship with devils.”

Images are honored for God’s sake. This only text of Saint Paul is enough to answer all the whole heap of heretics that bark against holy images that good men honor for God’s sake. For Saint Paul here showeth that the cause why the worshipping of idols was unlawful among the Gentiles or paynims was because that the worship that was done to those idols was done to devils. And why, but for because that it was done to those idols for the love and honor that they bore to those devils whom they called gods, and whom those idols represented?

But so it is, on the other side, that good folk which worship images of Christ and his saints—do worship thereby Christ and his

1 abhor: abominate  1, 23, 31 paynim(s): pagan(s)  3, 4 sort: set  7 even: just
9–10 company not together if any that ... be: i.e., are not to associate with anyone who... but is
10 covetous: avaricious  10, 11 worshipper; worshipper / venerator  12 place: passage
13, 14, 36, 37 worship(ped): venerate(d)  14 company: associate  15 may: can
15 sincerity: freedom from falsification; faithfulness // plain meaning: i.e., the guilelessness of intent //
the clear intent // 16 spoke: i.e., was speaking  18 wherefore: why  19 meat: food
20 would... forbear: i.e., would have Christians forbear eating  20–21 in this wise: words to this effect
21 say I; i.e., am I saying // it: that  24 would... should: don’t want you to
26 this only: i.e., just this one // of: from  27 all... heap: the whole entire pack  28 bark: i.e., squawk
30 cause: reason // worshiping: venerating // unlawful: not morally permissible  31 because that: because
31 worship: veneration  32, 33 done: i.e., given  32–33 for because that: for the reason that
36 side: i.e., hand // which: who
saints whom those images represent. Wherefore it followeth that likewise as the paynims, worshippers of idols, did evil in the worshipping of them, because that in the worshipping of them they worshipped devils: right so do the Christian men well in the worshipping of images, because that in the worshipping of images they worship Christ and his holy saints. And now ye see, good Christian readers, that this one place of Saint Paul so plainly reproveth all these heretics that bark against images... that saving they be shameless, they should never look any man in the face for shame.

But Tyndale, to blind the reader with, hath corrupted in his translation all this place of Saint Paul also, and hath in every place put out “idol” and set in “image”... to make the reader ween that Saint Paul speak all this against images... which he so speaketh against the paynims’ idols that his reason which he maketh against them doth openly commend and confirm the Christian worshipping of holy saints’ images. And here may ye see what a true translation Tyndale’s is, and for what purpose he translateth it false... and God provideth that the scripture which he falsifieth openly fighteth against him.

This pageant hath he played also, shamefully falsifying Saint Paul, in the second chapter to the Romans... where Saint Paul saith to the Jews, “Thou abhorrest idols and robbest God of his honor”—meaning that though they abhorred the paynims’ idols, and would not worship their false gods that were devils, yet for all that, they, by the breaking of God’s law with their evil living, they took away the honor from God, in causing him and his law to be dishonorably spoken of among the paynims.

Now cometh me Tyndale, and in despite of holy images he hath translated that place in this wise: “Thou abhorrest images and takest from God his honor.” Here ye see Tyndale’s truth, lo! Did Saint Paul say so? Did Saint Paul mean so? Did the Jews abhor images? They abhorred idols, but not images. They abhorred not in the Ark the images of the angels, though they abhorred abroad the idols of devils. But Tyndale’s translation of this place may marvelously

**Note** well be said unto himself—“Thou abhorrest images, Tyndale, and takest the

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1 _wherefore_ from which  2, 15, etc. _paynims_: pagans  2 _evil_: badly  3, 5, etc. _worshipping_: venerating  3, 5 _because_: by reason of the fact  4 _right_: just  // _worshipped_: venerated  6 _worship_: venerate; give honor to  7, 12, 13 _place_ (of): passage (from)  8 _reproveth_: proves wrong  // _bark_: i.e., squawk  9 _saving_: were it not that  10 _face for shame_: i.e., face, for fear of embarrassment  11 _blind_: deceive  12 all this: this whole  13 put out: i.e., rejected  // _ween_: think  14 _speak_: i.e., is speaking  15 _reason_: argument  16, 20 _openly_: manifestly  16 _commend_: set off to advantage  17–18 a _true_: a faithful / an accurate  19 _false_: inaccurately  20 _fighteth_: militates  21 _pageant_: i.e., charade  23: See Romans 2:22.  23, 30, 36–37 thou _abhorrest_: you hold in abomination / you shun with loathing  24, 32, etc. _abhor(red)_: abominate(d)  25 _living_: manner of living  27 _dishonorably_: disrespectfully  29 _cometh me_: comes at me / here comes  // _despite_: denigration  30, 35 _place_: verse  30 _wise_: way  31 _from_: away from  // _truth_: honorableness / veracity  32 _so_: that  34 _Ark_: i.e., Ark of the Covenant  34 _abroad_: i.e., everywhere  35 _may marvelously_: can strikingly
honor from God… for thou wouldst have us set Christ’s image at naught, which without God’s dishonor we cannot do.”

What shift shall Tyndale find now? Will he say that “idols” and “images” be all one, because that idols be a kind of images, and “image” is a term indifferent to good and bad? For a man may say “an image of the devil” as well as “an image of God.”

Tyndale shall, I think, find no reader so slenderly witted to suffer him escape so. For though idols be of the kind of images… yet since they be such a special kind as always to Christian men’s ears do signify evil images and devilish, he may not in translation change the name into the general, whereby it may not be perceived of which kind he speaketh. For this were very naught if he did it in favor of the worse kind, to make men ween it were better. And now, when he doth it in hatred of the better kind, to make men ween it worse—that is to wit, in despite of the images of God Incarnate, and of his holy saints, to make them seem idols—he doth a hundred times worse. For he were not so wretched by a hundredfold (as wretched as he were!) that needs would, in his fond fashion, love God and the devil together, as he that would love neither nother.

And if that Tyndale would stiffly stick in this point and abide thereby—that his translation of “idol” into “image” is good enough because idols be images—then, since that devils be angels (as indeed they be by nature, and evil angels be angels still), Tyndale may at his pleasure translate the devil into “angel” without any other addition, wheresoever he find him throughout all the Bible. And then shall he do therein as did a like-learned priest that throughout all the Gospels scraped out diabolus and wrote Iesu Christus, because he thought the devil’s name was not meet to stand in so good a place. And thus I think that every child may now perceive with how little learning and less wit, and least truth, Tyndale hath translated this word ecclesia into “congregation” instead of “church”—and that he hath so substantially defended it that in the maintenance of one false folly, he is now found in twain. For by a like manner as he falsely translated ecclesia into the unknown name of “congregation” in such places as he should have translated it into the holy, known name of “church,” and that he this hath done of a malicious purpose, to set forth his heresy of the secret, unknown church wherein is neither good works nor sacraments:

1 from: away from // set . . . naught: i.e., treat with contempt a crucifix. (See 129/1–6.)
2 God’s dishonor: i.e., dishonoring God // shift: subterfuge // all one: one and the same
3 because that: because // indifferent: equally applicable // a man may: one can
4 kind: genus // special: specific // 11 may not: cannot // he speaketh: i.e., Saint Paul is speaking
5 were: would be // naught: wrong / bad // 13, 15 worse: less good // ween: think
6 well: correctly; rightly
7–8 so . . . suffer: who is so little endowed with intelligence as to let // so: thus; by that route
8 kind: genus // 9 special: specific // 11 may not: cannot
12, 17, 18 were: would be // 12 naught: wrong / bad // 13, 15 worse: less good // ween: think
13 were: was // 15 to wit: i.e., to say // despite of: denigration of / insult to
14 needs would: was bound and determined to // fond fashion: foolishly warmhearted posture
15 neither nother: neither the one nor the other // 20 if that . . . would: i.e., in case . . . should
16 stiffly stick in: obdurately hold firm on // 21 good: valid // 22 since that: given that // 23 evil: bad
17 scraped out: scratched out // 28 meet: suitable // stand: be // place: text // every: any
18 may: i.e., could // 30 wit: intelligence / good sense // 29 truth: honesty / integrity
19 substantially: soundly / effectively // 32 maintenance: supporting
20 false folly: i.e., idiotic error made with deceitful intent // falsely: incorrectly
21 unknown: unidentifiable
so is it now proved that in the same wise and of like malice
hath he translated “idols” into “images,” under the color of the likeness
of false gods and devils to make the Scripture seem to reprove the
godly images of our Savior himself and his holy saints. And now—
using himself in his translation in such malicious and erroneous
fashion—he complaineth that good men have burned his evil-translated
Books and will not suffer his heresies to go forward.

In the end of this chapter Tyndale telleth me that I have been “so
long used” in my “figures of poetry” that when I “err most,” I do now,
as he supposeth, “by reason of a long custom” believe myself that I “say
most true”; “or else, as wise people when they dance naked in a net
believe that no man see them, even so” he saith that I think mine “errors
so subtly couched that no man can spy them.” As for mine errors,
how subtly they be couched, I cannot tell; nor what other men shall
spy, I cannot say. But surely if I could spy any in my writing myself,
I would not fail both to confess it to God and the world and forsake
it. Now, if I be by custom of poetry so blinded that I cannot
see mine errors but ween that my lies were true—yet if I find any
that can show them me, I shall soon amend the fault. But I have
one good likelihood that I do not err or lie after such fashion as
Tyndale telleth me… in that if it so were, Tyndale then, that prieth
thereupon so narrowly and with such eagle’s eyes as he hath, were
very likely to spy it… namely since I go so bare, dancing naked in a
net. And I am sure if he spied any such thing in me… he would of
his charity be so good to me as to tell me. But surely he hath spied
none yet. For all that he hath hitherto pored out and called mine
errors be but his own, and turn upon his own top every one.
And as for my “poetry,” verily I can little else… and yet not that neither.
But it had been good for Tyndale’s soul—and a thousand souls
besides—that he had meddled but with poetry instead of Holy Scripture
all the days of his life. For of poetry though there should have
come little good… yet could there never have come such a heap
of harm to Christian people as he hath of his blind malice brought
into this realm by his untrue translating, and more untrue construing,

of the Holy Scripture of God… most maliciously making
the Blessed Word of God to serve him for an instrument to drive
men to the devil.

1 wise: manner  2 color: semblance / pretense  2–3 of … of: i.e., of their likeness to  3 reprove: condemn
5 using: conducting // erroneous: i.e., deliberately erroneous; heretical  6 that: i.e., about the fact that
9 in my “figures of poetry”: i.e., to writing my syllogistic fairy tales  10 custom: habitation
10–11 say most true: am most speaking the truth  11 wise people: wizards and witches  12 even: just
13, 14 subtly: craftily // couched: worded  13, 15, 23 spy: espy; catch sight of  15 surely: certainly
16 confess: admit // forsake: renounce  17 custom: habit // poetry: i.e., creative writing / mythologizing
18 ween… were: think that my false statements are // any: anyone  19 show them: point them out to
19 amend the fault: correct the mistake  20 likelihood: indication // lie: speak falsely
21–22 prieth thereupon so narrowly: i.e., peers at my writing so closely; scrutinizes my writing so carefully
22 were: would be  23 namely: especially  26 hitherto: thus far  27 turn unto: boomerang onto
27 top: head  28, 30, 31 poetry: i.e., mythology / fairy tales  28 verily: truly // can: know
29 had: would have  30 meddled: involved himself  32 heap: lot  33 blind: deceitful / reckless
34 untrue: dishonest / deliberately inaccurate // construing: interpreting
And yet if poetry be, as Tyndale calleth it, nothing but feigning and lying—then is he cunning enough, and can, I assure you, make as much poetry upon any part of Scripture as any poet can in England upon any part of Virgil. And he useth in his writing much plain poetry wherein he danceth naked not all in a net… but for the more part so stark naked, without any net at all, that there is not the breadth of a silken thread to cover his poetry; of which points of his plain, open poetry I have shown you some already, and shall anon show you many more.

Then he asketh me why I have not contended with Erasmus, whom he calleth my “darling,” of all this long while for translating of this word ecclesia into this word congregatio. And then he cometh forth with his feat proper taunt that I favor him of likelihood for making of his book of Moria in my house. There had he hit me, lo, save for lack of a little salt. I have not contended with Erasmus my darling because I found no such malicious intent with Erasmus my darling as I find with Tyndale. For had I found with Erasmus my darling the shrewd intent and purpose that I find in Tyndale, Erasmus my darling should be no more my darling. But I find in Erasmus my darling that he detesteth and abhorreth the errors and heresies that Tyndale plainly teacheth and abideth by; and therefore Erasmus my darling shall be my dear darling still. And surely if Tyndale had either never taught them or yet had the grace to revoke them, then should Tyndale be my dear darling too. But while he holdeth such heresies still—I cannot take for my darling him that the devil taketh for his darling.

Now, for his translation of ecclesia by congregatio… his deed is nothing like Tyndale’s. For the Latin tongue had no Latin word before used for the Church, but the Greek word ecclesia; therefore Erasmus in his new translation gave it a Latin word. But we had in English a proper English word therefor; and therefore was no such cause for Tyndale to change it into a worse. Erasmus also meant no heresy therein, as appeareth by his writing against heretics; but Tyndale intended nothing else thereby, as appeareth by the heresies that himself teacheth and abideth by. And therefore was there in this matter no cause for me to contend with Erasmus, as there was to contend with Tyndale, with whom I contend for putting in “congregation” instead of “church”—except that Tyndale peradventure meaneth that I should have been angry with Erasmus because
that instead of “congregation” in his Latin translation, he had not put in our English word “church.”

Moria

As touching Moria, in which Erasmus under the name and person of “Moria,” which word in Greek signifieth folly, doth merrily touch and reprove such faults and follies as he found in any kind of people… perusing every state and condition, spiritual and temporal, leaving almost none untouched; by which book Tyndale saith that if it were in English, every man should then well see that I was then far otherwise minded than I now write: if this be true, then the more cause have I to thank God of amendment. But surely this is untrue. For, God be thanked, I never had that mind in my life to have holy saints’ images, or their holy relics, out of reverence. Nor if there were any such thing in Moria—that thing could not, yet, make any man see that I were myself of that mind…the book being made by another man, though he were my darling never so dear. Howbeit, that book of Moria doth indeed but jest upon the abuses of such things, after the manner of the disour’s part in a play; and yet not so far, neither, by a great deal, as the Messenger doth in my Dialogue—which I have yet suffered to stand still in my Dialogue, and that rather yet by the counsel of other men than of myself.

For albeit that it be lawful to any man to mislike the misuse of every good thing—and that in my Dialogue there be not only those evil things rehearsed, but answered also and assoiled, and the goodness of the thing itself well used is plainly confirmed and proved—yet hath Tyndale by erroneous books, in setting forth Luther’s pestilent heresies, so envenomed the hearts of lewdly disposed persons… that men cannot almost now speak of such things in so much as a play, but that such evil hearers wax a great deal the worse. And therefore in these days, in which Tyndale hath (God amend him!) with the infection of his contagious heresies so sore poisoned malicious and newfangled folk… that the King’s Highness (and not without the counsel and advice, not of his nobles only, with his other counselors attending upon His Grace’s person, but also of the right virtuous and especially well learned men of either university,
and other parties of the realm specially called thereto) hath, after diligent and long consideration had therein, been fain for the while to prohibit the Scripture of God to be suffered, in English tongue, among the people’s hands... lest evil folk, by false drawing of every good thing they read into the color and maintenance of their own fond fantasies, and turning all honey into poison, might both deadly do hurt unto themselves and spread also that infection farther abroad—I say, therefore, in these days, in which men by their own default misconstrue and take harm of the very Scripture of God, until men better amend—if any man would now translate Moria into English, or some works, either, that I have myself written ere this, albeit there be no harm therein... folk yet being (as they be) given to take harm of that that is good... I would not only my darling’s books, but mine own also, help to burn them both with mine own hands, rather than folk should (though through their own fault) take any harm of them, seeing that I see them likely in these days so to do.

But now, after this, Tyndale handleth me full unco urteously; for he taketh away all my thank and reward that I should have had of the spirituality. For he showeth them that I wrote not my book for any “affection” that I bear to them... no more than Judas betrayed Christ for any favor that he bore to “the high priests, scribes, and Pharisees”; but that I did the one as he did the other—for the lucre that should come thereof... after which he saith that I so sore hunger that the good man, as my friend, prayeth for me that I eat not too fast, for choking.

Now, if the spirituality had been about to have gathered a disme among them and give it me—Tyndale here had lost it me every penny. But God forgive the man, and I do. For when he speaketh of my “lucre,” in good faith he maketh me laugh; and so, I ween, he maketh many more too, that know well, God be thanked, that I have not so much lucre thereby that I stand in so great peril of choking with lucre as Tyndale standeth in danger of choking (God save the man!) with the bones of buttered beer.

Now, where Tyndale saith I have faintly defended the things whereof I write: the things be strong enough and little need me to defend them; and also, my purpose was not so much to do that that needed not (that is to wit, to defend them) as to prove, and make the people perceive, that Tyndale went about to bring in heresies.

1 called: summoned  2 fain: constrained  3 the while: the time being  4 English tongue: the English language  5 among... hands: i.e., to being in the people’s hands / to being passed around among the people  6 fond: imbecilic / sick  7 deadly do hurt: i.e., do life-threatening harm  8 default: culpability // misconstrue: wrongly interpret  9 that that: that which 18 handleth: treats // full: very 19 thank: credit  10 prohibit... suffered: i.e., prohibit that... be subjected  11 thyself: subject yourself  12 this: i.e., before this one that I’m writing now  13–14 that that: that which 18 handleth: treats // full: very 19 thank: credit  15 also, help to burn them both with mine own hands, rather than folk should (though through their own fault) take any harm of them, seeing that I see them likely in these days so to do.  16 in their hands: i.e., mine  17 with mine own: i.e., with my own  18 eft: i.e., no longer, remaining  19 I... hands: i.e., mine own hands  20 when: as soon as  21 the good man: as my friend  22 that... to... more: that I have not so much lucre that I stand in peril of choking with lucre as Tyndale standeth in danger of choking (God save the man!) with the bones of buttered beer.  23, 30, etc. lucre: monetary gain  24 after: for // sore: badly  25 for choking: i.e., for fear of my choking  26 disme: i.e., intending to take up a collection. (“Disme” is pronounced “dime.”)  27 about... disme: i.e., intending to take up a collection. (“Disme” is pronounced “dime.”)  28 had: would have  29 in good faith: in all sincerity // ween: think  30 under... disme: i.e., intending to take up a collection. (“Disme” is pronounced “dime.”)  31 did: would do // for: by // in... inclined: sickened  32 with: because of  33 bones of buttered beer: A reference to the little bones sometimes found in soups—and never found in this drink made up of beer, butter, and cinnamon.  34 bones of buttered beer: A reference to the little bones sometimes found in soups—and never found in this drink made up of beer, butter, and cinnamon.  35 faintly: weakly  36–38 that that needed not: i.e., that which there was no need to do  39 went about: was attempting
among them. And that needeth now as little; for Tyndale hath
proved it himself.

And so little defense sufficeth for any reason that Tyndale layeth
against it. And finally, if I were faint therein, as Tyndale saith—
yet is a faint faith better than a strong heresy.

But Tyndale yet for all this, as a good, godly father of his abundant
charity, saith that he “charitably” doth “exhort” me “in Christ”
by the examples of Judas and Balaam to “take heed”; and further he
counseleth me and my fellows, full holily, to “awake betimes, ere
ever” our “sins be ripe, lest the voice of” our “wickedness ascend
up and awake God out of his sleep, to look upon” us “and to bow his
ears unto” our “accursed blasphemies against the open truth… and to
send his harvestmen and mowers of vengeance to reap it,”
except we “repent, and resist not the Spirit of God, which openeth
light unto the world.”

These words, when I read them, seemed me so pithy and so
perceant, set and couched in such a high spiritual fashion…
that they made me much to marvel what Tyndale had spied in
me, and caused me to search myself, to see whether I had used any
such high blasphemies that the wickedness thereof were likely to
ascend up into heaven and awake God Almighty out of his sleep. But
when I had oversearched all my book and ransacked up the very bottom
of my breast… though I found in the one some pretty peccadilloes
(such as I will not now confess to Father Tyndale, because he saith
confessors keep no counsel), yet could I find, in good faith,
neither in my breast nor in my book, I thank God, any such high
blasphemies as Tyndale so highly crieth out upon, except he call
it a high blasphemy to call heresies heresies; which I take, as
help me God, in my poor conscience, for no higher blasphemy
than to call a goose a goose. Nor I find no truth that I either blaspheme
or once speak against, except Tyndale mean by this “open
truth” all the false open heresies that himself teacheth against
Christ’s holy sacraments. Against which kind of false truth I
no more fear to speak… than against the devil himself that first
found it out. Nor I cannot find wherein I resist the Spirit of
God in opening his light unto the world… except that Tyndale
take for the Spirit of God the spirit of the devil of hell… and for

1 that . . . little: i.e., there’s as little need now for me to do that 3 so little: that little a
3 defense: i.e., defense of what I said  // for . . . that: regardless of what argument  // layeth: presents
4, 5 faint: weak  6 of: i.e., doing this out of  8 Balaam: See Numbers 25:1–9 and 31:16; Deuteronomy 23:3–6;
and Revelation 2:14. 9 fellows: allies / cohorts  // full: very  // betimes: in good time  // ere: before
12, 31, 32 open: manifest; obvious  13 mowers of vengeance: i.e., vengeance-executing mowers
14, 27, 31 except (that): unless  17 piercing: from-on-high / grandiloquent / shrill
18 marvel: wonder  // spied: espied  19 used: uttered  20, 26, 28, 29 high(er): (more) egregious
20 were: was  22 oversearched . . . book: searched throughout my whole book (i.e., DH)
23, 26 breast: i.e., heart  23 pretty peccadilloes: little venial sins / innocuous boo-boos
25 keep no counsel: keep no confidence; i.e., do not keep secret what is confessed to them
25 in good faith: in all honesty  27 highly: strongly / portentously / shrilly  // crieth out upon: denounces
27 call: i.e., calls  28 as: so  30 I find no: do I find any  31 mean: means
32 false: counterfactual / vile  // himself: he himself  35 found it out: came up with it
35 I cannot: i.e., can I  36 that: i.e., if  37 take: takes
opening of light unto the world, he take the lightsome lantern of good example… by which the world may see for a show of holy

*Calate, Luther’s harlot* matrimony Friar Luther and Cate Calate, his nun, lie lusing together in lechery.

Now, to resist this devilish spirit my poor spirit, for all

Tyndale’s high, fearful charge, is so little afraid… that I call heartily to the Spirit of God to quench the foul firebrand of that hellish light, and that so thoroughly that the world see never any such example more!

And now, when that I had thus thoroughly searched well my breast and my book, and saw my conscience clear, far out of any such cause of jeopardy—then Tyndale’s terrible exorcism made me not much to tremble… since heretics have of old been wont always to use such words; but my mind more gave me to laugh at his high, solemn charge… whereby he would with his strange words enchant and charm the reader, and make him ween he were walking down to hell quick if he made so much as a mum against Luther’s lechery.

Now, whereas Judas and Balaam were not meet examples for me, that bear myself neither for an apostle nor for a prophet, I might here lay them both well for plain examples to him that bear(eth) himself for a right apostle that were sent to preach a new faith to this realm, and a new evangelist, too, that maketh with his false translation new scripture of his own; and very properly playeth he the part of Balaam too, in that he laboreth to bring maledictions upon Jerusalem, that is, the Catholic Church of Christ. And here might I bring him other examples in, also very meet for the matter, of men much like himself—heretics, I mean, of old time, and some of later days, not long before Luther. And when I had rehearsed up a Ragman’s roll of a rabble of heretics, and shown a shrewd sort that came to sorrow for their sin—then might I, lo, if I had Tyndale’s spirit, spit out Scripture apace and exhort Tyndale again holily, to take heed and beware betimes lest like heresies and like malice bring him to like mischief. But as for me, I can no such fashion; and therefore letting all such high process pass—of ripe sins, and ascending to heaven and waking God out of sleep… and set him on

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1 *lightsome:* light-giving / bright-shining  
2 *Calate:* (the) Strumpet  
3 *lusking:* lounging; indulging themselves  
4 *husband:* Friar Luther  
5 *high:* high-level / shrill  
6 *fearful:* frightful  
7 *helly:* hellish  
8 *more:* again  
9 *when that:* when  
10 *breast:* i.e., heart  
11 *out of:* removed from  
12 *jeopardy:* i.e., my soul’s being at risk  
13 *solemn:* straight-faced / authoritative-sounding / portentous  
14 *strange words:* extraordinary words / extreme statements  
15 *ween . . . quick:* i.e., think he’d be on a fast track to hell  
16–17 *ween . . . quick:* i.e., think he’d be on a fast track to hell  
17 *mum:* hmm; peep  
18 *meet:* fitting  
19 *plain:* i.e., obviously fitting  
20 *that:* who  
21 *laboreth:* endeavors  
22 *rabbles:* motley crew  
23 *mischief:* misfortune / ruin  
24 *properly:* well  
25 *rehearsed:* ticked off a catalog  
26–27 *ween . . . quick:* i.e., think he’d be on a fast track to hell  
28 *mum:* hmm; peep  
29–30 *rehearsed:* ticked off a catalog  
31 *sorrow:* grief  
32 *spit . . . apace:* i.e., spout scriptures in rapid-fire succession  
33 *betimes:* in good time  
34 *like:* similar  
35 *high process:* high-flown rhetoric  
36 *set:* i.e., to set
husbandry and drive him to harvest with mowers of vengeance
and reapers of ripe sins—leaving Tyndale in his vengeable parables,
I can no more, I, but pray God amend him and make him a good
man.

Against Tyndale’s Using This Word “Senior,”
and “Elder,” and Not “Priest”

Tyndale

Another thing which he rebuketh is that I interpret this
Greek word presbyteros by this word “senior.” Of a truth, “senior” is
not very good English, though “senior” and “junior” be used in the
universities; but there came no better in my mind at that time.
Howbeit, I spied my fault since, long ere M. More told it me, and
have amended it in all the works which I since made, and call it an
“elder.”

More

Tyndale in this chapter at great length declareth for his excuse
four fair virtues in himself: malice, ignorance, error, and
folly. For in his long babbling he hath never a clause but it falleth
in one of these four, and some one in all four, as ye shall see further
in his words following.

Here in the beginning, lest he should seem to have learned the
knowledge of his ignorance by my monition, he saith that he perceived
his fault himself before, and amended it, too. For whereas,
for lack of finding a better English word, he saith that he had
translated this word presbyteros into this word “seniors” in English—
he hath now amended it and made it “elders.”

Here hath he done a great act, now that he hath at last found
out “elder.” He hath of likelihood ridden many miles to find out that.
For that word “elder” is, ye wot well, so strange and so little known
that it is more than marvel how that ever he could find it out.
And one thing I promise you: if it were not worse than “senior”… he
had not found it yet. For this is a like amending as if he would
where a man were blind of the one eye… amend his sight by
putting out the other.

This word presbyter in the Greek, as it signifieth the thing that men
call a “priest” in English… was called sometimes senior in Latin. But
this thing that Englishmen call a “priest”—and that the Greek Church called *presbyter*, and the Latin Church also, and sometimes *senior*—was never called “elder,” neither in the Greek Church nor the Latin, nor the English neither. Now, this being thus… judge, good readers, yourselves, whether of two bad, it was not better when he called a priest a “senior,” by which word it was called sometimes, at the leastwise in some language… than when he calleth a priest an “elder,” by which word it was never called nor known, neither in one language nor other. And so ye may see how wisely, by long leisure and warning, too, Tyndale hath amended his matter.

**Tyndale**

And in that he maketh heresy of it to call *presbyteros* an “elder,” he condemneth their own old Latin text of heresy also, which they use yet daily in the church and have used, I suppose, this fourteen hundred years. For that text doth call it an “elder” likewise.

**More**

See the sincerity and plainness of the good man. It is no mastery for him to make proper solutions if himself may make the objections… such as no man objecteth nor would object against him but himself. For here he saith that I make it heresy to call *presbyteros* an “elder”—which thing I never said nor thought. But I said and say, and truth I say, that Tyndale did in his English translation change the word of “priest” into “senior” of a heretical mind and intent to set forth his heresy… whereby he teacheth that priesthood is no sacrament.

For as for this word “elder,” how could I *then* charge him with it as a heresy, when he had not *then* translated “elder,” but “senior”… till now that he hath by longer leisure amended it and made it worse! So that ye may first here see a piece of his plain poetry doubly proved and doubly reproved… by which he layeth unto me the thing that I never said nor had at that time either cause to say or occasion to think upon.

Nor now I say not that it is heresy if he have, as he saith, translated since that time *presbyteros* by this word “elder”; but I say he doth it with the mind of a heretic to set forth his heresy. For else I would not call it heresy if one would translate *presbyteros* a
And yet—this thing being so properly spoken as ye see—he saith that the old translation in Latin, read in the church this fourteen hundred years, “calleth” presbyteros an “elder” in like wise. Which word of Tyndale I would call a lie... saving that it is more than a lie by a syllable.

Tyndale

In the fifth chapter of the first of Peter, thus standeth it in the Latin text: “Seniores qui in vobis sunt, obsecro ego consenior, pascite qui in vobis est gregem Christi” (“The elders that are among you, I beseech which am an elder also, that ye feed the flock of Christ which is among you”). There is presbyteros called an elder.

More

Heard ye, reader, ever such another? Is presbyteros here called an elder in the old Latin translation? I find there this word seniores where the Greek Church used in their language presbyteros. But as for this word “elder,” which Tyndale saith is the old Latin translation—he were like to pore out his eyes upon the Latin Book ere he find that English word “elder” there, but if he cause it to be written in himself. And yet he layeth like texts three or four (some in the epistles of Saint John, and some in the Acts), where he findeth instead of presbyteros this word seniores, and natu maiores; and always he setteth thereto, “Lo, here is presbyteros called an elder, and an elder in birth,” as though this Latin word seniores, or natu maiores, were this English word “elder”... whereas he saith that presbyteros is called “elder” in the old translation... which, as ye see, must needs be false, but if this English word be in that Latin Book, and that he make English Latin and Latin English.

But now—lest he call the redargution of his folly “sophistication”—let us divine for him what he might mean. He will haply say that he meaneth that this Greek word presbyteros is, in the text that he hath alleged, called by the old translator seniores, and seniores signifieth “elder” or “elders.” And so, though this word “elder” be not in the Latin...
translation, yet since that Latin word is there that signifieth in Latin the same thing that this word “elder” signifieth in English, we cannot blame him for translating *presbyteros* into this word “elder”… but if we blame in like wise the translator for translating *presbyteros* into this word *seniores*.

First, if I said that the old translation were in that point not so well as it might have been… I should not say so alone. And Erasmus (whom Tyndale calleth my darling, and whom himself doth, for all that, in his own translation prefer before the old) doth, as well in the said epistle of Saint Peter as in the said twentieth chapter of the Apostles’ Acts, not only keep still the Greek word *presbyteros*, but showeth also that the old translator translated it not well (because he translated there this word *presbyteros* into this word *seniores*, and in the other place into *maiores natu*); but saith that he should rather have kept still the word *presbyteros* unchanged, because that word is it that signifieth authority with the Greeks… whereas *seniores* in Latin *Acts 20:17; Tm 4:12* signifieth but their age, and all were not old, as appeared by Timothy. And for that cause, in the said place of Saint Peter’s epistle… Saint Jerome amendeth that old translation and keepeth *presbyteros* still, reciting Saint Peter in this wise: “Presbyteros qui sunt in vobis, obsecro ego compresbyter…”

Wherein Saint Jerome was rather content to join the Latin conjunction with the Greek word, and call it *compresbyter*, than to change that word signifying the office into *seniores* and *consenior*, signifying but the age. For among the Latins, *senior* signified none other; but among the Greeks, *presbyteri* was the name that many times signified rulers and governors.

Now, if we list, we may yet excuse the old translator… which how soon after Christ’s death he translated it, who can tell? And then—when the Latin Church had no Latin word for the Christian priests, already received and used—what blame was he worthy that took that word, not continually but among, which of all the Latin words seemed to him to go next the signification of *presbyteros* at that time? And that was, as him thought, *seniores*; in which word yet the Church never followed him, though: but though they read his translation openly, in divine service, yet neither in their writing nor

1. *signifieth*: means
2. *but . . . wise*: unless we likewise blame
3. *so well*: as good
4. *were*: was
5. *point*: respect
6. *should . . . alone*: would not be the only one saying this
7. *whom himself*: i.e., whose Latin edition of the New Testament he himself
8. *prefer before the old*: i.e., give preference to over that old one
9. *said*: i.e., above-referenced
10. *19 said*: i.e., above-referenced
11. *18 appeared*: was evidenced
12. *cause*: reason
13. *place*: passage
14. *in this wise*: thusly
15. *Latins*: i.e., Latin-speakers
16. *none other*: nothing else
17. *list*: want to
18. *which*: who
19. *received*: accepted
20. *reciting*: i.e., writing the words of
21. *that took*: i.e., who took
22. *among*: occasionally; here and there
23. *go next*: come closest to
24. *as him thought*: in his thinking
25. *in*: regarding
26. *which*: i.e., the using of which
27. *followed him*: followed his lead
28. *opened*: in public
29. *divine service*: liturgical services
preaching would they take up that word and call a priest “senior”—as appeareth by the books and sermons of all holy doctors since.

And therefore Tyndale is without excuse, which hath translated *presbyteros* by this English word “elders”—a word unknown among Englishmen to signify priests…and among whom this word “priest” was the proper English word well known, and had served in that signification, so many hundred years before Tyndale was born.

Also, go me to the place which Tyndale allegeth in the First Epistle of Saint Peter: “Seniores qui sunt in vobis, obsecro ego consenior, pascite qui in vobis est gregem Christi.” Which place I take for example. For whereas he layeth two places of the epistles of Saint John, and one in the twentieth of the Acts… all be for one purpose, and this one place answered, ansereth them all. I say, therefore, that Tyndale hath even here, in this his new book, translated that same place wrong, and all the remnant in like wise. And that will I prove partly by Tyndale’s own words which in this book follow the translation of those words.

. . . “The elders that are among you, I beseech which am an elder also, that ye feed the flock of Christ which is among you.” There is *presbyteros* called an elder. And in that he saith “feed” Christ’s “flock,” he meaneth even the ministers that were chosen to teach the people and to inform them in God’s word, and no laypersons.

More

Lo, Tyndale here showed himself that by this word *seniores* be there understood the ministers that were chosen to teach people. Then say I that if this word *seniores* was taken in that signification there… Tyndale should not translate it into this English word “elder,” which signifieth not the office, but the age, *here*. And this is, I say, true… all were it so that Tyndale’s false heresy were true, that Holy Orders were no sacrament at all…but a bare office. For if it were but in a profane, common story, in which men may boldly be in the translation at much more liberty than in Holy Scripture—yet were he a naughty translator that would translate a thing into such a word as in the tongue into which he translateth, is not understood in that signification.

2 appeareth: is evidenced // holy doctors: Church theologians 3, 18 which: who
8 go me to the: i.e., let’s look at that 8, 14 place: text 8 allegeth in: brings forth from
10, 12 place: i.e., adducement 10 take for: take by way of 11 layeth: (also) cites
11 places of: passages from 12 twentieth: i.e., twentieth chapter // for one: (cited) for the same
13 even: right 14 this his new book: this new book of his 15 remnant: rest // wise: manner
16 follow the: i.e., come right after his 20 in that he saith: i.e., from his saying
21 he meaneth even: i.e., it is clear that he is indeed speaking of 22 inform: instruct
24 showed: stated 24–25 be there: i.e., are to there be 28 office: function / job description
29 all were it so: even were it the case // false: false / despicable
30 were: i.e., is // bare office: i.e., mere filling of a job position 31 profane: secular; nonreligious
31 common: ordinary // story: narrative 33 were he: would he be // naughty: bad
34 tongue: language 35 in that signification: i.e., to have that meaning
As if, percase, a man would translate a Latin chronicle into English, in which were mention made of something done in London—if he found in that chronicle the aldermen called by the name of *senatores*, or peradventure *seniores*, he should yet in his English translation call them not “senators,” nor “elders,” neither, since neither of those two words is in English the name by which the aldermen of London be known: but he must therefore translate *senatores*, and *seniores* also, into “aldermen” in his English translation. And further, if he there found this word *senatus Londinensis*, he should not translate it into this word “senate,” but either into “mayor and aldermen” or percase (if the circumstance of the matter so lead him to it) into “mayor, aldermen, and common council.”

And therefore, as ye plainly see... Tyndale’s defense of his translating *presbyteros* into “elders” is as feeble to stick to as is an old, rotten, elder stick, and though it were but in a profane story.

Now, where it is in the holy story of Christ’s Gospel, what manner a thing is it to translate “elder” instead of “priest”—which word “elder” in English was never so taken nor understood—and thus to do without necessity, having this word “priest” so commonly known and so long?

Why doth he not by the same reason change “bishop” into “overseer,” and “deacon” into “server”? Both which he might as well do as “priest” into “elder.” And then must he with his translation make us an English *vocabulary* of his own device, too. And so, with such provision, he may change “chin” into “cheek,” and “belly” into “back,” and every word into other at his own pleasure, if all England list now to go to school with Tyndale to learn English, and else not.

Now, if he would say that with such changes he could change the names into the better, and show us what the names signify—first, if he said therein true, he may tell us those significations in a tale beside; but he must in English let *English* words stand in his English translation, for all that. And yet were out of his mouth a right good tale evil worth the hearing: for with a little honey he mingleth so much poison that, rather than to swallow the one down with the other, a man were yet much better to forbear them both. Yet settesth me Tyndale one mighty strong bulwark to fence in all his field, out of which he shooteth a
This shot shall I not now much need to fear. For likewise as from the shot of a gun a man were meetly safe that had, ere the gun were loosed, made a step aside fifteen hundred miles from it: so, since I am stepped now fifteen hundred years from the apostles’ days, and almost as many from the interpreters’ time of whose intents and purposes Tyndale asketh me now the why... I may say that I never talked so much with them by mouth as to ask them the why... and therefore, since they have not written me the why, I am not bound to tell Tyndale the why.

But I ask of Tyndale no such far-fetched whys, but a why of his own deed. And that since we now have, and hundreds of years have had, English names enough for such orders of offices as he translated out of Latin—I ask him this why: why did he translate the same by this English word “elder,” which nothing signifieth the same? And since that in the texts that himself allegeth, neither the Greek word presbyteri nor the Latin word seniores signifieth in those places, by Tyndale’s own confession, the age, but the office: why giveth he, then, that English word “elder” in their stead, which signifieth not the office but the age? For though Tyndale say that presbyteros and seniores was at that time nothing understood but an elder (wherein as touching presbyteros peradventure it will be proved untrue), yet since himself saith not nay, but by his own words affirmeth (and in that point it happeth him to say true indeed), that both presbyteros and seniores be in those places set to signify the office and not the age (for else had young Timothy, upon the calling together of presbyteros or seniores, been left uncalled and had leave to bide at home), whatsoever moved in the first giving of the name the apostles or the interpreter to call the office by the name of presbyteros in Greek or seniores in Latin... it was Tyndale’s part yet in his English translation to give it that English name by which the office (were it holy or profane) was and long had been commonly known in England.

And further, if no special name would have contented him—yet should he then have called presbyteros the “rulers,” “governors,” or “officers,” or some such other English word which signifieth...
office, rather than to call it “elders,” by which name there is in the English tongue none office understood at all, but only the bare age.

And thus, as touching change of presbyteros into “seniors,” and his amendment into “elders,” that is to wit, from evil to worse: ye see how well he hath acquitted him.

Howbeit, if he had had in the change none other fault but folly... it should have been long ere I would have gone about to find it. But now standeth all the matter in this which he slippeth over: that he did it of very cankered malice, by which he setteth forth against Christ and his church his deadly, malicious heresy... wherewith he would make men ween that Holy Orders were no sacrament. And for that cause he asketh why that the apostles did not call the priests hieræus in Greek, but presbyteros, which signified, he saith, nothing but only elders. And by this reason would Tyndale have it seem that the apostles did take the Christian priests for no more consecrated persons than other Christian men—because they used a word that had no holy signification.

But Tyndale here, though he wink fast... is not yet so fast asleep as he maketh for. For if he listed to lift up his head and look up a little, he should soon see that his argument were assoiled with the other word which he hath also mistranslated of like malice: ecclesias.

For if he will needs argue that priests be no persons consecrated, nor their order no sacrament, because the apostles called them presbyteri... which name had at that time no holy signification in the Greek tongue, where they took it: then seeth Tyndale well enough (saving that he winketh and will not see it) that it must needs follow that Baptism were no sacrament neither, because the apostles and evangelists called it baptisma, and in Holy Scripture also named the holy company of baptized people by this Greek word ecclesias... of which two words, baptisma and ecclesias, neither nother had in the Greek tongue before, any holy signification at all, nor signified there any other thing than the one a washing, the other a congregation or assembly, of heathen, paynim people. And thus is in this point Tyndale’s plain folly and dissembled falsehood well and plainly convicted.

1, 2 office: function / position  2, 27, 33 tongue: language  2, 7 none: no  2 bare: mere  
4 as touching: as regards (the)  5 into: i.e., of that into  // evil: bad  6 him: himself  
7 howbeit: however  // the change: i.e., the making of that change  7, 36 folly: idiocy  
8 it...ere: i.e., a long time would it have been before  
9 standeth...this: i.e., the whole problem consists in this thing  // slippeth over: glides past  
10 cankered: corrupt / malignant  11 deadly: lethal  12 ween: believe  // were no: is not a  
13 why: i.e., why it is  15 reason: consideration  19 wink fast: has his eyes shut tight  
20 maketh for: i.e., pretends to be  // listed: cared  21 were assoiled with: was refuted by means of  
24 will needs argue: insists on arguing  25 order: ordination  27 took it: i.e., got it from  
28 saving: except  // winketh: shuts his eyes  // will not: refuses to  29 were: i.e., is  
31 company: community  32 neither nother: neither the one nor the other  35 paynim: pagan  
36 plain: patent  // falsehood: dishonesty  // well and: good and; quite  37 convicted: exposed / proved
And, now, since that the apostles and evangelists did apply and approper that profane word *ecclesia* to signify the whole company of Christian people sacred and sanctified in the holy Sacrament of Baptism, and in like wise the profane word *presbyteros* to signify a certain sort of the same company specially consecrated unto God by the holy Sacrament of Order: he that now translateth those words in those places into the English tongue by any other words than such as in the English tongue do signify those holy, consecrated companies, the one segregated from paynims by the Sacrament of Baptism, the other segregated from the laypeople by the

Sacrament of Order—as Tyndale hath done both in the holy name of “church” and “priests,” calling the one but “congregation,” the other first but “senior,” and now, that worse is, but “elder”—if he know it for no fault, then is it great ignorance; if he forget to mark it, then is it great negligence; if he perceive it and dissemble it, then is it great falsehood; if he do it, as Tyndale doth, to make priesthood seem no holy sacrament, then is it a very malicious, pestilent heresy… like as if he would in like manner and of like intent translate *baptisma* into “washing,” to make men ween it were no other manner washing when the priest christeneth a child than when a woman washeth a buck of clothes.

He planteth in a great process to small purpose… because I said that Timothy was not old. And then Tyndale saith that Saint Paul chose him because he found in him more wisdom, sadness, and virtue than in the aged men of that place. And Tyndale doth well to tell us so; for else would all the world have went that Saint Paul had made a young man bishop because he would have had him wild.

But then goeth he forth and showeth us a solemn process, that God-and-necessity is “lawless”; and all this he bringeth in to prove that not only young men but women also may for necessity administer all the sacraments… and that as they may christen for necessity, so they may for necessity preach, and for necessity consecrate also the Blessed Body of Christ. And for to make this matter likely, he is fain to imagine an unlikely case: that “a woman were driven [alone] into an island where Christ was never preached.” As though things...
that we call “chance” and “hap” happed to come so to pass without
any providence of God! Tyndale may make himself sure that since

Mt 10:29

there falleth not a sparrow upon the ground
without our Father that is in heaven, there

shall no woman fall aland in any so far an island, where he will
have his name preached and his sacraments administered, but that
God can and will well enough provide a man or twain to come to
land with her; whereof we have had already meetly good experience,
and that within few years.

For I am sure there have been more islands, and more part of the
firm land and continent, discovered and found out within this
forty years last past than was new-found, as far as any man
may perceive, this three thousand years before; and in many of these
places the name of Christ now new-known, too, and preachings had,
and sacraments administered, without any woman fallen aland
alone. But God hath provided that his name is preached by such good
Christian folk as Tyndale now most raileth upon—that is, good religious
friars, and especially the Friars Observant, honest, godly,
chaste, virtuous people—not by such as Friar Luther is, that is run
out of religion, nor by casting aland alone any such holy nun
as his harlot is.

When Tyndale hath proved by this unprobable case that women
may consecrate the Body of Christ—then he lamenteth the miserable
servitude of the simple souls, the poor, seely women, because
men will not suffer them to say Mass, and crieth out upon us, “O
poor women! How despise ye them! The viler the better welcome to you!
Better is to you a whore than a good woman!”

O the tender heart of piteous Tyndale! He beginneth now, by
likelihood, to look toward wedding; he speaketh like a wooer. But he
will, I warrant you, no vile person; but because he is a priest and
hath promised perpetually to live chaste… he will no whore, therefore,
but rather will do as Luther hath done: wed a nun and
make her a whore.

Then exhorteth he full holily, and, in manner, conjureth also, the
reader, in our Lord God, that he shall read over the two epistles
of Saint Paul written to Timothy, whereof himself also rehearseth
part—which whosoever read, shall see therein both the false malice
of the man and yet the working of God therewith. For God hath
casted Tyndale to put in such things as directly reprove his
own conditions; and the devil hath made him falsely to leave out
those words which if he had set in... must needs have openly
declared that all is heresy that ever he goeth about.

For Saint Paul there teacheth Timothy to beware, and avoid
the company, of “men of corrupt minds” which waste their
brains about wrangling questions. And Tyndale is in company
of none other... but such as Luther is, and Friar Huessgen, and their
fellows, that had wasted out their wits so long about wrangling
heresies that now they are fallen at last to run out of religion and
waste out their brains about wrangling wives.

Saint Paul also teacheth Timothy

that he should not sharply rebuke any
man that were elder than himself, but exhort him as his father,
though himself was bishop and, as Tyndale saith, an apostle too.
Now, Tyndale—being neither norther, nor having any office so
much as among heretics—letteth neither sharply to rebuke his
elders in age nor also to jest and rail upon all states, spiritual
and temporal, throughout all Christendom, and namely against all
religious men... but if they will run out and wed. And thus ye
may see with what fruit Tyndale readeth Saint Paul.

Now would I that Tyndale had put in this place these words that
he leaveth out: “Noli negligere gratiam quae in
tei est, quae data est tibi per prophetiam, cum
impositione manuum presbyteri” (“Neglect not the grace that is in thee,
which was given thee by prophecy, with the putting-upon the
hands of a priest”). And afterward, in

the second epistle: “Admoneo te ut resuscites gratiam
Dei quae est in te per impositionem manuum meuarum” (“I warn thee that
thou stir up the grace of God that is in thee by the putting of
mine hands upon thee”).

These words of Saint Paul to Timothy in those epistles which

Tyndale exhorteth every man to read, and whereof himself rehearseth

1 false: underhanded
3 reprove: prove wrong / condemn
4 conditions: dispositions
5 falsely to: i.e., with deceitful intent
5–6 openly declared: clearly communicated
6 all: everything
8–9, 11, 13 about: on
8 wrangling questions: i.e., quibbling questions raised just out of contentiousness
11 fellows: counterparts / cohorts
12 are fallen: have come / run out of religion / abscend from religious life
13 wrangling: quarrelsome
15 are elder: was older
17 himself was: i.e., Timothy was a
18 neither norther: neither the one nor the other / office: official position
20 jest...upon: i.e., jeer at and rant about
21 temporal: lay
22 religious men: male religious; monks and friars
25–32 warn: remind thee to
32 by: i.e., on account of
also part, do manifestly reprove Tyndale’s heresy, and clearly prove the holy order of priesthood a sacrament.

For these places show both the sensible sign of laying the Apostle’s hands upon Timothy in the making of him priest... and also that God gave his grace therewith. And the first text showeth also, after the Greek (in which it is “with the putting-upon the hands” not “of a priest,” as the Latin is, but “of priesthood”), the power and authority that Timothy had in giving the same grace forth unto others whom he should after make priests.

And these texts do so plainly reprove him... that he is fain to make a shameful shameless shift to void them, such as all the world may wonder at. For he saith in his book of Obedience that the putting on of Saint Paul’s hands upon Timothy was no sacramental sign... nor any other thing but a custom of putting a man’s hand upon another... as men do here upon a boy’s head when they call him “Good son,” or as Saint Paul used to stretch out his arm to the people when he preached.

What availeth it to lay manifest Holy Scripture to Tyndale, that forceth so little so manifestly to mock it? Tyndale crieth out that every man misconstrueth the Scripture—and then himself, ye see what construction he maketh! Saint Paul saith plainly that Timothy received grace by the putting of his hands upon him. And Tyndale letteth not to tell him as plainly nay... and that he did but stroke Timothy’s head and call him “Good son”—by likelihood because he was but young. But howsoever Tyndale list to trifle... these places plainly reprove and convict his heresy, and prove priesthood a holy sacrament.

Now falleth he to railing upon the holy ceremonies of priesthood, as shaving and anointing. And first he saith that “if only shaven and anointed may [preach, or consecrate the sacraments], then Christ did them not, nor none of his apostles, nor any man in long time after; for they used no such ceremonies.”

This is a worthy jest, I promise you. If me listed here to trifle as Tyndale doth... I could ask him how he proveth that Saint Peter was never shaven, since I suppose he never saw him; or if he would put me to prove that he was shaven—and therein, when I could find no plain scripture for it, Tyndale would not believe me but if I

1, 26 reprove: disprove; prove false
2 the holy order of priesthood: Holy Orders / ordination to the priesthood
3, 26 places: texts
3 sensible: sense-perceptible / outward
3–4 laying the Apostle’s: i.e., Saint Paul’s laying of his hands on Timothy
6 after: according to
10 reprove him: prove him wrong
11 shift to void: maneuver to get around / attempt to nullify
14–15 putting a man’s: i.e., one man’s putting his hands on another
16 used: was wont
18 availeth it: i.e., good does it do
19 forceth: scruples
20 every man misconstrueth: everyone is misconstruing
21 construction he maketh: i.e., construing he does
24 by likelihood: probably
25 list: chooses
26, 33 trifle: play games
26 convict: confute
27, 28 priesthood: i.e., ordination to the priesthood
28 railing upon: ranting about / bad-mouthing
29, 35, 36 shaven: i.e., (men who are) tonsured
30 may: may / can
31 taking upon: putting on
32 ceremonies: rituals
33 worthy jest: jab that has merit
34 me listed: I wanted
35 I suppose: i.e., I’m pretty sure
36 put: challenge
37 plain... it: i.e., scripture saying so straight-out

//
brought forth his barber—I might tell Tyndale again that I
were not bound, since the Scripture showeth it not, to believe him
that Saint Peter was ever christened, till Tyndale bring forth
his godfather!

5 But these fantasies, of his and mine both, go far from the matter.
The truth is that as God by Moses taught his synagogue certain
goodly ceremonies for the garnishing of the service done to him
by his Chosen People there, and for the stirring of them to devotion:
so hath he by his own Holy Spirit, whom he sent to instruct his
Church, taught them holy ceremonies to be used about his blessed
Holy ceremonies stir
ceremonies, to the honor thereof and to
up devotion.
the increase of Christian men’s devotion—
as indeed it doth, whatsoever Tyndale
babble. Now be there among these the shaving and the anointing
of the priest. And so is there the apparel of the priest at Mass, and
many other observances used in the same. Now, if some of the same
were before used either among Jews or paynims… yet Christ’s
church “borrowed” them neither of the Jews nor the paynims (as
Tyndale saith), but took them again of God. Now, where Tyndale
argueth that if none may consecrate the Sacrament but only “shaven
and anointed,” then Christ nor any of his apostles might not, because
they were never shaven nor anointed—he maketh a worshipful
reason. For first, our Savior Christ—the very inward-anointed
priest whom God had anointed “with the oil of gladness above
all his fellows”—needed neither ceremony nor sacrament as touching
himself. And as touching his apostles, though Christ unto them
instituted sacraments—yet he left many of the ceremonies to the
Holy Ghost to teach, by whom they be instituted and by whom they
be in the Church continued. Now is there none that may consecrate
the sacrament but if he be first made priest… and priest is there
none made but the ceremonies of shaving and anointing are
used in the making… though they be not the substance of the Sacrament
of Order, no more than the catechisms and exorcisms at the
christening be of the substance of the Sacrament of Baptism. And
therefore though before those ceremonies used, priests might consecrate
unshaven and unanointed, when shaving-and-anointing
was not yet instituted: yet now can there none do so, since there is no
priest made unshaven and unanointed. For if they make any at
Wittenberg by a bare choice, without the giving of the Sacrament
of Holy Orders by such as have power to give them… they be no
priests nor may not consecrate at all, no more than may the devil.

Tyndale

And seeing that the oil is not of necessity: let M. More tell me what more virtue is in the oil of Confirmation, inasmuch as the bishop sacreth the one as well as the other; yea, and let him tell the reason why there should be more virtue in the oil wherewith the bishop anointeth his priests. Let him tell you from whence the oil cometh, how it is made, and why he selleth it to the curates, wherewith they anoint the sick—or whether this be of less virtue than the other.

More

Tyndale here putteth many questions to me which he will that I must needs answer because the oil in the making of a priest is not of necessity; but surely these questions be to the matter of much less necessity. Howbeit, because I must needs answer to men of such authority when the questions be so solemnly put: I say that if a bishop sacre the one oil and the other both alike, there is no more virtue in the one than is in the other. But I say that the oil being all one… it is in the anointing of the priest a holy ceremony; and in the anointing of the child at Confirmation it is the matter of a holy sacrament… and in the Anointing of the Sick also, and every of these two is one of the seven which the Spirit of God hath taught the church of Christ to know and use for seven sovereign means of very special grace.

And therefore such difference is there as between the hallowed water standing in the font before it be occupied—or if it were sprinkled upon a man for holy water—and the same hallowed water being occupied in the christening of a child, at the time in which it is applied thereto. For in that time, besides the goodness that it hath of the hallowing… it hath another, effectual goodness by God’s ordinance, whereby it is made a means of purging the soul from sin, and infusion of God’s grace, and of enabling the new-regenerated creature to inheritance of heaven.

And when Tyndale asketh me in any of these things the cause and the reason why… I might as well ask him the cause and reason why in
the nature and property of any natural thing—beast, herb, tree, or stone. Which if I were so mad to look that Tyndale were able to
tell me—what had he more to say than that God had planted that
nature and property therein? Which answer shall also serve in these
holy ceremonies and sacraments… whereof the virtues be caused by
God’s ordinance, through his holy words; whereof the profit is
limited and apportioned after such rate and degrees as is to no
man fully and perfectly known, but only to God, that giveth it. And
thus answer I Tyndale to these questions.

He asketh farther from whence the oil cometh, and whereof it
is made. What is that any more to the matter than from whence the water
is fetched that is put into the font, or of what grapes the wine was made that
Christ at his Maundy turned into his Blood?

Now, where he asketh me why the bishop selleth it unto the
curates wherewith they anoint the sick: thereto I say that the
bishop sendeth it to the curates because they should therewith
anoint the sick in the Sacrament of Aneling.

But why he selleth it to the curates, if he so did: thereof can I not
tell the cause… but if it were, peradventure, because he would be paid
therefor. But I can tell well that the bishop selleth it not, to curates nor
no man else, but the curates have it sent them free, but if they reward
the bringer, of their courtesy, with a groat—which bringer is yet the
archdeacon’s servant, and not the bishop’s. And this I can tell for I have
enquired for the nonce. And by this can I tell as well that Tyndale here
believeth the bishop shamefully for the nonce.

Tyndale

And when he affirmeth that I say—how the oiling and shaving is
no part of the priesthood!—that improveth he not, nor can do, and
therefore I say it yet.

More

It is very truth that I improve him not in that point… but am well
content that he say it yet, and I will say the same. But I improve
that he saith every Christian man, and every woman too, is as verily a
priest as these that at the receipt of that Holy Order are both anointed
and shaven. This is it that I improve; and this is it that is a
stark heresy though Tyndale say it yet.
Tyndale

When he ensearched the uttermost that he can... this is all that he can
lay against me: that of a hundred, there be not ten that have the
properties which Paul requireth to be in them. Wherefore, if oiling
and shaving be no part of their priesthood—then evermore of a
thousand, nine hundred at the least should be no priests at all. And
Quoth-Your-Friend would confirm it with an oath and swear deeply
that it would follow, and that it must needs so be. Which argument
yet, if there were none other shift... I would solve after an Oxford
fashion, with "Concedo consequentiam et consequens."

More

Tyndale here maketh a tale—as though it were a dialogue, or rather,
a triologue, between himself, the Messenger, and me... saying that
I in my Dialogue did allege that if oiling and shaving were no
part of their priesthood... then of a thousand priests, nine hundred
at the least were no priests at all, for lack that of a hundred
priests, there be not ten that have the properties that Saint Paul
requireth to be in them. And he saith the Messenger would affirm
it with a great oath... and that himself would, "if there were none
other shift," assioil it "after an Oxford fashion, with 'Concedo consequentiam
et consequens.'" Wherein he meaneth that, since he showeth none
other shift, he granted both twain for true: that is to wit, that
except oiling and shaving be part of the priesthood, else it
must needs follow that of a thousand priests, nine hundred be none
at all, for lack of good conditions; and also he granteth not only
that of reason it would so follow, but also that it is true indeed, that
for as so much as oiling and shaving be not the things that maketh
them priests, and good conditions they lack... therefore they be no
priests at all.

But forasmuch as he saith that he will assioil it so for lack of
other shift... he shall not need so to do; for I will find him another
shift myself—and a plain contrary shift—and assioil it
with "Nego consequentiam et consequens." For whereas he granteth both
to be true: I say that they be both false. And whereas he maketh
as though they were mine own words and the Messenger's with me—
in good faith, I neither remember them nor find them, albeit that
I have purposely looked for them in all such places of my Dialogue as

2 when... uttermost: i.e., after doing the utmost scrutinizing 3 lay: adduce 4, 17 properties: attributes; qualities
4, 18 requireth to: i.e., says there must 4-5, 14, etc. oiling and shaving: (their) being anointed and tonsured
6 should: would 7 Quoth-Your-Friend: i.e., the Messenger in More's Dialogue concerning Heresies,
whose words are often distinguished from More's by the use of "quoth he" and "quoth I." 7 quoth: said
7 deeply: solemnly 9, 19, 21 none: no 9, 20, 22, 31, 32 shift: recourse / way to do this
9 solve: answer / refute 9-10, 20 after... fashion: in an Oxford manner 10, 20 concedo: I concede
10, 20-21, 33 consequentiam... consequens: the consequence and whatever is deducible from it 12 tale: speech
14 allege: claim 15-16 nine... no: at least nine hundred would not be 16 lack: i.e., the deficiency
19 himself: he himself 20, 30, 32 assioil: refute 21 showeth: gives mention of
22 both twain: i.e., both of those two things 23 except: unless
25, 28 conditions: character traits; (priestly) dispositions 26 of reason: logically
27 for as so much as: since it is the case that 30 forasmuch as: seeing that; since 32 a plain contrary shift: an exactly opposite tactic
32 so: in that way 33 nogo: I deny 36 in good faith: in all honesty
36 find: i.e., have been able to find
methought it should be if it were there at all. And therefore leaving
that point in question between us till I come to reply to his Answer
made unto my Dialogue—at which time I shall read it over of
necessity and must needs find it if it be therein—I will in the meanwhile
not let, if I said it myself, to say that I said wrong. For by

And so do all good men. God’s grace, never will I wittingly while
I live defend the thing that myself
shall think untrue, though it had hapned me to say it myself;
but that I shall well and plainly revoke it and call it back, not
dissembling mine own oversight. And would God Tyndale would do
the like, and Luther too; they should then neither so stiffly defend so
shameless heresies as they do… nor make so shameless glosses of their
own former words, when they see them so reproved that they can in
no wise defend them… nor so shamefully change from worse to
worse, as Luther hath against his own conscience done in some
one matter thrice.

To the matter I say, therefore, that it is false that if oiling and
shaving be no part of the priesthood, then it must follow that of a
thousand there be nine hundred no priests at all. For I say that
oiling and shaving be no part of the priesthood indeed…but be holy
ceremonies used about the consecration; likewise as in Matrimony
and Baptism both, be divers holy ceremonies used that be not the
essential points of those sacraments. And therefore is it false that
if oiling and shaving be no part of the priesthood, the priest is no
priest for lack of priestly virtues. For the holy Sacrament of Order
is given him by the imposition of the bishop’s hands upon
him in such wise as the church of Christ useth and ever hath used
since the death of Christ unto these days.

And that the grace of God appointed unto Holy Orders is given
with that putting-upon of the hands… is twice declared by Saint

1 Tm 4:14 Paul in his epistles to Timothy—and that so
2 Tm 1:6 plainly that it grieveth Tyndale’s heart to
hear thereof, and maketh him to make a
mock thereat and say it was but like as a man layeth his hand on
a boy’s head when he calleth him “Good son.”

But the place is, for all that, so plain… that when Tyndale so
playeth therewith and so laugheth thereat, he laugheth but from the
lips forward, and girneth as a dog doth when one porreth him in the teeth with a stick. And thus have I proved the consequence to be false which Tyndale granteth for true. Now, to that other part, that is to wit, the consequent which he granteth for true also, I say that it is false also. For likewise as he granteth that a priest is no priest at all for lack of priestly conditions—so might he say as well that a Christian man is not christened at all, for lack of Christian conditions. And because Tyndale will have a priest nothing but an officer—yet after his own false and fond fashion he should not grant it for true. For then must he say that every evil officer—mayor, bailiff, constable, or sheriff—if he misuse himself in his office, were forthwith out of office. And thus ye see that the consequent is false which Tyndale also granteth to be true.

But all this business maketh he for hatred and despite that he beareth to priesthood, and to the Divine Service that the priests say, whereof himself saith none at all… and for the malice that he beareth to the Mass, which himself never saith… and unto the holy sacraments which the priests administereth, and which Tyndale utterly striveth to destroy.

Against Tyndale’s Translating of Caritas into “Love” Rather Than into “Charity”

Here maketh Tyndale a great process… and telleth us that “charity” hath in English speech divers significations: sometimes love, sometimes mercy, sometimes patience. And what is all this to purpose? Should he therefore leave out “charity” where it may conveniently stand? By this wise reason we should never use the word in one signification nor other… lest the one should be taken for the other. Now it liketh him to forget that the circumstances take away the doubt—which thing since he layeth so often for his excuse, he must be content that it also serve for his charge. For since this word “love,” that he setteth in the stead of “charity,” hath of itself some doubt also, whether it mean good or evil, but if the circumstance somewhat set it out: what need was it to put the indifferent word “love” in the place of the undoubted good word “charity,” thereas the sentence.

1 girneth: grins / shows his teeth // porreth: pokes 6, 8 conditions: dispositions 7 might: could 9 after . . . fashion: i.e., in that illegitimate and foolish fashion that is his own (not gotten from Oxford) 11 evil: bad // misuse: were to misconduct 12 his office: his official capacity // were: would be 14 business: to-do / ballyhoo // despite: contempt 15 Divine Service: Divine Office / breviary prayers 20 against: about 23 great process: big production 24 divers: several / various 25–26 what . . . purpose: what relevance does all this have to the point at issue 26 may: can 26 conveniently: appropriately 27 wise reason: brilliant reasoning 29 like: suits 32 against: about 23 great process: big production 24 divers: several / various 25–26 what . . . purpose: what relevance does all this have to the point at issue 26 may: can 26 conveniently: appropriately 27 wise reason: brilliant reasoning 29 like: suits 32 against: about 23 great process: big production 24 divers: several / various 25–26 what . . . purpose: what relevance does all this have to the point at issue 26 may: can 26 conveniently: appropriately 27 wise reason: brilliant reasoning 29 like: suits
well showed that it signified neither mercy nor patience, but love… and then the word signified that it meant good love, which is expressed by “charity”?

Then showeth he that the Greek word agape standeth so, sometimes, that he must needs interpret it “love” and not “charity”; as though I had found a fault with him because he used this word “love” in such places as this word “charity” might not conveniently stand!—whereas I find the fault in this: that he putteth out “charity” where it might well stand; and that so often that he seemeth to mislike the name of “charity.”

Charity

Now, because I say that every “love” is not charity, but only such love as is good and ordinate: Tyndale answereth me, “No more is every ‘faith’ Christ’s faith.” That wot we well enough; but yet, put by itself, it commonly signifieth “Christ’s faith,” in matters of the faith; so that when we mean a false faith, we be fain always to set some other word therewith, as when we say “Tyndale’s faith,” “Luther’s faith,” “Friar Huessgen’s faith,” and such other like.

He putteth another example by this word “hope,” and saith that every “hope” is not a Christian hope… and yet he must use it, and a thousand other words like, such as be indifferent and signify both good and bad… all which if he should eschew, he should, he saith, translate nothing at all.

Who biddeth him leave all such words out? Or who saith that he should never put in this word “love”? He answereth the thing that no man layeth to his charge; and the thing that I lay to his charge

Hope

he leaveth ever unanswered. For go me to his word “hope,” which is indifferent, and signifieth as well hope of getting the “love” of his leman as hope of reward in heaven for charity borne to his enemy. Though this be thus, yet if there were in English a word that signifieth no hope but a good, godly hope (as “charity” signifieth no love but a good, godly love), then were he an evil translator that, where the place in Greek or Latin speaketh of good hope, would not translate it into that English word that signifieth none other hope but good.

And therefore it well appeareth that Tyndale doth not well when thereas the Scripture speaketh of good love, he had liefer translate it by the word “love,” that is indifferent to both good and bad, than by the word “charity,” that signifieth no love but good. This is it that I
charge him with, and to this I would have him answer once... and not, leaving this untouched, walk and wander at large and never meet with the matter.

Tyndale

[Yet saith he farther:] Agape and caritas were words used among heathen men ere Christ came, and signified, therefore, more than a godly love. And we may say well enough—and I have heard it spoken—that “the Turks be charitable one to another among themselves, and some of them unto Christian men.” Besides all this, agape is common to all loves.

More

Yet he is in hand again with agape often... and bringeth not forth one wise word. For though this Greek word agape signify love indifferently, good and bad—yet this word “charity” signifieth no love but good. And therefore in such places of Scripture as agape signifieth good love, why should Tyndale, translating into English, rather take this word “love”—that signifieth no more good love than bad—rather than this word “charity,” that signifieth no love but good? This I ask him yet again!

Now, though this Latin word caritas was a word used among the heathen ere Christ came... and though it had signified in Latin at that time, among them, an evil love and a naughty—yet this English word “charity” never signified among us any other love than good; not even in that speech that Tyndale speakeoth of, that “Turks be charitable among themselves, and some of them to Christian people too”... where it signifieth yet rather pity than love. And therefore Tyndale must in his English translation take his English words as they signify in English, rather than as the words signify in the tongue out of which they were taken into the English. And yet remember I not that caritas in the Latin tongue was used to signify evil love.

And I say to Tyndale yet further, that though this English word “charity” had been English before the birth of Christ, and had then signified among English infidels an evil, wanton love—yea, though it had then, among them, signified none other love but naughty—yet since it signifieth not that but the contrary now in our time, and so hath signified long before our days... Tyndale must needs in his

Note

1 once: i.e., for once  2 untouched: not discussed  3 meet: deal  4 matter: issue  5 yet saith he farther: i.e., he also goes on to say  6, 21 ere: before  7 may: can  8 well: rightly  9 agape: i.e., being called agape  10 12–13 bringeth... word: i.e., says not one sensible thing about it  13, 21, 31, 34 though: even if  13 signify: i.e., does signify  14 indifferently: impartially  15 places: passages; texts  16 as: i.e., where  17 an... naughty: i.e., a bad, immoral love  18 speech: thing said  19 tongue: language  22 an... evil: a bad  28, 30, 33 (an) evil: a bad  30 that: i.e., any instance in which  33 wanton: dissolute  34 none: no  35 naughty: i.e., an immoral one
English translation use his English words in such signification as the people useth them in his own time, and not in such signification as they were used in of old time, which the people have changed and forgotten hundreds of years ere he were born.

For else he should make a gay confusion, if he would in the matters of virtue and Christian faith use the old words after the old fashion… and take fides for nothing but such as it signified ere Christ came. Then wheresoever he found in Saint Augustine and other holy doctors “persona Patris,” “persona Filii,” “persona Spiritus Sancti”… Tyndale must call them not the “persons” but the “visors” of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost… and make men ween that they dance in a mask.

And thus yet again ye see to how little purpose this reason serveth Tyndale, that agape and caritas were words used among the heathen ere Christ was born.

Tyndale

Finally, I say not “Charity God,” or “Charity your neighbor,” but “Love God,” and “Love your neighbor.”

More

This is a pretty point of juggling… by which he would make the reader look aside, that himself might play a false cast the while… and men should not see wherein the question standeth. For he maketh as though I reproved that he hath this word “love” in his translation in any place at all, whereas I neither so said nor so thought. But the fault I found—as in my Dialogue I said plainly enough—was that he rather chose to use this word “love” than this word “charity” in such places as he might well have used this word “charity”… and where the Latin text was caritas, and where this holy word “charity” was more proper for the matter than this indifferent word “love.”

This was the fault that I found. And therefore whereof serveth his trifling between the noun and the verb? I let him not to say “Love thy neighbor”; nor I bid him not say “Charity thy neighbor,” nor “Good-affection thy neighbor,” nor “Good-mind thy neighbor,” no more than “Drink thy neighbor.” And yet as he may say there “Give thy neighbor drink”… so may he if it please him say “Bear thy neighbor good mind,” “Bear thy neighbor charity.”

3 of old time: in days of old  4, 7, 15 ere: before  4 were: i.e., was  5 gay confusion: fine mess  9 holy doctors: Church theologians  10 visors: personas; guises  11 ween: think  12 mask: i.e., masquerade; masked ball  13 to . . . serveth: i.e., how little good this consideration does  20 pretty point: clever act  21 juggling: sleight of hand  21 false cast: deceptive trick  24 the while: during that time  26—28: See DH 286/35—289/2.  27 might well: could rightly  29 matter: thing being expressed  30 indifferent: neutral / equivocal  31 trifling . . . verb: i.e., silly playing of his noun-into-verb game  33 good-mind: good-disposition  35 good mind: a good disposition
Tyndale

Though we say a man ought to “love” his neighbor’s wife or his neighbor’s daughter, a Christian man doth not understand that he is commanded to defile his neighbor’s wife nor his neighbor’s daughter.

More

This matter is somewhat amended here by this word “ought to love.”” But else if Tyndale fall not to the “charitying” but to the “loving” of his neighbor’s wife, or the “loving” of his neighbor’s daughter, I had as lief he bore them both a bare charity as with the frail feminine sex fall too far in “love,” namely since he saith that priests must needs have wives.

But whereof serveth him this example? Did any man forbid him to use this word “love”? He maketh as though I forbade that word utterly… because I forbid it him where he should not use it but “charity.” Thus crieth he out upon all the Church… and saith they forbid all matrimony, because they forbid the banns between friars and nuns.

Against Tyndale’s Translating

“Favor” Instead of “Grace”

Tyndale

And with like reasons rageth he because I turn charis into “favor,” and not into “grace”… saying that “every favor is not grace,” and that “in some favor there is but little grace.” I can say also in some grace there is little goodness—as when we say, “He standeth well in my lady’s grace,” we understand no great godly favor; and in universities there be many ungracious graces gotten.

More

This is all that he saith for his putting out of “grace” and setting in of “favor.” And I pray you consider what cause hath he now shown why he so should do! And yet his title of this chapter is “Why ‘Favor’ and Not ‘Grace,’” as though he would tell you why. And hath he now shown you any cause at all?—but thinketh that his proper scoffing is sufficient to change the known, holy names of

3 understand: i.e., take this to mean
7 matter: contention // word: expression
10 had as lief he bore: would as soon have him bear // bare: slight; meager
11 namely: especially
12 needs: necessarily
13 whereof . . . example: what does this example do for him
16 upon all the Church: i.e., against all the Church authorities
19 against: about
22 reasons: arguments
23 every . . . is not: i.e., not every . . . is
27 gracious: i.e., dispensations from some of their statutory requirements for getting a degree
29 putting out: i.e., rejecting
30 pray you: ask you to
32 would: was going to
33 shown . . . cause: i.e., reason he has now given
34 proper: splendid
35 to change: i.e., justification of his having changed
virtue, through all Scripture, into such words as himself liketh. And now he pleaseth himself wonderfully well because he hath found out so feately that pretty scoff that “grace” signifieth sometimes no good, as when a man “standeth well in his lady’s grace.” But he seeth well that I find with him the fault for changing “grace” into “favor” where the Scripture speaketh not of “the grace of my lady,” but of “the grace of our Lord.” In speaking whereof—albeit that God’s favor is never but good—yet is in respect unto his creature his

\[ \text{God’s grace and favor is not always one.} \]

he both favoreth for his grace and giveth grace for his favor… and favoreth for his mercy… and yet his favor and his mercy not both one, in respect, I say, to his creatures, though his own nature be so entire and whole that all that ever is in him is all one. And yet, where he putteth his example of “standing in his lady’s grace”… because it is yet but indifferent, for that may be good enough, he should have made the example by lewd Luther and his lewd lady’s grace. And when he saith that in the university many ungracious graces be gotten, he should have made it more plain and better perceived if he had said as for example, when his own Grace was there granted to be made Master of Art. And thus “graciously” hath he acquitted himself in putting out of “grace.”

Against Tyndale’s Changing of “Confession” into “Knowledge,” and “Penance” into “Repentance”

Tyndale

And that I use this word “knowledge” and not “confession,” and this word “repentance” and not “penance”—in all which he cannot prove that I give not the right English unto the Greek word.

More

This is plain untrue that Tyndale saith, as I have plainly shown already in the words “church,” “priest,” “charity,” and “grace”; all which chapters whoso read and consider from the beginning, and advise well Tyndale’s words and mine, be he learned, be he not learned, that readeth them, if he have natural wit and be but indifferent… he shall, I doubt not, find Tyndale in these points so

1 such... likely: i.e., whatever words suit him  
2 pleaseth... well: is extremely pleased with himself  
3 found out so feately: so deftly come up with  
4 pretty: clever  
5 no: i.e., something not  
6 but: other than  
7 8, 12 respect: relation  
8 9, 10, 12 one: i.e., the same thing  
9 10, 11 for: on account of  
12 not: are not  
13 entire and whole: unitary and undivided  
14 yet: moreover  
15 made the example by: i.e., used for that example  
16 lewd: lascivious / sorry  
17 ungracious: devoid-of-grace; unholy  
18 against: about  
19 Grace: i.e., university-approved self / noble personage  
20 putting out: i.e., his rejecting  
21 whoso: i.e., whoever will  
22 advise: ponder  
23 natural wit: natural intelligence / common sense  
24, 26 knowledge: acknowledgement  
25 27, 31 in: with regard to  
26 27 all which: i.e., all of which instances  
28 but: i.e., at least  
29 indifferent: unbiased  
30 in: on
clearly confounded that he shall trust both his learning the less and
his wit the worse, while he liveth after. Besides that he shall perceive
also malice, hatred, and envy so stuffed in Tyndale’s heart that
although he had great wit and learning both, yet must the mist
of such blind affections needs blindfold them both.

Tyndale
But it is a far other thing that paineth them and biteth them by
the breasts. There be secret pangs that pinch the very hearts of
them, whereof they dare not complain. The sickness that maketh
them so impatient is that they have lost their juggling terms. For
the doctors-preachers were wont to make many divisions, distinctions,
and sorts of grace: \textit{gratis data}, \textit{gratum faciens}, \textit{praeveniens},
and \textit{subsequens}.

More
Nay, God be thanked, they have \textit{not} lost these terms yet, and God
forbid they should. For these terms of grace be no English terms,
but terms necessary for the true knowledge of God’s gifts and
graces. But \textit{Tyndale} hath indeed lost them, from whose heart the
devil hath juggled all grace save \textit{gratia gratis data}—and yet that too,
almost; with which \textit{gratia gratis data}, all had he thereof much more
than he hath, he might go forth as he goeth: the straight way down
to the devil. For those be graces and gifts as God giveth a man
whereof he may make a matter of virtue or a matter of vice, as him
list to use them; and abusing them, to vice, the man is much the
worse for them: as beauty, strength, learning, or wit. \textit{Gratia gratum
Gratia gratum faciens} \textit{faciens} is that grace by which the man is
acceptable to God: as the grace given in
the baptism, though it be to children; and the grace with which
in faith, hope, and charity man worketh good works—watch, fast,
pray, give alms, and such other like as God rewardeth in heaven.
Now, forasmuch as man can do no good but if God begin (and he is
always ready to begin!), therefore the grace with which God beginneth
\textit{Gratia praeveniens} to set us a-work is called \textit{gratia praeveniens}.
And forasmuch as we should soon
cease to but if grace continued with us (as our eye should cease to
see if that we lacked light), God continueth his grace with us to

\begin{itemize}
    \item \textit{clearly confounded}: thoroughly confuted / manifestly defeated
    \item \textit{trust .. worse}: i.e., have both less confidence in
    Tyndale’s being learned and even less in his being intelligent
    \item \textit{Tyndale’s .. heart}: as long as Tyndale lives thereafter
    \item \textit{that .. intelligence}: passions
    \item \textit{affections}: inevitably
    \item \textit{breasts}: cuts them to the quick; hits them where they live
    \item \textit{pinch}: wrench; torment
    \item \textit{sickness}: ailment
    \item \textit{impatient}: irritable
    \item \textit{gratia .. data} - freely given
    \item \textit{gratia .. data} - given to make (one pleasing to God). (This \textit{gratia} is what is now called “actual” grace.)
    \item \textit{gratia .. data} - given to make (one pleasing to God). (This \textit{gratia} is sanctifying grace.)
    \item \textit{praeveniens} - preventient; anticipatory. (This grace and \textit{gratia subsequens} are subcategories of sanctifying grace.)
    \item \textit{begin}: i.e., postulate
    \item \textit{sorts}: subsets
    \item \textit{be no}: are not
    \item \textit{but .. way}: could still keep going the way he’s
going: on that direct path
    \item \textit{abusing}: misapplying
    \item \textit{as .. watch}: keep vigil
    \item \textit{him list}: he chooses
    \item \textit{nothing}
    \item \textit{begin .. initiates it}
    \item \textit{begin .. take that initiative}
    \item \textit{to .. to work at doing good deeds}
    \item \textit{if that}: i.e., if it happened that
\end{itemize}
Gratia cooperans work with us… which is called gratia cooperans. And yet, forasmuch as he that well worketh with grace deserveth of God, by God’s goodness, increase of grace, according to the Gospel—“Omni habenti dabitur et Mi 25:29 abundabit” (“To every man that hath, there shall be given, and he shall abound.”) that well bestoweth his talents of grace and worketh well therewith)—therefore the grace that God giveth a man for the good use of his
Gratia subsequens former grace may be called gratia subsequens. And finally, forasmuch as grace persevering with man at his end bringeth him to glory… which whoso attaineth is then in surety of steadfast and imperishable
Gratia consummans grace and favor of God: this final grace is called gratia consummans, that is, grace that perfecteth the thing.

Now, since every man perceiveth well that albeit that in God all is one grace, with which he preventeth our good works, and with which he helpeth them forth in the progress, and which addeth and maketh more abound, and with which he perfecteth his creature in glory—yet since that in us and our works it is diversely considered after diverse respects… and of every each of those respects falleth necessity for men in schools oftentimes to speak (especially for the reproof of those heretics that would have no divisions nor distinctions whereby the thing should be made open and plain, but would blind and beguile their hearers with darkness and confusion), reason requireth to give every diverse respect a diverse name among them that must often speak thereof… except that they should in an argument at every third word repeat a whole tale, where one word agreed upon may well and sufficiently serve.
And therefore ye may see that these be no juggling terms, but terms devised with good reason and of necessity. But surely the false, subtle juggler the devil hath taught these young jugglers, his scholars Luther, Huessgen, and Tyndale, to fall to such false juggling… that they labor sore to juggle away, not only those terms of grace, and the very name of “grace,” out of men’s ears… but also the belief of all grace, and therewith the effect of all grace, clean out of
men’s hearts; and, free will and grace taken away, to make men
believe that there is nothing at all but destiny. And so, pretending
liberty, they put all in thralldom; and pretending virtue, they
drive men to vice; and pretending God, they drive men to the
devil. And this is Tyndale’s juggling… which because he would not
were perceived—to dissemble his false juggling and have it taken
for truth—he calleth the plain truth by the name of “juggling,” as ye
shall hear by and by.

Tyndale

With “confession” they juggled, and made the people, as oft as they
spoke of it, understand shrift in the ear; whereof the Scripture
maketh no mention. No—it is clean against the Scripture, as they
use it and preach it; and unto God an abomination, and a foul,
stinking sacrifice unto the filthy idol Priapus.

More

This high, godly, “spiritual” man taketh for none abomination at all,
but can abide well and hold very well with, and not defend it
only, but commend it also… that a nun consecrated unto God
should run out of religion and do foul, stinking sacrifice to that
filthy idol of Priapus that Friar Luther beareth about to gather in
his offering with; and that they shall both, and a great many such
ribalds more… shamefully show their abominable bitchery, to the
corruption of the world, openly. But he cannot abide in no wise
that any man should so repent his secret sin that he should unto
his confessor show it secretly. This can Tyndale in no wise abide.

And why? For he would rather have sin shown in shameless
boasting, whereby it might increase and grow… than shamefastly
shown in confession, where it might be weeded out and cast away.

I purpose not here to fall in dispicions with Tyndale for the
matter; nor at every lewd fellow’s blasphemy… to bring the blessed
sacraments in question. For since Tyndale cannot himself deny
Confession

but that Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome,
Saint Ambrose, Saint Gregory, Saint
Cyprian, and other holy saints have both used, allowed, commended,
and taken confession for a necessary part of penance; and

and every good man hath in himself ever found no little spiritual

2 destiny: predestination / fate 2, 3, 4 pretending: touting 3 all: everyone // thralldom: slavery
5, 6 juggling: trick-playing; conning 5–6 would not were: i.e., does not want
6 dissemble: camouflage; smokescreen // false: deceitful / despicable 7 for: i.e., for a telling of the
7 juggling: a con 8 by and by: right now 10 with: i.e., with the word
10 juggled: did a con job; pulled a fast one // as oft as: i.e., whenever
11 understand: i.e., understand by it
11 shrift in the ear: oral confession; i.e., confession to a priest 12 clean: completely
13 use: practice
14, 20 Priapus: i.e., the penis. (Priapus, the Greek and Roman god of procreation, was usually depicted with a very
conspicuous one.) 16 high: lofty / superior // none: no 17 hold very well with: very well go along with
19 run out of religion: abscond from religious life 22 ribalds: degenerates; profligates
23, 25 in no wise: by no means 25 show it: make it known 26 for: because 26, 28 shown: made known
27 shamefastly: ashamedly 27, 28 might: could 29 fall in dispicions: get into disputations // for: i.e., over
30 lewd: crass / vile / ignorant // fellow’s: good-for-nothing’s 31 in: into 32 but that: that
33 Gregory: i.e., Gregory the Great 34 used: practiced / made use of // allowed: approved of; sanctioned
34–35 commended . . . confession: i.e., and recommended confession, and taken it
profit and soul-comfort therein: it shall not now greatly force
what a newfound sort of heretics bark and bawl thereat.
And as for this word “knowledge,” is very far from the Greek word
exomologesis… and as far from the Latin word confessio… and yet much
more from the very matter itself—that is to wit, from the Sacrament of
Penance. For both the Greek word and the Latin do signify an
opening and a showing of the thing—and the matter itself meaneth a
willingly offered declaration of the secret, hidden sin—and this
English word “knowledge” is ambiguous and doubtful. For as it is a
noun, it signifieth but the knowing of a thing, or understanding…
as where a man saith, “This child hath yet no knowledge neither of
good nor evil.” And when it is a verb, or that it is turned into this
word “knowledging”… yet signifieth it rather not denying than the
willingly telling of our own fault, and namely of our own
offer. For that noun “knowledging” and that verb “knowledge” hath
in our tongue their proper place where the fault is by some other
laid unto a man’s charge… and where this Latin word agnosco or
agnitio may stand in the place if they talked in Latin. As where we
say of a stubborn body that standeth still in the denying of his
fault that is laid before his face, “This man will not knowledge his fault,”
or “He will not be acknown of his fault.” And therefore is this word
“knowledge” or “knowledging” not very meet nor very proper neither for
the Greek word nor the Latin—and least of all for the matter, since
that confessing and confession is the willingly made declaration
of our sin unlaid unto us by any man save ourself. In which
doing though the penitent use among with his confessor this
word “knowledging”—yet is it rather his willing behavior that serveth
the matter than the property of that English word.

Now, if Tyndale will tell us that “confession” and “confessing” is
drawn out of the Latin, and then will ask me what English word
had we for the thing before: I ween we had before, none at all; but
ever since, the proper English word hath been “shrift” and
“shriving.” For, saving that the goodness of God brought in that
thing with his holy sacrament of Penance (which was brought
in by the Latins), men were, I ween, far off from confessing of their
faults themselves of their own offer—and scantly would knowledge
them when they were laid unto their charge and proved to their

1 force: matter 2 newfound: newly encountered / recently contrived 3 knowledge: acknowledgement / knowledge 4-5 yet much more: i.e., much more yet 5, 7 itself: i.e., itself that is at issue 6 an opening: a disclosing 7 showing: revealing 8, 24 willingly: voluntarily 9 doubiful: indeterminate 11 yet: as yet 11-12 neither . . . evil: i.e., about either good or evil 13, 15, etc. knowing: acknowledging / acknowledgement 14 willingly: i.e., voluntary 14, 16, etc. fault(s): misdeed(s); wrongdoing(s) 14 namely: especially 15, 36 offer: initiative 15, 20, 22, 36 knowledge: acknowledge 16 tongue: language 17 some other: some other man / someone else 18 may: could 19 body: individual 20 is laid before: i.e., he is being accused of to 21 be acknowledged: admit 22 meet: fitting 23 matter: matter at issue 23-24 since that: given that 25 our . . . ourself: i.e., a sin of ours that we aren’t being accused of by anyone other than our own self 26 though . . . among: even if the penitent does occasionally use 27-28 his . . . property: i.e., the voluntary aspect of his behavior that is germane to the issue… than the actual aptness 30 drawn out of: derived from 31 ween: think 32 proper: normal 33 in: i.e., about 34-35 brought in: introduced 35 the Latin: i.e., people who spoke Latin 36 scantily: scarcely 37 laid unto their charge: charged against them
face. Only God hath brought in, with the grace of the sacrament, that men are so supplied and made humble in heart that they will willingly go show themselves their own sins to the priest (whom God hath there appointed in his stead), and there abide the shame and the rebuke thereof, and lowly submit themselves to such pain and penance as their confessor shall assign them, and the same faithfully fulfill in punishment of themselves for their sin.

But this is it that Tyndale meaneth: he would have all willing confession quite cast away, and all penance-doing too, as himself showeth by and by.

Tyndale
AND in like manner, by this word “penance” they make the people understand holy deeds of their enjoining, with which they must make satisfaction to-God-ward for their sins—when all the Scripture preacheth that Christ hath made full satisfaction for our sins!

More
This is a great sin, lo: that ever any man should take pain for his sin. Now, though the Scripture preacheth that Christ hath made full satisfaction for our sins—yet would I fain that Tyndale should tell me where he findeth any one place in Scripture that Christ’s satisfaction for our sins is in such wise full that he will there be no pain put unto us therefor. Let us consider his own words that follow.

Tyndale
AND we must now be thankful to God, again, and kill the lusts of our flesh with holy works of God’s enjoining, and . . . to take patiently all that God layeth on my back.

More
This is well and holily spoken. But now let pass, for this once, holy Luther and his holy nun with all their holy works that they work together, in killing the lusts of their flesh, in showing themselves thankful, again, to God.

I will ask Tyndale, first, whether such holy works as God hath taught his Church to be enjoined unto him by his ghostly father… be not enjoined unto him by God. If not, he taketh away all the commandments of father and mother, prelate and prince, that

1 brought in: i.e., brought it about 2 supplled: rendered pliant 3 willingly: voluntarily
4 show: tell 6 pain: suffering 8 willing: voluntary 9 quite cast away: entirely done away with
9 himself: he himself 10 showeth by and by: immediately makes clear
14 to-God-ward: i.e., directed toward God; in relation to God 18 lo: i.e., oh yes
18 take pain: suffer pain / undergo punishment 20 fain . . . should: i.e., sure like for Tyndale to
21 any: so much as // place: i.e., statement 22 wise: a way // will: will have
23 therefore: for them / for that 26, 33 again: in response 28 patiently: uncomplainingly
30 well and: quite // let: i.e. let’s let 35 be: i.e., have // him: i.e., the penitent // ghostly: spiritual
37 prince: i.e., secular ruler
commandeth any good thing to be done to God’s honor; unto all which persons in all such commandments, God commandeth Tyndale and every man else to be obedient, and accounteth their commandments for his own.

Yet if Tyndale will no pain enjoined but by God’s own mouth… nor suffer nothing laid upon his back but if God truss up the pack himself and with his own hands, and bind it upon his back with a packsaddle: then will I yet wit of Tyndale whether God do not enjoin any such holy works, or lay any such burden upon the backs of repentant sinners, for the sins that be past, and whereof he is already repentant.

If Tyndale answer no: then shall we put him in remembrance of many places in Holy Scripture… as well in Exodus, where he promiseth to punish the people for their idolatry notwithstanding their repentance and his remission too…

Ex 32:32–35; 34:6–7... their repentance and his remission too… as in the Second Book of Kings, where he punished King David for his manslaughter and adultery notwithstanding his repentance… and many places besides.

Now, if he grant that God punisheth the sin notwithstanding the repentance of the penitent and the remission of his displeasure: then granteth he, and so must he grant, that albeit one drop of Christ’s precious blood had been sufficient to satisfy for all the sins of this whole world—and for all the pain, also, that were in any wise due to the same—yet hath it not pleased him so to order it. But lest that such short forgiveness, as well of all the pain as of the displeasure of God, and of the deadliness (or, as men might say, of the “damnability”) belonging to the mortal offense, might make men wax the worse and set much the less by sin: he forgiveth at the repenting, and by the shrift and absolution, his high indignation whereupon followeth the perpetual banishment from the sight of his face and fruition of his glory into the eternal torment of hell; but he leaveth ordinarily some temporal pain to be sustained for the evil act past—and that to be suffered either here by good works of penance-doing, or other satisfactory pains or good works either in this world here or after this world in purgatory… but if they be by other folk’s good deeds

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2 in: regarding   5 will: i.e., will have   5, 23 pain: punishment   6 suffer nothing: i.e., let anything be 6 but if: unless   8 wit: inquire   9 do: does   13, 18 places: passages   15 remission: forgiveness 16 the Second Book of Kings: i.e., 2 Samuel   17 manslaughter and: i.e., indirect murdering and his 22 had: would have 24 wise: way   25 short: quick   25 order: arrange 25 forgiveness(es): forgiveness(es) / remission(s)   26 all the pain: i.e., the whole debt of punishment 27 displeasure of: offense against   27 deadline: lethality   28 men: i.e., one   29 wax: become 29–30 set . . . sin: have much less concern about sin; consider sin much less of a big deal 30 forgiveth: lets go of   31 indigination: righteous wrath 32 fruition: enjoyment 36 satisfactory: satisfaction-making 210/37—211/1 but . . . relieved: i.e., unless they are, through God’s goodness, relieved by good deeds done for them by other folk
done for them through God’s goodness relieved. And this, I say, as by
good authorities appeareth, our Lord doth ordinarily; not forbarring
his absolute merciful power, whereby he may do when he
will what he will.

Now, if Tyndale grant, as he needs must, that notwithstanding
the repentance and the remission both—and Christ’s
satisfaction also for the eternality of the pain, and full restitution
to God’s favor—yet there remaineth a temporal pain, or by
good, holy works, other satisfaction for the same: then is it not
against all Scripture (as Tyndale saith it is), nor against any part
thereof, neither, that men shall with penance-doing endeavor themselves
to satisfy for that pain... since it is not God’s ordinary pleasure
that his Passion shall serve every man for the satisfaction of that
pain, because it accordeth not with his ordinary justice... lest, the
fear of all pain utterly taken away, men were likely to make little
force how boldly they fall to sin.

And then if it be well done that a man for his sin willingly
punish himself, why may he not meekly submit his will to the
counsel of his confessor and take penance at his hand?

Tyndale

And if I have hurt my neighbor, I am bound to shrive myself
unto him, and make him amends if I have wherewith; or if not,
then to ask him forgiveness.... and he is bound to forgive me. As
for their “penance,” the Scripture knoweth not of.

More

He never bringeth in a good word but for an evil purpose. He
saith here very well concerning our duty toward our neighbors.
But he saith maliciously—to make us withdraw our duty toward
God, for the satisfaction of the temporal pain that is due for our
sin, after the restitution to God’s favor, and the eternality of the
pain forgiven. And that pain God hath not ordained of common
course to be satisfied by the only merits of Christ’s Passion... but
if men’s works wrought with his grace be added thereunto.

Tyndale

As for their “penance,” the Scripture knoweth not. The Greek hath
metanoia and metanoite—“repentance” and “repent,” or “forthink”
and “forthink”; as we say in English, “It forthinketh me,” or “I forthink,”
and “I repent,” or “It repenteth me,” and “I am sorry,” that I did.
More

Tyndale here beareth us in hand that the Scripture speaketh not of “penance”… because himself giveth the Greek word another English name. And because that Tyndale calleth it “forthinking” and “repentance”—therefore all Englishmen have ever hitherto misused their own language in calling the thing by the name of “penance.”

Now, as for the word “penance”—whatsoever the Greek word be, it ever was and yet it is lawful enough (so that Tyndale give us leave) to call anything in English by what word soever Englishmen by common custom agree upon. And therefore, to make a change of the English word as though that all England should go to school with Tyndale to learn English… is a very frantic folly.

But, now, the matter standeth not therein at all. For Tyndale is not angry with the word but because of the matter. For this grieveth Luther and him: that by “penance” we understand, when we speak thereof, so many good things therein… and not a bare repenting or forthinginking only, but also every part of the Sacrament of Penance—Penance includeth three things. confession of mouth, contrition of heart, and satisfaction by good deeds.

For if we called it but the sacrament of “repentance,” and by that word would understand as much good thereby as we now do by the word “penance”—Tyndale would be then as angry with “repentance” as he is now with “penance.” For he hateth nothing but to hear that men should do any good.

We have, for our poor English word “penance,” the use of all Englishmen since Penance first began among them. And that is authority enough for an English word… except Tyndale will bind us to fetch authority of reason for every word, of every language, out of Albert’s De modis significandi… because that Friar Luther, Friar Huessgen, and Friar Lambert have so sore set their study upon Albert’s De secretis mulierum. And yet, if he will needs press upon us therewith, we may say that we take in “penance” of the Latin word paenitentia, which the Church useth for the same sacrament; or we may say that the word “penance” is derived and cometh of the word pain… which both in heart, in word, and in deed, the penitent should endeavor himself to conceive and sustain for his sin. But this is it that Tyndale so sore doth abhor. For he consequently saith…
Tyndale

So, now, the Scripture saith, "Repent" (or "Let it forthink you") “and come and believe the Gospel” (or "glad tidings") “that is brought you in Christ; and so shall all be forgiven you; and henceforth live a new life.”

More

Here seemeth a godly thing, and is in deed very devilish. For the words that be spoken to the heathen to come to Christendom—in the entry whereof, at Baptism, they be new-regenerated to God, and cleansed clean and purged from all spots—these words draweth Tyndale to them that be christened already, and keep their belief still, and yet fall into deadly sin again. For whose reconciliation again to God, our Lord hath of his goodness instituted the Sacrament of Penance—without which they that after Baptism fall again to sin do lose the fruit of their baptism if the time serve them to take it.

Penance

And therefore saith holy Saint Jerome that the Sacrament of Penance is the board upon which a man getteth to land and saveth himself after the shipwreck. Which words of his, Luther in his book of Babylonica sore dispraiseth. For Saint Jerome showeth that the Sacrament of Baptism is the ship, and was figured by the ship of Noah, out of which there was no man saved. And when a man breaketh the ship of his baptism in the storm of temptation, and falleth into the deep sea of sin: then hath he yet his remedy provided by God, if he catch hold upon the board of the salt sacrament of Penance and so swim… and God will help while he laboreth himself to land. But Luther and Tyndale would have us ween that after Baptism there needeth no more but repent… and by and by all is gone again and clean washed away—sin and pain eternal and temporal and altogether—and the man in like case as when he came first from the font.

But whoso consider well the words of Saint Paul in the sixth chapter unto the Hebrews shall find it far unlike… where Saint Paul saith in this wise: “It is impossible that they which have been once illumined, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have been made partners of

2 forthink you: cause you regret  6 deed: reality  7 to come: i.e., about to come / coming
7 to Christendom: into Christianity  9 from: i.e., of  // spots: stains  // draweth: diverts
10 keep . . . still: i.e., continue to keep their belief in Christ and the Gospel
11 into . . . again: back into mortal sin  12 again: back  14 again to: i.e., back into mortal
14 fruit: benefit  14–15 the time . . . it: i.e., they are given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Penance
20 sore dispraiseth: strongly criticizes  // showeth: says  21 figured: prefigured
22 out: outside; other than inside  23 breaketh: wrecks  25 salt: preservative
27 laboreth himself to: strenuously moves himself toward  28 ween: believe
28 there needeth no more: i.e., nothing more need be done  28–29 by and by: immediately
29 clean: completely  // pain: (debt of) punishment  30 altogether: everything  // like case: the same condition
31 came . . . font: i.e., first came away from the baptismal font  33 into: i.e., of his letter to
34 saith in this wise: speaks as follows  35 they which: those who
35 illumined: brought into the light / enlightened  36 partners: partakers
the Holy Ghost, and have also tasted the good word of God and the
powers of the world to come, and then are slidden down, should be
renewed again by penance, crucifying again to themselves the
Son of God and having him in derision.”

Here showeth this blessed apostle Paul that the deadly sin
committed after Baptism... putteth a man in that case that it shall
be very hard (for so is “impossible” sometimes
taken in Scripture) by penance to
be renewed again; that is to wit, to come again to Baptism, or

The great force of Baptism... to the state of Baptism, in which we
be so fully renewed, and the old sin so
fully forgiven, that we be forthwith in such wise innocents that
if we died forthwith, there were neither eternal pain nor temporal
pain appointed for us (that is to wit, neither hell nor purgatory);
but that deadly sin committed after Baptism, is very
hard by the Sacrament of Penance—confession, contrition, and
great pain taken, too—to bring us again in the case that the
temporal pain due therefor in purgatory shall be worn all out, by
our penance done here. In all which things we never exclude
the special privilege of God’s absolute mercy. For by his mighty
mercy the thing that is impossible to man is not impossible to God—
as our Savior saith in the Gospel of Matthew. But I speak of the
Mt 19:26 ordinary course of his common ordinance—
in which is excepted also the prayers

and good deeds with which any man is besides his own penance
helped and relieved with the good deeds of other men’s charity,
Other men’s good deeds or the spiritual treasure of Christ’s church
relieveth us.

upon good cause applied conveniently
toward the redeeming of his temporal
pain. But else I say—by the authority of Saint Paul in this place—
that it shall be very hard for a man by penance wrought in grace to
be restored again to the state of Baptism, clear from all pain due
for the sin.

For since the Sacrament of Baptism, which regenerateth us and
maketh us new creatures, doth not so fully apply the Passion of Christ
for our satisfaction that it so dischargeth us from all the pain of
sin but that we sustain yet, every man for himself, the painful

2 slidden down: backslidden  3, 9, 11 renewed: made new; regenerated  3 to: for
4 having him in derision: exposing him to ridicule  5 the deadly: i.e., a mortal  6, 17 case: situation
8 taken: used as meaning  9, 14 to wit: i.e., to say  10 force: impact  // to: into
11 the old: i.e., any and every previous 12 wise: a way  13 were: would be
13, 14, 18, 30 pain: punishment 14 appointed for: assigned to  15 deadly: mortal
15 committed: i.e., having been committed  // is: i.e., it is
17 great pain taken: i.e., a severe penance carried out  // bring... the: i.e., get ourselves brought back into such a
therefor: i.e., for that forgiven sin // worn all out: completely exhausted / totally taken care of
18 exclude: leave out of consideration  21 the thing: something  // to: for  22 speak: i.e., am speaking
24 is excepted also: i.e., are also not included  26 of other men’s: i.e., done for him by other men out of charity
28 conveniently: suitably  29 redeeming of his: i.e., the payment of his debt of  30 place: passage
31 wrought in: i.e., done in the state of  32 again: back  // clear... due: i.e., free of all debt of punishment
36 for our satisfaction: i.e., to the satisfaction that needs to be made for our sins
36 dischargeth... of: disburdens us of the whole penalty for
twitch of bodily death: we may well believe the Apostle in this place, that the pain temporally due to our actual sin committed after Baptism is not so soon worn out and paid by penance but that it is, as Saint Paul saith, a thing very hard to do. For the spiritual creature which Baptism begetteth and createth of new… Penance, finding by sin again allto frushed, plastereth and patcheth up, and maketh much work to cure the wound and bring it to a scar.

I could for my part be very well content that sin and pain and all were as shortly gone as Tyndale telleth us. But I were loath that he deceived us if it be not so. And therefore, to the intent it may the better appear that penance is necessary—and that to return to God and clean to be forgiven is not so light a thing as Tyndale maketh it, but that the church of Christ appointing pain for the sin (and not a bare forthinking or repentance, as Tyndale would have it) is therein taught by the Holy Spirit of God—let The manner how to return to God every man consider in what wise the prophet Joel describeth the manner with which man should return to God again after sin: “The

Jl 2:12–13 Lord saith, Return to me with all your heart, in fasting, in weeping, and wailing. Tear your hearts and not your garments, and return to your Lord God. For he is benign and merciful, patient, and plenteous of mercy, and ready to forgive sin.”

Tyndale

And it will follow if I repent in the heart… that I shall do no more so willingly and of purpose.

More

In these few words there are many doubts. First, how Tyndale taketh “repenting in the heart”: whether he mean that whoso repenteth in his heart shall no more do so again willingly and of purpose as long as he so repenteth; or else that whoso repent once in his heart shall never cease to repent… or though he do, shall never, yet, do more so willingly and of purpose while he liveth. And if he mean in the first manner, his words be little to purpose. For if he grant that though he repent at one time, he may cease to repent at another, and then do as evil as he did, and be as evil as he was: then had I as lief that he said the man which once repenteth
will do so no more as long as he doth so no more, and will be good still till he be naught again.

Now, if he mean in the second manner, that whoso repenteth once in his heart can never after cease to repent as long as ever he liveth… or though he cease to repent, shall yet, as long as ever he liveth, never willingly and of purpose fall to sin again: then either of all that fall to sin again—that is to wit, of all Christian people, almost—there was never none that ever repented in heart… or else whosoever have once repented in his heart, all the sins that ever he doth after, he doth none of them willingly… or at the least he doth them not of purpose, but unwittingly, by chance and mishap, ere ever himself be aware thereof, at adventure, suddenly.

Now, if he say that never any which do sin again did heartily repent before… and then that he require no less than hearty repentance of man for his reconciliation to God: he preacheth us no gospel, nor telleth us no glad tidings, but the heaviest tidings that ever man told. For then he telleth us plainly that of all Christian people there is almost none that standeth in state of grace longer than the lack of reason excuseth the default of his deed… or that the lack of life leaveth him no time to sin again after his repentance.

For we plainly see that such as repent fall again to sin; and so, by him, they never so repented that ever they were reconciled again to God in all their whole life. And then were there also much doubt of their death. For though it be good in some case, yet were it not good always that every man were overly bold upon the sudden grace that the thief got at last, that hung on the cross at Christ’s right hand.

And if Tyndale ween to make the matter more easy because he saith he that repenteth in heart will “do so no more,” meaning that he will no more fall to that kind of sin: this will not serve him. For he falleth out of God’s favor and the state of grace by the committing of any other sin that is upon his damnation forbidden. And therefore if hearty repentance be able forever to keep him from one kind—it must be able to keep him from every kind of like deadliness, or else it sufficeth not.

Now to the other point. If Tyndale think to ease all the matter by this—that he saith not that he which repenteth in heart shall “do

Note

1 so: i.e., that thing 1–2 be good still: keep being good 2 naught: bad 4, 9 once: at some one time
5 though he: i.e., even if he does 6, 10 willingly: volitionally 6, 11 of purpose: purposely
6, 7 to sin again: back into sin 10 doth: i.e., commits 11 unwittingly: inadvertently
12 mishap: accidental misfortune 13 ere: before 14 himself: he 15 at adventure: on the spur of the moment
12 suddenly: spontaneously 13 never . . . heartily: i.e., those who commit sin again never did sincerely
14, 33 hearty: sincere 16 heaviest: most distressing 18 standeth in: remains in the
19 the lack of: i.e., his lack of the use of 21 excuse: . . . deed: i.e., exonerates him of culpability for his bad actions
19 that the: i.e., if it happens that 21 such . . . to: i.e., people who repent do fall back into 22 by: according to
23 again: back 24 doubt: uncertainty / fear 25 in some case: i.e., a good hope in some instances
26 were . . . upon: placed too much confidence in 27 at last: i.e., at the end of his life 28 been . . . matter: i.e., thinks he is making this contention of his
28 more easy: the less anxiety-producing / the more palatable 29, 37 in heart: sincerely
29, 30 no more: never again 30 fall to: fall into / commit 29 serve him: get him anywhere / do that repentant person any good 32 upon: on pain of 35 of: i.e., of sin that is of 36 think . . . matter: thinks he makes the whole claim more palatable 37 which: who
so no more,” but that he shall “do so no more, willingly and of purpose”—
then riseth there another doubt: what he calleth “willingly” and “of purpose.”

He hath, as it seemeth, some other understanding of this word
“willingly” than other men have. We say that if he do it not
willingly... he sinneth not at all, if his will nothing do therein at all, except it depend upon some other sin of himself done willingly before... as where a man sinfully falleth in drunkenness or in frenzy, and then, drunken or frantic, doth harm; or whereas
one man giveth other occasion of ruin, as Tyndale doth... when
men be burned here with his books, and after damned for his heresies—such men, peradventure, as he never knew, and yet fallen

A notable saying all their deaths, both of body and soul, in
Tyndale’s neck. For as holy Saint
Augustine saith, the heretic that is a teacher and a setter-forth of heresies, though he be deep damned in hell, shall never yet know the uttermost of his pain till the Day of Doom. For as many men as before that day be damned for his heresies—such shall ever, as they come to hell, more and more increase his pain.

But else, I say, where a man hath no will in the deed nor in the occasion thereof—there is he, as I think, no partner in the sin. I wot not what Tyndale meaneth by “willingly” and “of purpose.” For he is wont to reckon as though there is nothing done “willingly” that is done of frailty... nor I cannot tell what he calleth “purpose”—how long time serveth, after his reckoning, to make it done of purpose.

But this I wot well: albeit that there be degrees and circumstances that aggrieve the sin and make it more weighty (as when it is in the mind long continued, and done of pure malice, and such other things), yet if these lack so the damnable deed, that God hath forbidden to be done in deed, by him that is not against his will forced thereunto—this call we willingly done, and say that he sinneth deadly that so doth, although he never purposed himself long before upon it. As if a man meet another and kill him suddenly for an angry word... or meet a maiden suddenly and so deflower her—this would I call “willingly,” but if she were so strong or had so much help that she ravished the man’s maidenhood and deflowered him by force.

1 so: that thing 1, 2, etc. willingly: volitionally 1, 3, etc. of purpose: purposely / on purpose
2 doubt: uncertainty; question 5 he do it: i.e., someone does something bad
7 except it: i.e., unless that bad thing he does // depend: is consequent // of himself done: committed by him
8, 9 in: into 9 frenzy: a wild rage // frantic: gone berserk // whereas: wherever 10 other: i.e., another an
11 after: afterward 11, 18 for: on account of / for holding 12 peradventure: perhaps
13–14 in Tyndale’s neck: on Tyndale’s shoulders 15 setter-forth: promoter 16, 19 pain: punishment / pain
17 the Day of Doom: Judgment Day 19 come to: arrive in 21 partner: participant 22, 26 wot: know
24, 28 of: out of 24 frailty: human frailty; susceptibility to temptation 25 time serveth: a time suffices
25 after: according to 26 albeit: i.e., though it is true: granted 27 aggravate: aggravate; worsen // as: such as
28 pure: sheer 29 yet... so: i.e., yet even if such circumstances are lacking to 32 deadly: mortally
32 although: even if 32, 34 meet: (happens) to encounter / another: i.e., some other man // kill: i.e., kills
34 suddenly: unpremeditatedly // an angry word: i.e., for saying something vexatious
34 so: i.e., in the same way (i.e., unpremeditatedly) 35 deflower: i.e., deflowers // but if: unless // were: was
36 ravished: violated // maidenhood: virginity
Now, such things as these be, we doubt not but that folk have fallen to again after repentance, and after penance too—and such as have been by the Sacrament of Penance restored unto the state of grace. And since that these be damnable whether they be before purposed or no, therefore it is partly false, partly foolish that Tyndale saith—that whoso repent in heart shall never do so more, willingly and of purpose—since he that hath repented in heart may do so again willingly, and of purpose, too… and he that did it not of purpensed purpose doth it yet, for all that, damnably if he do it willingly.

And for conclusion, though it may be said by good men of good mind, in exhortation to perseverance in good works, against the lightness of such as fall shortly to sin again, that they “repent not, but mock,” because their lightness giveth occasion and conjecture so to think and say: yet to put it for a rule and a surety, as Tyndale doth, that whoso repenteth once in heart shall never sin again willingly and of purpose… and that they that sin again willingly and of purpose did never repent in heart, is very false doctrine and a very plain heresy.

Avoid this doctrine.

Tyndale

And if I believed the Gospel—what God hath done for me in Christ— I should surely love him again, and of love prepare myself unto his commandment.

More

It is undoubtedly a very good occasion to move a man to love God again, when he believeth the love that God hath to him, and the things that of very love God hath done for him. But yet it is not true that Tyndale saith: that every man which believeth this love doth so love God again that of love he prepareth himself unto God’s commandments. I dare say that Saint Peter loved him well… and yet he both forsook him and forswore him too. But a man that well believed should peradventure prepare him to God’s commandments if neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil drew him back… nor such heretics worse yet than all three pulled the root of right belief.
out of his heart. And how stand the words of Tyndale with
Luther’s holy doctrine which he preacheth against the liberty of
man’s free will… whereof if man have none, as their heresy teacheth,
then how can it be true that a man can of love prepare himself
to the commandments of God?

And finally, if it be true that Tyndale saith (that is to wit, that if
he believed the Gospel, he should surely prepare himself to the commandments
of God); and then if this be true therewith, as indeed
it is, that he that doth (as Tyndale doth) infect his neighbors
with deadly poisoned heresies against the blessed sacraments, and
thereby maketh their bodies be burned in earth with his books, and
their souls burned in hell with his heresies, is the most traitorous
despirer of God’s commandments that can be devised: it
followeth very clearly that Tyndale believeth not the Gospel at all;
and surely no more he doth.

And now cometh he and saith that I know that all that he hath
said for his defense in the change of “church,” “priest,” “grace,” “charity,”
“penance,” and such others is true, because I knew (as he saith) the
Greek before him; whereas I, by such little knowledge as I have of
Greek, Latin, and of our own English tongue together, know his
defense both very false and foolish. And that have I so clearly proved… that to the perceiving of both his falsehood and his folly,
there shall not greatly need the knowledge of three tongues nor
twain neither… but an indifferent reader that understandeth
English and hath in his head any reason or natural wit. For albeit
that the more learning the reader hath, the more madness he shall perceive in Tyndale’s defense of these things foreremembered, yet
he that hath wit and no learning at all shall clearly perceive enough.

And to that intent only have I taken the labor to answer his
defense—to make it open, to learned and unlearned both, that he
bringeth to the matter, after his two years’ musing thereupon,
neither insight of any substantial learning nor yet any proof of
reason or natural wit, but only a rash, malicious, frantic
braid, furnished with a bare bold assertion and affirmation of
false, poisoned heresies. For, saving to make this appear, I needed
not to touch those points at all. For every man well knoweth that
the intent and purpose of my Dialogue was none other but to make
the people perceive that Tyndale changed in his translation the
common-known words to the intent to make a change in the faith.
As for example, that he changed the word “church” into this word “congregation” because he would bring it in question which were the church… and set forth Luther’s heresy that the church which we should believe and obey is not the common-known body of all Christian realms remaining in the faith of Christ, not fallen off nor cut off with heresies (as Bohemia is, and some parts of Germany), but that the church which we should believe and obey were some secret, unknown sort of evil-living and worse-believing heretics.

And that he changed “priest” into “senior”… because he intended to set forth Luther’s heresy teaching that priesthood is no sacrament, but the office of a layman, or a laywoman, appointed by the people to preach. And that he changed “penance” into “repenting”… because he would set forth Luther’s heresy teaching that Penance is no sacrament.

Lo, this being the only purpose and intent of my Dialogue… Tyndale cometh now and expressly confesseth the same thing that I purposed to show. For he teacheth and writeth openly those false heresies, indeed, that I said then he intended after to do; so that himself showeth now that I did then show the people truth… and then needed I to make none answer, since his own writing showeth that he made his translation to the intent to set forth such heresies as I said he did.

For as for that Tyndale calleth them no heresies but the very faith, forceth me but little; for so hath every heretic called his own heresies since Christendom first began. But for all that, the devil will be the devil though Tyndale would call him God.

And I made my book to good Christian people that know such heresies for heresies—to give them warning, that by scripture of his own false forging (for so is his false translation, and not the scripture of God) he should not beguile them and make them ween the thing were otherwise than it is indeed. For as for such as are so mad already to take those heresies for other than heresies, and are thereby themselves no faithful folk, but heretics, if they list not to learn and leave off, but long to lie still in their false belief: it were all in vain to give them warning thereof. For when their wills be bent thereto, and their hearts set thereon, there will no warning serve them. And therefore—since Tyndale hath here confessed,
in his defense, that he made such changes for the setting forth of such things as I said—it is enough for good Christian men, that know those things for heresies, to abhor and burn up his books, and the likers of them with them; so that, as I say, I needed none answer to his defense at all, saving to make, as I have done, both learned and unlearned folk perceive him for an unlearned fool. And yet—defending himself so fondly, and teaching open heresies so shamefully—he saith it appeareth that there was no cause to burn his translation, wherein such changes found as ye see, and being changed for such causes as himself confesseth; that is to wit, for a foundation of such pestilent heresies as himself affirmeth and writeth in his abominable books. He might much better, if he cut a man’s throat in the open street, say there were no cause to hang him—but bid men seek up his knife and see it him safe! This might he, in good faith, much better say then than he may now say that there is no cause to burn his translation. With the falsehood whereof, and his false heresies brought in therewith, he hath killed and destroyed divers men, and may hereafter many, some in body, some in soul, and some in both twain.

And therefore, where in the end he looketh so much to me that he forgetteth himself… and, making me another holy sermon of my “covetousness,” my great “advantage” in “serving” in “falsehood,” mine “obstinate malice against the truth”… he forgetteth in the meanwhile that his own malice is against the truth in such manner obstinate that he doth as the devil doth, endure pain for the maintenance of his false, devilish heresies against the truth; and, putting me in mind again of the false prophet Balaam and his evil end, and that all such resisters of the truth come at last unto an evil death… he forgetteth in the meanwhile that double death that his fellow heretics commonly come to, first by fire in earth, and after by fire in hell… save they that at the one renounce his devilish heresies, and so escape the other: Tyndale, therefore, whereas it liketh him Tyndale’s “truths” to liken me to Balaam, Pharaoh, and to Judas too, since the pith of all his process standeth in this one point, that his heresies be the true faith, and that the Catholic faith is false; that the holy days nor the
fasting days no man need to keep; that the Divine Services in the
church is all but superstition; that the church and the alehouse is
all one saving for such holy preaching; that men have no free will
of their own to do neither good nor ill; that to reverence Christ’s
cross or any saint’s image is idolatry; that to do any good work
(fast, give alms, or other) with intent the rather to get heaven, or
to be the better rewarded there, is deadly sin before God and worse
than idolatry; to think that the Mass may do men any good more
than the priest himself, were a false belief; a false faith also to
pray for any soul; great sin to shrive us or to do penance for
sin; friars may well wed nuns and must needs have wives,
and the sacraments of Christ must serve for Tyndale’s jestingstock—
these be the “truths” that Tyndale preacheth. And because I call
these “truths” heresies—therefore Tyndale calleth me Balaam, Judas,
and Pharaoh… and threateneth me sore with the vengeance of God and
with an evil death. What death each man shall die, that hangeth in
God’s hands; and martyrs have died for God, and heretics have
died for the devil. But since I know it very well, and so doth Tyndale
too, that the holy saints dead before these days, since Christ’s time
till our own, believed as I do, that Tyndale’s “truths” be stark
devilish heresies: if God give me the grace to suffer for saying the
same—I shall never in my right wit wish to die better. And
therefore, since all the matter standeth in this point alone—that if his
heresies be the true faith, then I stand in peril, and if they be a
false faith, I may be safe enough—let him leave his sermon hardly
for the while, and first go prove his lies true, and then come
again and preach; and Friar Luther also, and his leman with him,
too; and then may the geese provide the fox a pulpit.

Here endeth the Second Book, in which is
confuted Tyndale’s defense of his
false translation of the New
Testament.

1 Divine Services: praying of the different parts of the Divine Office  2 but: nothing but
2–3 is all one: are entirely the same  6 the rather to get: to be the more likely to get to
7 deadly sin: a mortal sin // before: in the eyes of  8, 11, 25 may: can
8 men . . . more: i.e., any good to any more people  9 were: i.e., is
10 to shrive us: i.e., for us to go to confession  11 well: rightly; with moral rectitude
12 jestingstock: i.e., laughingstocks  15 sore: severely  16 an evil: a bad
21 suffer: undergo martyrdom  22 wit: mind
23 all the matter standeth in: i.e., our whole issue boils down to
25 leave . . . hardly: i.e., totally quit his sermonizing  26 the while: the time being
27 again: back // leman: bedmate; cohabitee  31 false: deliberately inaccurate; falsified
The Third Book

Hereafter followeth the Third Book, in which be treated two chapters of Tyndale’s book: that is to wit, “Whether the Church Were before the Gospel, or the Gospel before the Church,” & “Whether the Apostles Left Aught Unwritten That Is of Necessity to Be Believed.”

Whether the Church Were before the Gospel, or the Gospel before the Church

Tyndale hath all this while, with his defense of changing “church” and other things used in the Church, maliciously by him changed in his translation… kept us, as it were, still striving with him in the church porch. But now have I won the porch upon him… and we be come to join together within the church. For now taking his translation for damnable as it is… we be come to try between us the falsehood of his pestilent heresies concerning the Church and the word of God by the Spirit of God taught unto his Church… with which heresies he corrupteth the word of God and with poison infecteth his Church—as I have before manifestly declared, both concerning Christ’s holy sacraments and divers other articles of Christ’s faith.

But forasmuch as by the discourse of my Dialogue I proved clearly that nothing can be sure and certain among Christian men, not so much as the Holy Scripture itself, but if we believe the Church; and I proved also that the church of Christ cannot fall in damnable error, but hath been, is, and ever shall be taught by the Spirit of God every necessary truth to the belief whereof God will have them bound… and that this church is and ever hath been taught by the word of God partly written and partly unwritten… and that
those two words are both of one authority; and finally did I
prove that the very church of Christ here in earth, which hath the
right faith, and which we be bound to believe and obey,
5 is this universal, known people of all Christian nations, that be
neither put out nor openly departed out by their willful schisms and
plainly professed heresies… and that Luther’s church and all the
churches sprung out thereof, with all the prophets and patriarchs
of the same, as Zwingli, Bucer, Balthasas, Otho, Friar Huessgen,
Friar Lambert, and Tyndale, be the synagogue of Satan and servants
of the devil: now cometh me Tyndale and, perceiving
10 himself sore bound to the stake with the strength of this chain,
beginneth to writhe and wrestle, and fareth foul with himself,
to look if he could break any link thereof. Whereabout forasmuch
as he seeth that all the rabble of heretics have long labored of old…
and yet their books vanished away to the devil with themselves…
and that the devil hath of their dry ashes raised up a hundred
sorts of new sects of heretics, much more blasphemous than
ever were the old: he hath overlooked studiously all their books…
and with all the poison that the devil hath put in them hath
stuffed his mouth full, to spit it out again against God and his
ho
y holy sacraments and all good Christian people, whom he laboreth to
infect with the fury that they should not know the very church of
God (whereof themselves be members!), but would make them so mad
as to believe that the church of God were some one sort of a hundred
sects of heretics, and no mark among them all why more the
one than the other… whereas they must, and do, in this point all
agree—that they be all false save one—and the truth is in deed that
they be false every one.

Now, to know that the nearer Tyndale cometh to the matter, the
further he fleeth from the truth… and hideth himself in the darkness
of the devil, walking with a scone of a dim light to
make men ween he would show them the way, and leadeth them clean
awry: ye shall hear how boldly he beginneth… and after shall I so
show you the matter that every child shall perceive his bold, wily
folly to come of no good trust in his cause, but lack of wit and
shame.

1 one: the same  2, 22 very: true  2, 26 in: on  3 bound: obliged  8 as: such as
8 Bucer: Martin Bucer (d. 1551). // Balthasas: Balthasar Hubmaier (d. 1528).
8 Otho: Otto Brunfels (d. 1534). // Friar Huessgen: Johannes Oecolampadius (d. 1531).
9 Lambert: Francis Lambert (d. 1530).  10 cometh me: i.e., comes at me / here comes
11 sore: tightly / grievously  12 fareth . . . himself: carries on disgracefully / falls all over himself
13 to look: i.e., trying to see  // could: i.e., can // whereabouts: i.e., toward which goal; in which endeavor
14 all the rabble: the whole motley crew  16 of: from  17 sorts: varieties  18 overlooked: read through
18 their books: i.e., the books of these new groups of heretics  21 laboreth: strives
22 fury . . . know: i.e., raving lunacy of not being able to recognize as such  24 were: i.e., is
24 sort: variety  25 mark: i.e., way to tell  27 save: except // deed: actuality
29 matter: point / issue  31 scone of: i.e., screened candlestick that gives  32 ween: think
32 would: i.e., is going to  32–33 clean awry: completely astray  34 matter: reality
34 every . . . shall: i.e., any . . . would be able to  35 folly: foolishness // but: i.e., but of a
35 wit: intelligence / good sense
Tyndale

Whether the Church Were before the
Gospel, or the Gospel before
the Church

Another doubt there is, whether the Church (or Congregation) be
before the Gospel, or the Gospel before the Church. Which question
is as hard to solve as whether the father be elder than the son or
the son elder than his father. For the whole Scripture and all
believing hearts testify that we are begotten through the Word.

Wherefore, if the Word beget the Congregation, and he that begetteth
is before him that is begotten: then is the Gospel before the
Church. Paul also (Romans 10) saith, “How shall they call on whom
they believe not? And how shall they believe without a preacher?”
That is, Christ must first be preached ere men can believe in him.

And then it followeth that the word of the preacher must be before
the faith of the believer. And therefore, insomuch as the Word is
before the faith, and faith maketh the Congregation: therefore is the
Word or Gospel before the Congregation.

More

Lo, he that readeth this and heareth not the answer, except himself
be well ripened in the matter, may ween that Tyndale in these words
had acquitted himself like a man and borne me over quite, he solveth
the objection so plainly and playeth therewith so pleasantly. But,
now, when ye shall understand that never man was so mad to
make this objection to Tyndale but himself, then shall ye laugh
to see that he wrestleth all alone and giveth himself a fall, and in his
merry solution mocketh also no man but himself.

I said in my Dialogue that the Church was before the Gospel was
written; and that the faith was taught and men were baptized, and
Masses said and the other sacraments administered among Christian
people, before any part of the New Testament was put in writing:
Right faith was taught by the
word of God unwritten.

And that this was done by the word of God
unwritten. And I said also there, and yet
say here again, that the right faith
which Adam had, and such as in the same faith succeeded him

2 were: existed; came  5 doubt: question  6 be: is  11, 17, 18 before: preexistent to
6–7 question . . . solve: question . . . answer / difficulty . . . resolve
12, 13 shall they: can they be expected to / are they going to  12 whom: i.e., him in whom
14 ere: before  15 be: come  20–21 except . . . matter: unless he is well informed on this subject
21 ween: think  22 had: i.e., has  23 so plainly: in such an easy-to-understand way  24 man was: was anyone
27 mocketh: holds up to ridicule  27 merry: sportive / hilarious  28 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies
28 was: i.e., came into existence  28 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies
28 Dialogue concern Heresies
33–34 yet say here: here say yet  35 such: i.e., all such people
long ere writing began, was taught by the word of God unwritten… and so went from man to man, from the father to the son by mouth. And I said that this word of God unwritten… is of as great authority as is the word of God written.

I showed also that the church of Christ hath been, is, and ever shall be taught and instructed by God and his Holy Spirit with his holy word of either kind—that is to wit, both with his word written and his word unwritten—and that they which will not believe God’s word but if he put it in writing be as plain infidels as they that will not believe it written… since God’s word taketh its authority of God, that speaketh it, and not of man, that writeth it. And there is like surety and like certain knowledge of the word of God unwritten as there is of the word of God written… since ye know neither the one nor the other to be the word of God but by the tradition of the Church. Which church, as all Christian men believe, and the Scripture showeth, and Saint Augustine declared, and Luther himself confesseth, and the devil himself saith not nay… the blessed Spirit of God hath inwardly taught, teacheth, and ever shall teach to know, judge, and discern the word of God from the word of man… and shall keep the Church from error, leading into every truth… as Christ saith himself in the sixteenth chapter of Saint John’s Gospel. Which he did not if he suffered the Church to be damnably deceived in taking the word of man for the word of God… whereby it should instead of service to be done to God, fall in unfaithfulness, and with idolatry do service to the devil.

And therefore I showed in my said Dialogue—and yet the King’s Highness much more plainly showed in his most erudite, famous book against Luther, out of which I took it—that the word of God

The Spirit of God teacheth the Church all truth.

The authority of the word of God unwritten is of as great authority, as certain, and as sure as is his word written in the Scripture; which point is so fast and sure pitched upon the rock our Savior Christ himself that neither Luther, Tyndale, nor Huessgen, nor all the hellhounds that the devil hath in his kennel, never hitherto could, nor while God

1 ere: before 5, 28, 29 showed: stated 6 God . . . Spirit: i.e., God the Holy Spirit 8 they which: those who 9 but if: unless 10 it written: i.e., his written word 11 taketh: receives // of: from 12 like . . . like: i.e., just as much trustworthiness and just as 17 confesseth: acknowledges 18–19 saith not nay: does not deny 20 judge: discern 21 discern: distinguish; tell apart 22 did not: i.e., did not do // suffered: allowed 24 deceived: gone wrong 25, 27 service: homage 26 in: into 28 yet: moreover 29 plainly: explicitly 31 unwritten: i.e., not written there 32 sure: trustworthy 33–34 fast and sure: very surely; good and securely 34 pitched: i.e., set and fixed 36 hitherto: to this day // while: as long as
liveth in heaven and the devil lieth in hell never hereafter shall
(bark they, bawl they, never so fast), be able to wrest it out.
And that they be all, as I tell you, so feeble in this point whereupon
the effect of all their whole heresies hangeth (for but if they
vanquish this one point, all their heresies fully be burned up and
fall as flat to ashes as it were alms all obstinate heretics
did), ye may see a clear proof by these words of Tyndale which
he hath set so gloriously forth in the forefront of his battle, as
though they were able to win the whole field. For whereas I said
The word of God unwritten
that the Gospel and the word of God unwritten
was before the Church.
was before the Church . . . and by it
was the Church begun, gathered, and
taught; and that the Church was before that the Gospel that now is
written was written (that is to wit, before any part of the Gospel was
written; for as for all the whole Gospel—that is to wit, all the words of
God that he would have known, believed, and kept—was yet
never written): this being the thing that I said, Tyndale, with all
The Church was before the Gospel written.
the help he hath had of all the heretics
in Almaine this two or three years together,
is yet in such despair to be able
to match therewith that he is with shame enough fain to forget
that I said the Church was before the Gospel written, which
thing himself cannot deny, and is fain to frame the doubt and
make the objection . . . as though I had said that the Church had been
before the Gospel and the word of God unwritten; whereof himself
knoweth well that I said clean the contrary. And therefore, good
readers, having this thing in your remembrance, take now the
pain to read Tyndale’s words again, and ye shall have a pleasure
to see how fondly he juggleth before you. For now, his craft opened and
declared unto you, ye shall perceive that he playeth nothing clean . . .
but fareth like a juggler that conveyeth his galls so craftily that all
the table spieth them!

Tyndale

And again, as the air is dark of itself, and receiveth all her light
of the sun: even so are all men’s hearts of themselves dark with
lies, and receive all their truth of God’s word, in that they
consent thereto.
More

And this liketh me very well; and so much the better by cause that the goodness of God causeth Tyndale to speak these words nothing touching the matter for any reproof of my book, but only reproofing himself and condemning all his whole sect. For I never said, nor no man else, as I suppose, neither Christian nor heathen, that God taketh his truth or his light of man, but man of God. And therefore this holy sermon he spendeth but in waste… saving, as I said, for the condemning of himself and his sect.

For since it is true that by the light of God, as Tyndale here confesseth, men’s hearts be cleansed from lies and false opinions and from thinking evil good, and therefore from consenting to sin; and we see well that Tyndale and all his sect be set all upon heresies and false, blasphemous lies, and think (if they think as they say) both evil good and good evil… for they call Christ’s sacraments evil and Luther’s lechery good… and so not only consent to sin, but also commit and defend and teach the whole dead, stinking sea of sin: it followeth, by Tyndale’s own holy sermon here, that his own heart and the hearts of all his whole sect be the dark air of hell… from which the light of God’s own glorious Son, that came to give light into the dark air of this earth, hath far withdrawn its beams. And this hath Tyndale, with his own holy words devised of none occasion (and far from the matter) but only to show the glory of his high spiritual phrase, nothing done at all but given himself a fall and thrown all his matter in the mire.

Yet hath he one word by which it appeareth that while he saw himself fallen, he would pull down other men into the mire to him. For if ye consider his words, ye shall see that he coucheth them in such wise that he would make men ween that wheresoever there were a true belief, and false opinions taken away… that there it must needs be that men shall not consent to sin. Which thing he doth for the color and cloak of their false opinion… by which they teach that “faith alone” always sufficeth—wherein when they find themselves so shamefully confuted and convicted, they be loath to seem to flee by day, and therefore they flee by night and retreat themselves in the dark… making as though they were mistaken and meant nothing but that whoso have a right belief, and not a
false opinion, it cannot be but that he must needs do well; as Tyndale saith here that he which doth not believe evil to be good, he shall never consent to sin.

As it is a great folly to affirm this... so were it almost as much folly to confute this. For who is there that thinketh that to kill a man for his money is no sin? And yet many wretches do it. Who thinketh that adultery is no sin? And yet many wretches do it. Who thinketh that to wed a nun is no sin? I dare say not even these wretches themselves that wed them, but they verily know it for sin and yet the wretches do it. And therefore this tale of Tyndale’s is but a very foolish heresy.

Tyndale

. . . (John 17) “Sanctify them, O Father, through thy truth. And thy word is truth.” And thus thou seest that God’s truth dependeth not of man. It is not true because man so saith or admittest it for true . . .

More

Whereof serveth all this, while no man said the contrary?

Tyndale

. . . but man is true because he believeth, testifieth, and giveth witness in his heart that it is true.

More

Mt 16:16; 26:69–74 Nay, pardie, this is not always true. For Saint Peter himself was not true when he testifed and gave witness with his Master in his heart and yet forswore him openly with his mouth. And Judas believed in his heart that God’s word was true... and yet was himself not true, but a false thief and a false traitor too. And nowadays also be there many false thieves and false traitors unto God—false heretics, I mean, that by the word of God believe and wot well enough that it is abominable theft and sacrilege for a friar to wed a nun... and yet, as false harlots, both do and teach the contrary to their own belief.

Tyndale

And Christ also saith himself (John 5), “I receive no witness of man.” For if the multitude of man’s witness might make aught true, then were the doctrine of Muhammad truer than Christ’s.
More

Now cometh he somewhat to his purpose indeed... but he cometh to a full shrewd purpose. For by these words of Christ in the fifth chapter of John... he would make it seem that there should no credence be given to the Church, because they be men... and therefore cannot (as Tyndale saith) bear witness unto Christ nor his word, since Christ saith himself, “I receive no witness of man.” To this purpose hath he brought forth all his gay, painted process before... the glittering whereof he hopeth should so daze our eyes that we should not see the falsehood of his short, sudden conclusion in which he knitteth up Christ and Muhammad together to confound the credence and authority of Christ’s church.

But, good Christian readers, deferring for the while Muhammad’s doctrine (with whom Tyndale may make a match!), I shall show you what fraud and deceit Tyndale here useth both in the translating and in the interpretation of these words of our Savior Christ that he rehearseth, written in the fifth chapter of Saint John. Christ in that place neither meaneth nor saith that he taketh no witness of man, as Tyndale rehearseth, but he both meaneth and saith that he taketh not his special witness of man, but of God. And to the intent that ye may the better perceive that for to make his heresy seem proved by the Gospel, he falsely translateth the Gospel... ye shall understand that the Latin tongue lacketh one certain article that the Greek hath, and which article in part both our English language hath and the French also, and divers other tongues, and it is in English this word “the.” For whereas we have two articles in English, “a” and “the,” “a” (or “an,” for both is one article, the one before a consonant, the other before a vowel) is common to everything, almost; but “the” signifieth oftentimes some special thing, and divideth it from the general. As when I say “a man” or “a horse,” it standeth indifferent, and appeareth not what man or what horse I mean. For if I would be so unwise to say to my servant, “Go do me this errand to a man,” he should not wit what man he should go to. But when I say, “Go do this errand to the man,” he wotteth well that I mean a certain, special man, to him and me known, to whom the errand pertaineth. This article “the” doth, therefore,
in our English tongue, give great light unto the sentence; and
the Greek tongue hath an article that doth the like in theirs; and the
lack of the like doth in the Latin tongue leave oftentimes the sentence
obscure and dark which would with that article, if the
Latin language had it, appear open and plain.

I shall show you first an example thereof in the first chapter
of the Gospel of Saint John, which place Tyndale hath wrong
translated also... for what cause, the devil and he knoweth. For
Tyndale is not ignorant of that article, neither the Greek nor the
English, and maketh himself as though he translated the New Testament
out of Greek. These words be the words of the Gospel in that
place, after Tyndale's translation:

This is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and
Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “What art thou?” And he confessed
and denied not, and said plainly, “I am not Christ.” And they asked
him, “What, then? Art thou Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Art thou
a prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

I would not here note, by the way, that Tyndale here translateth
“no” for “nay”—for it is but a trifle and mistaking of the English word—
saving that ye should see that he which in two so plain English
words, and so common, as is “nay” and “no,” cannot tell when he should
take the one and when the other... is not for translating into
English a man very meet. For the use of those two words in
answering to a question is this. “Nay” answereth the question
framed by the affirmative. As, for example, if a man should ask
Tyndale himself, “Is a heretic meet to translate Holy Scripture
into English?”—lo, to this question, if he will answer true
English, he must answer “Nay,” and not “No.” But and if the question
be asked him thus, lo—“Is not a heretic meet to translate Holy
Scripture into English?”—to this question, lo, if he will answer true
English, he must answer “No,” and not “Nay.” And a like difference is
there between these two adverbs “yea” and “yes.” For if the question be
framed unto Tyndale by the affirmative, in this fashion—“If a heretic
falsely translate the New Testament into English, to make his
false heresies seem the word of God, be his ‘Books’ worthy to be burned?”—
to this question, asked in this wise, if he will answer true English
he must answer “Yea,” and not “Yes.” But, now, if the question be asked

1, 2, 3 tongue: language  1 give . . . unto: shed a lot of light on  1, 3 sentence: meaning
4 dark: nebulous; hard to make out  5 appear . . . plain: i.e., be clear and obvious  7, 12 place: passage
10 as though he: i.e., seem to have  12 after: according to  13 record: testimony  14, 16 what: who
19 “no” for “nay”: i.e., as “no” what he should have translated as “nay”
19 mistaking . . . word: i.e., a using of the wrong English word just on account of mistakenness
20 he which in: a man who regarding  // so plain: such simple  22 take: use
23, 26, 29 meet: qualified / fit  27, 30, 36 true: i.e., in good  28 But and if: i.e., But, now, if
33 framed: formulated; worded  // by: in  35 false: vile / [a polite-language equivalent of] damn
35 seem: i.e., seem to be  // be . . . worthy to be: i.e., are his “New Testament” editions deserving of being
36 wise: way
him thus, lo, by the negative—“If a heretic falsely translate the
New Testament into English, to make his false heresies seem the
word of God… be not his ‘Books’ well worthy to be burned?”—to this
question, in this fashion framed, if he will answer true English,
he may not answer “Yea,” but he must answer “Yes,” and say, “Yes,
marry be they—both the translation and the translator, and all that
will hold with them.”

And this thing, lo, though it be no great matter… yet I have
thought good to give Tyndale warning of, because I would have
him write true one way or other; that though I cannot make him
by no means to write true matter, I would have him yet at the leastwise
write true English.

But now to the matter itself. Ye see that by Tyndale’s translation, the
Jn 1:21; Lk 7:26–28 Jews asked of Saint John whether he
were a prophet, and that he answered nay…

and so he denied that he was a prophet. Now doth Christ testify
of him that he was both “a prophet” and “more than a prophet”; so
that if Saint John should say of himself that he was no prophet, and
Christ said yes… either should Saint John say untrue himself or
else should there an untruth be spoken by the mouth of our Savior
himself; of which two things the one is incredible and the
other impossible. And in the Latin tongue this thing is left in
doubt, for lack, as I told you, of an article correspondent to the Greek
article and to the English article “the”; and for that cause, some right
holy men, and very well learned, were for lack of the Greek tongue much
troubled with that place, how it might be understood right. But
Tyndale by the Greek tongue perceiving the article… saw well
enough that he should not have translated it into the English, “Art
thou a prophet?” but “Art thou the prophet?”… and then were the matter
open and plain. For they asked him not whether he were a prophet—
that is to wit, whether he were any prophet—but whether
he were the prophet; that is to wit, the great prophet of whom
Dt 18:15 Moses prophesied and promised in the
Deuteronomy. Of which prophet there
was opinion among many of the Jews not that he should be Christ,
but a great prophet that should come before him. And therefore they
asked Saint John, “Art thou the prophet?”—meaning that special

1 by: in 2–3: seem . . . “Books”: See notes for 231/35. 3 well . . . be: quite deserving of being
4 framed: formulated // true: i.e., in good 6 marry be they: indeed they are 8 great: serious
9 give . . . of: call Tyndale’s attention to 10, 11, 12 true: correct(ly) 11, 13 matter: content
13 by: according to 15, 30, 31, 32 were: i.e., was 16 so: thus 18 no: i.e., not a
19 yes: i.e., yes he was // say untrue himself: himself speak untruthfully 21 incredible: not believable
22 tongue: language / edition 22–23 in doubt: unresolved; up in the air 24 cause: reason
25, 27 the Greek tongue: i.e., (his) knowledge of Greek / (access to) the Greek edition 26 place: text
29–30 were . . . plain: i.e., would what is being said there be clear and obvious 33 promised: gave promise
33 the: i.e., the Book of 34 of: about 35 Christ: i.e., the Messiah 37 special: specific; particular
prophet. And yet the Jews that asked Saint John the question—
notwithstanding that by their own question they knew that he
did not in his answer deny himself to be any prophet, but that
special prophet of whom they meant—did yet falsely rehearse him
in their anger, when they said again unto him, “If thou be neither
Christ nor Elijah nor Prophet, why baptizest thou, then?” And as the
Jews did then wittingly false rehearse him, so doth Tyndale as
falsely now translate him… making it seem that, by their question
and his answer, either Saint John should say untrue or else our
Savior himself. And for what intent, let Tyndale himself tell;
but that he so doth, his translation showeth. And that he doth it
wittingly well appeareth by that he is not so ignorant in the Greek
tongue but that he knoweth the article there which he should have
taken into the English… and in many other places so hath he done.

And in this place if he had not perceived it himself—yet that good,
virtuous, and well-learned man Nicholas de Lyra gave him warning
thereof; whom though Tyndale list to set at so short and mock and

Nicolas de Lyra scorn, saying that “Lira delirat,” yet he
shall not say nay but he gave him good

warning here, and hath indeed more good learning in the Scripture
of God than hath Luther and Hutchins, and five Friar Huessgens, and
as many Friar Lamberts too.

Now that I have shown you somewhat of the strength and effect
of the article, both Greek and English, which declareth that the
word whereeto it is set signifieth not a thing generally, and confuse,
at large, but some special thing, determinate, of that kind;
and that I have shown you one example thereof in the Gospel, which
Tyndale hath evil translated: I will now go further and show you
how he hath evil translated also this selfsame text of Saint
John too which he now allegeeth, and hath therein falsified the
words of our Savior himself which he now bringeth forth for
his purpose.

The words spoken by our Lord be, as Tyndale hath translated
them, these: “I take no record of man.” In the Latin they be thus:

“Ego testimonium ab homine non recipio.” Which if it be translated into
English without the article (as the Latin hath none), then is it thus:

“I take not record of man”; and not, as Tyndale hath translated, “I take
no record of man.” He maketh his English as though the Latin were

“Ego nullum testimonium ab homine recipio.” And whether the sentence be
precisely both one in these twain—“I take not record of man” and “I take no record of man”—we shall not now need to dispute, since Tyndale taketh the sentence wrong which of them both soever were the words, as I shall show anon. But first I shall go forth and show you, as I began, that he should have translated the words into English otherwise—and thereby have expressed the Greek the better, and yet not contraried the Latin.

Ye shall therefore understand that in that place of Saint John the fifth chapter, where Tyndale hath translated Christ’s words in this wise, “I receive no record of man,” the Greek book hath there, upon this word “record,” the article that is, as I have shown you, correspondent unto our English article “the”; by which article put before the word “record,” that word there, in the tongue in which the Evangelist wrote the words himself, signifieth not a common record, in general, but a certain, special kind of record—as the Greek article made the word “prophet,” in the first chapter, to signify not a prophet in general, but a special prophet whom the Jews looked for.

And therefore I say that Tyndale should in his English translation not have left out that article “the,” but should at the leastwise have translated it thus: “I receive not the record of man”; whereas with his translating “no record,” that article “the”—whereupon the weight of the sentence hangeth—he hath not only left out, but clean excluded, also. For if he had translated it “I receive not record of man,” though he left out “the,” yet he might take it in thereto and amend it, making it “I receive not the record of man.” But now that he hath translated it “I receive no record of man,” he hath excluded it utterly but if he take in “not” and put out his false “no”; for he cannot say “I receive no the record of man.” And this hath he done not of ignorance but of malice, to make it seem that Christ utterly refuseth and rejecteth all manner witness of man in testification and witnessing of him and his truth. And this translation therefore deviseth Tyndale because he would have us ween that Christ would have the witness of all his Church utterly serve of naught.

But, now, because it will peradventure seem unto some men that though he had in his translation expressed the Greek article and
made it thus, “I take not the record of man,” that yet it were all one
and no difference between those words and these, “I take no record
of man”—of truth, the difference is not easy for every man to perceive…
and yet some difference is there indeed, as there is between these
twain. If a man would say in speaking of God and Moses, “I take
Moses for no leader of the children of Israel,” he should say wrong,
for he should deny him to have been their leader in any manner wise as
he was their leader indeed. But if he would say, “I take not Moses
for the leader of the children of Israel,” he should say well enough; for
he should thereby not utterly deny Moses to have been any manner
leader of them… but he should deny that he was their only leader, or
their chief leader… meaning that though he were a leader, yet God
was the leader, that is to wit, the chief leader. Now, if any yet perceive
not clearly the strength of this article, he may consider that it is
not all one to say “I take you for no man,” or “I take you not for a man,”
and “I take you not for the man.” The two first excludeth him utterly
from all the nature and kind of man; the third doth but deny him
to be some such certain man as they mean of.

But yet shall ye further understand that, as I said in the beginning,
though our article “the” be correspondent unto the Greek
article in declaring the certainty of the thing that it is put unto, and
in restraining the word from its general signification to a more
determinate especialty; and that in many things this is very
plain and clear: yet doth not our article, sometimes, so fully and so
effectually declare that thing as doth the article in the Greek,
specially but if we change the order of our English words from
the order of the Greek. And therefore I say that to put away the
doubt, and for the better expressing of the article, Tyndale should in
the translating of that place have changed somewhat the order of
the words. And where they lie in the Latin in this wise—“I receive
not the record of man”—he should rather have translated it thus: “The
record I receive not of man.” For by so translating those words
and so changing the order, he should have gone more near to the
expressing of the very sentence that Christ there spoke and meant—
which was that the special record he took not of man, but of God…
and not that he would take of man no manner record at all; as I shall

1, 2, etc. record: testimony  1, 31, 32, 35, 36 of: from
1–2 were . . . difference: i.e., would all amount to the same thing, there being no difference of meaning
3 of truth: truth to tell  5 twain: i.e., two things  5, 8 would: were to
6, 9, 10, 11, 33 should: would  6 say wrong: speak wrongly  7 should deny: i.e., would be denying
7 manner wise: i.e., such kind of way  9 say well: speak rightly  10, 36 manner: kind of  12 were: was
13 to wit: i.e., to say  13–14 any yet perceive not: anyone still does not perceive 14 strength: force
14 may consider: i.e., might think about the fact  15 all one: one and the same
16 two first excludeth: i.e., the first two statements exclude that “you”  17 all the: the whole
17 kind: species  18 they mean of: i.e., both the speaker and the addressee have in mind
21 declaring the certainty: i.e., bespeaking the particularity // put unto: attached to 22 restraining: restricting
23 especially: specificity // in: with regard to  24 plain and clear: clear and obvious
25 effectually: adequately // declare: bespeak / make clear  26 specially but if: especially unless
27 put away: get rid of  28 doubt: ambiguity  29 place: i.e., verse  30 where: whereas // wise: manner
33–34 gone more near . . . very sentence: i.e., come closer . . . actual sentence/thing  34 spoke: i.e., said
35 special: chief // took: got
anon so clearly prove you that Tyndale shall never while he liveth wade out thereof.

But first, it will haply seem hard to some men that he which translateth should in his translating make any change in the order of the words. Ye shall understand that it is a thing which he must many times needs do... because of the manners and forms of speaking in diverse languages. For if he shall always translate word for word and in the order as it standeth, he shall sometimes give a sentence unable to be perceived or understood; and sometimes a wrong sentence; yea, and sometimes a contrary, too—of all which I could give you examples, were it not both needless and also too long for this present book.

I will therefore of a great many give you but one... in which Tyndale hath, for lack of changing the order of the words, translated a very plain place, in the very beginning of Saint John’s Gospel, whether wrong or no let others judge... but surely otherwise than I would have done.

His translation is this: “In the beginning was that word, and that word was with God, and God was that word.”

First, this word “that” putteth Tyndale for the article “the,” whereof I have shown you before; wherein he doth much amiss. For it is no doubt but that it is here put for to signify the specialty of the thing, as of God and the Word; because there be many words, and the paynims worshipped many gods... the article is set to those words to signify not a word nor a god—as though it were one of the many words of men, or one of the many gods of paynims—but the God, and the word that is the singular God and the singular Word: that is to wit, the Word of God. And that article is not in English this word “that,” as Tyndale hath translated... but this word “the,” as he should have translated... but if he will turn the article out of its kind.

A man may say “The man that we spoke of was here,” or “That man that we spoke of was here.” But and if he speak of him absolutely, without mention of any speech before had with him, he must then say “The man was here,” and may not say “That man was here” but if he add somewhat to it.

If ye speak of the chief captain of the field, ye may say “The captain will march on tomorrow.” But ye may not say “That captain will march on tomorrow” but if ye show which captain...
by some other token, or else point him with your finger. And
Tyndale knoweth this well enough… and therefore he calleth God always
“the Lord,” and not “a lord” nor “that lord.” And therefore I
marvel why he translated *In principio erat verbum* “In the beginning
was that word”; for surely that word “that” was not to begin with
nor to stand there… but if Tyndale intended to mock.

But as I was about to say, where he translath “God was the Word”…
albeit that in the Greek and in the Latin it doth well enough, and
in the English that manner of speaking may stand in many other
things, and especially in the plural number, or in the first person
or the second singular, where the things that we speak of, or the
article, or the diversity of the word which is in the verb, in our
English tongue, changed in those two persons singular, taketh the
doubt away and maketh the matter open which of the two terms
we take for *subjiciendum* and which for *praedicatum*; yet in this great
matter I would rather in our own tongue have changed and turned
the order of the words, and translate it thus—“The Word was God”—than
as Tyndale doth, “God was the Word”… likewise as I would in English
rather say “Christ was God” than “God was Christ.” For these words
“God was Christ” or “God was the Word” be not well spoken, saving
that we understand thereby the other, with the words changed;
that is to wit, “Christ was God” and “The Word was God.” For else,
understood as it standeth, “God was Christ” were as much to say
as that all three Persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—were
Christ all three.

Howbeit, I say not this to show that I think that Tyndale meant
any evil in this; nor I impugn not in this point his translation so
greatly but it may be borne; but I say the other is in English
better and more clear. And I say this… to show that the order of
the text in Scripture may be sometimes by the translator better
changed than kept. And I tell you this to the intent that ye may the
more clearly perceive that Tyndale should not have letted in the
other place that he alleged, in the fifth of Saint John, “I receive
no record of man,” to change the order of the words  with setting
in the article, and to have said “The record I receive not of man.”

Yea, and since the article signifieth the special kind of record:
rather than to do as he hath done—left it quite out, as though God
refused all manner witness of man—he should rather have translated it “The chief record I receive not of man”; as himself hath, in the fourteenth of Saint John, translated, “The chief ruler of this world cometh”… whereas in the Greek is not this word “chief”… but that he putteth it in himself because of the article, which he would not withdraw from the devil, lest he should have diminished his honor. But he withdraweth it here from the witness of God… because he would take from God the witness of all true Christian people, which by their true belief do set their seals as witnesses to the truth of God.

Now, if he will contend and strive with us upon the vigor and strength of this article “the,” or of its correspondent in the Greek… and bring us forth example in our speech, or in the Greek either, in which it may seem that those articles have not always that manner strength: all this shall nothing serve him at all.

For if they have sometimes that strength, and then the matter showeth that the Greek article hath that strength in this place, that we speak of now: that shall suffice to prove that he hath done wrong to leave it out when he might in the English find the means to express it. And it appeareth that he did yet worse when he sought the means to exclude it; and worst of all since he left it out maliciously, for the maintenance of his heresy by which he would make it seem that Christ by those words rejected and refused the witness of his whole Catholic Church. For which cause he hath double translated those words wrong, or rather treble, as few words as they be. Once in leaving out the article “the”; the second in putting in this word “no”; the third, whereof I spoke not yet, in this word “receive,” instead of this word “take.” For the Greek is lambano, and the Latin is capio or accipio; and both the Greek and the Latin signifieth taking, and not receiving. Now, it is not all one to say “I take no record of man” and to say “I receive no record of man.”

The difference between “to take” and “to receive” For the one signifieth that I care not for it, nor that I will not go about it. But the other—“I receive no witness of man”—signifieth that I will not receive it, but refuse it though it be offered… or else another thing which will not serve for Tyndale’s excuse: that is to wit, I receive none because no man offereth
me none. But Christ without seeking for it was offered the witness of Saint John; which Tyndale maketh as though Christ rejected, while he falsely translateth the words of our Savior and maketh him say “I receive no witness of man.”

Now shall I plainly show you, by many places of Scripture, that it is false that Christ receiveth no record of man; and then may ye thereby see that Tyndale hath translated false. Or if he would blind you with brabblings upon the Greek tongue… ye shall at the leastwise perceive plainly that he taketh the sentence falsely. For these two be plain repugnant: that God receiveth some record of man… and that God receiveth no record of man.

For Tyndale cannot say here that Christ spoke it there by the figure called hyperbole, as Saint John did where he said “His witness Jn 3:32–33; Lk 24:44–49 no man taketh,” meaning very few.

Our Savior himself in the twenty-fourth chapter of Saint Luke—when he had shown his apostles and others of his disciples that all things written of him by Moses and the prophets and in the psalms were and must be fulfilled, and thereupon opened their wits to the understanding of Scripture, and said unto them, “Thus it is written,” and “Thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise again from death the third day,” and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem—he said unto them further, “And ye are witnesses of these things… and lo, I will send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in Jerusalem till ye be endowed with power from on high.”

Lo, here ye may see that Christ did not say that he would receive no witness of man. For he said himself that those men should be his witness among all nations.

He saith also himself unto them in the first chapter of the Acts, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Jewry, and in Samaria, and even unto the world’s end.” The New Testament is full of those places… in which it appeareth plainly that men be the witnesses of God. For though that his truth hath need of witness [Acts 1:8] How God’s truth needeth no witness, neither of man nor

2 John: i.e., John the Baptist. (See John 1:19–34.) 3 while: when 3, 7 false(ly): wrong(ly) 4, 6, 10, 11, 28, 36 of: from 5 places: passages 6, 10, 11 record: testimony 8 brabblings: quibblings // upon: about // tongue: language 9 taketh . . . falsely: i.e., gets the meaning wrong // two: i.e., two assertions 10 repugnant: contradictory / incompatible 13 witness: testimony 14 taketh: accepts 16 shown: told 19 wits: minds 23 beginning at: starting out from 25 tarry you: stay 28 should: would 29 witness: i.e., collective witness 31 Jewry: (of) Judea 32 even . . . end: to the very ends of the earth 33 places: passages / locations 34 though that: i.e., though it is true that
angel, as touching any need that God hath for himself, yet since he intendeth to work the way to man’s salvation not by only miracle (whereby he might, if he would, so wrest man’s will to consent that he should not fail to believe… or cast into the heart such a light of understanding that he should not fail to know… every article of the faith), but also by a natural way joined thereunto, wherein the will of man may, by the labor of himself (with God) in the captivating of his wit (with help of grace) into the obedience of the word of God, somewhat endeavor himself toward his own salvation by faith: it pleaseth God to use in this way the witness of men for a means… as he saith in the same fifth chapter, speaking of the witness of Saint John, where he saith, “The record I take not of man, but I tell you this because ye should be saved,” giving them knowledge that though his credence hang not upon the mouth of man… for he hath, as he there saith, a greater witness than the witness of Saint John, that is to wit, the witness of the Father himself… yet was it ordained that he should have also the witness of Saint John, and so, afterward, of his evangelists and apostles—yea, and after that, of his other holy-doctors-and-saints of every age, and specially the witness of his whole Catholic Church, to hear and give credence unto them—for a means by God provided by which man should come to faith for his salvation. Here ye perceive that not only in other places of Holy Scripture… but also in the selfsame place that Tyndale bringeth forth himself, willing by his false translating and false understanding to make men ween that God taketh no manner witness of man, it is clearly proved that he neither said nor meant in that manner… but that he received not his chief record of man, because he had greater record than man—that is to wit, as well the works which his Father made him work as also the witness of his Father himself—which notwithstanding, he received and accepted for a means of man’s salvation the witness of man also, as ye see by these places of Scripture.

And likewise in the fifteenth chapter of Saint John our Savior joineth the witness of men to the witness of the Holy Ghost, where he saith unto his disciples, “When the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, which is the Spirit of Truth that proceedeth of the Father, he shall bear witness of me… and ye shall bear witness also, because ye have been with me from the beginning.”

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1 as touching: as regards
2 might: could
3 would: wanted to
4 consent: assent
5 may: can
6 compelling: subjugating
7 wit: intellect
8 somewhat endeavor: contribute some effort
9 John: i.e., John the Baptist
10 record: testimony
11 because: in order that
12 credence: credibility
13 hang not: has no dependence
14 hol-doctors-and-saints: sainted Church theologians
15 specially: i.e., as a distinctively important and notable thing
16 them: i.e., the evangelists and apostles
17 place(s): passage(s)
18 willing: wanting / attempting
19 false: deliberately inaccurate
20 give: i.e., listening to and giving
21 to: i.e., from
22 in: i.e., of the kind
23 make use of: i.e., which Comforter
24 that manner: kind of
25 from: i.e., than that of
26 made: i.e., had
27 which: i.e., which Comforter
28 if: from
And yet, for because we should not by these words ween that he would have no witnesses of men but those only that were with him in his own time while he lived here on earth, God saith by the mouth of Saint John the Baptist, in the third chapter of Saint John the Evangelist, “He that cometh from heaven is above all, and testifieth the things that he hath seen and heard… and his testimony no man receiveth. Whosoever do receive his record hath put his seal thereto that God is true.” And what is that to say but that every true-believing man is a witness that God is true?

And thus appeareth it not only that Tyndale hath mistranslated and misconstrued these words of Christ “I receive no witness of man” for the furnishing of his heresy by which he would take away the credence of Christ’s Catholic Church; but also ye see it

Every true-believing man is a good witness of God.

proved, by these words of Saint John the Baptist, that every true-believing man, that believeth God’s word, is a good witness of God and his word; which clearly proveth that Christ’s Catholic Church is a very special witness. For only in that church is the number of true-believing men… and all that are fallen out of that Catholic, known church are very false-believing heretics.

And also since our Savior saith, “My chief witness I take not of man… but yet I say to you this” (that is to wit, the witness of the good, holy man Saint John) “because ye should be saved,” it appeareth that Tyndale, refusing all witness of man, is likely to be one of those that for unfaithfulness never shall be saved.

Now, albeit that I have in this chapter plainly convicted Tyndale of malicious falsehood used by him in perverting the Holy Scripture of God, as well in the words as in the sentence, for the setting forth of his pestilent heresy taking away the credence that men are bound to give to the church of God, and thereby the obedience that men are bound to bear to the church of God; and that he doth all this because he would instead of God’s church bring men into the congregation of the devil: yet forasmuch as I see that Tyndale setteth not a little by this chapter and would we should ween that it were highly well handled, I will a little
stick the longer therein, to the intent that I may make you the better
and the more clearly perceive that all that he saith therein is either
plain untrue… or else such part as is true proveth his purpose
false.

And forasmuch as Tyndale is all in “the word of God”… and would
thereby make us ween that men’s words should utterly serve of
naught, not so much as for the witness of God’s word: ye shall
understand that whereas Tyndale saith that the word of God “cleanseth”
man’s soul from false faith, “John 15, ‘Ye be clean by reason of the

\[Jn 15:3\] God’s word alone

doth not cleanse the soul

from false faith.

word.’” it is not true that, as Tyndale
would have it seem, “the word” alone
cleanseth the soul from false faith, no
more than faith alone, as he would have it
also seem, cleanseth the soul from sin. For, besides the grace and
goodness of God preventing men’s will, with offering man by
the hearing of his word a gracious occasion of faith; and besides
man’s own will working with grace toward the captivating of
his understanding toward the belief of God’s word; and besides
the grace, aid, and help of God working with man’s will toward
that obedience whereupon followeth that grace that accomplisheth
and perfecteth the full act of believing—besides all these,
I say—there helpeth toward it another thing, without which
many a man should never have come to it; and that is, besides
the word of God, the wonderful works of God in doing great and
marvelous miracles, without which many a man should never
have believed that he had been God; as himself testifieth in the fifth
of Saint John, saying, “The works which my Father hath given
me to do, the same works which I do… they be witness of me that
my Father sent me.”

Will ye see that Christ putteth not all in his word, but joineth his
work therewith? Hear what he saith in the fifteenth chapter of Saint
John: “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they should have no
sin; but now have they nothing to cloak their sin with.
He that hateth me hateth my Father.” Now, though this be indeed
true—that if Christ had never come and spoken to them, there
could not have been laid unto them the sin of that unbelief
whereof they were now faulty when they refused to believe on him and
hated him—but yet to show that his only preaching was not the thing
that so should bring them and bind them to believe upon pain

1 stick . . . therein: dwell . . . on it  3 purpose: thesis  5 in: i.e., into / about  6 would: attempts to
6 ween: think  6–7 should . . . naught: i.e., count for absolutely nothing  7 the witness of: i.e., witness to
15 preventing: acting in advance of  16 gracious: grace-filled  17 captivating: subjugating / leading
23, 25, 32 should: would  24 wonderful: wondrous  25 marvelou s: stupendous; astonishing
works: workings; actions
26 himself: he himself  26 he: i.e., God (the Son; Jesus)  26 had been: was
26 testifieth: attests  26 fifth: i.e., fifth chapter [verse 36]
28 be witness of: i.e., bear witness to  30 will ye: do you want to
30 putteth . . . word: i.e., does not stake his claim to credibility on only his word  31 work: action
36 laid unto: charged against  37 faulty: guilty  38 his only preaching: his preaching by itself
of damnation… but if he wrought miracles among them for
the proof of his word: therefore he saith further, “If I had not done
works among them which none other man did… they should be
without sin. But now they have seen, and yet have hated both me
and my Father.”

Thus have I clearly shown you that whereas Tyndale would have
it seem that God’s word alone always cleanseth men’s souls from
false faith—he teacheth in that a false faith; for the miracles many
times help to the cleansing of men’s souls.

And let Tyndale stick well to this point; for I intend shortly
to show by this that the miracles wrought in Christ’s church clearly
reprove all the false “faith” that he and his master, and all their whole
hundred sects that are their offspring, preach.

But first, where Tyndale saith that God’s word is true, and layeth
therefor the seventeenth of Saint John—no man saith nay to that. And where
he saith further that God’s truth dependeth not of man’s word—
we will grant him this, and much more, too, than he looketh for. For

The truth of God doth not
depend upon God’s own word. I say further that the truth of God dependeth
but is absolutely true in itself, without any
dependence upon his word at all. And as it is true that Tyndale
saith—that God’s truth is not true because man so saith—so is this
true also: that God’s truth is not true because God so saith. But, on
the other side, likewise as this argument or consecution is true—

“God saith that whoso believe not his church… is to be taken as a paynim;

ergo, that thing is true”—so is this consecution true: “Christ’s
church saith that whoso break his vow of chastity sinneth deadly, and
whoso holdesth it for lawful holdesth a heresy; ergo, these two
things be true”; and yet is neither the saying of the Church the
cause of the truth of these two, nor the saying of Christ the cause of
the truth of the other. But likewise as if I see one sit, it must needs
be that he sitteth while I see him sit, because I could not see him
sit but if he sit indeed; and yet he sitteth not because I see him
sit, for sit he should though I saw him not; nor if I say that he
sitteth, the truth of his sitting dependeth not upon my saying,
but the truth of my saying dependeth upon the truth of his
sitting: so doth the truth of God’s deed not depend upon the
truth of his word... but the truth of his word dependeth
upon the truth of his deed. For though the word of God cannot
be but true (since if the thing were not true, God, that is the Truth,
would not say it)—yet is the thing true that God speaketh... not because
it is truly spoken, but because it is truly done. For truth
was the thing in itself, and truth it should have been all had it
never been spoken. And this I say is true touching the words and
propositions by which God anything telleth to his creatures (by
writing or without)—lest Tyndale make us here some sophistication
as though I spoke of the great Word of God whereby allthing
is made: the Son of God himself, one equal God with his
Father and their Holy Spirit.

If Tyndale ask us now whereof serveth, then, the truth of God’s words: I say
that it serveth to make known or believed
among us the truth of God’s deed. For when God saith, “Whoso
believeth and is baptized and liveth well after, or doth penance for
his sin... shall for his faith and good works be highly rewarded in
heaven”—though this shall not be true because God saith it, but because
he will do it... nor he doth it not because he will say it, but
he saith it because he will do it—yet hath he ordained that his
word shall be the way by which that truth shall be shown us... and
that miracles joined unto his word should make us perceive that
it is his word, whereby with reason we must needs be bound to
believe it... and it being believed, we be by reason bound to obey
it.

And this is, therefore, the way that God hath taken from the beginning;
that is to wit, he hath from the beginning joined his word
with wonderful works, to make his word perceived for his own.

Thus did he in every age before the coming of Christ. Thus did
he in Christ himself, whose words he proved by his wonderful
works, as himself saith in the fifteenth of Saint John. Thus did he also
by his blessed apostles, whose doctrine he confirmed by miracles.
And thus hath he done ever since. For likewise as when he sent his
own Son, lest men should not believe him and his doctrine
declaring himself such as he was... God made him do miracles,
more, and more excellent, than ever any did among men before (John
15): when he sent his apostles and his disciples to preach, lest they
should not have been taken for God’s messengers—and that if they
had but told the miracles that Christ did, the countries to
whom they were sent would have went that they had lied and
feigned such fables themselves—therefore Christ caused them to do
Exodus 7—10 miracles in his name before the people…
as God caused Moses to do before Pharaoh.

And when the world was turned to him, and that apostles were not
sent about, then was the Church of every time the apostle to such as
were born and came into the world in their time; of whom such
as lived and remained after their time… were in their stead left
for the apostle that should teach and preach to those others that should
be born into the world in their time; and so forth, from age to age.
And for because that they which from time to time come into this
world, newborn first of their fleshly father and mother, and
after of God and their mother Holy Church by the water and the
Spirit, should be sure that their said mother the Church is Christ’s
apostle and teacheth them the true doctrine, and neither deceiveth
them with false scripture (as doth the congregation of Turks) nor
with false traditions (as do the synagogues of Jews), nor with false
expositions (as do the false churches of heretics): he causeth his
church to do miracles still in every age, and to be discerned and
known by the plenteous working of God’s wonders by himself
wrought therein—so many, and so great, that no man can be ignorant
thereof but he that will neither see nor hear… or is so desperate and so
sore set in an obstinate malice that he will to the devil willingly,
by doing now as the Jews did of old and as Tyndale now doth of
new… ascribing the miracles wrought by the goodness of God to be
done in God’s church by the power of the devil.

And yet when Tyndale is so devilish to tell us thus… he toucheth
nothing this point which I laid against him in my Dialogue:
that if his lie were true, then should it follow that of so many false
churches of false heretics, there should some such miracles be
wrought as well as in ours… since if that our church were a false
church, it were yet but one of the many. And if he will say that
ours were the greatest and the falsest, and therefore false miracles
therein greatest and busiest: yet must he tell us wherefore it is that

3 but told: merely related  4–5 went… fables: i.e., thought they were lying and had made up such unlikely stories
8 when: i.e., when the time came that  / / turned: converted 12 for: as; to be
14 for… which: in order that those who  / / from time to time: i.e., in their respective successive eras
19 false: inauthentic  / / Turks: i.e., Muslims 20 false traditions: invalid traditions
21 expositions: interpretations 22 discerned: distinguished 25 will: is determined to  / / desperate: far gone
26 sore: strongly / terribly  / / will… willingly: deliberately chooses to go to the devil 30 to: as to
30 toucheth: vitiates / discredits 31 nothing: not at all  / / laid: made
31 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies
33 false: truth-opposing / vile / [a polite-language equivalent of] damn  / / some: i.e., be some in which some
34 if that… were: if it were the case that… was 35 were yet: would yet be  36 were: is
36, 37 greatest: (the) biggest 37 busiest: most prolific  / / wherefore: why
among so many of their false churches more, God suffereth not at the leastwise for their little, pretty, small falsehoods, some little, pretty, small miracles to be done. But whereas of truth their falsehoods be so great and outrageous that they stretch from heaven to hell—they have not yet, among them all, one miracle done, great nor small, neither by God nor devil.

And this I show you (for the order of the thing) that ye may perceive that the truth of God is justified in itself, and dependeth not upon his word, nor his word is not the cause of his truth... but by his word he showeth his truth... and by his word we believe that he doth it; and by his apostles and evangelists we believe that he said it; and by the Church of every age following, we be taught and believe that the evangelists and the apostles preached and taught, partly by writing, partly by word without writing, such things as the Catholic Church of Christ telleth us to have been taught by them. And by the miracles done in the same Catholic Church, we know that the same church is the very church of God... and that the doctrine of the same church is revealed and taught unto it by the Spirit of God... and that all other congregations teaching the contrary be false churches, and either their writing be false scriptures or their expositions falsely confound the Scripture... since God hath left his miracles for a mark of his true church, and by the means thereof for a mark of his true doctrine, too... whereby it should be known where were his faithful folk, and his very words, with the right understanding of the same, from all the faithless and feigned-faithful folk, and wrong writing, and false interpretations, and counterfeited preachings, in the world, in that God would leave all those congregations void of all miracles—whereby hath been his perpetual custom to declare and magnify his truth from the beginning of the world unto this day... as I shall yet farther prove in a treatise apart, wherein I shall answer the words of Tyndale, as well in his book of Obedience as elsewhere, as near as I can gather them, by which he would make us believe that all true miracles were ended either in the apostles’ days or soon after... and that all were false illusions of the devil that have been done ever since. Which if he will have believed... he must, I say yet again, tell us then wherefore miracles have all this while continued only
in our Catholic church, and in no false church of heretics as well
as with us, since himself cannot deny that of so many sects as they
be, they must needs be all false save one.

And therefore, though it be true, as indeed it is, that the true
doctrine doth prove the true miracles, and false doctrine proveth
the false miracles; by which we be sure that the Christian miracles be
true, and the paynims’ miracles false: yet know we which is that
true doctrine by the reason that the true doctrine hath been
better proved, and daily is better proved, by more and greater than
ever was the false doctrine, or ever shall be to the world’s end. For

\[ \text{Jn 15:24} \quad \text{as our Savior saith himself—} \text{“If I had not come and wrought works such as no man else had done, they had been without sin.”} \]

And he promiseth

\[ \text{Jn 14:12} \quad \text{that his preachers shall do the} \]
same and yet greater; and so did his
apostles, and his disciples, and his holy doctors, ever since, in
every age.

And as for false miracles, the Catholic Church of Christ, as it is
taught by the Spirit of God, discerneth them well enough from the
ture… and therefore it discerneth and forbiddeth the marvels that
appear in crystal stones, and such other superstitious conjurations…
and is not moved anything to set by them, but condemn them
though they be marvelous… and hath the Spirit of God, according
to Christ’s promise, assistant, whereby it both rejecteth the superstitious
marvels and worketh the very-faithful miracles, for the
proof of the true-faithful doctrine and the true mark and knowledge
of Christ’s very, true church, since none hath miracles but it.

Now, if Tyndale will say that the Doctors of the Catholic
Church have not done miracles for every point of their doctrine:

I say no more did the apostles themselves, though Tyndale say yes,
which he shall never prove. But by their miracles they proved themselves
true preachers and God’s true messengers… and that thing
sufficed for the proof of their whole doctrine. And so God hath done
miracles since for all his saints in every age… and that sufficeth
to prove that their faith was true and the contrary false.

And if he say farther that every man in the Catholic Church
doeth not miracles, nor every Doctor neither: to that I answer that
of many men teaching all one faith, it sufficeth if any one of them
do miracles. For when the Jews were in desert, every man that was

2 himself: he himself
4 though: even if
7 paynims’: non-Christians’
8 by the reason: by reason of the fact
9 greater: i.e., greater wonders
12 had been: would have been
15 yet: even
16 holy doctors: sainted theologians
20 forbidden: excludes; rules out
21 crystal stones: i.e., crystal balls
22 moved . ..: by: inclined to attach any value to
23 but: i.e., but rather to
24 according to: in accord with
25 very-faithful miracles: i.e., actual miracles, the marvels brought about in and through the true faith
27 very: real
30 every . . . did not: i.e., not every . . . worked
of the well-believing sort did not miracles... nor Aaron also did no miracles; but Moses did, and God wrought wonders among them himself.

Nor when divers apostles went together... every one of them did not always a miracle by himself. But since they were all of one faith, it sufficed for the proof of the teaching of them all, that any one of them did.

If he will say that sometimes the doctors which we call holy saints have not all agreed in one... but some one hath sometimes thought in some one thing otherwise than others have done: I say that this his saying is nothing to purpose. For God doth reveal his truths not always in one manner... but sometimes he showeth it out at once as he will have it known and men bound forthwith

Ex 3:10, 18–22 to believe it—as he showed Moses what he would have Pharaoh do. Sometimes he showeth it leisurely, suffering his flock to come and dispute thereupon... and, in their treating of the matter, suffereth them with good mind and Scripture and natural wisdom, with invocation of his spiritual help, to search and seek for the truth, and to vary for the while in their opinions, till that he reward their virtuous diligence with leading them secretly into the consent and concord and belief of the truth by his Holy Spirit, “qui facit unanimes in domo”

Ps 67:7 (Vulgate) (“which maketh his flock of one mind in his house,” that is to wit, his church). So that in the meanwhile the variance is without sin, and maketh nothing against the credence of the Church... except Tyndale will say that he will neither believe Saint Peter nor Saint Paul in anything that they teach... because that once they varied in the manner

Gal 2:7–8, 11–21 of their doctrine, as appeareth. But he shall never find that any of the holy doctors held obstinately the contrary of that thing which the whole Catholic Church had in his time determined for an article of the faith. For I dare surely say that if any so had done... he had repented and changed ere God did any miracle for him either quick or dead.

And therefore as touching Tyndale and Luther and Friar Huessgen, this objection will not excuse their obstinate heresies held so

1 well-believing sort: right-believing set // Aaron... no: i.e., nor did also Aaron work 4 divers: several 4 went: went about 5 by: for 5, 12 one: the same 6 that: that which 8 doctors: theologians 8 which: whom // call: consider 9 agreed in one: been in unanimous agreement 10, 27 in: with regard to 11 this his saying: this thing he’s saying // is... purpose: is totally beside the point / gets him nowhere 12–13 showeth it out: puts it out there; communicates it 13 at once: i.e., all at once 14 showed: told 16 showeth it leisurely: i.e., takes his time making it known // suffering: allowing // dispute: debate 17 suffereth: permits 18 mind: disposition; attitude 19 vary: be at variance; be in disagreement 20 till that he reward: i.e., till such time as he rewards 21 with: by // secretly: imperceptibly 21–22 the... the: i.e., consensus and accord regarding, and belief of, the 25 variance: disagreement 25–26 maketh nothing: militates not at all 26 credence: credibility // except: unless 28 because... manner: i.e., because they at one time clashed regarding the living-out of what they were teaching 29 as appeareth: as it appears 30–31 holy... held: i.e., sainted theologians died obstinately holding 31 that thing: i.e., something 33 surely... done: i.e., state for a fact that if any of them had ever taken such a stance 33 he had: i.e., he would have had to have 34 ere: before 35 quick or dead: i.e., while he was still living or after he died 36 as touching: as regards 37 objection: counterargument
stiffly against all the old holy saints, while they say now that friars may well wed nuns… but if they repent, and leave their heresies, and do penance, and teach truth; for by such means they may yet be saints too, and so I pray God make them.

Now, if Tyndale will yet further say that the Church itself have not always in every age utterly believed alike… but that the Church in some age hath believed otherwise than it hath in some other: I say that this can also nothing serve his purpose. For, whatsoever Tyndale say, never shall he prove the contrary but that God is at his liberty still, and ever still shall be, to teach his truths more and more, as his pleasure shall be to have them known, and to govern his church to his pleasure in diverse ages after diverse manners, such as himself list for to devise… whereof his church is by their whole consent sure. For else shall the Spirit of God—assistant ever with them, by God’s promise, and leading them into all truth—never suffer his whole Catholic Church to consent thereto.

And if Tyndale say the contrary of this… he must also say that Christ hath broken his promise… and he must also tell us that we be still bound yet unto this day, and ever shall be bound still, to the law made by God and his holy apostles at Jerusalem, which they

 Acts 15:20, 28–29 made and sent out in writing… where they forbade “fornication and eating the meat offered up to idols, and all meat of beasts suffocated or strangled, and the eating of any beast’s blood.” Which ordinance if it now stand, and that we must now believe that it is not now lawful to do any of those things there forbidden (as we must indeed if God were not, for all that, at his liberty still in the governance and teaching of his church, what he will have believed and what he will have done), then is quite gone a good piece of their pleasant preaching of their evangelical liberty. For then whereas they preach that every man is at liberty to eat what he list… they leave no man at liberty to eat a poor pudding.

But his church is sure enough… by that they know well that their whole assent is not wrought without the Spirit of God assistant in his church. And that themselves be his very church they be sure enough… by that they see him specially present with them by his continual miracles, which fail in all false churches that be fallen out of this. All

1 stiffly: obdurately // old holy saints: holy saints of old // while: when // 2 may: can 2 well: legitimately; with moral rectitude // but if: unless // leave: abandon; give up 5 have: i.e., has // 8 nothing: in no way // 12 in diverse: in different 12–13 after diverse manners: in different ways // 13 himself: he himself 13 list for: i.e., so chooses // whereof: i.e., of which ways’ being of God’s devising 14 their whole consent: i.e., (by the fact of its) unanimous agreement (on this) 14–15 assistant ever: always actively present 16 suffer… to consent: i.e., allow it to happen that… gives unanimous assent 18 his promise: See Matthew 16:18 and John 16:13. // 22 meat: food // 23 beasts: animals 24 stand: remains in effect // 25 lawful: morally permissible // 29 pleasant: cheery; blithe 31 what he list: whatever he wants to // 32 poor: mere; measly // pudding: blood sausage 33 sure enough: i.e., confident enough about this // 33, 36 by: i.e., by reason of the fact 34 whole: unanimous // wrought: brought about // assistant: i.e., being present and active 35 very: true // 37 fail: are lacking // out of this: i.e., away from this church
which false churches this true church, of charity (Christ’s proper badge), ceaseth not to solicit and labor

of salvation and the haven of heaven—except the devil, by their deadly malice, drown them utterly with driving them down into the depth of indurate heart, thoroughly pierced with their pestilent heresy.

And yet I say further that this objection of diverse articles believed by the Church in diverse times will not serve the heretics for their defense... since that they teach such things for true as not only all the holy doctors and all the holy saints of every time, but also all the whole Church of every time, have ever taught to be false. Or else they must show us some one man, at the leastwise, that in this fifteen hundred years before their days hath held for good and lawful that such persons as have vowed chastity to God may run out of religion and wed harlots at their liberty.

Now, if Tyndale will take hold of that that I have said—that God is at his liberty to reveal a thing when he will—and that he hath now revealed this new article to him and his holy fellows: they must, I say, then prove us by miracles that they be God’s true messengers; for else why should we believe them?

If he say that they prove it by Scripture, in that they preach his word: I say again, the Scripture I know for God’s word, but them I know not for God’s messengers, because they will not be acknown of all God’s words; for they will believe no word of his without writing... and also, his words written they misconstrue. And therefore, concerning the word of God written, the question lieth between us not upon God’s word, but upon the right understanding thereof, wherein while all the old holy doctors be quite against them, we say now to Tyndale that of reason we may not believe him. For in these points wherein we vary—as, for example, that friars may wed nuns—either the Scripture is plain and easy to perceive, or doubtuous and hard to understand. If it be plain and easy: we cannot think but that among so many of the old holy, wise, and well-learned doctors, some one at the least, in all this long while, should have been as able to perceive it as Luther and he now...
so suddenly. And on the other side, if he say that in that point the Scripture is dark and hard: then may we with reason think that Luther and he, and Friar Huessgen too, may as well misunderstand it now as all those holy, wise, well-learned saints all this fifteen hundred years. So that yet again we be come to the point that Tyndale, if in his doctrine depending upon the exposition of Scripture he look to be believed that friars may wed nuns, against the doctrine of all those old holy doctors that in their expositions call it abominable lechery—he must needs do miracles as they did, or else must Luther or Friar Huessgen, or some one of their fellows at the least.

For where he saith, in one place of his book against me, that we may require no miracles of them—if he had said because they can none do, I would have taken it for a final answer, and would have troubled him no more with that troublous question. But, now, because he saith it needeth not… and would it should seem that the miracles which Christ and his apostles did should serve for the proof of his doctrine—my conscience cannot suffer me to let him go so.

For since our question is not upon Christ’s and his apostles’ words, which their miracles proved true, but upon the exposition and understanding that Tyndale and Luther giveth to them—which expositions all they that God hath, ever since the apostles’ days hitherto, by miracles proved to be his true preachers… have plainly taught to be false—Tyndale may not say for shame but that for his doctrine taught by those expositions, if he will be believed against many preachers proved true by many miracles, he must do miracles too… or else if we believe him before all them, we be much more than mad, especially but if some of his company and fellows in his heresy did some miracles for him; which, our Lord be thanked, he suffereth no false church of heretics to do, but his own Catholic Church alone.

And now in such things as God seeth most need, and the heretics most busy to assault his church—there doth he most specially fence in his church with miracles. As in the reverence of images, relics, and pilgrimages, and worshipping of saints,
and his holy sacraments... and most of all, that holy Sacrament of the Altar, his own Blessed Body; for which manner of things he hath wrought and daily doth many wonderful miracles... and the like of those that he wrought in the time of his apostles, to show and make

The Catholic Church is Christ's perpetual apostle. proof that his Catholic Church is his perpetual apostle, how many nations soever fall therefrom, and how little and small soever it be left.

And therefore we say not, as Tyndale beareth us in hand, that the truth of God dependeth upon the multitude of men's mouths; but that the Catholic Church, illustrated with the miracles of God, and taught by the Spirit of God... is set upon the high mountain of the stone that is Christ... and therefore can never be hidden; but that the miracles which God ever worketh and ever shall work therein doth and shall make the light of the doctrine shine and show the right way to heaven.

And these miracles hath God often wrought to the conversion and amendment of Jews and heretics... and often to the confusion and burning up of obstinate Jews and heretics, with the beginning of their hell even here in earth.

Now, Tyndale denieth not but that there be and have been such miracles... but he saith that they be done by the devil. But then say I that in his so saying he is worse than ever was the devil. For the devil durst never say so much himself as did the Jews and now Tyndale say.

But when he saith it... I say, yet again, he must show me why there be no miracles among all his false churches of heretics... or else to call the true miracles of God done in the Catholic Church of God false illusions of the devil is a word well able alone to prove himself a devil.

Now, if Tyndale will say that the Turks have miracles among them as well as our church: I may deny it him, by his own rule, but if he prove it by plain Scripture. But, now, if I grant it him, yet shall it not serve him. For I may prove him by plain Scripture that there be neither none such nor so many done among them as these be that be daily done in Christ's Catholic Church. For our Savior saith that his own miracles passed all that had been before... and that yet his apostles and disciples, and his faithful, believing

Jn 15:24; 14:12 folk, should do as great and greater. And we see that in the Catholic Church God

1 his: i.e., in the celebrating and receiving of his // that: i.e., toward that 3 wonderful: wondrous; astounding
7 fall: fall away // little: little numerically; unpopulous 9 beareth us in hand: i.e., makes us out to
9–10 the truth of God: i.e., divine truth / what constitutes orthodox belief
10 the... mouths: i.e., the numerosness of the people saying it is this or that 11 illustrated: illuminated
18 confusion: downfall; undoing 19 obstinate: contumacious 20 even: right // in: on
24 durst never: never dared 26 show: tell 29 of the: from the // a word: an assertion
31 Turks: i.e., Turkish Muslims 33 but if: unless 34 serve him: do him any good; get him anywhere
34 may prove: can prove to 36 daily done: i.e., done all the time 37 passed: surpassed
37 been: i.e., ever been done 39 should: would
hath done and daily doth for his saints, both while they were here and after their departing hence—and hath also done and daily doth at divers images and pilgrimages—as great miracles in confirmation of our faith in that behalf as ever he did in the time of the apostles. And therefore am I very sure that neither paynims nor Turks be able to match our church in miracles; but that ours as far pass all theirs, if they have any, as ever the miracles of

Ex 7:8–12; 8:1–10 Moses passed the witchcraft of the Egyptian jugglers. And of this am I as sure… as that the false churches of heretics do no miracles at all.

Furthermore, as for miracles or marvels done among the Turks or Saracens—since Tyndale is not yet, as far as I know, circumcised, nor professeth not himself a Saracen, nor I know him not very surely for a Turk but for a heretic, I shall not greatly need to dispute with him upon miracles done among the Muhammadans… but (which were as good as to do that he doth!) let him go circumcise himself, and then come again and speak for Muhammad and his men, and I shall answer him further for their miracles. But in the meantime while I know him but for a heretic, it is enough to tell him that among all the false churches of false heretics there be no miracles at all. But God worketh his miracles in his true church, to show his true church—that is to wit, his true apostle. And then, his true preacher known—that is sufficient for all his preaching, and to prove that he doth teach and expound the Scripture after the right understanding… taught and inspired by the Spirit of God, sent to dwell with his church forever, according to Christ’s promise; and therefore shall not need no particular miracles upon every article, for Christ used not that himself.

And thus in this mine answer to his one chapter… which he so gaily flourished that he had went the glittering thereof would have made every man’s eyes so a-dazed that no man should have spied his falsehood and found out the truth—I have in such wise confounded him and all his whole doctrine utterly… that if I never would write one word more, yet should he never against this alone defend his devilish doctrine while he liveth, and take all the devils in hell to help him.

2 hence: from here 3 divers: various // pilgrimages: pilgrimage sites; shrines 5 paynims: pagans 6, 12, 15 Turk(s): Turkish Muslim(s) 7 pass: surpass; outstrip 8 passed: transcended / outdidd 9 jugglers: sorcerers 13, 14 Saracen(s): Arab Muslim(s) 13 yet: i.e., as yet 16 dispute: argue; debate // upon: about 17 were… that: i.e., would be as good a thing to do as what 17–18 circumcise himself: i.e., get himself circumcised 18 again: back 19 for: regarding 21 false [heretics]: truth-opposing / vile // [a polite-language equivalent of] damn 23 show: make known 25 after: according to 28 need: be needed // particular: special 28 upon: i.e., for; to support 29 used not that: used not that approach; did not proceed in that way 30 this mine answer: this answer of mine // his one chapter: i.e., this one chapter of his 31 gaily: showily // flourished: i.e., filled with brilliant rhetoric / brandished // went: thought 32 spied: espied 33 falsehood: dishonesty; mendaciousness // wise: a way 33 confounded: confuted 34 all his whole: his whole entire 34, 36 doctrine: body of teaching 34 never would: were never to 36 while: as long as // and take: i.e., even were he to get
Whether the Apostles Left Aught Unwritten

That Is of Necessity to Be Believed

We become now, good Christian reader, unto that matter which is undoubtedly one of the most special points that are in debate between these heretics and us. For upon this question hangeth all their whole hold in the destruction of many holy things believed and observed in Christ’s Catholic Church.

For if we speak of fasting the Lent or other holy vigils—they say we find it not in Scripture. If we speak of keeping the holy day—they say the Scripture appointeth none. If we speak of worshipping the Sacrament of the Altar—they say it is not commanded in Scripture; and so of every good thing, almost, in like wise. For in this point they end not. It serveth them but for a step forward. For after time that they have said this once, that every necessary thing is written; albeit that they say therein false and are never able to prove their saying true, as ye shall see anon: yet when they be confuted and concluded openly therein, they dissemble shamefully their confusion… and, making then as though their part were proved, they run on farther and will hear no more thereof… but deny also the things that be well and plainly written in Holy Writ indeed.

As, for example, when we say that Confirmation, Priesthood, and Matrimony be holy sacraments—Tyndale saith nay… for, he saith, “it is not written in Scripture.” We show him plain scriptures for them, of grace given in them “by the imposition of the hands,” by the words of Saint Paul… and Tyndale laugheth his words to scorn, saying it was but a manner of the country, as a man layeth his hand upon a boy’s head when he calleth him “Good son.” And as for Matrimony… he saith that Saint Paul meant not in such wise… and that he can make as good a sacrament of salt, of mustard seed, of a key, or of a net.

So that, as I say, believe them once in this, that we be bound to believe nothing but the only Scripture; and take away the credence from the Catholic Church (as though that God, leaving his only Scripture therein, had broken his promise and taken his
Spirit therefrom!): the very Scripture itself shall serve every foolish heretic for a bauble.

Now forasmuch, therefore, as the matter of this chapter, wherein Tyndale, as he did in the chapter last before, in which I have plainly confounded him, goeth about again to take away the credence of Christ’s Catholic Church… which once fallen away, the credence and the fruit of Scripture and all goeth with it (for both would every sect of heretics wrest it unto their own

By the Church we know errors… and, as Saint Augustine saith, save the Scripture of God. for the Church we know not the Holy Scripture of God from unholy writing of man)—I require the reader to consider well what he readeth, and pass it not over suddenly, but advise it sadly… and I doubt not then but he shall plainly see that Tyndale shall in this chapter, as solemnly as he setteth forth, take a shameful fall. Hear now, therefore, what he saith.

Tyndale

But did not the apostles teach aught by mouth that they wrote not? I answer, Because that many taught one thing, and every man the same in diverse places and unto diverse people, and confirmed every sermon with a sundry miracle: therefore Christ and his apostles preached a hundred thousand sermons, and did as many miracles… which had been superfluous to have been all written.

More

Now consider, good reader, that Tyndale’s purpose is to prove us that the apostles wrote all that was of necessity to be done or to be believed. And remember that as yet he doth but tell us that they did so, and proveth it not yet… but he will anon, full worshipfully. But in the meanway mark me this first: that he saith that Christ and his apostles did confirm every sermon with a sundry miracle.

For till he prove me that by Scripture… I deny it plainly. For since neither Scripture teacheth it nor the Catholic Church preacheth it, nor any reason proveth it: I may well and boldly deny it, and so I do.

For I see well his falsehood for which he feigneth it. He seeth miracles wrought by God plenteously in his Church, and that thereby his
Church and the faith thereof is confirmed; and therefore, to bring at the leastwise some part thereof in question, he would say that we find not special miracles done for every point. But I say no more did the apostles neither, nor Tyndale shall never prove it. For if he will prove me that... he must prove me true not only the thing that himself saith, which is more than ever he shall prove true—that is to wit, that they proved every sermon with a sundry miracle—but also that either they never preached but one article in one sermon, or if they preached many... he must then prove me two things: one, that they confirmed that sermon with as many miracles as they preached points; another, that they showed the people that the miracles which they then did was so many miracles for so many points; for else might all those miracles be done for the proof of one of those points, and all the remnant unproved.

For if Tyndale will say that thing needed not, forasmuch as any one miracle sufficed to prove them all, since it proved him a true preacher: then shall Tyndale say, lo, the thing that I would have him say; for then himself proveth that it needed not that they should prove every sermon with a several miracle made among one people—nor peradventure any one sermon, neither, otherwise than as by miracles shown at other occasions beside their sermons, they proved themselves holy men and God's messengers. For we find many miracles done by them at such times as they were not making of sermons. And yet, when they did them in Christ's name...

we find not always that they added a special article of our faith, which specialty they would have by that miracle confirmed.

And thus ye see that here he affirmeth one thing that he shall never prove; which thing yet I would not vouchsafe to speak of, saving that he doth it of an evil purpose. For his master Martin Luther, when Erasmus laid against him for man's free will the doctrine of the old holy saints whose faith was approved by miracles, laid against him again that though they did miracles, Erasmus yet could not prove that any of them did a miracle specially for that article; and therefore he would have that article seem unproved as for any miracle. And this way taketh Tyndale now for the selfsame intent... and therefore feigneth that the apostles “confirmed every sermon with a sundry miracle.” But I doubt not but that if

2 in: into  // would: decided to  3, 25 special: particular  3, 11, etc. point(s): article(s) (of the faith)
4 nor... it: i.e., nor will Tyndale ever prove that they did  5 will: is to  6 himself saith: i.e., he is saying
7, 37 a sundry miracle: See note for 255/21, 30.  8 article: i.e., article of the faith  11 another: i.e., the other
11 showed: told  12 the: i.e., the set of  14 remnant: rest (be)  15, 18 needed not: was not necessary
16–17 him a true preacher: i.e., that preacher to be a trustworthy, authentic one  18 himself: he himself
19 several: separate  // made: produced  // among: i.e., in the presence of
20 one people: i.e., one same group of people  // peradventure: perhaps  // any: i.e., even
21 show... sermons: i.e., performed out in the open on occasions other than their givings of sermons
24 making of: giving  // yet: furthermore  // when they did them: i.e., while they did do their miracles
25 special: particular; specific  26 specialty: specific one  28 vouchsafe: bother
29 evil purpose: ill intent  30, 32 laid: adduced  31 old: early  // approved: corroborated
32 again: in response  // though: even if  33 specially: specifically  35 way: approach
36 feigneth: makes up the story  37 doubt not but: have no doubt
we should bid Tyndale here, or Luther himself, prove us every article of his faith which he would we should ween were the faith that the apostles preached—if we should, I say, bid them prove us that the apostles confirmed every article thereof by a sundry miracle—they should seek in Scripture till their eyes were sore ere they found it.

Moreover, Tyndale’s words fight together, and one part cannot agree with another. For if these words be true—that they proved every sermon with a sundry miracle—then is it false that he saith here also: that is to wit, of miracles as many be written as needeth.

For if it be true that Tyndale saith, that the apostles “confirmed every sermon with a sundry miracle”; and that was not needful but because it was needful that every necessary point of faith that they preached should be proved by miracle: it followeth that every necessary point that they preached, they did prove by miracle.

Then, further, if every necessary point that they preached, they proved by miracle because it was needful that it should be, for credence to be given to that point for our souls’ health—it was needful, then, for the conservation of the same credence, if the credence could not be kept without writing, that of every such necessary point of faith and necessary doctrine of theirs, without which believed we cannot be saved… there were one miracle written at the least. But there is not of every such article one miracle written; ergo, it is not true that Tyndale goeth about to prove: that the miracles as many be written as needeth… and that every necessary thing is written. And verily if everything that we should necessarily believe had been the intent of God to have it put in writing… and that it had been also necessary that every point were proved by one miracle… and not sufficient that the preachers were proved by miracles themselves, and thereby their doctrine to be believed: it were very probable, then, both that the writers would have written some things much more openly and plainly than they have done… and also that of every necessary point of faith, they would have written one miracle at the least. But, now, since God intended not to give his New Law by books, but specially by the necessary points thereof written in men’s hearts… whereof himself would be the special inward master: he hath provided the Scripture to serve for part, but not to serve alone for all. And since such miracles as be written therein, suffice to prove

1, 3 bid . . . prove: challenge . . . to prove to  2 would . . . were: would have us think is  4, 8, 11 a sundry miracle: See note for 255/21, 30.  5 should: would // ere: before
6 fight together: clash with one another  7 agree: i.e., be reconciled  8, 10, 23 it: i.e., this thing
9 needeth: is necessary  11 but: except  12, 14, etc. necessary: essential (for salvation)
12, 14, etc. point(s): article(s)  17 health: well-being / salvation  19 writing: i.e., scriptural backup
19, 22, 31 of: i.e., for  20 believed: i.e., being believed by us
21–22 there . . . least: i.e., there was at least one miracle recorded in Scripture  23 goeth about: is attempting
23–24 the . . . be: as many of the miracles are  24 need: i.e., are needed to be; is necessary
25–26 verily . . . writing: i.e., if in actuality it had been God’s intent to have everything that we have to believe in order to get to heaven put in scriptural writing  26 that: i.e., if  28 proved: i.e., proved trustworthy
29 were: would be  30 writers: i.e., scriptural writers  33 books: written documents
34, 35 special(ly): preeminent(ly)  35 master: teacher
the apostles God’s true preachers… and therefore needed not miracles
to be written for every point of their preaching: no more needed
there to be miracles done for every point of their preaching.

And for farther proof thereof… how many things preached the
apostles by their epistles, with which we read not that they sent
by the messengers for every point a miracle!

And thus, good readers, here ye see first that this point of Tyndale’s
preaching must be better proved… which point thus reproved
answereth and reproveth clearly divers other places of his book
hereafter. But yet is it farther to be considered and weighed in his
words, that he saith:

[that] the pith and the substance, in general, of everything necessary
to our souls’ health—both of what we ought to believe and what
we ought to do—was written. . . . So that whatsoever we ought to believe
or do, that same is written expressly… or drawn of that which is
written.

More

Lk 16:1–8

In these words though I find lack of truth… yet I somewhat allow his wit… as
our Savior said by the wicked bailiff which, though he played the
false shrew for his master, provided yet wilily somewhat for himself.
And so playeth Tyndale here. For now that he plainly perceiveth
that the doctrine is plainly false which his master
Luther and himself too have taught so plainly between them all this
while—that is to wit, that there is no necessary truth to be believed
but if it be proved by plain and evident Scripture—now cometh
Tyndale and seeth that they shall be put to flight and fain to
run away… and therefore wilily provideth a starting hole,
stepping from “plain and evident Scripture,” their old specially
plain, evident words, unto dark, debatable terms of “general,” “pith,”
and “substance,” and of “drawing out” and “deducing” and “depending”
upon Scripture… upon every which word he may make
an argument when it cometh to the point.

But yet if he would honestly stand to his tackling in this point,
and give us the like liberty that himself will take… and neither
use false deductions of his own nor refuse our deductions if we
deduce them well: we would never find fault in this point. But,
now, let us deduce a thing never so strait, it cannot be allowed.
Let himself draw it never so far awry... yet will he swear that it is right enough. I shall give you, for the more clearness, one example of either side. We say that since our Savior hath himself promised, in the Gospel, that himself and his Holy Spirit shall be with his church all days unto the end of the world—it followeth, sa y we, thereof, that his church shall never fail as long as the world lasteth. And because our Savior saith in like wise that his Holy Spirit, ever abiding with his church, shall teach his church all things, and lead them into every truth, and put them in remembrance of all that himself had or would say unto them—we deduce thereupon that he will not suffer his church fall into the erroneous belief of any damnable untruth... but lead them into the truth that is the contrary of that untruth. And since he said not, “The Holy Ghost shall write unto you all things,” nor “. . . shall write you all truth,” but “. . . shall lead you into all truth”—we deduce thereupon that the belief whereinto the Spirit of God leadeth us, and planteth it in our heart, is as good and as sure to salvation of our souls without any writing at all as if it were written in parchment with golden letters and Christ’s own hand.

Here have I shown you an example of our deductions... which I trust every man may see that we draw it not far of, but that the Scripture well and clearly maintaineth our deducing thereof. And the example also that I show you serveth much for our matter against Tyndale, that contendeth, and laboreth to prove, that we be bound to believe nothing but God’s promises... and here he seeth that God promised, not to put allthing in writing, but that the Holy Ghost should teach us by leading us into every truth.

Now shall I show you an example of Tyndale’s deduction upon Scripture, which, as God would, he bringeth forth himself in this same present chapter, to the intent that ye should not lack a show... whereby ye shall see how plainly he proveth his holy doctrine by the Holy Scripture.

Mt 22:39 The Scripture saith, “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” Now, upon this text deduceth Tyndale that women may christen, and consecrate the Body of Christ and say Mass too. How other men will allow this deduction, I cannot tell. But lest they that like it not might hap to ween that he saith it not, I shall rehearse you his own very words.

1 draw . . . awry: i.e., give Scripture no matter how distorted an interpretation  5 himself: he himself 6 thereof: from that 7 fail: go out of existence 8 in like wise: along the same lines 11–12 himself had: i.e., our Savior himself had said 13 suffer: let 14 but: i.e., but rather, will 18 planteth it: i.e., that he implants // good: valid; sound 19 sure to: i.e., certainly conducive to the 19 writing: i.e., mention in Scripture 20 in: on 20–21 Christ’s own hand: i.e., by Christ’s own hand / in Christ’s own handwriting 22, 30 show(n): i.e., give(n) 22, 30, 39 deduction(s): deducing(s) 22 which: i.e., in which 23 may: can // draw . . . of: i.e., come up with an inference that is not far-fetched 24 well and: quite // maintaineth: supports 25 I show: i.e., I’m giving // matter: case 26 that . . . laboreth: who . . . tries hard 26–27 we . . . but: i.e., there’s nothing we’re obliged to believe but 28 allthing: everything 29 should: would 30, 36 upon: i.e., from 31 would: i.e., would have it 33 show: demonstration 37 christen: baptize 38 allow: assess 39 like it not: do not approve of it 39 hap: happen 40 ween: think; believe // rehearse: quote // very words: actual words / words verbatim
Tyndale

They will haply demand where it is written that women should baptize. Verily, in this commandment “Love thy neighbor as thyself” it is written that they may and ought to administer not only Baptism but all other [sacraments also] in time of need, if they be so necessary as they preach them.

More

Lo, sir, here ye see that if the Mass be so necessary as the Church teacheth… which saith and hath ordained that it is necessary to be said unto the parish at the leastwise every Sunday: if the priest be not at home, then some goodwife may for a need step to the altar and say Mass in his stead… because the Scripture saith “Love thy neighbor as thyself.”

What is there that these folk may not prove by Scripture… if they may deduce it thus and have their deduction allowed? Uzzah made as good deduction as this, and yet had no thank. For

1 Chr 13:9–10 he thought that because of the commandment “Thou shalt honor thy Lord God”… he might, and was bound to, set his hand unto staying and keeping up of the Ark of the Testament, that was about to fall. But God taught other men by that man’s sudden death… that he was too malapert, to meddle with that kind of God’s honor that was not meet for him. And Tyndale because a woman must love her neighbor as herself… will have her not touch the Ark, but the

Blessed Body of God, and bodily consecrate it herself—which neither the Blessed Mother of Christ nor the highest angel in heaven durst ever presume to think, because God had not appointed them to that office. Such deductions upon Scripture made they of likelihood that took upon them in the Old Testament more than their part came to—as Korah and Abiram… and the king Uzziah, that would

Nm 16:1–33 needs play the priest and incense God
2 Chr 26:16–23 himself… for which honorable service our Lord sent him shame and sorrow.

Now, if Tyndale ask me why a woman may christen and not consecrate, since both be sacraments: I can answer him the common answer, that though both be necessary… yet both be not like great

2 haply: maybe // demand: ask peremptorily 3 verily: actually 5 in time of need: when need be
6 preach them: i.e., preach them to be 8 lo, sir: i.e., oh boy 9 teacheth: i.e., teaches it to be
9 is necessary to: i.e., needs to; must 11 goodwife: housewife // for a need: if need be
11 step: sashay up 14, 15 may (not): can(not) 15 deduce: i.e., deduce from
15, 16 deduction: (an) inference / (a) deducing 15 allowed: approved; accepted as valid
16 had no thank: i.e., received no favorable regard / got no credit for it 19 might: could rightly
19 bound: obliged // staying: steadying 20 Testament: Covenant // that: which
21 sudden: prompt; immediate 22 malapert: presumptuous // to meddle: in involving himself
22 God’s honor: i.e., honoring of God 22–23 was not meet for him: i.e., it was not his place to try to do
27 durst ever: ever dared // think: i.e., think of doing 28 deductions: deducings; inferences
28 upon: from 28–30 made… to: i.e., were probably made by those in the Old Testament who took it upon themselves to do more than their position entitled them to do 30 as: such as // that: who
30–31 would needs: was bound and determined to 33 sorrow: grief / affliction
34 christen: baptize 36 like: equally
nor like necessary. For both is there greater reverence to be had to
the sacrament of Christ’s Body than to the sacrament of Baptism…
and yet is Baptism of more necessity than the other, since that for
fault of Baptism salvation faileth, and not for fault of housel. But
as for my part, I would give him none answer to that question other
than the ordinance of God’s Spirit… which I see that God hath
taught his Church, and else would he not suffer them to believe that
it were well done, whereof no man is bound to give a precise cause.
But it were overmuch boldness to think that we could precisely
tell the cause of everything that it pleaseth God to devise… though
Tyndale and his “spiritual” sort will not obey God’s bidding till
themselves, as he saith, have ensearched and found the very, full cause
why.

It is to me, for all Tyndale’s deduction, a greater question yet,
saving for the custom of Christ’s Catholic Church… why a woman
may christen, than why she may not consecrate. For surely, since God
sent out only men to baptize, I would set no woman thereto for any
need, no more than to be a confessor and assiole men of their
sins for need… saving that I see the one ever used everywhere in
Christ’s whole church, and the consent of holy saints approving
and allowing the same. And in consecrating, never woman
did it… nor good man believed that any woman might do it.
Which belief if it were false, I doubt not but the Spirit of God,
teaching his church, would ere this have led his church into the
contrary truth, according to Christ’s promise.

But now, as I say, ye see by Tyndale’s example for what intent and
purpose he puttheth in his deducing and drawing of articles of the
faith out of the Scripture… wherein he may as well believe what he
will and take what he list, not of the tradition of Christ’s Catholic
Church, but of the tradition of Martin Luther’s leman… as frame
himself a faith by a deduction of Scripture deduced in such a
fashion.

In the same manner, he draweth out of Scripture (in his book of
Obedience, and in this book also) that a friar may marry a nun by
the authority of Saint Paul. For, being asked where he findeth it
in Scripture, he saith it is written in these words to Timothy: “A
bishop must be unreprovable and the husband of one wife.”

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1 like: equally // greater . . . be: i.e., to be greater reverence // 1–2, 2 to the: toward the // 3 since that: since
4 fault: lack // faileth: i.e., fails to occur / is unattained // housel: Holy Communion // 5 none: no
7 suffer: allow // them: i.e., the members (and in particular the Magisterial ones) of the Church
8 it . . . whereof: i.e., this difference in practice is a right one, for which // 8, 10, 12 cause (of): reason (for)
9 were: would be // 11 sorr: set // 12 themselves: they themselves // ensearched: gone in search of
12 very: real // 14 deduction: deducing // 15 the custom: i.e., its being the established praxis
16 may (not): can(not) // christen: baptize // surely: assuredly // 17 any: i.e., any kind or amount of
18 assiole: absolve // one ever used: i.e., one thing always in practice / one practice always in effect
20 consent: consensus // allowing: accepting as legitimate // in: i.e., as for
21–22 never . . . nor: i.e., never has it happened that a . . . nor that a // 22 might: could
24 ere this: before now // 26 Tyndale’s example: i.e., what Tyndale gives as his example
27 puttheth in: i.e., puts in that remark about // drawing: extrapolating // 28 may: i.e., could
28 well: rightly; legitimately // 29 will: wants to // list: chooses to / pleases // 29, 30 of the: from the
30 leman: bedmate; cohabitee // frame: devise // 31 a deduction of: an inference from
33 draweth out of: extrapolates from // 35 it: i.e., this // 37 unreprovable: irreproachable
And in the words of Saint Paul “There shall come false prophets that shall forbid marriage.” And in this text also: “It is better to marry than to burn.”

Is not this conclusion, trow ye, well deduced? In the first because Saint Paul did put in this word “one” to forbid and exclude any more than one—Tyndale deduceth that a bishop must needs have one; and thereby maketh Saint Paul false in another place, where he counseleth and wisheth that he should rather have none.

In the second text because Saint Paul condemneth them that would say it were not lawful for any man to marry—Tyndale deduceth that every man may marry though himself have made unto God a contrary promise before; and might as well deduce that no man may be forbidden to marry though he have a wife already. For the friar is as well and as clearly forbidden to marry by the scriptures, that forbiddeth him the breach of his vow… as is the man forbidden to marry that hath a wife already.

And upon the third text, because Saint Paul saith that it is better to marry than to burn—Tyndale deduceth that it is better for a friar to marry than to forbear lechery… and considereth not that when he breaketh his vow and weddeth a harlot, then he burneth both body and soul: first here in the fire of foul, filthy lust, and after this world in everlasting fire of hell. Is not this conclusion worshipfully deduced upon Scripture? It is marvel that he deduceth it not rather upon the text that he speaketh of here—“Love thy neighbor as thyself”—and upon this text also: “Do to another as thou wouldst be done to thyself.” These have yet some better color for Luther and his leman—and I doubt not but he will find them at last and say that his marriage is grounded there—because he loveth her with such a lewd, lousy love as the lewd, lousy lover in lechery loveth himself… and is so righteously disposed that he will never desire that she shall lie with him but when he is even as well content that himself shall lie with her.
This that we say now in sport... he will say once in earnest, I warrant you.

Now, for the declaration of his purpose in “drawing” and deducing of the article of their faithless faith out of Scripture of God, these examples suffice; and therefore I shall proceed farther.

Now, next he cometh to the purpose to prove you that every necessary thing that we be bound either to believe or to do is written in Scripture. And now hark, I pray you, how properly the good man proveth it. These are his words...

Tyndale

For if that I were bound to do or believe under pain of loss of my soul anything that were not written nor depended of that which is written, what helped me the Scripture that is written?

More

Lo, here is his first argument, that he setteth forth in the forefront of the field, as a specially strong band. Which argument whoso well advise and consider—if himself have wit—shall plainly say that it cometh out of a madman’s mouth.

For by this reason, till the Gospels were written... every man might have refused all the doctrine of Christ in every point that was not written in the Scripture before his day, nor drawn out thereof by a little straighter line than Luther draweth his. And when Christ taught them the counsel of virginity and many other wholesome things above the perfection of their Old Law—they might have said, “Show me this in writing.” And then if he had answered that himself being such as he was (and for such testified by writing, and by the word of his Father, and by his own wondrous works)—owed to be believed of them in everything, upon pain of the loss of their souls—they might have said again as Tyndale saith now: “If we be bound upon the pain of loss of our souls to believe anything that is not written nor dependeth of that which is written, what helped us the Scripture that is written?” This tale of Tyndale’s might they have told unto Christ himself, against the Sacrament of Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar too.

1 Cor 11:34 Now, when Saint Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians said, “I will order the

1 in sport: in jest  // say once: one day say  2 warrant: bet  3 declaration: exposing  4 of the: i.e., every  5 the purpose to prove: i.e., his objective of proving to  6 necessary: i.e., essential-for-salvation  7, 30 bound: obliged  8 hark... how: i.e., I ask you to please take note of how  9 properly: well / logically  10 if... bound: i.e., if it were the case that I was obliged  11 anything: something  12–13 were... me: i.e., neither was given by God in writing nor followed from something that was, of what help to me would be  15 lo: look  16 field: i.e., battlefield  17 whoso... consider: whoever seriously looks at and reflects on  18 if himself have wit: i.e., if he himself has any sanity  19 by this reason: according to this reasoning  20, 24, 29 might: could rightly  20 refused: rejected  21 drawn out thereof: extrapolated therefrom  22 testified by: attested in  28 of: by  29 again: in reply  30 as: i.e., what  31–32 is... us: i.e., neither is given us by God in writing nor follows from something that is, then of what help to us is  32 tale: speech  33 might they have: they could have  34 the Altar: i.e., the Eucharist  35 order: set in order / regulate
remnant when I come myself”—they should by Tyndale’s reason have sent him his epistle again, and say, “If we shall be bound to do anything unwritten, what availeth us all that ever thou writest?”

But there needeth no places of Scripture to this blasphemous folly of Tyndale spoken against the Scripture… because God hath taught and left some part of his pleasure without Scripture. For if a man write certain rules to his household servants, and yet give them certain, besides, by his own mouth—such as peradventure should need no warning in writing because the continual use and exercise of them could not suffer them to be forgotten (in which kind of commandments be the blessed sacraments so daily used in Christ’s church that forgotten they cannot be, nor left they shall not be, for all the business that these heretics, the devil’s doctors, can make)—if this lord’s servants were so wise to learn this lesson of Tyndale and say, “Nay, sir; and ye leave these things unwritten, then a straw for all that ye have written!”: might not the master say that his men were a sort of malapert, foolish knaves? And this is, as ye see, Tyndale’s first reason wherewith he full properly proveth us that the apostles wrote altogether that ever we should be bound to believe. Which reason ye see yourselves is not worth one rush… but, rather, a plain unreasonable blasphemy foolishly spoken against the Scripture of God… which he saith serveth for naught if God bind us to believe any word of his besides.

Now let us proceed to the second… which is, I promise you, very second, for any fruit that ye shall find therein. These are his words…

Tyndale

Inasmuch as Christ and all his apostles warned us that false prophets should come with false miracles, even to deceive the elect if it were possible: wherewith should the true preacher confound the false, except he brought true miracles to confound the false, or else authentic scripture of full authority already among the people?

More

Great cause have we to give thanks to God… whose goodness wresteth the tongues of heretics and maketh them there speak most
against themselves where they ween to speak for themselves the best, as he serveth Tyndale here. For these be the words that I would have wished him to say! For whereas he meaneth that all must be written because that else there were nothing that could confound false prophets that should come and show false miracles, except the true preachers should show true miracles against them: I answer to Tyndale two things. The first is that it is plain false that Tyndale taketh for a plain truth: that is to wit, that the true preachers could have nothing to confound the false prophets that should come with false miracles, but if all the truth were written in scripture authentic among the people. And that if it so were… then the true preachers had enough without true miracles to confound the false prophets bringing false miracles. The second thing that I answer him with is this: that if it were true that he saith (that without miracles nothing would sufficiently serve in such case except that every necessary thing were written in authentic scripture), yet since himself confesseth that true miracles might in such case sufficiently serve the true preacher and confound the false and save the faith upright—and that he cannot say but that God is able to do them whenssoever he list, and will never leave his church destitute of help and comfort necessary, and therefore in such necessity will not fail to do them—Tyndale must needs agree (be he never so loath to come to it) that God hath no necessity, for avoiding of such peril, to provide that his church should have every necessary thing delivered unto them, and evermore kept with them, in authentic scripture… while himself, by his promise, would ever dwell with them, and had, for the proof of their faith against false prophets and their false miracles, the mighty means of true miracles, and out of measure greater, in his own hand. Which means of miracles for A final stop against all contradiction the true proof of his word among mortal men… is and hath been, and ever shall be, the final, peremptory stop against all contradiction.

This second answer is open and plain enough in itself. And forasmuch as the first appeareth not, peradventure, so fully plain at the first sight… I shall make it clearer. When Tyndale saith that
except all were written that we be bound to believe or to do, there were else nothing save miracles to confound false prophets that should come with false miracles—ye perceive well that he presupposeth that if every such thing be written in authentic scripture, then without miracles the matter is safe enough... and the true preachers able enough to confound the false by the Scripture alone. For but if he say so, he saith no more for the alleging of Scripture than for the alleging of the faith without Scripture.

Now, Tyndale telling us thus... we must first wit of him which false prophets he meaneth: paynims, Turks, or heretics. If he mean paynims or Turks, then goeth he very far wide; for the true preachers cannot confound them with our authentic scripture... for it is not authentic among them, but they say that it is false. If he mean heretics, he goeth almost as far wide; for they will also, when they list, deny for Holy Scripture any part of Holy Scripture that proveth against their purpose—as they deny the Book of Maccabees because it proveth purgatory and prayers for them that are dead... and deny the Epistle of Saint James because it reproveth a bare faith without good works.

Now, if they admit the Scripture for Scripture, yet are ye never the nearer... for they will deny the true sense thereof, and obstinately defend a false... so that the true preacher and that false prophet shall be still as far asunder as if they denied the very Scripture itself.

Now, when he speaketh of confounding them—we must wit of him what he meaneth by “confounding” them. Whether he mean that the true preacher shall make the false prophet ashamed... or that he shall make the people perceive their doctrine for false. As for making the false prophets ashamed—ye see yourselves they be so shameless that it will not be, for ye see they wed nuns openly. And when they be not ashamed to look folk in the face after that shameful sacrilege and abominable bitchery, whereof will they be ashamed? Now, if he mean that the true preacher shall by the authentic writing make the people perceive the false prophet false:

I say that shall he not do by Scripture anything more largely than he shall do the same by the word of God unwritten... which word
Tyndale would have no man believe. For the perceiving whereof, suppose me now that the true preacher and the false prophet came together to dispute the truth, in a great audience of people, upon some such article as the false prophet would teach against the common faith of the Catholic Church. As, let me see, for example…

whether friars may wed nuns. Tut, nay; that can serve for no example, it is too clear and too far undisputable for any false prophet to find any reasoning therein… as the thing which never since the world was peopled could have found any man to think it lawful, till now… nor yet now, neither, findeth any that so thinketh, as many wretches as so saith and so doth; nor it were not possible for the false prophet to find any color therein but such as all the world would wonder at—except such beasts as lust to see it so for hatred and despite of honesty. But let us take therefore for example some such heresy as hath been held and disputed of old. And what rather than one of the greatest?—that is to wit, that heresy that Arius held, and his great company: that our Savior Christ was not one equal God with his Father.

Suppose me, therefore, I say, that some false prophet were so devilish as to preach that point again… and that he had by false preaching won unto him (as Arius had in his time) much people already, of every state and degree… and that he should then come in an open audience of a main multitude, to dispute with any true preacher that would offer himself to defend in that point the part and belief of the Catholic Church. Now, when the true preacher and the false prophet were come together, and fallen in dispicions in two pulpits on high, that all the people might hear them; and that the one alleged divers texts of Scripture for the truth, and the other as many for the false part, and each of them gloss against gloss; and when the true preacher would lay thereto the consent of all the old doctors, and of all the Catholic Church of Christ this fifteen hundred years: the false prophet would say again as the false prophet Luther saith himself—“I set not by Jerome, I set not by Augustine, I care not for a hundred Gregorys, I care not for a thousand Cyprians, I lay for me the

2, 20 suppose me: let’s suppose 3 dispute . . . upon: i.e., debate, before a large audience, what the truth is about 5 common: universal 6 Tut: The written representation of the sound one makes with one’s tongue on the upper gum of the mouth, to express disapproval. 6 nay: no 7 undisputable: undebatable 8 find any reasoning: i.e., find any room for argument // as the thing: i.e., its being something 9 found . . . lawful: come by anyone thinking morally permissible // yet: even 10 findeth: comes by / can there be found // any: i.e., anyone 11 nor . . . not: i.e., nor would it be 12 color: semblance of propriety // all: i.e., everyone in 13 wonder at: i.e., raise an eyebrow at; find preposterous 13–14 for . . . honesty: for hatred of, and contempt for, chastity 15, 24 dispute(d): debate(d) 17 great: large // company: group of followers 21 point: tenet 22 much: a lot of 23 state and degree: walk and station of life 24 in an open: i.e., before a public // main: huge 25 any: some 25 in that point: on that issue 26, 30 part: side (of the argument) 27 fallen: engaged 28 disputions: disputations 29 that: i.e., it happened that // alleged: adduced // divers: several 31 gloss: interpretation 32 consent: consensus // old doctors: early theologians 34 again: in response 34 as: i.e., what 34–35, 35 set not by: have no regard for 35, 36 for: about 36 lay for me: claim as my support
plain word of God. And for the ‘Catholic’ church that thou callest the ‘church of Christ,’ it is but a multitude of mortal men, whom if I should believe for the multitude, I must rather believe the paynims or the Muhammadans, which be many more. And thy ‘saints’ whom thou layest for thee be dead; but the word of God, that I lay for me, liveth, and shall live forever! And the church of Christ is unknown to men, but it is well known to God… out of Jb 10:7; Jn 10:28–30 whose hand no man can take them, as our Savior saith, but though they sleep now and rest in hope, as the Scripture saith, ‘My flesh shall rest in hope,’ they shall yet in the day of the Lord awake at the blast of the trumpet, and ever after live with the Lord in his reign. And of these, I doubt not, was that holy man Arius, and many another holy man of his sect.”

Now, if against all this the true preacher fall in farther dispicions again… as well about his first question as about the Church, with divers others that incidentally fall in debate between them… and then, for the final end and plainest proof, conclude and rest upon the Scripture, and say that he hath proved his part well thereby, and that his texts be clear, and the texts of the other part are falsely wrested, and his own answers effectual, and the others but sophistical; and then the false prophet for himself again say that he joyeth much that their disputation is come to so good a point… for he knoweth well that he hath alleged the scriptures right, and construed them in their true sense… and that his adversary is adversary of the plain, open truth, and preacheth and teacheth against his own conscience, and thereby sinneth against the Holy Ghost, which “shall never be forgiven in this world nor in the world to come”… for whose irremissible sin himself is full sorry… and exhort him to remember the false prophet Balaam and beware betimes lest he come to like end… and then say that he is yet glad, again, on the other side, and highly thanketh the Lord, that hath by his true teaching there opened the eyes of the people about them, that they now clearly see the light of truth… which hath now put away the darkness of their ignorance wherein the blind leaders, the false, popish preachers, have led them wrong all this while before… the
error of whom he doubteth not but that God hath by him made them now so plainly to perceive that he well dare, and so doth, make them all his judges, whither of them both hath defended his part better... and therefore prayeth them to speak and show their minds

1 Cor 14:29 therein, “for the Apostle saith, ‘While other speak, the congregation must judge,’” and “every man” (saith Luther) “for his own soul believeth or believeth not upon his own peril, and therefore upon his own belief”—what he should believe, and what not—must needs be judge himself”: now, good readers, when they thus have spoken both... think ye, by your troth, that the people unlearned of their audience shall be meet to discern and judge whither of them hath spoken better, and whither part is between them better proved by Scripture? Are not the people well likely with such doubtful disputicons to be rather led out of the truth than well confirmed in it? Namely since many of them shall be corrupted in corners and drawn into that false faith before, as the guise of heretics is!

But, now, how much peril were there more if this false prophet should, as Tyndale putteth his case, come forth with false miracles too... and in the end of his disputation and his holy exhortation thereupon, say farther to the people thus: “Dear brethren, in the love of the Lord the Father and his only-begotten Son, our Savior Christ, that came into this wretched world to show it example of meekness, and not to make himself as great a god as his Father, as the popish preachers preach unto you... which thereby make you believe that our master Christ passed in pride the proud angel Lucifer, that for the same pride was deprived of heaven and thrown into hell, where he reigneth as prince upon all the sons of pride: I am come, as ye see, sent by the blessed Spirit of the Lord, that hath prayed for you with sighs unspeakable, that ye might be delivered from this error that this false preacher here and I have disputed upon in your presence... where you see and, I am sure, perceive full well that I have with the word of God overcome him utterly, though he babble on still. But yet—because the truth standeth not in words, but in virtue and power of deed—it pleaseth God that for the strengthening of weak consciences, I shall show you more proof of the glory of God. For since this evil man, misled with an evil spirit, would lead...
you still in a wrong way, and make you misunderstand the
Scripture… saying that I take it wrong and teach you false: whereas
I made yourselves judges of the matter, I shall now call God to judge it
himself, in your sight, by some show of his special presence and
power!” And then, after this spoken… should call up unto him some
well-known-blind man, and in the sight of all the people suddenly
make him see. What saith Tyndale to this? Here is his own case.
Were the authentic scripture in this case likely to stay the people?
Surely meseemeth nay. For though the Scripture be true in itself,
Many great difficulties yet since it is not so plain but that many
arise upon Scripture, great difficulties arise thereupon… in
which though he which upon the
study thereof hath bestowed many years may perceive the true
part from the false—yet unto the unlearned it shall be likely, full oft,
that in such dispicions the false part may seem truest. And
then how much more if he see in his own sight miracles set thereto!
But now say I that, on the other side, the word of God unwritten
may stay altogether. For I say that the truth of that article
taught and believed as the Church without any doubt or question
believeth… may be so surely engraved in man’s heart that though he
never have read, nor heard, neither, any scripture in that point—
yet presupposing it for an undoubted truth, he shall set at naught
all the false-wrested Scripture of the false prophet, and all his false
miracles too… and shall ever construe the Scripture by the known
article of the Catholic faith, which was taught and believed before
The strength of the
word unwritten those texts of Scripture were written,
and hath yet the same truth now that it
had then, notwithstanding all the
texts that seem to say the contrary. And by this faith in the word
of God unwritten in their Books… and yet written in their souls, did
did there many martyrs stand and shed their blood in witness of the
truth thereof, that never read nor heard the Scripture in their days—
and would, in the same word unwritten, with God’s grace have withstood
false miracles too; which had yet been undoubtedly the sorest
pinch, saving for the more, and more marvelous, miracles that themselves
saw or believed done on the other side, for the truth.

But I say, therefore, as I have often said before, that as for miracles,

6 well-known-blind man: i.e., man well known to be blind // suddenly: instantaneously
7, 8 case: (hypothesized) situation. (See 264/28–33.) 8 were . . . likely: would . . . be likely
9 stay: i.e., satisfy & keep in the right belief 9 meseemeth nay: to me it seems not
10 plain: clear
12 he which: someone who 13 may perceive: i.e., may be able to tell 14, 15 part: contention
14 full oft: quite often 15 dispicions: debates
17 side: i.e., hand // unwritten: i.e., not written in Scripture
18 stay altogether: do all the keeping in place & take care of everything
21 in: regarding // point: tenet
22 undoubted: unquestionable; incontrovertible // set at naught: disregard
23 false-wrested: deceitfully twisted
27 yet: still // truth: truthness / trustworthiness
30 unwritten: not written // Books: Bibles
31 stand: i.e., stand firm 32 in: i.e., in all
33 in: by means of // unwritten: i.e., not written in Scripture
34 had yet: yet would have // sorest: worst
35 the more: i.e., the more numerous // marvelous: phenomenal // themselves: they themselves
he hath so specially kept for the proof of the truth, that all the miracles which the paynims or other infidels have done except heretics… he hath ever made his true preachers to do greater miracles against them, and by the greater miracles to destroy them—
as he did in Moses and in Elisha, and in his holy apostles, and other holy saints after them. But as for heretics, God hath never suffered them to do any miracles at all… because he would have by the mark of miracles his very, true church known from all the false churches of heretics.

Nor never shall he suffer them to do any, till the great archheretic Antichrist come himself… which, as help me God, I fear be very near his time, and that Luther is his very foregoer and his Baptist, to make ready his way in the desert of this wretched world… and Tyndale, Friar Huessgen, and Zwingli, his very false prophets to preach for him. But when he shall come himself and work wonders, to pervert (if it might be) the very chosen too—yet shall he not work miracles alone, but God shall for his Church in miracles far pass him… for anger whereof he shall kill them and trust all in strength of sword. And because he shall have so many ways to turn the people wrong, God shall not suffer the wretch long, but shall shorten his days… and, putting strength and miracle together, shall kill him with the spirit or blast of his holy mouth. And thus, good readers, ye plainly now perceive that since the Scripture alone against heretics-and-miracles may not sufficiently serve to unlearned people otherwise than may the belief without the Scripture; and also that heretics shall do no miracles till Antichrist come… and yet then shall have also greater miracles wrought against him, and that his time shall be but short, and himself finally by miracle destroyed and killed: ye see proved plainly that Tyndale’s second reason with which he would prove that the apostles left no necessary thing unwritten… hath in it no reason at all.

Tyndale

Some man would ask, How did God continue his generation from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, and so to Moses, without...
writing... but with teaching from mouth to mouth? I answer first
that "There was no Scripture in the world all the while"—that shall
they prove when our Lady hath a new son!

More

Tyndale saith that "some" man "would" ask this question. But
he knoweth well enough that I lay this against him, in my Dialogue,
because he so precisely saith that nothing may be certainly
known, to be believed, but by Scripture. And now he answereth me
that our Lady shall have a new son ere I can prove that there
was not Scripture from the beginning! He weigheth his words
wisely when he saith that our Lady shall have a new son first
(which he might as well say by every woman that is past this world),
saying that "our Lady never had a new son besides our Savior Christ"
is none article of his false faith, as himself plainly confesseth... because it is not plainly written in Scripture.

But is not this a proper answer, now? Whereas against his false
ground that there can be no true faith but if it be written in
Scripture, I objected against him the faith of many good-faithful
men... in whose days we cannot prove that their faith was written,
and yet we doubt not but that they were good and faithful: he saith I
cannot prove that they had no Scripture. If he will say (as he
doeth) that they could have no good and sure faith without Scripture...
and will also confess (as he doeth) that they had good and sure
faith: he must himself prove that they had Scripture... and not tell
me that our Lady shall have a new son ere I prove that they had no
Scripture. For it is enough for me that our Lady shall have two new
sons ere Tyndale prove that some of those faithful folk in the
first or second generation had any writing at all; and that our
Lady shall have five new sons ere Tyndale prove that the faithful
people had before Moses' days any scripture such as Tyndale
must mean but if he go about to beguile us with sophistical
equivocation. For our matter is not of "scripture" as it is taken for bare
writing, such as every scrivener's boy writeth in his master's
shop... but as it signifieth such holy writing as God causeth to
be written and bindeth folk to believe upon the peril of their soul
health. And then I say yet again that it is enough for me that our
Lady shall have fifteen new sons ere Tyndale be able to prove me
that some of those whom I allege and he confesseth for faithful folk
had any such scripture at all.

1 writing: i.e., putting anything in writing  //  but... to mouth: i.e., except by way of oral transmission
2 all the while: in all that time   //  5...: See DH 252/7—253/21.  //  5...: might want to
6 lay this: i.e., make this argument  //  7...: expressly / categorically  //  may: can  //  9...: before
10 weigheth: i.e., chooses  //  12 might... by: could as rightly say about
14, 23, 38 confess(eth): acknowledge(s)  //  16 proper: fine / logical
17 there...: no: i.e., no belief can be a part of the  //  17, 31 but if: unless
18 good-faithful: right-believing  //  20, 27, 29, 38 (good and) faithful: (quite) right-faith-possessing
22, 23 good and sure: i.e., valid and sound / quite definitely correct  //  31 he go about: i.e., he is trying
31 beguile us: hoodwink us; pull the wool over our eyes  //  32...: dispute  //  of: about
32 as... bare: i.e., in the sense of mere  //  33 scrivener's boy: copyist's helper
35-36 peril of their soul health: i.e., jeopardizing of their salvation  //  37 prove: prove to
And Tyndale, feeling full well that this point pricketh him, shrinketh hither and thither thereat, and seeketh many shifts. And for all the shifts that he findeth here, because they all satisfy not himself... he is fain afterward in his Answer to my Dialogue to seek up some new... and saith that in Noah's days, when the Flood came, there were no more left that believed right but those that were saved in the ship. In which place he jesteth upon that virtuous, cunning man Nicholas de Lyra, saying, “Lira delirat.” But it is more easy for Tyndale to make a mock upon his name... than to obtain his virtue and learning. But what winneth Tyndale by that answer there? If he said true... yet were he never the nearer. For if the whole world were at that time fallen from the faith save those few—yet were it for my purpose sufficient that the true faith had first from God to man, and so forth from man to man, come by mouth without Scripture unto those few... though all the remnant that had heard thereof had then been fallen from the belief thereof except only those few... as all the known nations of the world that hath heard of Christ's faith and Holy Scripture, too, be now fallen from both twain, save only these few that yet remain. And of them, some fall from the faith and from the effect of Scripture by false interpretation—as they that fall from the sacraments, and that so construe the Scripture that they would make it say that friars may wed nuns. Of both which sorts if there went so many away that the remnant which were left were as few as were taken into

Note
Noah’s ship—yet should always those few be the very church of God upon earth because of the right belief, although that of those few some were naught of living. And among them should there miracles of God continue, to show the presence of God, and strengthen them in the faith, and make his church known... such as are out may find the way to it to come in if they will; as he ceased not to walk with the Jews by miracles although there were many naught, till he quite forsook them—which by his promise he shall never do Christ’s Catholic Church.

Tyndale
God taught Adam greater things than to write.

More
If he mean of spiritual revelations, it maketh little to the purpose; if of worldly things, I think well he taught him things of

1 feeling: realizing // priceth: impales  2 shrinketh: recoils this way and that  3 shifts: subterfuges  
4 findeth: comes up with  5 fain: constrained // afterward in: i.e., later on in / in a later section of  
6 new: i.e., new ones  7 jesteth upon: makes a crack about  8 cunning: learned // delirat: talks nonsense  
9 a mock upon: a mockery out of  10 winneth Tyndale: i.e., does Tyndale stand to gain  
11 he said: i.e., what he said were // yet... nearer: i.e., it still wouldn’t get him anywhere  
12, 16, etc. fall(en): fall(en) away  13 were it: would it be  15, 27 (al)though (that): even if  
14 and: i.e., and those  19 twain: i.e., the one and the other  20 effect: reality  21 as: such as  
22 and: i.e., both  23 both: i.e., both of  25 very: true  28, 32 naught: (who were) bad  
26 out: i.e., outside of it  30 out: i.e., outside of it  32 quite: completely  33 do: i.e., do to  
34 mean of: has in mind // it... purpose: this has little relevance  38 think well: well suppose; certainly think
greater necessity—as, peradventure, tillage of the ground. But as for writing, I ween, as long as he lived, was found yet long after
Adam’s days. For though Adam had as great a wit as any man had since—yet he found not out everything that
many a more mean wit hath found since… except Tyndale tell
us that Adam printed books, and made glasses, and shot guns, too.

Tyndale
And that there was writing in the world long ere Abraham—yea, and
er Noah—do stories testify.

More
Jn 19:35
Full well. But there is none of those stories anything sib to Saint John’s
Gospel. He findeth not in them “Qui vidit, testimonium perhibuit,” nor
“verum est testimonium eius.”

There were stories which, as Saint Augustine saith, wrote of
things done thousands of years before the world was made. And
though it were proved (as it is not) that there were writing from the
beginning—yet, as I said before, it would not prove that there was
Holy Scripture that time… which is the only writing that must
be proved or else all that he proveth is as good unproved.

Tyndale
Notwithstanding, though there had been no writing—the
preachers were ever prophets glorious in doing of miracles, wherewith
they confirmed their preaching.

More
This is right well said and very largely… and lacketh nothing
now but even to be as well and largely proved. Which when he
shall so largely prove me by plain Scripture (without which, by
Luther’s own rule, Luther’s own scholar may not look to be believed)—
he shall have much ado, I trow. For he saith that by all this time
which was the space of so many hundred years, the preachers were
“ever prophets” and “glorious in doing of miracles, wherewith they
confirmed their preaching.” Verily, Noah—we find that he confirmed his preaching

with miracle, that was with the flood that drowned the whole world.

1 as: such as // peradventure: perhaps 2 ween . . . he: i.e., think that this, no matter how long he
2 found yet: i.e., yet devised 3, 17, 22 though: even if 3, 5 (a) wit: (an) intellect
4 found not out: did not learn 5 more mean: more average / lesser // found: devised; come up with
5 except: unless 6 glasses: glass objects 8, 9 ere: before 8 yea: yes 9, 12 stories: historical records
6 testify: attest 11 full: very // none: not one 12 anything sib: that is at all comparable
13 “Qui . . . perhibuit”: “He who saw it, testified to it.” 14 “verum . . . eius”: “his testimony is true”
15–16: See City of God, 11. 15 stories: i.e., purportedly historical accounts
15 wrote of: i.e., were written about 17 there were: i.e., there was 19 that time: i.e., at that time
20 proved: i.e., proved existent from the start 26, 27, 28 largely: expansively / comprehensively
21 even: just 28 shall . . . prove: i.e., goes about . . . proving to 29 scholar: pupil / protégé
29 may not look: i.e., cannot reasonably expect 30 much ado: a lot of trouble // trow: feel sure // by: through
31 space: duration 33 verily: indeed 35 that was with: i.e., the one that was
But else, in that age from Adam to his day… what miracles findeth
Tyndale done by the preachers? Now, from Noah to Abraham, how
many miracles findeth he done by the preachers? Nor from Abraham
to Moses neither, he findeth not very many; so that it will, I ween,
be very hard for him to prove that the preachers did always prove,
all that while, their preaching by miracles.

But I am very glad to hear him say so… and am content to
discharge him of the proof, and agree that he saith truth. And then
say I that since himself agreeth that for the proof of the preachers’
document preaching all one thing down from generation to
generation by the space of so many hundred years, holy preachers
and miracles were so necessary that for the necessity thereof he
presumeth that it was so: it is reason that he agree also that by this
whole time of fifteen hundred years of Christ’s church, holy preachers
with miracles have been as necessary. And then since he must also
grant that God hath as much cure of the church of his Son as he
had of any church before: he must grant that of each thing
necessary God hath as well provided for it as ever he did for any.
Whereof it followeth that since holy preachers and miracles were
always so necessary in the other that God always provided them so
plenteously that they never lacked: he hath in like wise all this
while provided that in his own church holy preachers and
miracles have also continued and have never lacked. And then
followeth further that since in all this while there hath never been in
any church of heretics (as many as have been of them!) neither
saint nor miracle… but both twain ever, plenteously, continued
in this only church which is the common-known Catholic Church
of Christ: thereupon followeth it, finally, that only it is the true
church of God… and that all the others be false churches of the devil.

Now if Tyndale will say that it is now not like… for there is no
cause neither of holy preachers nor miracles, because we have the

Lk 16:27–31 scriptures—as Abraham said unto the
rich glutton that lay in hell and would
have Lazarus sent into his father’s house to give his brethren warning,

“They have already Moses and the prophets; and if they believe
not them, no more will they believe one that were come hence, neither”—
this will not serve Tyndale. For they were not excusable which
then had the scriptures, considering that the Scripture had been,
and yet every age were, well testified with miracles, in that the

4 ween: think 7 so: i.e., this // content: willing
8 discharge . . . proof: i.e., let him off the hook with regard to the proving
8 agree . . . truth: i.e., grant for the sake of argument that what he’s saying is true 9 himself: he himself
9 agreeeth: grants 9–10 preachers’ . . . thing: i.e., doctrine of preachers who all preached the same thing
11, 13 by: throughout 11 space: span 12 for: on account of 13 reason: i.e., only reasonable
13 agree: grant 16 hath . . . cure of: has as much concern for / takes as good care of 17 had of: had for / took of
18 provided: made provision // it: i.e., this church 21 never lacked: were never lacking // wise: manner
23 continued: i.e., continued to be present // lacked: been lacking 25 have: i.e., there have
26 both twain . . . continued: i.e., both of these two kinds of marvels have . . . continued to be found
27 only church: church alone // common-known: common-knowledge 31 cause neither of: i.e., need for either
33 would: wanted to 36 one: someone // hence: from here
37 serve Tyndale: help Tyndale; get Tyndale anywhere // which: who
39 yet every age were: furthermore was in every age // testified with: attested by

40
prophets and preachers thereof, and the places where it was preached
and occupied in God’s service, were by God illustrated and set out
with miracles… insomuch that he did not only send into the
world his prophets and true preachers with miracles, but also

2 Kgs 13:21 by the bones of them raised and sent into
the world dead men also, to give the
world warning too—though he listed not to do so much at that
wretch’s request. And finally, when all was too little, and that they fell
to false construing of the Scripture, and so began to multiply
their false doctrine that they made the better-believing folk the
fewer and the false part the greater—he tarried not long, but came himself
to reform it and begin his own special church with his
own preaching and his holy apostles’… not with bare dispicions,
and bearing men in hand the words of the Scripture were plain

enough… but with plenteous miracles to reprove the false doctrine
of the false Pharisees that had begun to teach contrary to their old
holy fathers before. And thus hath God ever since sent holy saints
into his church, as the reason of his goodness required that he should.
And where these new Pharisees, these manifold sects of heretics,
both now do and from the beginning have done, misconstrue the
Scripture of God against the mind of Christ and his apostles: our
Lord sendeth and ever hath sent not only good, virtuous preachers
against them, but also reproveth and ever hath reproved their
most common heresies, against saints and sacraments, with daily
marvelous miracles… and neither suffereth nor never suffered any one
to be wrought among all them, but such as he worketh sometimes
where he maketh an image to speak, or the Blessed Sacrament to
bleed, to detect their despiteful dealing, and make them be
burned therefor… whereas they shall never find in Scripture that
ever God suffered false miracle either by man or devil to be done to
the confusion of his true prophet. And therefore it is plain yet
again that the Catholic Church is the true church, and all these
heretics’ “congregations” false.

35 Tyndale

And beyond that, God wrote his testament unto them always, both
what to do and what to believe, even in sacraments. For the sacrifices

2 occupied: used // God’s service: i.e., the liturgy / public worship services
2 illustrated: added luster to / illuminated // set out: distinguished
5 them: i.e., those prophets and true preachers of his 7 listed: chose 8 all: i.e., all that
8–9 that . . . construing: i.e., the false preachers started resorting to deliberately inaccurate interpreting
9 multiply: proliferate 11 tarried: hung back 12 it: i.e., the situation
13 bare dispicions: mere disputations 14 bearing men in hand: telling people that / trying to convince people that
15, 23 reprove(th): disprove(s); prove(s) false 16 false: unfaithful / erroneous / treacherous
20 misconstrue: misinterpret 24 against: about 25 marvelous: astonishing
25 neither . . . any: neither allows nor ever did allow even 26 but: except 27 an image to: a statue
28 to: in order to // detect: expose // despiteful dealing: i.e., insulting treatment of it 29 therefore: for that
30 suffered: i.e., allowed a 31 confusion: discomfiture / bringing down // plain: clear
35 testament: covenant / will 36 even: equally
which God gave Adam’s sons were no dumb popetry or superstitious
Mahomiet, but signs of the testament of God; and in
them they read the word of God as we do in Books.

More

Tyndale telleth us here another fair tale. But in this I say as I
said before in the other: that his tale lacketh but all that it
should have—that is to wit, the proof. For ye shall hear now how he
would seem to prove it.

Tyndale

The testament which God made with Noah, that he would no more
drown the world with water… he wrote in the sacrament of the
rainbow. And the appointment made between him and Abraham…
he wrote in the sacrament of circumcision. And therefore said
Stephen (Acts 7), “He gave them the testament of circumcision”; not
that the outward circumcision was the whole testament… but the
sacrament or sign thereof. For circumcision preached God’s word
unto them, as I have in other places declared.

More

Is not this well proved now! He showeth us of sacrifices, of circumcision,
and of the rainbow—which he coupleth with sacrifices
and circumcision, and calleth it a “sacrament,” like the others, because
he would have us ween that no sacrament either then did or
now doth any more profit the soul than doth the rainbow!
Which rainbow whether God made new, to make men sure of his
promise by the marvelous new sight thereof, or that it being but
an appearance natural, by the reflection of the sun—I will not
dispute because of other men’s writing. But this I wot well:
I see no man write thereof that ever saw it before.

Nor if it had never been seen yet… there would, I ween, for all the
natural reasons that men make now therefor, never a man have
missed it. But as I say, were it the one, were it the other… God
Why God made the rainbow either made it or appointed it but for a
sign of bodily health, and the world to
be preserved from universal flood; whereas sacrifices and circumcision,
and much more the blessed sacraments of Christ’s church,
pertain to the soul health… not as bare signs, but as things well

1 dumb: unintelligible; mumbo-jumbo  2 Mahomiet: Muhammadanism
3 Books: Bibles  5 fair: good-sounding
6 tale: story // in: about  5 this: i.e., this one // ar: i.e., what  6 but: i.e., nothing but  8 would: hopes to
10, 14, 15 testament: covenant  10 no more: never again  12 appointment: agreement; contract
15 outward: external  17 declared: explained  19 showeth: speaks to  20 coupleth: links / lumps in
22 ween: believe  24 new: i.e., then for the first time // make . . . of: i.e., give men a guarantee of his keeping of
25 marvelous: wondrous; astonishing
27 dispute . . . writing: i.e., do any arguing about what different men have written on this subject // wot: know
28 it before: i.e., a rainbow before the time of Noah  29 ween: think // for: despite
30 reasons . . . therefor: i.e., explanations that men now give for it  32 appointed: designated
33 bodily health: bodily well-being / physical salvation
36 the soul health: the soul’s well-being / spiritual salvation // bare: mere // well: really
helping thereunto—as prayer doth, and all reverent manner and
devout fashion used by man therein. But this is all Tyndale’s purpose:
to pull down the sacraments and have them taken for bare, simple
signs. For surely to couple the sacrifice of Abel or the sacrament
of circumcision with the sign of the rainbow… is almost as well
likened as to liken the Matins that men sing at church, or the
Blessed Sacrament at the Mass, to the sign of the Saracen’s head.

But now consider how well these things prove his ghostly purpose.
He saith that from Adam to Moses, God taught them in sacraments
always both what they should do and what they should believe;
and he proveth it because God did so in three. And so this is his
argument: God did so thrice, ergo he did so always; God did so in
three, ergo he did so in all; God in sacraments taught them
some things, ergo in sacraments he taught them all things.

Where findeth Tyndale that God taught Abraham what thing the
circumcision should signify, or wherefore he should do it, other
than that he would have him and all his do it? What moral virtue
he should understand thereby—as the cutting off and casting away
of all superfluous carnal things, or any such other thing—what
did he teach him? Or where findeth he that to the people was any
such thing preached thereby, when the circumcision was given
and commanded?

In the sacrifice of Abel in killing and offering the beasts…
where findeth Tyndale that there was taught unto Abel, or any man
else, that it should signify the killing of fleshly lusts, or any such
other things… saving that they should serve God in that manner?—
which yet we rather gather by reason than find it written in
Scripture.

Where findeth he that Abraham was taught that in offering up
his son Isaac, and then the sheep in his stead… it should signify
the offering of Christ upon the cross, or anything else but his
thankful obedience and proof of his fast faith and hope in God?

And though it may appear in every sacrifice, and in every
prayer unto God, that men should love God above all things—yet in
what sacrifice were they learned to love their neighbor?

This is a vain tale of Tyndale which he shall never prove while
he liveth. And yet the better he proveth it if he could prove it… the
worse should he make his matter. For if sacraments were with them,
in all that time, able to be profitable without Scripture: then so

1 all: every // manner: approach / convention
2 devout fashion: devotional style
3 pull down: downgrade / truncate // bare: mere / empty
4 surely: certainly // couple: link / jump in
5–6 almost . . . likened: i.e., about as good a comparison-making
7 sign . . . head: sign of the Arab’s head; i.e., typical tavern sign
8 ghostly purpose: holy point
9, 13, 14 in sacraments: i.e., by way of sacraments
11 because: i.e., by the fact that
12–13 in three: i.e., in three instances
16, 30 should signify: was to signify
16 wherefore: why
18 as: such as // carnal: corporeal
21 circumcision: i.e., sacrament of circumcision
23 beasts: animals
25 should: was to // saving: i.e., anything other than
26 should: were to
32 fast: steadfast; firm
33 appear: be evident
35 learned: taught
36 vain tale of: meritless thing said by
38 worse should: less well would // matter: case
39 without: i.e., apart from / in a way not stated in
may ours be now profitable without Scripture... except he find therefor a prohibition in Scripture; which neither he nor none of his fellows ever found yet, nor never shall find while they live. For whereas they lay for a prohibition the words of Moses (in the Deuteronomy) commanding that no man shall add nor minish—they that lay that text for a prohibition of our sacraments unwritten... be, as I shall show you afterward, surely too mad to live.

Now seeth Tyndale this to be very truth himself: that if sacraments were without Scripture profitable unto them, and stood them in the stead of Scripture—it might be by the same reason in like wise profitable to us, and stand us in stead; which thing destroyeth all his whole purpose. And therefore, to answer that with... he saith that “[so it might indeed,] if that the wicked pope had not taken away the significations of our sacraments from us, as he hath robbed us”—saith Tyndale—“of the true sense of all the Scripture.”

Tyndale must here tell us which pope hath taken from us the signification of the sacraments, and robbed from us the true sense of the Scripture. If any pope this eight hundred years (by all which time Tyndale saith they have been all naught) have done anything therein contrary to the old popes that were by the space of seven hundred years next before that, which popes he denieth not for good nor cannot deny: let him tell which, and wherein, and whereby he can prove it. But that am I sure he shall never show while he liveth. For I wot well that the old holy works that have been made, as well by old holy popes (as Saint Gregory, Saint Leo, and others) as by the old holy doctors (as Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, and other), concerning as well the significations of sacraments as the true sense of Scripture, do consent and agree together against Tyndale and Luther and Friar Huessgen and all their fond fellows. And if Tyndale say nay, let him show me which old holy popes were they that ever held that the Sacrament of the Altar is such a bare, simple sign, and set but only to signify the memorial of Christ’s Passion, and unity of him and us, with love and concord among ourselves... and that it were sin to think it were not bread still, as Luther saith, or to think it were anything else, as Tyndale and Friar Huessgen saith... and great sin to worship it, as

1 may: i.e., could 1, 10 without: i.e., apart from / in a way not stated in 1 except: unless 2 thereforefor: i.e., for them 3, 30 fellows: cohorts 3, 24 while: as long as 4, 7 lay (that text) for: claim (that text) to be 4 in the: i.e., in the Book of; in 6 minish: subtract / remove 8 afterward: later 9 very: i.e., the actual 11 it: i.e., our set of sacraments 11, 14 might: could 11 reason: line of reasoning 12 wise: manner 13 all his whole purpose: his whole entire case 14 if that: if 19 this: i.e., this last // by: throughout 20 been all naught: i.e., all been bad // have done: has done 21 old: i.e., former // were: i.e., were in office // by the space of: in the span of the 22 next: i.e., right 22–23 deny: i.e., does not, and cannot, deny to have been good ones 24 show: state 25 show: tell 31 old: early 25 made: written 26, 27, 31 holy: i.e., sainted 26, 27 as Saint: such as Saint 27 doctors: theologians // other: i.e., others 29 consent: concur; form a consensus 30 fond: foolishly self-confident / imbecilic 31 show: tell 32 a bare: i.e., an empty 33 simple: ordinary 33 memorial: commemorating 35 were sin: would be a sin 35–36 were not bread still: was not still bread 36 were: was 37 great: a grave
Luther, Huessgen, and Tyndale say. And as concerning the “true sense” of Scripture which he saith the “pope” hath robbed from us… and meaneth the popes of eight hundred years last past… which true sense Tyndale now bringeth again: let him show, then, which popes of the other seven hundred years before, or which holy doctors of all that long time before… did construe the Scripture so that any of them would say that a monk might wed a nun! And lo, thus ye see, good readers, in what worshipful wise Tyndale proveth all his purpose. But now will we go farther.

Tyndale
But in the time of Moses, when the congregation was increased, that they must have many preachers and also rulers temporal—then all was received in Scripture . . .

More
Here is his whole ground whereupon he will anon conclude that since all was then received in Scripture among the Jews… so must it follow that all was received by Scripture among Christian men. Which followeth not, as I will after show you, though he said true… in that he saith that in the time of Moses all was received in Scripture.

But since that thereupon is all his whole matter grounded, let him prove that point first. For ye consider well that it is not enough to him that they then received Scripture, but he must prove that then they received all in Scripture… and that everything that they should do or believe was then delivered them in Scripture. And therefore, since that this is the point and the thing that he saith, and proveth not: let him prove you this well first, and then go further in God’s name. What proof he bringeth ye shall see…and how true it is ye shall soon judge. Thus he saith…

Tyndale
[All was then received in Scripture:] insomuch that Christ and his apostles might not have been believed without Scripture, for all their miracles.

More
Lo, this is all the whole proof that ever he bringeth forth for this point whereupon his whole purpose hangeth. And indeed it were

3 of the 4 now bringeth again: i.e., is now bringing back  // show: state
5–6 holy doctors: theologians 6 so: in such a way 7 might: could legitimately
8 worshipful: impressive / awe-inspiring  // wise: way 9 all his purpose: his whole thesis
11 increased, that: i.e., increased to the point that 12 must: had to  // rulers temporal: secular rulers
13, 16, 17, 19, 24, 31 all: everything 15 ground: basis  // anon: presently 17 by: by way of
18 after: later 18–19 though he said true: even if he was telling the truth 19 in . . . saith: i.e., in saying
21 since that: given that  // all his whole matter: his whole entire case 22 consider well: well realize
23 to: i.e., for 24, 25 then: back then; at that time 25 should: were supposed to; were duty-bound to
26 since that: since 28 go further in God’s name: by all means go further 29 soon: readily; easily
31 insomuch that: i.e., so that; to such an extent that 32 might . . . been: i.e., could not have gotten
32 without Scripture: i.e., without the help of Scripture; without scriptural backing
36 purpose: case  // hangeth: is contingent  // were: would be
somewhat... if it were as true as it is false. For he neither hath any scripture to prove it... and all reason is quite against it. First, as for Scripture, though Christ showed to the Jews, as the truth was, that the Scripture made mention of him—yet he never said unto them as Tyndale saith, that he might not be believed else; nor no scripture so saith. He saith no more of Scripture than of Saint John the Baptist. For he saith that the Scripture beareth witness of him, and so saith he of Saint John too.

But, because Tyndale compareth the Scripture with miracles, and setteth so little by God’s word unwritten: Christ said somewhat more by miracles, and by his own word at that time unwritten, than he said either by Saint John or by the Scripture either. For he said of those twain that if either of both had lacked... they had not been in the sin of infidelity. And he saith not so much of Saint John, nor of the Scripture neither.

Now, reason is clear against Tyndale in that he saith that Christ and his apostles could not be believed for all the miracles. For though God had never given warning by Moses that there should come another prophet—yet except God had expressly said that he would never send more (which he said not), what should let Christ to be believed coming with miracles... and though he would teach in the belief, not contrary articles to those that were before taught, but other revelations farther that were not taught before, and in works make what change that God list to command? God’s word when it was brought unto the people by Moses—was it believed for God’s sake, or for Moses’? If for God’s sake: then though Christ had not been God (as he was), yet since God sent him with miracles as he sent Moses, what should let him to be believed as well as Moses though he had never been spoken of before? Now, if for Moses’ sake: Christ was as good as Moses was, all had he not been God; and incomparably better since he was God. Why could he not, then, have been believed without the witness of Moses, coming with miracles more than ever Moses did or all the prophets besides—and namely doing so many in his own name?

And, because that in the credence given unto Christ, Tyndale
giveth so great preeminence to the Scripture above the miracles of
Christ (that is to say, to the word of God written, above wonderful
works of God done)—let Tyndale understand that the cause why
the witness of Scripture helped unto the credence of Christ was by
reason of miracle: that is to wit, because it prophesied of him.
Which thing that shall come so long after… is a great miracle!
And, yet farther, they that would not believe in Christ for his
miracles… would not believe in him for the Scripture neither.
And yet, for the final confutation of Tyndale’s folly in saying that
Christ for all his miracles could not have been believed but for the
Scripture: Every fool knoweth that all the world save the Jews, in
their turning to Christ’s belief, were not led by the Scripture, but
by the miracles… and believed not Christ for the Scripture, but believed
the Scripture for Christ, and Christ for the miracles. And the
Jews, which people most believed the Scripture—of them, I say,
fewest believed in Christ.

Tyndale
Wherefore, forasmuch as Christ’s congregation is spread abroad into
all the world, much broader than Moses’; and inasmuch as we
have not the Old Testament only but also the New, wherein all things
are opened so richly, and all fulfilled that before was promised;
and insomuch that there is no promise behind, of aught to be
shown more, save the resurrection; yea, and seeing that Christ and
all the apostles, with all the angels of heaven, if they were here,
could preach no more than is preached, of necessity to our souls:
how, then, should we receive a new article of our faith, without
Scripture, as profitable unto my soul… as smoke for sore eyes?

More
Here Tyndale maketh his conclusion that since Moses, because
the people “was increased,” so fully received all things necessary
to be believed in Scripture… that Christ himself “might not have been
believed without Scripture” (which thing is very false), therefore
it followeth that “Christ’s congregation” hath all things necessary to
be believed written in Scripture; which thing is as false; and reason
it is that it be false, when he concludeth it upon false. But Tyndale—
perceiving well himself how false his foundation is, and how feeble his
building is that he settteth thereupon—hath therefore, to make it

1 so: such
2 above: over
3 wonderful: wondrous; astounding
4 for: on account of
5 yet: also
6 folly in: i.e., blunder of
7 all: i.e., all the people in
8 save: except for
9 12 turning to Christ’s belief: converting to belief in Christ
10 abroad: out; far and wide
11 broader: i.e., more far and wide
12 behind: remaining; left not yet fulfilled
13 opened: revealed / explicated
14 all: everything
15 resurrection: i.e., general resurrection
16 of: i.e., that is of
17 how: i.e., why
18 how: i.e., why
19 receive: accept
20 without: i.e., that comes to us from outside of; that is not found in
21 more: i.e., anything more to be carried out
22 behind: remaining; left not yet fulfilled
23 22–23 aught . . . more: i.e., anything more to be carried out
24 23 of: i.e., that is of
25 all: i.e., all the things that must be believed in
26 in Scripture all things that must be believed in
27 as profitable: i.e., that would be as profitable
28 as smoke: i.e., as is smoke
29 people: i.e., Israelite population
30 30–31 all . . . Scripture: i.e., in Scripture all things that must be believed in
31 might not have been: i.e., could not have gotten
32 without: i.e., without scriptural backup
33–34 hath . . . Scripture: i.e., has in Scripture all things that are obligatory to believe
34–35 reason . . . be: i.e., it stands to reason that it should be
35 when: i.e., since
36 false: untrue / shaky
37 36 false: untrue / shaky
38 feeble: unsound; flimsy
stand the surer, undershored and underpropped it with certain other strong posts made of rotten reeds.

One is that all things be now, beside the Old Testament, opened richly in the New Testament, that before were promised. This underpropper is not very proper for to bear up his building; for it is the selfsame thing that is in question. For we say that if he take the “New Testament” for the book of that scripture written, he must not only say but also prove that everything is opened therein that of necessity for our soul health is to be believed or done; and this is the thing itself that is in debate. And therefore while he doth but tell us, and prove it not... and so underproppeth his assertion with itself—he sheweth himself as wise as one that, lest his rotten house should fall, would go about to take down the roof, and pull up the ground sill, to undershore the sides with the same.

Then setteth he to it another shorer: that all thing is in the New Testament fulfilled that was promised before... and also that “there is no promise behind, of aught to be shown more, save the resurrection.” Now, this shorer is so surely set that it is shortly blown down quite, if a man say no more but “What then?” For besides that as there lay more promises in the Old Testament than every man well understood, so may there yet, peradventure, lie more promises unperceived yet, either by Tyndale or me, both in the Old and in the New; but, I say, besides this... and besides this also—that Tyndale saith here untrue (for besides the resurrection, there are yet unfulfilled as well divers promises of tokens and things that shall come before the resurrection, and all those things, pardie, that are promised to come after, as the Judgment itself, and bliss or pain everlasting to the judged bodies)—but yet, I say, besides all this... what if all the promises be fulfilled saving the resurrection? Doth that prove that there could be nothing of necessity believed without Scripture? Is there nothing to be believed but promises? If God tell me a thing, or bid me do a thing... am I not bound to believe the one nor to do the other, because they be no promises? If Tyndale speak wisely in this, I must needs confess my folly; for in good faith, I can see no wit therein.

But finally he setteth to a mighty strong post, able to bear down all, when he saith that Christ, and all his apostles, and all the
angels of heaven, could preach no more than is preached, of necessity to our souls. And therefore, and for all the wise and well-framed reasons which I have reproved and proved unreasonable before, he saith that to receive a new article of faith without Scripture were as profitable for our souls “as smoke for sore eyes.”

This is a substantial shorer, lo, and very surely set, I assure you. For, first, I might agree all that he saith, and his purpose never the more proved. For where he saith that all is already preached that is necessary or can be necessary to the soul—if I would answer and say, “That is very true, all such things is already preached; but all such preaching is not written”… where were now Tyndale’s conclusion? But I will not be so mad to grant him that all is either written or preached, either, that can be of necessity to man’s soul. For who would be so mad to think that God knoweth not many things that we know not—and that he can if it please him reveal and show us any of those, and command us to believe them, whencesoever he list? And when he so would do… then were they of necessity to our soul’s salvation to be believed. And he may when it please him command us to do some other things that he hath not commanded yet… and then should we be bound to do them. And he may command to leave undone some things that he hath before commanded to be done… and then should we be bound to leave them undone. And this is so plain and evident to every man that hath any spark of reason in his head… that I wonder where Tyndale had left his wit when he wrote this!

And this was also a wise temperance of the matter: that he saith for these wise causes that it were as wholesome for our souls as smoke for sore eyes if we received any new articles of faith without Scripture. If the eyes of his soul were not sore bleared or stark blind with the smoke of the smoky fire of hell, he would soon have seen with his two eyes his two follies in these few words. For he saith if we received a new article “without Scripture”… whereby he confesseth that if God will give us a new article in Scripture, as he gave Moses… it were not unwholesome. And what can he then say but if God give it without Scripture, he must be believed?—but if Tyndale dare say that the truth of God do depend upon his writing, and that his word be naught worth till it be written! Another folly is this: that he saith if we receive “a new article”… and then all the examples that he putteth be old. And we shall put him some others as old.
Tyndale

What helped it me to believe that our Lady’s body is in heaven?

More

If this be a new-believed article… let Tyndale tell when this belief
began; and he shall find that it hath been thus believed even
from the time of her decease. And now the thing that almost fifteen hundred
years hath been believed… he calleth a new article. But, now, how like
is this belief, of this new article of fifteen hundred years old, unto his
example of smoke and sore eyes? For, first, if it helped him not… yet

at the least it hurt him not, as smoke doth sore eyes. But since it is

True it is that our Lady is in
heaven both body and soul.

Jn 16:13; Ps 67:7 (Vulgate)

Spirit of God, which leadeth the Church
into every truth; and the Church grown
into the consent and agreement thereof by

the same Spirit of concord and agreement which “maketh all the
house of one mind”;
and though the belief thereof were very new:
yet it helpeth him and doth him good to believe it… as it
helpeth him and doth him good if he believe other truths which
God hath revealed and shown by writing before; except Tyndale

trust not God upon his word but if he give him his writing thereupon,
and his letters patent, under his great seal. For else why
should it not help him as much to believe that our Lady’s body and
soul is in heaven, since God hath taught his church so to believe… as

Gn 5:24

2 Kgs 2:11

Elijah is body and soul in paradise, since
he may do the one that doth the other?

And he saith the one that saith the other… though he say them not
both in one manner, but the one by writing, the other by mouth.
For the inward inspiration of his Spirit… is his mouth unto his
reasonable creatures.

Howbeit, he saith and speaketh indeed the one thing and the
other both of one fashion. For if he speak… he but inspireth his
word into some creature, that speaketh it out. And as he speaketh he
writeth. And therefore whoso better believeth the word of God written
than the word of God unwritten—that is to wit, the Scripture than the
inspiration—he believeth better the creature that wrote it than God
himself that inspired it.

2 what: how  4 new-believed: newly believed  5 even: right  13 grown: i.e., has come
14 the consent: i.e., its consensus // thereof: i.e., on that  16 though: even if
19 shown… before: i.e., communicated before, in scriptural writing // except: unless  20 but if: unless
22–23 our… heaven: i.e., our Lady is in heaven body and soul
25 paradise: The intermediate state of heaven, between earthly life and the resurrection to a glorified body.
26 may: can  28 in one: in the same // the one: i.e., the one thing  30 reasonable: reason-endowed
31–32 saith… fashion: i.e., actually communicates and speaks both the one thing and the other in the same manner
34 whoso: whoever  36 wrote it: i.e., wrote it down; wrote it out
If Tyndale will avoid this and say, “Nay, but I believe better these men that wrote the one, of Enoch and Elijah, than I believe these men that tell me the other, of our Lady”: then must Tyndale tell us why he better believeth those than these. Wherein what hath he to say but that those that wrote it in the Scripture were inspired of God, and so he believeth it as the word not of men but of God? Then answer we again that they that tell me the other, of our Lady, were inspired of God… and therefore it helpeth him to believe it as the word not of men but of God. If he ask how shall he know that God inspired the men that tell him the tale of our Lady: we must ask him again how knoweth he that God inspired them that wrote the tale of Enoch or Elijah. If he say that he knoweth it because it is Holy Scripture: we then shall ask him further how he knoweth that it is Holy Scripture. And then is he driven to the point that, when he hath all done… he must be fain to flee to the Church, and say that he knoweth it by “the church.” And when he shall show you by which church he knoweth it, he must needs show you some church which himself may know; for else—how should any such church tell it him as himself knoweth not? And when he showeth you any known church… he is doubly confounded. For both he destroyeth his heresy that no church should be believed but elects… and also shall be driven to confess that he knoweth the Scripture by our church—that is to wit, Christ’s Catholic Church, which he refuseth. And then shall we further tell him, for his third confusion, that by the same-self church doth he know that God hath inspired that other article, of our Lady. And yet, for his fourth confusion, we shall tell him further that the selfsame scripture which himself, by the means of the Church’s teaching, believeth to be the word of God… teacheth him also to believe that this thing which it believeth of our Lady is either good to believe or at the leastwise not evil, nor like smoke to sore eyes… since our Savior himself, in the same scripture, saith that the Spirit of God shall teach them all truth, and lead them into every truth, and that forever; since himself there promiseth that he will not leave them, but be with them forever, unto the world’s end.

And thus, good Christian readers, ye see to what worshipful conclusion, with a fourfold confusion, Tyndale hath brought himself

1 will . . . say: i.e., tries to get around this by saying nay, but: i.e., no, that’s not it; it’s that wrote: i.e., wrote down one: i.e., one thing 2, 3, 7, 26, 30 of: about 5, 8 of: by again: in turn other: i.e., other thing 10, 12 tale of: i.e., thing about it is: i.e., that is hath: i.e., is must be fain: inevitably is forced shall show: sets out to tell other: i.e., some confounded: confuted / done for 21 destroyeth: demolishes elects: i.e., that made up of only the elect confess: admit refuseth: rejects may: can any: some 18, 19, 28 himself: he himself 34–35 since himself: he: i.e., and since he . . . he himself be: i.e., will be worshipful: impressive
with laying this article, whereby he would diminish the worship of our most blessed Lady.

But likewise as he speaketh here of the Assumption of our Lady, the belief whereof he would seem to serve of naught: the same saith he, in divers places, of the belief of the perpetual virginity of our Lady—saying that it is nothing pertaining to the salvation of our soul. But I say that the Catholic Church of Christ believeth that the belief thereof—being (as it is, and from the beginning hath been) taught by the Holy Ghost—so pertaineth to the salvation of our souls that the contrary belief pertaineth to the damnation of our souls if heresy be damnable. And that this is no new article well appeareth by that that the old holy doctor Saint Jerome so far forth reckoned it for heresy that he wrote a whole book against the old heretic Helvidius for the confutation of that heresy. In which virtuous book Saint Jerome neither proveth nor goeth about to prove her perpetual virginity by Scripture… but only proveth that the places of Scripture which Helvidius brought forth for the contrary were not effectual to prove his malicious purpose against the common-received faith of Christ’s Catholic Church. Against which we may be very sure that the Scripture never speaketh in deed… how apparent soever a heretic make it seem.

For likewise as, though a sophist would with a fond argument prove unto a simple soul that two eggs were three, because that “there is one, and there be twain, and one and twain make three,” that simple, unlearned man, though he lack learning to assoil his fond argument, hath yet wit enough to laugh thereat, and to eat the two eggs himself and bid the sophister take and eat the third—so is every faithful man as sure in the sight of his soul, how apparently soever a heretic argue by Scripture to the contrary, that the common faith of Christ’s Catholic Church is out of question true… and that the Scripture, understood right, is never thereto contrary… since he wotteth well, both by his faith and by the Scripture, that the Church is taught its faith by God and his Holy Spirit… according to Christ’s promise, that can never be false; and wotteth well also that God never teacheth against the truth, nor writeth against his word, but that the contrariety that seemeth, ariseth of heretics’ malicious subtlety, or, as holy Saint Augustine

1 with laying this article: i.e., by bringing up this article of the faith // would: i.e., was hoping to
1 worship: prestige / honoring // should seem: have appear to
4 serve of naught: serve no purpose / be of no avail // divers: several // of the belief: about the belief
6 is nothing pertaining to: has no bearing on // so pertaineth to: has such a bearing on
10 pertaineth to: i.e., has attached to it // well appeareth by that: is made quite evident by the fact
12, 14 old: early // holy doctor: theologian // reckoned it for: i.e. considered the contrary belief
16 goeth about: attempts // places: passages // were . . . prove: were not convincing proof of
19 purpose: thesis / contention // common-received: universally accepted
20 may: can
21 in deed: in actuality // how . . . seem: i.e., no matter how obvious a heretic makes it seem that it does
23 though: if // would: tried to // 23, 27 fond: silly // because: by reason // twain: two
26 to assoil: i.e., by which to refute // wit: sense // bid . . . take: invite the logic chopper to take
29 faithful: i.e., right-believing // apparently: seemingly plausibly // common: universally shared
31 out of: beyond // wotteth: knows // and his: i.e., the // that: which
37 the . . . seemeth: i.e., whatever contradiction there seems to be // of: from // subtlety: craftiness; guile
saith, for lack of well understanding. Which misunderstanding may soon mislead that man which list to leave the faith of Christ’s Catholic Church and lean to the doctrine of a false heretic or to the liking his own wit.

But, for because Tyndale will, when we have all said, stick still at one point... and ask us what shall profit his soul to believe that our Lady is in heaven body and soul (of which he plainly believeth the contrary, both for her body and her soul; for he

*O fond opinion!* believeth with Luther that all souls sleep, and sleep shall till the Day of Doom), and will ask us also what profiteth him to believe that our Lady was a perpetual virgin and never had child but Christ... since none of those both articles is proved by plain Scripture... and we might be saved well enough though our Lady’s body came not in heaven till Doomsday... and also though she had more sons than one, and more husbands too: I will ask him then again what profiteth him to believe that our Savior himself died a virgin and never had wife nor child... since that article is not proved by very plain Scripture neither, and he might by his Passion have wrought our redemption although he had wedded, and begotten children too.

And in good faith, I ween we shall see those folk fall so frantic once... that they shall not let at last to say he *did* so, too... and bid us go prove the contrary by Scripture, or else they be at their angelical liberty to believe which way they list. But now come we to Tyndale’s other example that he putteth, of purgatory.

*Tyndale*

*What am I the better for the belief of purgatory?*

*More*

*In good faith, not the better of a halfpenny, while ye believe it no better than ye do. But surely if ye believed it well... ye might be both the better for purgatory and the farther from hell.*

*Tyndale*

*“To fear men with,” thou wilt say.*

*More*

*He maketh men answer as it pleaseth himself. But we will not say so; for it were a foolish saying, to say, “Tyndale is the better for*
the belief of purgatory to fear men with.” What fool would say so but Tyndale? For Tyndale’s belief cannot fear folk, no more than other men’s belief feareth Tyndale; nor Tyndale is not the better though other men be afeard. And therefore that question, as he
foolishly frameth it, so he foolishly answereth it.

Why purgatory is ordained

But I say that purgatory is ordained

for the punishment of such sins as

were either venial in the beginning… or from mortal turned to

venial by the forgiveness of the mortality.

The belief of purgatory doth

profit us two ways.

And I say that the belief thereof

profiteth two manner of wise. One wise, in

that it maketh a man to be preserved

thence, or to be the less while there, by that it maketh him do

penance and good works here (of which two things Tyndale

abhorreth to hear).

Another way the belief thereof profiteth, in that as for so far

forth it keepeth the believer from hell… into the fire whereof for the

contrary belief, and heresy, held against it, he should else fall

headlong down… believed he never so well, and lived he never so well

also, beside. And therefore of the belief of purgatory there cometh

these profits to other folk… though Tyndale be never the better for

the belief thereof, which believeth it not.

Tyndale

Christ and his apostles thought hell enough. And yet—besides that

the fleshly imaginations may not stand with God’s word—

what great fear can there be of that terrible fire… which thou

mayest quench almost for three halppence?

More

Nay, surely that fire is not so lightly quenched that folk should

upon the boldness of pardons stand out of the fear of purgatory.

For likewise as, though the Sacrament of Penance be able to put

away the eternality of the pain… yet hath the party, for all that, cause

to fear both purgatory and hell too, lest some default upon his

own part letted God in the sacrament to work such grace in him

Pardons discharge us

as should serve therefor: so, though the

pardon be able to discharge a man of

purgatory… yet may there be such default
in the party to whom the pardon is granted, that though he give for
three halfpence three hundred pounds, yet shall he receive no pardon
at all. And therefore can he not be for three halfpence out of fear of
purgatory, but ever hath cause to fear it. For no man, except revelation,
can be sure whether he be partner of the pardon or not…
though he may have, and ought to have, both in that and every
good thing good hope.

And if the fear of purgatory were so clear gone because it might
be quenched with the cost of three halfpence—then were the fear of
hell gone too, by Tyndale’s teaching… since bare faith and slight
repenting putteth out that fire clean, without the cost of a penny.

And where he saith that Christ and his apostles thought hell
enough—I ask him how he proveth that. For we see well by experience
that hell and purgatory too be scant enough, between them both,
to refrain folk from sin. We see also that both Christ and his
apostles have shown us that there is purgatory. And that have they
shown us not only by mouth, which were sufficient to faithful
folk… but by the Scripture too. And yet both twain be not enough
to Tyndale. For his fellows and he will not understand those
places of Scripture but after their own fashion.

And therefore, now, whereas he calleth as unprofitable to the soul
as smoke to sore eyes all things that be not either written in
Scripture or deduced thereupon… and put the examples of the
Assumption of our Lady and purgatory: he must add unto them
as many things more as himself putteth in the same case. And so
thereby ye see that he saith now that a child to be confirmed, or to be
christened either, if it be christened in Latin; or a man to shrive
himself of his sins, or to do penance, or to do any good works
toward heavenward, or to be aneled, or to pray to saints, or to
believe in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the Blessed Body and Blood
of Christ, or to do any honor unto it—all these things be, by
Tyndale, as profitable for the soul as smoke is for sore eyes. But I
pray God that the sore eyes of his sick soul may once look up
better… lest he finally fall into the foul smoke of hell, where he
shall never see after.

Tyndale

And that the apostles should teach aught by mouth that they would
not write—I pray you for what purpose?
More

Now have ye heard already by what high reasons Tyndale hath proved you the thing that he affirmeth—that is to wit, that the apostles wrote, and left in writing, everything that is of necessity for the soul either to be done or to be believed.

But since he seeth himself that in his reasons for his own part there is so little pith... and that he can never prove, nor no man else, the things that Tyndale must prove or else prove himself a fool for falling from the faith of Christ’s church; that is to say, that the apostles left all such necessary points of the faith in writing: he leaveth off now his part himself, and asketh us why they left aught unwritten—as though if I, that never was of counsel with them, cannot tell unto Tyndale plainly wherefore and why the apostles left aught unwritten, he might thereupon conclude that they wrote altogether. Is not this a wise and a worshipful reason?

This manner is much like as Tyndale would affirm that all the laws of England be written, and whatsoever were unwritten were no law; and when he had long wrestled therewith and could not prove it... would then ask me, “Hath the realm of England any laws that be not written? To what purpose, I pray you, should they be left unwritten?”—and then if I could not give him an answer thereto such as could content him, he might therefore with good reason take his part for proved... and well and worshipfully conclude that all that ever are unwritten are no laws! But now in my name he answereth his question... and then confuteth that answer.

Tyndale

“Because they should not come to the hands of the heathen; for mocking,” saith Master More. I pray you, what thing more to be mocked of the heathen... could they teach than the Resurrection, and that Christ was God and man and died between two thieves, and for his death’s sake all that repent and believe therein should have their sins forgiven them? Yea, and if the apostles understood thereby as we do... what madder thing unto heathen people could they have taught than that bread is Christ’s body and wine his blood? And yet all these things they wrote. And again purgatory, confession in the ear, penance and satisfaction for sin to-God-ward with holy deeds, and praying to saints, with suchlike—as dumb
This was a happy hap for Master Tyndale—that it happed Master More, with the laying of such a slender cause, to minister Master Tyndale so much pleasant matter of replication. For if I had not happed to have said that the apostles forbore the writing of some things for eschewing of infidels’ mocking, Tyndale had had now no more to say, but had left off with shame enough… whereas now, by this point, he hath occasion of much matter and winneth much worship therewith.

But, now, if I would be content to say that I was overseen in so saying… and that I cannot defend my words that they forbore to write any manner thing for any such cause; and that also I cannot tell why, nor for what cause, the apostles wrote some necessary things and left some necessary things unwritten… no more than I can tell why that every evangelist writeth many things that his fellows have, and yet leaveth out some as great and as necessary as some that he writeth in— if I would for Tyndale’s pleasure say this (which if I did, I needed not much to force for any great harm that my part could take thereby; for the thing were in itself nevertheless true—that the apostles so did indeed—though I could not tell why)— then had I taken away quite all Tyndale’s pleasure in his present babbling, and left him only to those reasons that he hath laid before; in all which he is, as ye see, too shamefully confounded.

But yet if it like you, good readers, to read mine own words as I wrote them, which ye shall find in the First Book of my Dialogue, the twenty-fifth chapter: there shall ye perceive it… that it is not fully so far from all reason as Tyndale would have it seem. For I show there that the apostles did more plainly speak, and more openly declared, many things by mouth among the Christian folk, because their audience was more meet while they were only among themselves… than they did by their writing, which might percase come into the hands of heathen men that would laugh some such things to scorn. Now cometh Tyndale and showeth that this is fondly said,
since the apostles letted not to write the thing that the heathen would most mock of all… and that purgatory and the sacraments were least likely to be mocked among them, for that they were most agreeable unto their own superstition. But, now, lest he should have encumbered himself somewhat with the answer, and have defaced therewith the beauty of his own tale—he leaveth out here all such things as I laid in that place for the proof. Howbeit, those things will yet, I trust, serve me sufficiently against all Tyndale’s scoffs. Among which, yet, where he weeneth that he speaketh wisest… he helpeth me somewhat himself even here, unawares. For first, though I could not tell why they wrote somewhat that the heathen men will mock, and yet leave out somewhat lest they should mock—though I could not, I say, tell why they did this—yet is it enough if I prove that they so did indeed. For the proof whereof I may lay, and so did in my Dialogue (which Tyndale here leaveth out), that not only Saint Peter so did, in the second chapter of the Acts, where he forbore Acts 2:22–36; Jn 10:33–38 to call Christ God lest it should have hindered the faith in that audience… but that our Savior did the same himself in the manifest preaching of his Godhood, as appeareth in the tenth chapter of Saint John. Now, since ye see that thus they did indeed… what needeth me to care for all Tyndale’s whys? Why they forbore this where was less cause to fear, and why they wrote this where was more cause to fear—since he cannot say nay but that they so did, am I bound to give the reckoning why and wherefore they so did? This dare I be bold to say: that they never taught thing of difficulty by writing but that they taught it more plainly by mouth; by which explanations by mouth, the people came into the undoubted truth and faith of the matter, were the writing never so full of doubt.  

For the proof whereof… Tyndale hath here, as I said before, by reason of his heresy with false understanding of Saint Paul… brought forth a right good example. For thus he saith…

Tyndale

Yea, and if the apostles understood thereby as we do… what madder thing unto the heathen people could they have taught than that bread is Christ’s body and wine his blood? And yet all these things they wrote.

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1 since: seeing that // letted not: did not forbear 2, 3 mock(ed): ridicule(d); laugh(ed) at 2 were: i.e., were the things 3–4 for… superstition: they being the ones most congruous with the heathens’ own superstitiousness 5 encumbered: stymied; disadvantaged 6 tale: narrative 7 laid: adduced / presented // howbeit: however 9 yet: moreover // weeneth: thinks // wiser: the most sagely / the most brilliantly 10 even: right 11, 12 though: even if 11, 12 tell: say 11, 12 somewhat: something 12 mock: i.e., make fun of (it) 14 lay: submit 16–17 forbore to call: refrained from calling 19 in: regarding 20 appeareth: is shown 21 what . . . all: why need I concern myself with all of 22 forbore: i.e., refrained from writing 24 say nay but: deny // bound: obliged 24–25 the reckoning: the account of 25 wherefore: what for 28 undoubted: unquestioned / incontrovertible // of: regarding 29 writing: written document 29 never so: no matter how // doubt: ambiguity / puzzlingness 31 heresy: heretical stance 31 with false understanding: together with an inaccurate taking 34 madder: crazier
More

Lo, here ye see that Tyndale himself doubteth upon Saint Paul’s words, whether he meant as “we” do… which yet mean not as Tyndale doth—that bread is Christ’s body, and wine his blood, so that the bread and wine still remain, as Tyndale saith that the apostles write—but that the bread, and wine, is converted and changed into Christ’s body and blood; and that by what words soever the apostles write it, yet that is the thing that they mean; and that albeit that they have written it plainly enough in Scripture, yet both Christ and they with many words so clearly did declare it by mouth that in that article neither then nor never after was there any doubt arose, till that these heretics here now, of late years, make doubts upon the writing… contrary to the declaration made by Christ and his apostles, and well and surely written in men’s hearts, fourteen hundred years before. Such peril is it, lo, to fall from the undoubted faith unto the dispicions of the Scripture, which by the faith is understood as the Scripture itself. For likewise as it saith

\[ Jn \ 5:39; \ Is \ 7:9 \]

plainly, “Scrutamini scripturas” (“Search ye in Scripture”), so saith it as plainly, “Nisi credideritis non intelligetis” (“But if ye believe, ye shall not understand”). And here ye see that though Tyndale will not confess that the apostles left anything unwritten, nor that they wrote anything the more covertly for the mocking of the heathen… yet he saith himself that the apostles wrote so that men might doubt what they meant. And that I dare well say that in the Christian flock they presently so far forth declared it… that they left no such doubt therein. And also dare I say that they taught things by mouth which they wrote not—partly for the cause aforesaid, partly for that it needed not—and this I say boldly. For though Tyndale say nay—yet Saint Paul said yes himself, when he wrote unto the Corinthians, “Caetera quum venero ipse disponam” (“The other things I will dispose,” or “order,” “when I come myself”).

But the sacraments so sore aggrieve Tyndale’s sore eyes that he may not abide the sight of them; and therefore he goeth on against them still…

2 lo: behold 2–3 doubteth upon… whether: expresses uncertainty about… as to whether 3 meant as: i.e., meant by them what // do: i.e., understand by them // say // which: who 3 mean not as: i.e., say not what 10 declare: articulate 11 in that article: i.e., regarding that article of faith 11–12 doubt arose: i.e., question raised 12 till: i.e., till its coming to be // late: recent 12–13 make doubts upon: raise questions about / manufacture doubts on the basis of 13 the writing: i.e., what is and is not written about this in Scripture // contrary to: i.e., that contravene 13 declaration: explication(s) 14 well and: quite 15 from: away from 15 undoubted: incontrovertible; definitely true 16 the dispicions of: debates about 19–20: This is from not the Vulgate, but a Latin translation of the Septuagint. 20 but if: unless 21 confess: acknowledge 23 for… heathen: i.e., to keep it from being ridiculed by heathens 24 so: in such a way // might doubt: could be in doubt as to // And: i.e., And you see 25 dare well: i.e., am right in daring to // presently: in person 25–26 so far forth: to such an extent 26 declared it: i.e., made clear what they meant by what they wrote 28 cause aforesaid: above-mentioned reason 28 for… not: i.e., because there was no need for them to write those things 29 boldly: with assurance 32 order: set in order 34 sore: terribly // aggrieve: irritate
Tyndale

Moreover, what is it that the apostles taught by mouth and durst not write? The sacraments? As for Baptism and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, they wrote; and it is expressed what is signified by them. And also, all the ceremonies and sacraments that were from Adam to Christ had significations... and all that are made mention of in the New Testament. Wherefore, inasmuch as the sacraments of the Old Testament have significations... and inasmuch as the sacraments of the New Testament (of which mention is made that they were delivered unto us by the very apostles, at Christ’s commandment) have also significations; and inasmuch as the office of an apostle is to edify in Christ... and inasmuch as divine ceremony edifieth not, but hurteth altogether (for if it preach not unto me, then I cannot but put confidence therein that the deed itself justifieth me—which is the denying of Christ’s blood!); and inasmuch as no mention is made of them as well as of others... nor is known what is meant by them: therefore it appeareth that the apostles taught them not, but that they be the false merchandise of wily hypocrites.

More

If a man read over these words and examine them not... he may be soon abused. But whoso well weigh them, and consider every part... shall soon perceive that this process is filled up with malice, falsehood, and folly. First, he would that because the apostles have written the two sacraments, that is to wit, Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar, and the significations of them... and of the other five (as he saith) have not written—he would, I say, therefore that we should take it as proved that the other five were no divine sacraments, nor delivered to the Church by Christ nor his apostles.

Now is this argument, though his antecedent were true... yet as wisely concluded as this is of the laws of England: Men have written some; ergo, they have written all.

By the title of his chapter, he taketh in hand to prove that the apostles have left no necessary thing unwritten. And now he proveth it by that that they have written some. For of his reason—yea, and of all his reasons—in conclusion this is the whole sum. Which sum what effect it hath every fool may see... but if Tyndale prove...
me farther that the apostles promised that they would write all;

Jn 21:25; 2 Thes 2:15 whereof Saint John professeth plain the contrary, and so doth Saint Paul too.

Now yet in this reason of his, as faint and as feeble as it is, he is fain to presuppose false. For he presupposeth that of any of the remnant… the apostles have not written. Which is so plain false

Acts 8:14–18 that if there were any shame in him, he might not for shame say it. Of Confirmation


Eph 5:12–32 plainly… and Saint Paul to the Hebrews

1 Tm 4:14 as plainly. Of Matrimony and Priesthood,

Jas 5:14–15 Saint Paul manifestly; the one to the

Mk 6:13 Ephesians, the other to Timothy. Aneling, Saint James—and Saint Mark in the Gospel, also. And of Penance, and the parts thereof—every man, almost, in every part of Scripture. And this thing Tyndale so well knoweth… and that it hath been so often so plainly proved unto them that they could never yet, nor never shall while they live, be able to withstand it neither with Scripture nor with reason, but with railing and babbling—and therefore, as I say, this knoweth Tyndale so well—that it is more than shame for him now so to write as though the apostles had never written of them. Which if they never had done indeed… yet were the sacraments sure enough, which hang upon God’s word as sure as all their writing… and of which unwritten word we be certain and sure by the selfsame means by which we know their books for holy writing: that is to wit, by the relation of the Catholic Church of Christ, and by the Spirit of God that leadeth the Church into the belief of the truth… and leadeth every well-willing person apart… into the believing of the Catholic Church, and by the believing of the Church, into the right belief of every necessary truth… and by the grounds thereof first had, into the right understanding of Holy Scripture… whereby the faith, before had, is more and more fastly confirmed… and without which faith before had, the wit of man might abuse the Scripture to the occasion of infidelity and unfaithfulness.

But yet, because I would be loath that Tyndale might say that I mistake him in anything and then ground my reason against

1 all: everything  2–3 plain the contrary: explicitly the contrary / the exact opposite
4 yet: also // reason: argument // faint: weak // feeble: flimsy; unconvincing  5 fain: constrained
5 false: inaccurately / dishonestly // of any: about any  6 remnant: rest (of the sacraments)
6 plain: obviously  7 shame: decency  8 might not for shame: i.e., could not be so shameless as to
11 Priesthood: i.e., Holy Orders  13 Aneling: the Anointing of the Sick  14 the: i.e., his
15 almost: just about  18 while: as long as // withstand: gainsay  19 but: only
20–21 more than shame for: i.e., exceedingly shameful of
22–23 were . . . enough: i.e., would the sacraments be firmly enough established
23–24 which . . . as: i.e., they being as solidly anchored in God’s word as is
26 relation: pronouncement; say-so  28–29 well-willing person apart: i.e., non-Catholic person of good will
33 fastly: fixedly  34 wit of man: human intellect // abuse: distort // to the: i.e., into an
36 he . . . say: hate to have Tyndale be able to say
37 mistake him in anything: take him wrongly about something // ground my reason: base my argument
him upon my own mistaking of his words: I will yet a little examine his words better… when he saith that the remnant of the sacraments besides Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar be no profitable sacraments, nor have no promise of grace, because the apostles wrote not of any of them “as” they did of the other twain.

I would wit of Tyndale whether he mean that of any of the other five the apostles wrote nothing at all; or else that they wrote not of any grace promised unto any of them; or else that of none of them the apostles wrote any proper significations of their outward

_Col 2:12_; _1 Cor 10:16–17_ signs… as Saint Paul did of Baptism when he resembled it unto Christ’s burying and resurrection, and of the Sacrament of the Altar when he teacheth the Corinthians that one loaf is made of many grains of corn, and the wine of many grapes, and that Christian men should

in like wise, being many in person, be made one in love and concord, and, as it were, made all one body in and with our Savior Christ himself. If he mean the first way—that is to wit, that of any of the said five sacraments the apostles wrote nothing at all—then shall he show himself too shameless. For the words be clear,

both of Confirmation, Priesthood, Aneling, and both the other twain. If he mean of the second manner… his saying shall be as shameless as in the first. For it is evident in all the three foreremembered that the apostles write of grace given with the putting-upon of the hands. And therein when Tyndale seeketh an evasion

in his book of _Obedience_, saying that the putting of the hands was but a manner of men in that country, as it was to stretch out the arm in preaching, or to lay a hand upon a boy’s head and call him “Good son”—this evasion is none evasion. For in the sixth chapter of Saint Paul unto the Hebrews… Saint Paul would not have made so serious and earnest remembrance of the putting-upon of the hands (which he rehearseth as earnestly as Baptism) if it were but such customary manner that men may do and leave undone as they list. Nor if it were but such a thing… he would not so expressly say to Timothy that he had grace given unto him by the

_Heb 6:2_; _Tm 4:14_ putting of his hands upon him. These places of Scripture—and many more, too—be
for this matter so plain against Tyndale, and so evident…
that when he wrestleth with them and would fain escape away with
some gay gloss of his own device, he fareth like a butterfly fallen
on a lime twig, which the more it striveth and fluttereth, ever the
faster it hangeth.

Now, if he mean in the third fashion… that is to wit, that the
apostles of those five sacraments do not besides the common signification
of grace write any special and proper significations of the
outward tokens, to which significations the same outward tokens
had such resemblance and likeness that they were therefore
appropered unto them… as water in Baptism hath by the washing of
the body a resemblance unto the cleansing of the soul; if Tyndale
mean in this manner—as it seemeth that he doth. For when Luther
and he, and all the sort of them, had long labored against the
blessed sacraments, and had first assayed to say that five of
them were not in Scripture spoken of at all… and when that would
not be bidden by, then that there was at the leastwise no grace
promised with them; when they see themselves shamefully convicted
and reproved in that point too: then fell they finally to the third
point… and would, notwithstanding that the Scripture make mention
of them… and of grace also granted with them… yet would the
wise men make us so mad as to take them all for naught but if we
find in Scripture what other, special signification every outward
token hath… and preach that signification to the people as the
special thing and the whole effect of the sacrament, letting the
grace go by… which these men would were clean forgotten, and in no
wise believed, but—whereas in all their writings they rail upon
allegories, and cry out upon such holy doctors as preach them—
yet the holy sacraments themselves they would should serve for allegories
only, and for nothing else.

Now, then, I say, since Tyndale meaneth thiswise, and therefore
saith in his words foreremembered that otherwise preached they
do no good, but hurt altogether (for it maketh, he saith, the
audience to put confidence therein that the deed itself justifieth
a man, which “is the denying of Christ’s blood”)—since Tyndale, I
say, saith thus—I would wit of Tyndale whether the sacraments

1 plain: manifestly / directly   // evident: conclusively
2 would fain: tries hard to
3 gay: plausible-sounding   // device: thinking up / invention
4 lime: birdlimed. (Birdlime is a sticky substance put on twigs to catch small birds.)
5 faster: i.e., more firmly stuck
6 if . . . fashion: i.e., if his meaning is that third one
7 of: about   // common: shared
8 proper: distinctive
9, 24 token(s); sign(s)
10 appropered unto: assigned to them as properly pertaining to
11 manner: way
12 13 mean(eth): i.e., means that assertion of his
13 mend: way of the whole lot
14 labored: campaigned
15 assayed to say: tried saying
16 17 hidden by: submitted to; gone along with
18 convicted: overcome
19 reproved: proved wrong
20 make: i.e., does make
21 wise: sagacious
22 mad: demented   // naught: worthless   // but if: unless
23 would were: would have be
24 clean: completely
25 forgotten: i.e., forgotten about
26 in no wise believed: by no means believed in
27 upon: rail about; denigrate
28 cry out upon: vehemently criticize
29 holy doctors: i.e., Fathers and Doctors of the Church / sainted exegetes/theologians
30 would should: would have
31 allegories: i.e., allegorical representations
32 words foreremembered: above-related words. (See 295/2–19.)
33 they: i.e., the sacraments
34 audience: i.e., hearers of the sermon
35 wit: inquire
and the ceremonies of the Old Law were by God provided to be well
and with their profit delivered and taught by Moses unto the Jews.
I think that Tyndale will not be so mad to say that God did
by Moses teach them to serve him with those sacraments, sacrifices,
and ceremonies... displeasant to himself, thankless toward
themselves, and also to their hurt. Wherefore, if he have either wit
or grace... he must needs grant and agree that they were by Moses
taught unto the Jews very well and agreeable to God's pleasure and
their wealth. But then say I that those special and proper significations
of every sacrament, sacrifice, and ceremony were not
taught them... nor they understood them not: wherefore it followeth
that Tyndale saith false... in that he saith that the knowledge of
them was so necessary for the soul health that without that knowledge
the use of them must needs be noyful and not lawful unto
them. For but if Tyndale teach false in this... God had taught his
people in the beginning to serve him with damnable ceremonies
himself.

Now, if Tyndale will at this clap turn his cheek aside... and
say that because that else all their service to God done with those
sacraments and ceremonies had been damnable... therefore it
appeareth well that all the significations of them were taught them...
and so the minor of mine argument false: yet in turning the one
cheek from me, he turneth the other very fair to me; so that he
will have a clap on the one cheek or the other, make what skift he
can.

For then say I this unto him: that if the knowledge of all these
significations was so necessary to them that without that knowledge,
the doing of those things which without sin they might not
leave undone were sin as oft as they did them; and that therefore,
lest we should be so wretched to ween God had on every side so bewrapped
his people in sin himself, by his own special
provision, that they could not by no means escape... we must needs
perceive that God caused them to be by Moses taught all those
significations—then say I that since they were not written unto
them in the Scripture, they were, if Tyndale told us true, taught
them but only by mouth... and so, from mouth to mouth, taught and
continued among them, till men by their folly and sloth fell to
forget them or little to force of them, and then to not believe them;
as these heretics fare by the right faith at this day.

And then say I that thereupon it very well followeth further that
Tynsdale, saying that Moses received all necessary things in
writing, said very false and like a very fool; for the knowledge
and understanding of those significations of all their sacrifices
and ceremonies, he confesseth to be necessary upon peril of their
souls, and yet he confesseth that they were not written in the
Scripture.

And if Tynsdale ween to wry aside and escape by that he saith
that those sacraments and ceremonies served them for Books… and
that they read all the significations in them as in Books: I ask him
whether the ceremonies were tokens so like the significations that
they were able to teach the significations, and keep them, by the
 beholding of the ceremonies, or not. If they were… they had not been
forgotten. If they were not, and yet the significations so necessary…
then yet again was not everything necessary delivered Moses in
writing.

But letting Tynsdale with his folly pass, the truth is that the Jews
had necessary things taught them beside the writing… and had an
expectation of Christ, and of redemption by him, before the Law
written… and in that time, and after, and the Jews look for it yet… and
they know that without him all their sacraments could not for
their final salvation serve them. But when they began little and
little to fall from that faith… and began to trust in the Law, and the
works of the Law, alone… leaving off this point of faith which was of
the Law, sacraments, and ceremonies, and all their bodily works of
the soul—then went they wrong. And that is the thing which Saint
Paul so sore reproveth in their trust and confidence to be saved by
the works of the Law; whereas if they had not left off the force and
strength of faith… both works of the Law and the ceremonies, too, had
stood them in stead of heaven. And therefore this nothing toucheth
the church of Christ when they put trust in the sacraments; for
they do it not without the faith that all the force and strength of them
cometh of Christ’s Passion; for this they believe, and this they teach.

1 folly: stupidity // sloth: indolence // fell: began to       2 forget: drop the practice of
2 little to force of: i.e., to attach little importance to // believe: believe in       3 fare by: behave toward
5 saying: in saying       6 said very false: spoke very dishonestly // very fool: literal idiot
8, 12, etc. ceremonies: rituals       8 confesseth: professes; claims // be: i.e., have been
9 confesseth: acknowledges       11 ween: thinks // wry: swerve // by that he saith: i.e., via that assertion of his
12, 13 Books: Bibles       15 keep: preserve       16 they had not: i.e., then the significations were not
17 so: i.e., were so       18 was . . . delivered: i.e., is it proved that not everything necessary was delivered to
20 folly: idiocy       21 beside: apart from       23 written: i.e., was written       25 and: by
26 from: away from       27 leaving off: i.e., leaving out of consideration // which was of: i.e., which there was to
30 sore reproveth: strongly criticizes // in: about // to be: i.e., of being       31 off: i.e., out of the equation
32 had: would have       33 stead of: i.e., good stead for their getting to
33 this nothing toucheth: i.e., this criticism made by Saint Paul is in no way applicable to
And it is no doubt but that the Jews never knew the special significations of all their sacraments, sacrifices, and ceremonies, other than grace and remission of sins, or peradventure that they were figures and tokens of things that should fall, not yet perceived by them; as we know our sacraments be effectual signs of grace. And it is undoubted that both they and we which in faith, hope, and charity do any such thing as God commandeth, and serve him in such fashion as he biddeth us… although we know not why he will be served in such wise, no more than Abraham knew why God bade him to serve him with the sacrificing of his own son—yet is that doing of that deed, done in that wise, pleasant and acceptable to God, and profit to man’s soul… whatsoever Tyndale tell us, and his master Martin too, and Friar Huessgen also, and take their wise wives with them. And therefore all this tale of Tyndale against the “sacrament”… is not worth the least feather of a wild goose’s wing.

But yet consider one thing, by the way, that ye mistake him not, nor be not by a fair word led out of your way. He calleth the Sacrament of the Altar the “sacrament of the body and blood of Christ”… in which words he calleth it well, but yet meaneth he not so well thereby as good Christian men do, nor as himself would seem to do. For he meaneth not that there is the very body and blood of Christ in deed, though he say there is the “sacrament” thereof. For by that meaneth he nothing else but only a bare sign, and token, and a memorial, thereof.

For the great heretic Thorpe, in his examination, calleth the sacrament aright, and by the same name that Tyndale now doth… so that a man would at the first hearing find no fault therein, but mistake him for a good Christian man. But afterward he declareth himself well and clearly that he meaneth like a naughty heretic… as Tyndale doth also in sundry places of his book. For he saith that “sacrament,” “sign,” and “token” be but three names of one thing… and that the Sacrament of the Altar is very bread still. And he mocketh at them that teach it to be the very body of our Savior himself—

And so, in this point concerning the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, Tyndale is yet a much more heretic than Luther is himself in his writing… although, indeed, it appeareth well that he meant as

Note: And it is no doubt but that the Jews never knew the special significations of all their sacraments, sacrifices, and ceremonies, other than grace and remission of sins, or peradventure that they were figures and tokens of things that should fall, not yet perceived by them; as we know our sacraments be effectual signs of grace. And it is undoubted that both they and we which in faith, hope, and charity do any such thing as God commandeth, and serve him in such fashion as he biddeth us… although we know not why he will be served in such wise, no more than Abraham knew why God bade him to serve him with the sacrificing of his own son—yet is that doing of that deed, done in that wise, pleasant and acceptable to God, and profit to man’s soul… whatsoever Tyndale tell us, and his master Martin too, and Friar Huessgen also, and take their wise wives with them. And therefore all this tale of Tyndale against the “sacrament”… is not worth the least feather of a wild goose’s wing.

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1 it is no doubt: there is no question 3 ceremonies: rituals 4 peradventure: perhaps // figures: prefigurements 5 should fall: were to come 6 undoubted: beyond question 7 biddeth us: tells us to 8 although: even if // will: wills to / wants to 9, 12 wise: (a) way 10 bade: told // with: by 11 pleasant: pleasing 14 wise: sagacious; enlightened 15 tale . . . against: i.e., stuff Tyndale says about 17 by the way: as a side note // that: in order that 18 a fair word: an error-free expression 19 Sacrament of the Altar: Eucharist / Blessed Sacrament 20 calleth: identifies 21 himself would: he wants to 22, 34 very: actual 22 deed: reality 24 bare: mere 24, 32 token: symbol 25 memorial: reminder 26 great heretic: i.e., very heretical // Thorpe: William Thorpe (d. 1407); see 8/25—9/2. 26 examination: trial 29 he declareth himself: he himself makes known 30 well and: quite 30 naughty: no-good 32 names of one: i.e., words for the same 33 Sacrament of the Altar: Blessed Sacrament 33 very: literal // mocketh at: ridicules 34 them . . . be: those who teach that it is 35 wood: furious 35 any honor: i.e., any venerating of it (especially by genuflecting to it) 36 in: with regard to 37 yet . . . than: much more of a heretic than even 38 appeareth well: is quite evident
much in the beginning, till he withdrew himself for envy of others that hastened forward and set forth that heresy before him.

And of truth, I am right credibly informed (by a very virtuous man whom God hath of his goodness illumined and called home again out of the dark Egypt of their blind heresies) that at such time as Friar Barnes and Tyndale first met and talked together beyond the sea (after that he fled out of the friars where he was enjoined to tarry for his penance after he had borne his faggot), Tyndale and he were of sundry sects. For Friar Barnes was of Zwingli’s sect against the Sacrament of the Altar, believing that it is nothing but bare bread. But Tyndale was yet at that time not fully fallen so far in that point, but, though he were bad enough beside, was yet not content with Friar Barnes for the holding of that heresy.

But within a while after (as he that is falling is soon put over), the friar made the fool mad outright, and brought him blindfolded down into the deepest dungeon of that devilish heresy; wherein he sitteth now as fast bound in the chair of pestilence, with the chain of pertinacity, as any of his unhappy fellows. And this I give you knowledge of… because I would not in any wise that ye were deceived with him, where he speaketh well and yet meaneth naught. But now let us yet farther consider well his words. Thus he saith…

Tyndale

All the ceremonies and sacraments that were from Adam to Christ had significations… and all that are made mention of in the New Testament.

More

Upon this he concludeth after, that except Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar… all the remnant be no true sacraments, for lack of significations. But ere he can so conclude… he must first prove not only that all the sacraments and ceremonies from Adam to Christ had significations… but also that all those significations were then to the people known and understood. For else, though God did set things to signify and to be done, yet if he commanded them to do it and told them not the significations,
but would leave them to be shown and disclosed at such time afterward as it should like himself—it was no sin for them in the

\textit{Note} meanwhile to do the things that God bade them do... but great merit to them,

though they understood not what the things signified that they did; no more than my servant that can no more but write is worthy rebuke and blame in the writing of a Latin book at my bidding, whereof he wotteth not what any one word meaneth. Now, that \textit{all} the significations of \textit{all} the sacraments and ceremonies from Adam to Christ were understood of the people: that shall not Tyndale prove me though he should live as many years as were between the creation of Adam and the birth of Christ. And therefore as many years must he needs have also, ere ever he make his conclusion follow and his argument good. For if God gave them ceremonies and sacraments whereof he gave them not the significations—then so might he likewise give us if it so please him to do. And farther, if they, by the doing of those not-understood ceremonies and sacraments in obedience of his bidding, did not sin, but deserved thank (all such, I say, as did them in due faith of salvation by Christ that was to come), then may we also by the observing of sacraments and ceremonies having some significations farther than we perceive (for one general signification of them all we know: that they be all good tokens and significations of grace... in that they be taught by God and his Spirit that in such things doth instruct his church)—we may likewise, I say, observe them without sin, and not without thank of God. And so Tyndale’s argument goeth to ground quite—although our sacraments and ceremonies were not good indeed. For they may be good, for any reason that he maketh to the contrary.

But, now, that they be good indeed, and delivered unto Christ’s Catholic Church by himself and his Holy Spirit sent by himself to dwell therein, to teach it all necessary truth, and thereby necessarily to preserve it from all damnable untruth, false belief, and idolatry (as the sacraments and the ceremonies were if they were false): this have I proved to Tyndale oftener, I trow, than fifteen times; to which in fifteen hundred years he shall, I am sure, never make one good answer.

1 shown: revealed 2 like: please 4 bade them: enjoined them to; told them to 6 no more but write: do no more than transcribe 7 worthy: deserving of // the writing: i.e., his transcribing
8 wotteth: knows 9, 14, etc. ceremonies: rituals / rites 10 of: by 11 were: i.e., there were
13 ere: before 14 good: valid; sound 16 might: could 17 farther: furthermore 19 deserved: merited
19, 26 thank (off): reward (from) 20 of salvation by Christ: i.e., in the Messianic salvation
22 farther than: i.e., beyond those that 23, 30 good: bona fide / authentic / legit
27 goeth to ground quite: totally collapses / completely falls apart // although: even if
28 good indeed: actually bona fide // may: could 29 reason: argument 34 as: i.e., which
34 were: would be 35 false: unauthentic; spurious // after: more often // trow: suppose
36 sure: certain 37 good answer: cogent answer / rebuttal that holds water
Tyndale
Wherefore, inasmuch as the sacraments of the Old Testament have
significations… and inasmuch as the sacraments of the New
Testament (of which mention is made that they were delivered
unto us by the very apostles, at Christ’s commandment) have also
significations; and inasmuch as the office of an apostle is to
edify in Christ… and inasmuch as a dumb ceremony edifieth
not, but hurtest altogether (for if it preach not unto me, then I
cannot but put confidence therein that the deed itself justifieth
me—which is the denying of Christ’s blood!); and inasmuch as no
mention is made of them as well as of others, nor is known what is
meant of them: therefore it appeareth that the apostles taught them not…
but that they be the false merchandise of wily hypocrites.

More
He repeateth here and heapeth up all his proofs together, which
proofs I have reproved piecemeal altogether… and so his
conclusion which he deduceth upon them is already reproved altogether.
But yet for his double confusion can I not forbear to touch
one piece again which in his repetition here he seemeth to set
out more open and more clearly to declare.

This piece is where he saith that all the sacraments of the New
Testament have significations also… and then expoundeth which
“all” he meaneth, saying all “of which mention is made that they were
delivered unto us by the very apostles, at Christ’s commandment.”
It is to me more than wonder what this man meaneth. First, it must
needs be that he accounteth among such as he saith there is no
mention made of their delivery by the very apostles, all those five
which he so often and so fully refuseth to take for sacraments: that
is to wit, Confirmation, Penance, Wedlock, Holy Order, and
Aneling. For he saith always that the other two, that is, Baptism
and the Sacrament of the Altar, have significations, and that these
have none; and by this reason he would now conclude that only
those two be very sacraments, and none of all these five.

But, now, his words will rather prove that these five have significations
too. For he saith that all have significations whereof
“mention is made that they were delivered unto us by the very
apostles.” Wherefore, Tyndale doth here either confess that these five

5, 24, 27, 36 very: actual  7 edify: build up  //  dumb: soundless / unintelligible  //  ceremony: ritual
8 hurteth altogether: does nothing but harm / is downright detrimental  9 but: i.e., help but
10–11 no . . . others: See note for 295/16–17.  12 of: by  //  appeareth: is evident
13 the false merchandise of: i.e., a bill of goods sold by  16, 17 reproved: disproved
17 upon: from / on the basis of  18 confusion: confutation / overthrow  //  touch: discuss
20 out more open: i.e., more out in the open  //  declare: articulate  22 expoundeth: explains
25 more than wonder: i.e., an exceedingly baffling mystery  30 Aneling: the Anointing of the Sick
31 Sacrament of the Altar: Eucharist  32 reason: reasoning  33 very: real
35 all have significations: i.e., significations are had by all the sacraments  37 confess: admit
have significations also... and then confesseth his words false by
which he so often saith they be no sacraments because they have
no significations (for lack whereof he calleth them “dumb ceremonies”);
or else he saith here that there is no mention made that
any of these five were delivered us by the very apostles... and then is
he therein too plainly proved false. For every man seeth that there
is none of all these five but that, as I have often shown, mention is
made of them by the evangelists and the
Acts 8:14–18 made of them by the evangelists and the
1 Tm 4:14 others of the apostles... if they be the “very
Eph 5:12–32 apostles” whom he and we both call the
Jas 5:14–15 apostles: Saint Peter, Saint Paul,
Mk 6:13 Saint James, and their fellows. So that
I wonder what the mad man meaneth,
to speak in this matter so solemnly and handle it so madly. For
when they make mention of them—the wise man may well wit that
they did not begin by any wily fox after... but by Christ himself,
that taught those things to them, and they forth to his
church.

Tyndale

And thereto, priesthood was in the time of the apostles an office—which
if they would do truly, it would more profit than all the sacraments
of the world.

More

Is not here another mad reason? His purpose is to prove that
the apostles left no necessary thing unwritten... and Tyndale
proveth it thus: “In the apostles’ time, priesthood was an office—which,
if the priests would do it truly, would more profit than all the
sacraments in the world.” Now, ye wot well his conclusion must
needs be this: “And therefore it followeth that the apostles left no
necessary thing unwritten.” Is not this a madly concluded argument?
And yet are there in his words more follies than one besides. For,
granted that priesthood was an office... yet might that officer be
consecrated with a sacrament, and so was indeed. And a part of
his office was also to administer the sacraments to the people.

Now, if that office well occupied were more profitable than all
the sacraments besides—what letteth the other sacraments to be

1 confesseth... false: i.e., admits are false his words  3 dumb: meaningless / unintelligible
3 ceremonies: ritual  5, 9 very: actual  6 false: dishonest
9–10 they be the... whom: i.e., the... are those men whom  12 fellows: confreres
13 mad: crazy  14 in: on  17 that: who  20 thereto: moreover
14, 24, 30 mad(ly): insane(ly)  15 the wise man: the brilliant man / anyone with any sense
15 wit: know  16 did not begin: i.e., were not originated  17 that: who  20 thereto: moreover
21, 27 do (it): carry (it) out / do (it)  21, 27 truly: rightly
24 more: i.e., be of more  24 reason: argument  24 purpose: objective
28 wot well: well realize that  31 follies: idiocies  32 officer: functionary / job holder
34 office: job  35 office well occupied: job well performed / position well occupied
36 besides: i.e., besides Holy Orders
36 what letteth... to be: i.e., how would that prevent... from being
good and necessary to salvation? Were this a wise argument—
“Better is it to forbear sin than to do penance for sin; ergo, to
do penance for sin is not necessary”? Now, after this goodly argument
goeth he to another as gay, and saith…

Tyndale

And again, God’s holinesses strive not one against another,
nor defile one another. Their sacraments defile one another. For
wedlock defileth priesthood, more than whoredom, theft, murder,
or any sin against nature.

More

Here is but one argument, and that but short; but here be two
lies long and loud enough. For first, where he groundeth himself
upon this—that “God’s holinesses strive not one against another,
nor defile one another”—he saith plain false and against Holy
Scripture quite. For the burying of dead men ever was and is a
holy deed and well allowed with God… and yet would he not suffer the
bishop to bury any man, and though it were his father. And also,
if Tyndale will abide by this, either he must say that perpetual
virginity is naught and not holy… contrary to Saint Paul and our

1 Cor 7:7–8, 32–35; Mt 19:12  Savior himself, who take it and teach
Mk 10:29–30; Gn 1:27–28  it for holy and prefer it before wedlock
with its work; or else he must say that wedlock with its
work is naught and not holy, which God himself both blessed
and commanded in Paradise… and which Holy Scripture commendeth

Heb 13:4  where it saith that wedlock is
honorable where the bed is undefiled
with adultery. And then must he confess also that his own master
Martin Luther (if the work of wedlock be foul and sinful) hath
sinfully doubly defiled himself with wedding of his nun. Or

else, finally, must he confess himself for a fool in saying that
God’s holinesses strive not one against another… but if he save himself
and say that perpetual virginity and the work of wedlock
be not repugnant, the one to the other; and then he shall not need
to confess himself a fool, for the whole world will confess it for
him.

Now maketh he another lie… where he saith that “wedlock defileth
priesthood, more than whoredom, theft, murder, or any sin against

1 good: bona fide  // to: for  // were this: would this be  // wise: sensible  2 forbear: i.e., not commit
3 goodly: splendid  4 gay: brilliant / specious  6 again: furthermore
6, 13, 31 strive not one against another: are not in conflict with one another  8, 37 than: i.e., than does
8, 37 whoredom: fornication
9 against nature: i.e., frustrating the natural orientation of sexual activity toward procreation
12 loud: conspicuous  14 he saith plain: i.e., what he says is manifestly
14–15 against . . . quite: utterly against Holy Scripture  16 allowed with: sanctioned by
16–17: See Luke 9:59–62.  16 suffer the: i.e., permit a  17 and though: i.e., not even if
18 abide by: consistently hold to  19, 23 naught: immoral  21 prefer it before: rank it ahead of
22, 23 work: act  24 Paradise: the Garden of Eden  26–27 undefiled with: not defiled by
27, 30 confess: acknowledge  28, 32 work of wedlock: marital act  30 for: i.e., to have been
31 but if: unless  31–32 save . . . say: i.e., spares himself that humiliation by saying
33 repugnant . . . other: contradictory . . . other; mutually exclusive  36 maketh: tells
nature." For if he say this as of himself... it is a foolish lie. But if he say it, as he doth, in the person of the Catholic Church, to make men believe that the Church teacheth so: then is it a very malicious lie. For it is not true, nor the Church teacheth not so. For the Church plainly teacheth that whoredom, theft, murder, and sin against nature could never be lawful, neither to priest nor layman. But the Church both knoweth and confesseth that wedlock and priesthood be not repugnant but compatible of their nature... and that wedded men have been made priests and kept still their wives. But since perpetual chastity and the forbearing of the work of wedlock is more acceptable to God than the work of wedlock in Matrimony: therefore the Church taketh none to be priests but such as promise

Priests profess perpetual chastity. and profess never to be married, but keep perpetual chastity. And then doth marriage after the promise made—not by reason of the priesthood taken upon them, but by reason of the promise made unto God and broken—defile the priest, I will not dispute whether as much as theft, murder, or the sin against nature... but I am sure as much as whoredom doth. For since the marriage is no marriage... it is but whoredom itself. And I am sure also that it defileth the priest more than double and treble whoredom... since that his marriage being, as it is, unlawful, and thereby none other but whoredom, doth openly rebuke and shame two sacraments there at once—that is, both Priesthood and Matrimony—and besides that, not only commiteth whoredom, but also saith openly that he will commit whoredom... and, as a bold beast and a shameless whoremaster, plainly professeth before the face of God and all Christian people that in steady and despite of his professed chastity, he cometh there to bind himself to shameless perpetual whoredom. And thus, good Christian readers, ye see how well this wise argument serveth him.

And now putteth he after it his great, solemn question where he findeth in Scripture that women may christen children; which joineth to his words before, near enough in the book, but in reason as far off as the scripture that he layeth therefor is far off from the matter; as I have touched before.

And surely, through all his book and almost everything that he maketh, sometimes the chapters, sometimes the paragraphs and

1 of himself: i.e., as something he himself is asserting 3 so: this 4 nor... so: nor does the Church teach that 5, 19, etc. whoredom: fornication 5–6, 18 against nature: See note for 306/9. 6 lawful: morally permissible 7 confesseth: acknowledges 8 repugnant: contradictory; mutually exclusive // of: by 10, 14, 28 chastity: continence / celibacy 10, 11 work of wedlock: marital act 11 acceptable: agreeable; pleasing 12 none... such: i.e., no one into the priesthood but such men 17 dispute: argue 19, 20 sure: certain 21 treble: triple // since that: since; given that 22 unlawful: nonlegit; not one in the eyes of God 22 none other but: nothing other than 23 doth... there at: i.e., he does at the “wedding” and in the “marriage”... at 23 rebuke: demean 24 Priesthood: i.e., Holy Orders 26 bold: brazen // whoremaster: lecher 28 stead: place // despite: scorn 30 wise: brilliant 31–35: See 259/35—260/25. 31 puttheth: poses 31 solemn: portentous // where: i.e., of where it is that 32 christen: baptize 33 joineth... enough: to his previous statements is in close enough proximity 34 layeth therefor: adduces for it 35 matter: subject; point at issue // touched: discussed 36 surely: indeed 37 maketh: writes
reasonings within the chapter, have so evil dependence one
toward another… that it seemeth the matter to be gathered by diverse
folk… and as they come to him in diverse papers, so he without
order and at adventure patcheth in his pieces nothing like together,
with great sack seams, and some seem rent-between. And in like
wise joineth he now the final clause of this chapter unto the
remnant… so that whoso consider what and how many things
go between it and the thing whereupon he conclueth it… shall
surely ween it were a poisoned, stinking tail of some stinking
serpent, that were quite cut off and after laid aside, far from the
poisoned body. For this is his final clause and his whole conclusion…

Tyndale

And finally, though we were sure that God himself had given us
a sacrament, whatsoever it were: yet if the signification were once
lost… we must of necessity either seek up the signification, or
put some other signification of God’s word thereto, what we ought
to do or believe thereby, or else put it down. For it is impossible to
observe a sacrament without signification, but to our damnation.
If we keep the faith purely, and the law of love undefiled—which
are the significations of all ceremonies—there is no jeopardy to
alter or change the fashion of the ceremony, or to put it down
if need be.

More

Lo, good readers, here ye see finally how well and how wisely, and
thereto how virtuously, Tyndale finisheth this chapter. For the
whole effect of all these words is in this world nothing else…
but that if God bid you do a thing and he tell you not what he
meaneth thereby, and for what cause he will have you do it: ye
must needs leave it undone and bid him do it himself. Would
Tyndale, ween you, be well content with his own servant that
would serve him of the same fashion? Not do what he biddeth him
till he tell him why he biddeth him? Would it not have become
Adam well, when God forbade him the Tree of Knowledge, to have asked
God again why he did so… and say, “Tell me, good Lord, wherefore, and
what thou meanest thereby, and why should I more die for eating
thereof than of another tree; tell me this, good Lord, ere thou go,

1–2 have . . . another: so poorly hang together; have so little connection with one another
2 it . . . matter: the book’s content seems  // by: from 2, 3 diverse: different 3 papers: manuscripts
3–4 without order: in no particular order; unsystematically 4 at adventure: at random; haphazardly
4 pieces nothing like: completely dissimilar pieces 5 great: big  // sack: i.e., burlap-sack
5 rent-between: torn-between 6 wise: manner 11 clause: i.e., paragraph 7 remnant: rest
7 whose consider: whoever considers 8 go: i.e., come 9 ween it were: think it was
9, 11 poisoned: venomous 10 were quite cut: was completely cut off  // after: afterward
13 though: even if 14 once: ever 15 seek up: search for and find
17 put it down: i.e., suppress the sacrament 18 observe: i.e., celebrate or receive
20 ceremonies: i.e., religious rituals  // there is no jeopardy: i.e., it is not at all unsafe
21 put it down: suppress it; do away with it 24 wisely: sagaciously
25 thereto how virtuously: how virtuously too 26 effect: upshot 27 bid you: tells you to
27 a thing: something  // tell you not: does not tell you 28 cause: reason
29, 31 bid(deth) him: tell(s) him to 30 ween you: do you think  // well content: very happy 31 of: in
32 biddeth him: i.e., is giving him that command 33 forbade him: i.e., forbade him to eat of
34 again: in reply  // so: that  // wherefore: i.e., your reason for giving me this prohibition
35 more die for: i.e., any more have to die on account of 36 ere: before
for else, be thy back turned once, I will eat thereof whether thou will or no!”

When God taught Moses the making of the tabernacle, the temple, and all things belonging thereunto—would it not have done well in Moses’ mouth to have said unto God, “Tell me what it meaneth that thou wilt have the tabernacle made of this manner, or else it shall lie unmade for me!”

When our Savior himself sent out his disciples, and bade them, in the confirmation of their doctrine, lay their hands upon sick folk and they should be whole, and that they should anoint some with oil—would it not, ween ye, have done very well that they should have said nay but if he would tell them why lay their hands more than speak their bare word, and why anoint them with oil rather than smear them with butter? Surely the devil hath made this man mad; he would else never say as he saith. For if it were impossible to use a ceremony but unto damnation, and that obedience to God’s bidding be evermore deadly sin, but if the signification be known: then lived the chosen people of God in the Old Law in a strange perplexity. Which, whatsoever Tyndale say, shall never be proved to have understood the significations of all the ceremonies which God expressly commanded them to fulfill and observe—though he would not that they should ween that the observing of them without faith and other good works should suffice them as Tyndale and Luther say… that faith alone shall save us without good works… as they said of old, and as he saith now, without sacraments too. For this is his final conclusion of all: that if we “keep the faith and the law of love undefiled,” there is no peril at all to “alter and change the fashion” of the ceremonies, and to put them down, too; meaning, as it seemeth, that if we keep the faith, and believe with Luther, that there needeth no more but faith… and then, therewith, keep the law of love after Luther’s loving manner, in lodging lovers—friars and nuns—lovingly together, then we shall never need to care whether we change or put down ceremonies and sacraments and all.

And surely very sooth he saith. For when we fall once to be content with that—there will, but if we change that mind and amend, neither any ceremony nor any sacrament serve us.

1 be . . . once: once your back is turned      2 wilt: will me to / like it    3 be . . . no: not
3 the making of: i.e., to, and how to, construct      6 of: in    7 lie . . . me: remain unmade as far as I’m concerned
9 bade . . . the: told them to, in      11 should be whole: would get well      12 ween yе: i.e., don’t you think
13 may: no    13, 18–19, 37 but if: unless   13–14 why . . . word: i.e., why their also laying their hands on the sick person would work better than their just speaking their words      14 why: i.e., why they were to
16 mad: insane    // as he saith: i.e., what he’s saying      17 use: carry out / use
17, 38 ceremony: ritual / ritual element      18 that: i.e., true that    // be . . . sin: is always a mortal sin
20 in the: i.e., under the    // strange perplexity: i.e., bizarre predicament    // which: i.e., which people
23 fulfill: carry out      23–24 that . . . ween: have had them think      26 of old: i.e., previously
29 there . . . all: i.e., it is not at all perilous      30 put them down: suppress them; do away with them
32 needeth: i.e., is needed    // but: i.e., than      33 after: in accord with
34–35 care . . . down: i.e., have any qualms about changing or getting rid of
36 surely . . . saith: certainly what he’s saying is very true    // when . . . once: once we start    // content: all right
37 mind: disposition      38 serve us: do us any good
And yet if faith and love be, as Tyndale here saith, the significations of all the sacraments, what peril is there to keep all the ceremonies with them twain, without any other significations? And thus by Tyndale’s own tale we shall neither need to put them down, alter, nor change them… whereas he saith before we must seek the significations again or put down the ceremonies, upon pain of damnation.

And here have ye now seen all that ever he saith for the proof of the thing that he hath in this chapter taken in hand to prove: that is to wit, that the apostles have left written in Scripture all things that of necessity pertain to the soul health, both in things to be done and things to be believed. And now perceive ye perfectly also… that all that ever he saith, there is not any one thing that to the proof of his purpose serveth him worth a rush.

Here might I now well leave, ye see well, as for this matter… since I have sufficiently confuted and avoided clearly all that Tyndale hath alleged for his part in this chapter… in which he would prove that the apostles have left written, in Holy Scripture, everything necessary to be believed or done for the salvation of our souls… and that so fully that whatsoever is not written in Scripture nor “deduced” thereupon (by which “deducing” what he meaneth, I have by his own example shown you!), that thing is not (as he saith) to be believed nor to be done of necessity… but men be at their liberty, in all such manner thing, to do it or do it not, believe it or believe it not—or rather, in sin to believe it or do it—though all the Catholic Church of Christ both do believe and many hundred years have believed that the thing is of necessity to be done or believed. In which matter, as I say, since Tyndale hath failed of his proof, I might here make an end… saving that I have thought it convenient, for his more utter confusion, to bring in by and by such things as I find written by him for his part in this matter besides… that ye may see, without farther seeking for it, all that he can say, at once. I shall therefore show you his answers to such things as I in the twenty-fifth chapter of the First Book of my Dialogue alleged for the proof that all necessary things were not written in Scripture, but some such only taught and delivered unto the Church by mouth. And when ye shall here have heard Tyndale’s answers unto those things—ye shall then the more clearly perceive how foul a fall he hath in this matter upon which the great part
of all his heresies dependeth; and over that, ye shall right easily
judge what pith and substance is in his book of answers wherewith
he would fain seem clearly to confute my Dialogue.

I showed there in my Dialogue by the authority of Saint John the
Evangelist in the last chapter of his Gospel… that allthing was
not written. For there he saith himself,
“Many things did Jesus… which if they
were all written, the world would not receive the books.” To this
answereth Tyndale thus…

Tyndale

[He juggleth. For] John meaneth of the miracles which Jesus did—
and not of the necessary points of the faith.

More

Ye see well now that Tyndale well feeleth that since the evangelists
did not go together by appointment to write their gospels… nor,
when they had written them, conferred their books together, to see
whether every necessary point were written in among them all…
or else at that collation to put it in some one (as we find that
Saint Paul had conference with Peter
and others of the apostles, to come and
speak of the faith among them, but not to write it all out in books);
but every evangelist, of occasion offered unto himself, as God put
in his mind and remembrance, wrote his own gospel severally,
by himself, and their epistles in like wise… and peradventure one
of them in all their lives never read the gospel that the other
wrote; this, I say, being thus: except that God beside their purpose
provided that among them all every necessary point should
be written (which thing Tyndale neither doth nor can by
reason or Scripture prove), else if any of them left unwritten any
point necessary to be believed, Tyndale cannot say but that every
of the other apostles might do the same; and then hath Tyndale no
surety that every such thing was written.

And therefore Tyndale feeleth full well how near this place of Saint
John pricketh him… if in those words of Saint John might be
understood that he had not written every necessary point of our
belief.

And therefore, to avoid this pinch… Tyndale saith that I juggle.
For Saint John, he saith, meant only of Christ’s miracles, and not
of any necessary point of the faith.
I juggle not. For I say not nay but that Saint John meant of miracles. And in the one place of the twain, he speaketh of miracles by name, saying, "Jesus wrought many other miracles in the presence of his disciples, that be not written in this book." In the other place, in the very end, he saith that Christ "did many other things… which if they should be all written, all the world could not receive the books that should be written." In which words I deny not but that Saint John meant of Christ’s miracles too; and therefore I juggle not. But Tyndale, that in that second place, where Saint John meaneth no miracles, there excludeth his doctrine… and would make us ween that Saint John left not unwritten any necessary point of faith—*he jugglith, and goeth about to beguile us.*

I think he taketh not so great hold upon this word "did"… in that Saint John saith Christ “did many other things,” and saith not Christ “taught many other things.” For this word “doing” includeth teaching, talking, speaking, and all. As if a man would say, “Christ prayed, preached, and taught; this did he day and night.” And therefore, since Saint John’s whole book was made not only of Christ’s miracles, but also of his doctrine, and as well word as deed… and then he saith, in the very end of his book, that Christ “did many things more, whereof if all were written the world could not receive the books”—why may not this be understood of words and deeds and all… but if Tyndale ween that the books would be the fewer if the doctrine were in them too!

But now let us see whither of us two play the false juggler: I, that tell you that every necessary point of belief is not written in Saint John’s Gospel; or Tyndale, that would make you ween that whatsoever ye find not written there, ye were not bound to take it for any necessary point of faith. For *else* if Tyndale would grant that Saint John had not written in deed every necessary point of faith—then is it as good for Tyndale that Saint John say so as that in deed it be so. Let us, therefore, leave disputing upon the word, and look upon the deed, and see whether it be so or not. If a man seek among the other evangelists, he shall find more necessary things than one left out in Saint John… and in each of them somewhat that some other hath. And if a man look further in the book of faith written in the hearts of Christ’s whole Catholic Church, he shall
find some things that none of them all hath written, and yet necessary points of faith; as I have shown you examples and shall.

But now, because of Tyndale... let us take some one. And what thing rather than the Last Supper of Christ, his Maundy with his apostles... in which he instituted the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, his own Blessed Body and Blood? Is this no necessary point of faith? Tyndale cannot deny it for a necessary point of faith... and though it were but of his own false faith agreeing with Luther, Huessgen, or Zwingli. And he cannot say that Saint John speaketh anything thereof—specially not of the institution. Nor he cannot say that Saint John speaketh anything of the sacrament at all, since that his sect expressly denieth that Saint John meant the sacrament in his words where he speaketh expressly thereof, in the sixth chapter of his Gospel.

And thus ye see how wisely Tyndale sticketh with me in the sentence of Saint John’s words... when the thing that I intend thereby is proved by his deed.

And yet... because Tyndale will nothing allow but the word... if he pull from me that word of Saint John, I shall prove him the same purpose by the word of Saint John’s master, our Savior Christ himself; and Saint John shall bear me record that it was Christ that said it. For our Savior, lo, as witnesseth Saint John in the sixteenth chapter, said unto his disciples himself, “I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now; but when that the Spirit of truth is come, he shall teach you all truth.”

Lo, here ye hear our Savior say himself that he left and would leave some things—and that great things, and therefore of likelihood necessary—that they should not hear till after his Passion, that the Holy Ghost should come and teach them; and, well ye wot, that Saint John endeth his book before. And therefore, as for this authority of Saint John that I laid in my Dialogue—Tyndale’s answer, wherein he calleth me a juggler, hath not yet juggled away the force... but hath, by his false cast of juggling, featly conveyed himself out of the frying pan fair into the fire.

Whereas I show in my Dialogue that it is not written in Scripture

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1–2, 6, 7 necessary point(s): essential (for salvation) article(s) 2 shown: i.e., given 4–5 his Maundy with his apostles: i.e., the occasion of his washing of his apostles’ feet 5 in which: i.e., during which supper 7–8 and though: i.e., not even if 10 anything: at all 10 specially not: not specifically // nor he cannot: i.e., nor can he 11 anything: in any way 11–12 since that: given that 12 meant: had in mind 15 wisely: sensibly // sticketh: quibbles 15 in: about 16 sentence: meaning // intend: understand 18 yet: moreover // allow: take into account 19 pull from me: deprives me of 20 purpose: point 21 record: witness 23 chapter: i.e., chapter of his Gospel 25 that: i.e., the time comes that 27, 28 left/leave: i.e., left/leave unsaid 28 that great things: i.e., big things at that 28–29 of likelihood: probably 29, 30 should: would 30 wot: know 31 that: i.e., that time of the Holy Spirit’s coming 32 authority of: proof text from // laid: adduced 32 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies 33 juggler: trickster; con artist 33 juggled away: by sleight of hand removed / prestidigitated away // the: i.e., its 34 hath: i.e., rather, he has 34 false cast of juggling: dirty trick of trying to pull a fast one / faulty act of sleight of hand // featly: deftly 35 fair: directly; right 36 show: point out 313/36—314/2: See DH 115/32–36; 150/1—151/28.
that our Lady was a perpetual virgin, and yet it is a necessary point to be believed; this is his answer thereto…

Tyndale

And how bringeth he in the perpetual virginity of our Lady?—which, though it be never so true, is yet none article of our faith to be saved by… but we believe it with a story faith, because we see no cause reasonable to think the contrary.

More

By this answer it appeareth well that, God be thanked, he findeth not yet the people’s devotion so far fallen from our Lady… that he dare be bold to say all that he thinketh. For else he would say more than he doth. And like as he forbiddeth folk to pray to her (and especially misliketh her devout anthem Salve Regina), so would he not fail, if he saw the people frame all after his fantasy, to blaspheme her in this matter of another fashion… as others of his fellows have done before his days.

But now, for the meanwhile, he is content that men may think themselves at liberty to believe it or not believe it as they list, as a thing of no necessity to be believed upon salvation of our souls.

And full well he wotteth that, though he say now that he can see no reason why “to think the contrary,” yet if he could bring us once in the mind that there is no peril therein, he might afterward well enough tell us, when he would, the contrary… and say that with better looking thereon, he hath now found that Helvidius and other elder heretics of the same sect said therein very well, and that reason and Scripture is with them… and that Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome and all the remnant say wrong, because their part is not written in Scripture.

This will not Tyndale hereafter let to say when he list… if he may make us ween in the meanwhile that we may choose whether we will believe this point or not.

But I say that in that point Tyndale saith wrong. For in any such thing as we be bound to believe… if I believe it in deed, and yet believe therewith that I may lawfully choose whether I will believe it or not: I say that in so believing I believe naught, nor my belief shall not serve me.

1–2 it . . . believed: i.e., this is something it is obligatory to believe 4 how: i.e., why 5 never so: no matter how 5 none: not an 6 a story faith: the kind of faith one has in historical narratives; an intellectual faith 9 by . . . appeareth well: from . . . is very evident 10 so . . . Lady: i.e., to our Lady so far in decline 11 be bold: venture 13 misliketh: disapproves of // her devout anthem: i.e., the devotional Marian hymn 14 frame . . . fantasy: order everything to his liking / view everything as he wants them to 15 of another: in another 15–16 others of his fellows: i.e., some of his fellow heretics 17 meanwhile: time being 17 that men may: i.e., to have people 18 list: please 19 of . . . upon: i.e., there is no need for us to believe for 20 wotteth: knows 21–22 bring . . . mind: i.e., ever get us to take the view 22 might: could 23 would: wanted to 23–24 with . . . thereon: i.e., after taking a better look at what they said 25 elder: earlier 25 sect: religious persuasion // said . . . well: were very correct in what they said about that 26 with them: on their side 27 remnant: rest // their part: i.e., what they assert 29 let: forbear 29 list: wishes to 30 ween: think 31 point: i.e., article of the faith 32 point: contention 33 bound: obliged // believe it in deed: do in fact believe it 34 lawfully: legitimately 35 naught: badly 35 nor: i.e., and that 36 serve me: be to me of any avail
Then say I farther that this article is such that we be bound to believe it. For he that believeth it not is a heretic—as it plainly appeareth both by Saint Augustine, in his book to Quodvultdeus, and by Saint Jerome, in his book against Helvidius; and by the other holy saints and martyrs who, as Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine rehearse, did write against heretics before… and called them “Antidicomarianites,” that is to say, Mary’s adversaries.

Then say I finally that forasmuch as it well and plain appeareth that all those holy cunning men and blessed saints, and therewith all the whole Catholic Church beside, have ever hitherto taken the perpetual virginity of our Blessed Lady for so sure a point of Christian faith and belief that they have ever condemned the contrary for a heresy; and then since that article is not in Holy Scripture written… but that the words of Scripture, not well understood, seem to say the contrary: I may and do against Tyndale and his fellows well and fully conclude that there is something necessary to be believed and yet is not written in Scripture. And so to my second argument, ye find his answer fond. For as for his “story faith,” with only which he saith we believe this point, I shall touch it, I trust, in such wise—and his “feeling faith” therewith when I come thereto—that every man shall feel with his fingers’ ends that Tyndale feeleth neither faith, learning, reason, wit, nor grace. I alleged in my Dialogue the words of Saint Paul to the Corinthians where he writeth unto them of the holy housel, “As our Lord hath delivered it to me, so have I delivered it to you.”

To this doth Tyndale answer thus…

Tyndale

And when he allegeth Paul to the Corinthians: I say that Paul never knew of this word “Mass”; neither can any man gather thereof any strange holy gestures, but the plain contrary… and that there was no other use there than to break the bread among them at supper, as Christ did. And therefore he calleth it Christ’s “supper,” and not “Mass.”

More

Here goeth Tyndale about to juggle; but his galls be too great. I laied those words for none other cause but to prove that
the Apostle before his writing taught them that great mystery by mouth… and showed them the manner himself before his epistle written… which he would not have written unto them at all if he might then conveniently have been present with them. And now, whereas I said that it was well likely that of Saint Paul by his present tradition was received holy gestures as the Church useth in the Consecration—he answereth me that there is no such thing there spoken of in the epistle. Which I said not there was; but I say that he findeth no word in the epistle that proveth that Saint Paul therein wrote everything that he presently spoke or did. But it appeareth well that Saint Paul speaketh of that thing in that chapter, not to put in writing all thing that he had before told them by mouth… but only to put in remembrance that the thing which they there received in the form of bread, though it were called bread, was yet in deed the very Blessed Body of Christ. And for the more clear proof thereof: he put them in remembrance that as he had before shown them, our Savior himself told him so. And this he remembered them of by writing, to make them use themselves thereafter the more reverently. For lack whereof he writeth to them that sickness and death by the vengeance of God fell among them—because they did not use such reverence and honor as they should do to the Precious Body and Blessed Blood of Christ. And in that chapter Saint Paul speaketh but of certain unreverent points in special… and concludeth saying, “Caetera autem qum venero disponam” ("The remnant," or “all the other things,” “I will myself order at my coming”). Here may we see, whatsoever Tyndale say, that Saint Paul, besides this that he wrote of the Sacrament, gave the people other traditions thereof by mouth (as I said in my Dialogue), pertaining to the reverence and honor thereof; and Tyndale saith here the contrary. But now let the Book be judge… and by that chapter judge also the false faith of Tyndale, that saith it is sin to do any honor to it.  
And where Tyndale saith that Saint Paul never knew this word “Mass”—I believe that well enough… for I never heard that he spoke any word of English. But that he knew not the thing that Englishmen call “the Mass”—Tyndale hath not proved yet, nor will not do this week. For he must prove it better than by that Saint

1 the Apostle: i.e., Saint Paul // before his writing: i.e., before he wrote about it
2 showed: made known to // the manner: the how-to; the (proper) procedure (for the celebrating of Mass)
3 epistle: i.e., epistle was // might: could // conveniently: opportunely // well: very // of: from
4 present tradition: i.e., instruction-delivering done orally and in person // was: were // holy: i.e., such holy
5 presently spoke or did: i.e., said or did when present with them // appeareth well: is quite evident
6 allthing: everything // though it were: even if it was // deed: fact; reality // very: actual
7 clear proof thereof: i.e., complete proving of this (assertion of mine) // shown: made known to
8 so: i.e., this // remembered: reminded // by: in // use: conduct
9 lack whereof: i.e., deficiency in this regard // use: show
10 points in special: i.e., behaviors in particular // remnant: rest // order: set in order; regulate
11 may: can // of: about // Sacrament: Blessed Sacrament // traditions: instructions; ordinances
12 thereof: about it // reverence: i.e., reverencing
13 honor (to): i.e., venerating (of—especially by genuflecting to) // the Book: i.e., that book of Scripture
14 that: who // knew (not): (never) heard of // that: the fact that
Paul spoke of God’s “supper.” For we call the houseling of the people “God’s board” and “Christ’s table”… and yet we know “the Mass” too, for all that, besides. And the apostles themselves, I doubt not, said Mass many a time and oft before any Gospel written. And holy Saint Chrysostom saith that the apostles in the Mass prayed for all Christian souls.

Whereas I said that of the apostles’ tradition was learned the manner of Consecration: that answereth Tyndale in this wise…

Tyndale

A great doubt! As though we could not gather of the Scripture how to do it!

More

Surely, men setting no more thereby than Tyndale and his fellows do… may gather out of the Gospel, or the Epistle either, or out of what they will, the manner of the Consecration, and saying of the Mass, that shall serve themselves… while they say it they care not how, and believe they care not what; while they believe it to be none oblation, host, nor sacrifice… nor the Body nor Blood of Christ to be in the sacrament… nor that the Mass doth any man good at all, save only to the priest himself. For what care they how they say Mass… which the more sinful they be, and the more encumbered conscience that they have… the more encumbered—and the more boldly, as Luther biddeth in Babylonica—presume they to God’s board! But undoubtedly whoso have a reverent care thereof, and right faith of the sacrament… well perceiveth that how to say Mass hath been taught the apostles by the Spirit of God, and by the apostles forth. And if Luther, Friar Huessgen, Zwingli, Tyndale, and Lambert had never known it before… but should have taken the Scripture in their hands, and each of them devise a manner of saying Mass by himself—I dare well say, for all Tyndale’s boast, each of them should have devised a sundry fashion, and yet never one of the right. For proof whereof: Luther himself—casting away the holy Canon of the Mass—frameth after his fond fashion a manner of consecration, and saying of the Mass, in his book of Babylonica. Which foolish invention of his, Rosseus impugneth, and plainly proveth that saving for the tradition of the Church, Luther could never tell how or in what wise to consecrate, or say Mass… and that

1–2 houseling of the people: people’s Holy Communion
2 know: are familiar with
4–6 See his Homily 3 on Philippians (v. 24).
7 of… tradition: by oral, in-person instruction from the apostles
8, 38 wise: way
10, 14 manner of: how-to of / procedure for (the)
13 surely: assuredly
14–15 what they will: whatever they want to
16, 17 while: when
21 which: who
23 biddeth: i.e., encourages them to
26 to: i.e., how to
32 should: would
33 casting away: throwing out
34 after: i.e., in
36 invention: contrivance

Rosseus: More wrote his Responsio ad Lutherum under the pseudonym Guilielmus Rosseus.
the way that Luther deviseth is insufficient and uncertain by Luther’s own rule. And I doubt not but that Tyndale hath read both Rosseus and Luther in those places; and therefore I marvel so much the more that he dare be so bold to say it… when, being himself but Luther’s scholar, he seeth his master made a fool therein already.

Whereas I in my Dialogue allege that the priest in the Consecration putteth water into the wine, whereas the Scripture speaketh but of wine: thereto answereth Tyndale thus…

Tyndale
A great doubt also, and a perilous case, if it were left out! For either it was done to slake the heat of the wine… or put to after a ceremony, to signify that as the water is changed into wine, so are we changed (through faith), as it were, into Christ, and are one with him. Howbeit, all is to their own shame that aught should be done or used among us Christians whereof no man wist the meaning. For if I understood not the meaning… it helpeth me not one corn (1 Cor 14, and as experience teacheth). But if our shepherds had been as willing to feed as to shear, we had needed no such dispicience, nor they to have burned so many as they have.

More
Whereas Tyndale saith in scorn (as he gladly scorneth always when he speaketh of the Sacrament!) that it were a “great doubt” and a “perilous case” to leave the water out, I am very sure that if there had been no doubt nor peril to leave it out… there was never good Christian man that any reverence had to Christ, but he would have put great doubt, and have thought it great peril, to put any water in. For what beast would be so bold, when he findeth not that Christ, in the consecration and change of the wine into his own blood, used any other thing than wine… and spoke also himself of the only liquor of the grape—who durst, I say, have put thereto anything else… and to have consecrated his blood of wine and water? But one thing is there that maketh Tyndale in this point so bold: that is to wit, his own spiritual rule, that he so much boasteth of, in searching out the cause… and then ruling allthing by some cause of his own making. As here, he guesseth here two causes why the water is put

1 deviseth: comes up with // insufficient: unsatisfactory // uncertain: dubious
4 marvel... more: am that much the more surprised // be... it: i.e., say it so boldly // scholar: pupil / protégé
5 master: teacher / mentor // 7–9: See DH 148/15–32 // allege: adduce the fact
7 in the: i.e. in the preparation for the // but: only // 11, 23 great: big // doubt: problem
11, 24 case: eventuality; situation // 12 it: i.e., the putting in of water // slake: reduce // heat: intoxicating effect
12–13 put... ceremony: i.e., added as a symbolic element // howbeit: but be that as it may // all is: i.e., it’s all
15 aught: anything // used: practiced // wist: knows // one corn: An apparent misreading or mishearing (by someone involved in the printing of Tyndale’s book) of “1 Corinth.” // sheep: fleece
19–20 had... dispicience: would have had need of no such discussion // many: i.e., many of us Christians
22 gladly: gleefully // were: would be // 24–25 if... peril: i.e., had it been not at all problematic or perilous
25 good: i.e., one bona fide // 26 to: toward
26–27 put... in: had a lot of misgivings about, and have considered very perilous, the putting in of any water
30 of the only: only of the // liquor of the grape: i.e., liquid that comes from grapes
31 who... thereto: who, I say, would have dared add to it // 32 of: out of // 34 in: i.e., of
35 allthing: everything // guesseth... causes: i.e., makes two guesses at the reason
in. And though he wot ne’er whither of the twain is the truth… yet he maketh himself sure that it must needs be the one. And then reckoneth he the causes, both twain, so substantial… that it maketh in his mind no matter whether the thing be done or undone.

Luther was himself also so enmeshed in this matter, when the King’s Highness laid against him the putting of the water into the wine, that in his frantic answer he fared as Tyndale doth here… and not witting what to say thereto, began to guess at the cause wherefore it was put in; wherein he sought so far… that at last he found that whether it were in or out made no matter, because, he said, it was a thing impertinent to the matter… so that by him, a man might put into the wine what he would beside. Yet then found he further that it is evil done to put it in. For he said it had an evil signification… and signified that the sincerity of Scripture was watered with men’s traditions. Lo, so was he bewrapped therein that he could not in this world wit what to say thereto… but, faring like a frantic fool and answering this and that, he wist ne’er what, nor at what point to hold him, finally fell to blasphemy. And now his good scholar Tyndale will be nothing acknown of his master’s folly, but divineth and deviseth two new causes of his own brain… and affirmeth that some one of those twain must needs be the very cause—as though God himself could find no further cause than Tyndale hath searched out!—and then he thereupon conclueth that the water may be as well left out as put in.

But whatsoever Tyndale say, there was never good man yet this fifteen hundred years that durst leave it out… nor otherwise use it than God hath taught his apostles with his own word unwritten any other wise than in Christian hearts.

Holy saints also have thought upon other causes. For some have thought that God ordained the water to be mingled with the wine as the water welled out with the blood out of his blessed heart upon the cross. And holy Saint Cyprian, that cunning doctor and

The saying of Saint Cyprian   blessed martyr, thereupon saith that our Savior himself, at the time of the institution of that blessed sacrament, did put water into wine; though there was no mention made thereof in the writing… no more than

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1 *wot* . . . *truth*: i.e., has no idea which of those two possible reasons is the real one
2 *maketh* . . . *sure*: rests assured; takes it as a certainty
3 *reckoneth* . . . *so*: accounts he those reasons, both of the two, so
4–4 *maketh* . . . *matter*: in his opinion it doesn’t matter
5 *enmeshed*: caught in a web
6 *in*: regarding
7 *fared as*: acted as; did what
8 *witting*: knowing
9–10 *made no*: did not
11 *impertinent*: irrelevant
12 *by him*: as far as he was concerned
13 *evil done*: ill done; a bad thing to do
14 *sincerity*: authenticity / purity
15 *watered with*: i.e., being watered down with / being adulterated by
16 *in* . . . *wit*: i.e., for all the world figure out
17 *wist ne’er*: never knew
18 *hold him*: settle himself; hold still and refrain from going further
19–20 *be* . . . *folly*: not admit to knowing anything about that foolish behavior of his teacher
21 *affirmeth*: asserts
22 *twain*: two
23 *wise*: way
24 *may*: can
25 *durst*: dared
30 *ordained* . . . *to*: decreed that the water
33 *cunning doctor*: erudite theologian
there was of divers other things that our Savior did (as Saint John saith), and that he would have to be done in his church ever after. Of which things this infusion of water is one taught undoubtedly by God to his apostles, and by them forth… and so this
fifteen hundred years continued in Christ’s church, without any mention thereof made in Scripture, and yet men of necessity bound to observe it; nor no man ever thought or durst think the contrary, till now Luther and Tyndale and such others of their sort which set so little by that blessed sacrament that they would have all honor and reverence taken from it, and reckoned for a bare sign set but only to signify, without any giving of grace… and therefore they would have it homely handled howsoever men list. Devise once some signification… and then would those heretics, by their wills, that instead of wine and water, men would consecrate new ale in corns.

Now, where he saith that it is the shame of the clergy if aught be used among Christian men whereof “no man wist the meaning”—why more than for Moses to deliver and leave to the people many ceremonies commanded by God, whereof the people, whatsoever Tyndale say, never understood the meaning? Would the wise man that if God bid a man do a thing… he shall say him nay but if he tell him why?

Then finisheth he this matter with a proper taunt: that “if our shepherds were as willing to feed as to shear, we had needed no such dispecions, nor they to have burned so many as they have.”

Lo the great fault that Tyndale findeth in that the prelates do not as he doth—devise causes at adventure and warrant them for true—nor leave out the water boldly upon his ghostly counsel now, against the faith of all faithful folk this fifteen hundred years before!

And where he layeth that the slackness of feeding hath caused so many to be burned—I will not say nay but that it might have been better with some if there had been used more diligence in preaching. But as for many such as have been burned… all the preaching in the world would not have helped their obstinacy. But sure, if the prelates had taken as good heed in time as they should have done, there should peradventure at length fewer have been burned, thereby. But there should have been more burned, by a great many, than there have been, within this seven years last past. The lack whereof, I fear me, will

1 divers: several 2 would have to be: would have be / wanted 3 infusion: pouring in 4 undoubtedly: unquestionably 5 of . . . bound: necessarily obliged 6 durst: dared 7 sort: ilk 9 which: who 10 set so little by: have so little regard for 11 from: away from 12 reckoned: i.e., it reckoned 13 bare: mere 14 homely: casually 15 list: please 16 devise: think up 17 wise man: i.e., brilliant man 18 this matter: i.e., his discussion of this subject 19 a proper taunt: an ad hominem attack 20 shear: fleece 21 bid . . . thing: tells a man to do something 22 say him nay: say no to him 23 this matter: i.e., his discussion of this subject 24 had need: would have had need of 25 dispecions: discussions 26 many: i.e., many of us Christians. (See 318/15–20.) 27 devise causes at adventure: contrive reasons willy-nilly 28 ghostly: holy 29 layeth: claims 30 say nay but: deny 31 been: i.e., gone 32 helped: remedied 33 should: would 34 peradventure: perhaps 35 at length: in the long run 36 I fear me: I’m afraid
make more burned within this seven years next coming… than else should have needed to have been burned in sevenscore.

Where I alleged the change of the Sabbath day into the Sunday without Scripture: thereto he answereth thus…

Tyndale

As for the Sabbath—a great matter! We be lords over the Sabbath day, and may yet change it into the Monday, or any other day, as we see need… or may make every tenth day holy day, only if we see a cause why. We may make two every week if it were expedient, and one not enough to teach the people. Neither was there any cause to change it from the Saturday, than to put difference between us and the Jews… and lest we should become servants unto the day, after their superstition. Neither needed we any holy day at all, if the people might be taught without it.

More

Tyndale maketh the change of the Sabbath day a very slight matter. And because that our Savior said of himself that “the Son of Man,” that is to wit, he himself, was “lord of the Sabbath day”; therefore, as though every man were God Almighty’s fellow, Tyndale saith that we be lords of the Sabbath day, so that we may change the Sunday into Monday.

He saith that there was never cause to change it from Saturday but only to put a “difference between us and the Jews,” and “lest we should become servants unto the day, after their superstition.”

But I think there was besides this another cause more principal than any of both those. For the Jews and the Christians had other differences and distinctions between them—as Baptism and circumcision. Nor it had not been so great inconvenience that they should both have served God on one day, that for the avoiding thereof we should have left the day that God himself appointed in the beginning. And also, Christian men both might have kept the same day that the Jews kept and yet have left the superstition thereof that the Jews use… and may now also (as haply some do) keep the Sunday with like superstition as the Jews do the Saturday. And

Mk 2:28
therefore these causes be but divined and guessed at, and seem but
The cause why the Sabbath day was changed into the Sunday very secondary. But the very cause of the change is… that men were not the lords of the Sabbath day; nor men were not the principal authors and makers of the change;

5

but the Son of Man, our Savior Christ himself, being (as he said himself) lord even over the Sabbath day too… and which, as God, had made and ordained the Sabbath day for man, and not man for the Sabbath day, and yet nevertheless subdued man unto certain order of serving, not the Sabbath day, but God upon the Sabbath day—

he, I say, himself, when he delivered the people from the observance of the Old Law, did, as lord of the Sabbath day, discharge them of the Sabbath day.

And yet—because they should not have such a lordly mind as

Tyndale here teacheth us to have… as to think they might at their pleasure take what day they would, and make and break as they list—

he appointed them (himself and his own Holy Spirit) the day of his own resurrection. Which glorious rising of his blessed body not only to rest, but also to eternal glory, it pleased him to have weekly celebrated with the resting day drawn from worldly business to the desire of heaven and acceptable service of God. And for

Our Lord’s day this is it, and ever hath been, specially called “our Lord’s day.” Whereof to say that we be now the lords, and able to change it to Friday for our pleasure, or turn it to every tenth day when we list—I ween that none will say so but lurdans that longed to make gauds of God’s Passion, or make him honored selder than he should. For as for need…

fell there never none such yet, to change this day that Christ hath ordained himself. And he is as able to keep it from such need of change forever hereafter… as he hath kept it this fifteen hundred years before.

If Tyndale stick still in this point… and say “the Church made it, and the Church may break it”: I say that the Church, as it made it, so it may break it. That is to wit, that as it made it by the Spirit of God, so it may break it by the same Spirit. That is to say that as God made it, so himself may break it, if it so shall please him.

For in such things, though the Church have ordained it—yet hath
the *Church* not done it, but the Spirit of God; as holy Saint Augustine saith in the receiving of our housel, where he saith that it hath pleased the Holy Ghost that whereas in the beginning it was received after other meats, it should be now received of folk while they be fasting.

And in like wise the apostles—to give us knowledge that though the Church make the ordinance, yet the Spirit of God is the worker thereof—wrote, as is remembered in the fifteenth of the Acts, “It hath pleased the Holy Ghost and us,” and so forth showed what laws they had made… declaring thereby that though themselves made them, yet made they them not without the motion of God’s Holy Spirit. And never shall the whole Catholic Church neither make without God nor break again without him; but he shall, with his presence and his Holy Spirit, so guide and govern his church in such manner of things… that they shall not change the Sunday neither of lordly mind, pleasure, nor necessity. Nor, I think, he shall never suffer the Church to change it, but it is a change once so made and established by our Savior himself that, as the Saturday was ordained by God himself to stand unchanged till Christ came… so is Christ’s day so ordained by himself that it shall stand unchanged till himself come again, and change all the week and all the year, too, into one eternal day without either week or year. And this change hath he made, I say, from Saturday to Sunday, himself without Scripture… which we be bound without Scripture obediently to keep and observe, whatsoever Tyndale babble and scoff against it.

For where Tyndale saith that “we” be such lords over it that “we” may change and make our Sabbath day as well upon any other day as upon the Sunday—I would wit of him, which “we”? Whether the whole Catholic Church, or every particular province… and if so, then every diocese… and by the same reason, every parish by itself… and then any household… and finally, any one man is by himself at the same liberty to keep for his own Sabbath day which day he list himself, and need not to come to church with others but when there is a sermon. And then, ye wot well, this way would do well. Now, if he mean by “we” all we the whole church

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1. *done it*: brought it about
2. *housel*: concerning our receiving of Holy Communion
3. *meats*: foods
4. *wise*: manner
5. *make*: enact
6. *worker*: producer
7. *remembered*: recorded
8. *fifteenth of the*: i.e., fifteenth chapter of
9. *so forth showed*: then proceeded to tell
10. *declaring thereby*: thereby making it clear
11. *themselves*: they themselves
12. *the motion of*: the instigation of; being moved thereto by
13. *make*: i.e., make any law
14. *break again*: i.e., revoke or change it
15. *mind*: disposition
16. *Sunday*: i.e., Sunday precept
17. *pleasure*: i.e., self-gratification
18. *suffer*: allow
19. *once*: once and for all
20. *Scripture*: i.e., scriptural mention of this
21. *bound*: obliged
22. *may*: can
23. *well*: rightly
24. *wit*: inquire
25. *the whole Catholic Church*: i.e., the Catholic Church as a whole
26. *particular province*: i.e., province individually
27. *reason*: reasoning
28. *which . . . himself*: whichever day he himself chooses to
29. *but*: except
30. *wot well*: well realize
of Christ by a common consent—then must he tell us which is it; and then must he needs assign a known church. Where is then become his heresy of their secret, unknown church of elects and penitents-without-penance?

And where he saith we need no holy day at all “if the people might be taught without it”—this is one draught of his poison put forth under the sweet pretext of preaching. Whereby, since preaching is necessary… he would make men believe that coming to church on the holy day—or there to honor God with divine service and prayer—were but a thing of naught; whereas the apostles came themselves into the temples in the holy days to pray.

Is 56:7; Mt 21:13

And our Savior allegeth himself the words of Isaiah “My house shall be called the house of prayer.”

Now, whereas I alleged in my Dialogue the words of Saint Paul unto the Thessalonians, to whom he writeth in this wise: “Keep you my traditions which I have taken you either by word or letter”—to this doth Tyndale answer nothing to me but this…

Tyndale

I have [to that] answered Rochester in the Obedience… that his “traditions” were the Gospel that he preached.

More

In very deed, Tyndale in his book of Obedience laboreth sore to wade out of those words of Saint Paul… in which, as my Lord of Rochester said, it appeareth plainly that Saint Paul saith himself that he taught things by mouth which he wrote not. And what saith Tyndale to it there? He saith nothing else in this world but as he saith here: that the things which Saint Paul taught by mouth were the selfsame things that he wrote. And then goeth he forth with a long babbler, part to no purpose and part plain heresy… and fareth as though himself had stood by all the while that Saint Paul taught anything by mouth. Now, whether his words be to purpose or not… I pray you consider yourself.

We say that these sacraments and many holy ceremonies used in the church in the Mass and in other parts of divine service… were taught by the Spirit of God and delivered by his blessed
apostles. “Nay,” saith Tyndale, “that could not be; for all necessary things that they taught, they wrote.” “Prove that,” say we, “and take all.” But we will prove, by Saint Paul’s own words, that he taught things that he wrote not; for he biddeth the Thessalonians keep and observe well all that he had taught them “either by mouth or letters.” And then that none of them were any necessary points, that point we bid Tyndale prove. His proof therein, ye have heard before… that if the apostles wrote not all such things, what could it avail that they wrote any things at all? And that reason ye remember that we have answered before… and proved it a great folly to reckon that in our own realm “no law bindeth that is unwritten, because there be many written”; or that their writing were unprofitable that wrote us part, because they wrote us not all. But, now, in that place of the Obedience where the rude ribald raieth against the Reverend Father my Lord Bishop of Rochester, he saith stiffly that none of those things which we speak of, and especially sacraments or ceremonies, were any of those things that Saint Paul taught by mouth. Then ask we him, “Wherewith know you that?” “Marry,” saith he, “for I shall tell you what he taught. He taught the same that he wrote; and his ‘traditions’ were the Gospel that he preached… and good manners, and virtues, and some good customs, too, that be since for abuses changed, as kissing each other. And some he taught as precepts, and some as good counsels… as virginity, and widowly chastity, not to win heaven thereby (‘For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything at all, but the keeping of the commandments is altogether’), but that they might be without trouble, and the better wait on God’s words, and the freelier serve their brethren.”

Here I pass by his heresies that in these words appear both against virginity and widowly chastity… which he meaneth to be nothing worth as touching any reward to be given for them in heaven. For though he say no further here but that they win not heaven—which every man agreeth—yet meaneth he further, as he declareth in many other places… and as it here appeareth by his example of circumcision. I let pass also his heresy concerning the circumcision, which, with his false understanding of Saint Paul, he would have taken to have stood in no stead at all toward heaven; and by the same reason, no more he would that Baptism neither, as he hath oftentimes declared.

2 take all: you win it all  4 biddeth . . . keep: tells . . . to keep  6 them: i.e., those things he had taught only orally  7 bid: tell / challenge  // prove: i.e., to prove  8 what . . . avail: of what avail could it be  9 reason: argument 10 great folly: i.e., large-scale fallacy / very unsafe blunder  12–13 their . . . part: i.e., what was written by anyone who wrote us only part would do us no good  13 place: passage   14 of the: i.e., of his book  15 rude ribald: boorish jackass  16 speak: are speaking  17 ceremonies: rituals  18 whereby: how  19 marry: i.e., oh, for heaven’s sake  21 for: on account of  22 as kissing each other: i.e., such as their greeting of one another with a “holy kiss.” (See 1 Corinthians 16:20.)  23 as: such as  23, 29 widowly chastity: i.e., not remarrying after being widowed  24–25: See 1 Corinthians 7:19.  24 is: i.e., counts for  25 altogether: everything  26 wait on: attend to  28 pass by: let slide  29–30 meaneth . . . touching: implies are worth nothing as for  32 agreeeth: grants  33 declareth: makes clear  // appeareth: is made evident 34 let pass: let slide  35 false understanding: inaccurate interpretation  36 would have: i.e., hoped to get  36 stood in no stead: been of no avail  // toward: i.e., for getting to  37 reason: line of reasoning  37–38 no . . . neither: i.e., of no more such avail would he have Baptism taken either  38 declared: made clear
I Cor 7:19

I let pass also… that by those words of Saint Paul which himself now bringeth in, that “the keeping of the commandments is altogether,” his own heresies be overthrown. For if the keeping of the commandments be altogether… then faith alone is not altogether; but rather, as he maketh circumcision nothing because the commandments be all, so might he make faith nothing because the commandments be altogether. But he maketh Saint Paul’s words to serve him for his juggling stick. For Saint Paul meaneth of circumcision alone in the Old Law—with faith and good works… as Saint James speaketh of faith. And in the New Law, now, it is nothing at all indeed.

These words also, of Saint Paul, destroy Tyndale’s heresy that men’s good works be not rewarded in heaven… and that it is idolatry to serve God with any bodily works, or to do any of them to come the rather to heaven. For if the keeping of the commandments be altogether… and some of them be bodily works: a man may lawfully do them for God’s sake, and to his worship too, and have his reward in heaven too.

But now letting these points pass, as I say—I would ask Tyndale whether among those points that Saint Paul taught by mouth and which he wrote not… were any things necessary to be believed or done upon peril of our souls’ health. If he say yea: then destroyeth he his whole reason that he made before for the contrary… where he said that if the apostles taught any such things and wrote them not, what availeth all those things that they wrote? If he say nay… but that all the things that he taught by mouth were things of little weight, and not worth the writing; and that therefore he wrote unto the Corinthians that all the “other things” he would dispose and ordain himself at his coming, because he reckoned them not worthy to occupy place in his epistle: if Tyndale tell us this, we will ask him who told him so… and whereby he knoweth that Saint Paul taught the people by mouth no more things, nor of none other kind, than Tyndale saith he did. Was himself at that time companion to Saint Paul… and that so continual and inseparable that day nor night he never departed from him, but ever watched him.

3, 5, 17 altogether: everything 6, 7 make(th)… nothing: i.e., make(s) out… to be nothing 7 might: could 9 juggling stick: magic wand / trickery device 10 meaneth… alone: i.e., is talking about circumcision only as it was // with: i.e., accompanied by 13, 23 destroy(eth): demolish(es) 15, 17 works: deeds 18 come the rather: be the more likely to get 19 have: receive 23 health: salvation 24 reason: argument 26 what availeth: of what use are 28 weight: importance 28 the: i.e., putting in 30 ordain: stipulate / regulate // reckoned: considered 31 worthy to occupy place: i.e., worth having take up space 32 so: this // whereby: by what means; how
so surely that he could never say nothing but Tyndale stood by
and heard him?

Tyndale in this point well perceiveth himself how hard a
part he hath to prove. And therefore, seeing that he hath entered a
matter that he cannot end... and hath said that he can never make
good: at last he waxeth angry. And because he cannot tell allthing
that Saint Paul taught (as he began to take upon him)—
he concludeth nothing but that Saint Paul taught none of the
sacraments nor ceremonies that Luther and he reprove. And thus
he saith...

Tyndale
But that the apostles gave us any blind ceremonies, whereof we
could not know the reason: that I deny and also defy.

More
Forsooth, save for the rhyme, I would not give a rush neither for his
denyng nor for his defying, nor for any reason that he layeth forth
therefor.

For whereas he saith that it is “contrary to the learning of Saint
Paul everywhere,” I say that therein Tyndale saith not true. For
Saint Paul reproved but the superstitious trust that the Jews
had as well in their ceremonies and sacraments as in the works
of their law, without faith and justice and deeds of charity; and
the superstition of them also that thought themselves bound
of necessity to keep them still after the New Law promulgated and
spread about—when the time of those old ceremonies, sacraments,
judicials, and all was gone... saving for as far forth as the church
of Christ by the Spirit of God hath taken up any again. But let
Tyndale bring of Saint Paul all the places that he possibly can...
and he shall never find one while he liveth, among them all, in
which Saint Paul reproveth any sacrament or ceremony taken
up and accounted for good through Christ’s whole Catholic
Church—nor yet the Jews for using the ceremonies given by God
to Moses, and by Moses to them, for the time while they served,
though they knew not the significations... except it were for lack
of some other virtue, which they left off and rought not for... and
thereby lost the fruit of their ceremonies and all.
One other thing he saith which he taketh for a high point to prove that Saint Paul taught no ceremonies or sacraments but such as he taught also their significations. And that he proveth thus…

Tyndale

Paul commandeth that no man once speak in the church, that is, in the congregation, but in a tongue that all men understand… except that there be an interpreter by.

More

And what then? At such time as the Law was given first to the children of Israel… it was indeed written in a tongue that the people understood. But yet the ceremonies, though they were written in the same tongue, yet were there many of them that the people never understood what they meant—nor, peradventure, Moses neither—and yet were they bound of obedience to observe them; and their obedience was fruitful, too, but if that some other fault made it lose the fruit.

And therefore, where Tyndale telleth a long tale that Saint Paul “commandeth” them to “labor for knowledge, understanding, feeling,” and “beware” of “hypocrisy, ” “ceremonies,” and “all manner of disguising,” and many such words more, some of Saint Paul and some of his own planted in among them: his tale seemeth somewhat solemn, but it is nothing substantial. For the sacraments and ceremonies given by God unto his church be neither hypocrisy nor Judaic ceremonies, nor “disguisings,” neither… which word Tyndale setteth in himself, in scorn, as it seemeth, of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Nor Saint Paul, though he would have them “labor for knowledge,” meaneth not, yet, they shall leave the sacraments unserved which God hath taught, till he teach them the knowledge why he taught them, and what special signification every sacrament and ceremony had.

For whereas Tyndale rhymeth it out and saith that he both denieth and also defieth that the apostles taught any ceremony whereof the reason could not be known: for all his denying and also defying, a better man than the apostles did—our Savior Christ himself, when he sent his disciples forth to baptize and to preach—
he taught them how they should go and what they should do; but the reason and cause of every ceremony, that find we not that ever he taught them... but at some of them he suffered both them then, and us ever since, to guess and to divine.

Lk 9:3, 10:4

For that he would have them neither bear wallet nor satchel, nor shoes upon their feet, nor stick in their hand, nor salute any man by the way, nor why he chose water and Baptism instead of circumcision, nor why he would they should lay their hands upon some sick folk whom they should heal, nor why they should anoint sick folk with oil and heal them by that means: the causes, I say, and the proper significations of all these ceremonies and many others, we find not that our Savior, when he sent them, showed them; and yet he bade them do it, and they were bound to obey, and merited and deserved by their obedience. Much more than he should have done, whoso would have said, “Tell me first, good Lord, why may I not put on my shoes? Why may I not take a stick in my hand? What art thou the better though I go barefoot? What shall it hurt the matter though I bear a stick? Why were it not as good to smear a sick man with butter as anoint him with oil? Tell me the causes of all those things, and the proper signification, ere I go. For else, to say that I will be sent out with such dumb ceremonies whereof I know not the causes—that I deny and also defy.” He that thus should have said like Tyndale... should have gotten little thank.

And as I have before somewhat said, Almighty God taught many ceremonies to Moses, and he forth to the people... and neither can Tyndale nor any man else prove me by Scripture that the people understood all their significations; no, nor Moses neither. And where is then Tyndale’s worshipful rhyme, that I deny and also defy?

I let pass all the ceremonies taught about the Ark, the Temple, the sacrifices, and many other things... and will wit but how Tyndale can prove me that the children of Israel, or, as I say, Moses either, understood all the ceremonies commanded by God Divers ceremonies about their departing out of Egypt.

Why a lamb? Why a kid? Why of one

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1 go: travel  2 reason and cause of: i.e., rationale and reason for  / ceremony: procedure / directive  
3-4 at some... guess: i.e., some... guess at  3 suffered: allowed  4 divine: intuit  
7, 17, 19 stick: walking stick  7 salute... way: greet anyone along the way  
9 would they should: would have them  11, 20, 23 causes: i.e., wherefores  11, 21 proper: distinctive  
12, 26, etc. ceremonies: procedures / directives  13 showed: made known to  13-14 bade them: told them to  
14 bound: obliged / merited: gained merit  15 deserved: became deserving of reward  16 whoso: whoever  
17 take: hold  18 what... go: how are you the better off for my going  
18-19 what shall... though: what harm will it do if / how will it hurt anything if  19 bear: carry  
19 were it not as good: wouldn’t it be as good / wouldn’t it work as well  
21 signification: i.e., signification of each and every one of them / ere: before  22 dumb: seemingly meaningless  
24 said: spoken / should: would / thank: commendation  25 somewhat said: said something to the effect of / to some extent said  
27, 33 prove: prove to  29 worshipful: awe-inspiring; redoubtable / deny: gainsay  
31 Ark: i.e., Ark of the Covenant  32-33 wit but how Tyndale: just inquire of Tyndale how he  
35 divers: all kinds of  36 kid: young goat / one: i.e., the age of one  329/33—330/5: See Exodus 12:3-13.
year? Why without spot? Why taken the tenth day? Why offered the fourteenth? Why the vengeance of God put from the house at the token of the blood put upon the posts? Why eaten by night? Why none left till the morrow, but rather the remnant burned? Why unleavened bread? Why wild lettuce? I know well God wist why he commanded all those ceremonies; but I say Tyndale cannot prove that the people understood them all, nor, peradventure, that Moses neither...

If Tyndale yet say that the people understood all those ceremonies:

I will first bid him prove me that point by Scripture. And then for some likelihood toward a proof of the contrary… I will lay forth, for authority against William Tyndale, the words of one man whom Tyndale would were most believed of all men; that is to wit, the words of William Tyndale himself. For himself saith, in his book against me…

Tyndale

Christ asked the apostles (Mt 16) whom they took him for. And Peter answered for them all… saying, “I say that thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, that art come into this world.” That is, “We believe that thou art he that was promised unto Abraham should come and bless us and deliver us.” Howbeit, Peter yet wist not by what means. But now it is opened throughout all the world: that through the offering of his body and blood…

More

Now, since, as Tyndale saith himself, Saint Peter at that time did not know by what means Christ should redeem us; and it is very likely that Saint Peter, albeit he was not yet fully learned, did yet at that time, going to school with Christ, understand as much at the leastwise as the common people did even in Moses’ days: I think, therefore, that Tyndale should himself agree, contrary to that himself hath said before, that the people understood not all the ceremonies. And yet I think he will not say that they might at that time leave all such undone… and say as Tyndale saith—“All that, utterly we deny and also defy.”

I would fain wit wherefore Tyndale should take it for so strange that God or his apostles should give unto Christ’s church any ceremonies whereof they should not understand the reason… when

1 spot: (any) defect // taken: procured // the: i.e., on the // day: i.e., day of the month (of Abib)
2 put: deflected / averted // at: i.e., by // token: sign // the morrow: the next day // remnant: rest
5 wild lettuce: i.e., bitter herbs // wist: knew // ceremonies: rituals / observances
7 peradventure: perhaps // neither: i.e., did either // yet: still
9 bid him prove me: challenge him to prove to me // some likelihood: i.e., something likely to work
11 one: i.e., the one // would were: i.e., would have be the // of: of / by // himself saith: he says
18 that . . . world: This was actually said by not Peter but Martha; see John 11:27. // howbeit: however
20 yet wist not: did not yet know // opened: revealed; made manifest // albeit: although
26 learned: instructed // with: under the tutelage of // even: i.e., back // should: would
29 agree: grant // that himself: what he // might: could legitimately // leave: i.e., have left
32 say as: i.e., have said what // fain wit wherefore: like to know why // strange: absurd / unaccountable
he seeth well that God hath spoken to his people many words by his prophets, and his own Son, and his Son’s apostles too, and caused them to be written also in Holy Scripture… in which texts men be no more sure of the very sentence than of the very signification of those ceremonies. But God hath not without our fruit left such things unknown unto us—to quicken and exercise, as

Why God hath left many things unknown to us—those ceremonies. But God hath not without our fruit left such things unknown unto us—to quicken and exercise, as

Saint Augustine saith, some men’s minds in the study and devising thereupon… which if all were open and plain, would wax negligent and dull… and now, in the devising thereupon, find out good and fruitful things (allegories and others), not affirming those to be the very things there intended, but things that devoutly and fruitfully may be thereon taken and turn men to devotion, and this as well in the ceremonies as in those hard and not intelligible texts. And if Tyndale deny this… because he would seem sure of allthing, and that there were no place in Scripture to him not understood: he shall, while he would seem so wise, prove himself a fool in the judgment of all men that anything labor in Scripture. And thus ye see now in what substantial wise that Tyndale hath answered my Lord of Rochester, unto the plain words of Saint Paul written unto the Thessalonians… by which words he showeth plainly himself that he wrote not all that he taught. And then that these things which Tyndale impugneth, why that they might not be among those things that Saint Paul taught by mouth… ye have heard, I say, how worshipfully Tyndale hath proved.

I were loath to leave untouched anything that Tyndale anywhere saith against my purpose in this matter. And therefore, since I find in his Answer to my Dialogue yet another patch wherein I perceive he taketh great pleasure… and weeneth—or would, at the least, that other men should ween—that he had therewith utterly proved his part and clearly reproved mine: I will withdraw none of his glory, and therefore ye shall hear that too. In his answer to the twenty-ninth chapter of my First Book, these are his words…

Tyndale

In the twenty-ninth [chapter, M. More] allegeth that Christ said not “the Holy Ghost shall write,” but “… shall teach.” It is not the use to say the Holy Ghost “writeth,” but “… inspireth the writer.”

3 in which: i.e., of which 4 very… very: i.e., actual meaning than they are of the actual 5, 14 ceremonies: ritualistic observances 6 our fruit: benefit to us 7–15: See Saint Augustine’s On True Religion, 33. 7 quicken: activate 9, 10 devising: meditating 9 open and plain: clear and obvious 10 wax: become 11 find out: come up with 12 very: literal // intended: meant 13, 20 in/unto: regarding 15 intelligible: i.e., completely decipherable 16 would seem: i.e., wants it to seem that he is // allthing: everything 16 were: i.e., is // place in: passage of 17 to: by // while: when // would: wants to 18 wise: brilliant / astute 18–19 anything labor: do any work 19–20 in what substantial wise that: i.e., in how sound a way 20 my Lord of Rochester: i.e., Bishop Fisher 21–23: See 2 Thessalonians 2:15. 23 impugneth: assails as erroneous 24 that they might: i.e., they could 25 worshipfully: admirably 27 were loath: would be loath; would hate 27 untouched: undiscussed 28 purpose: contention 29 patch: section 30, 31 ween(eth): think(s) 30 would: wants 31 part: side of the argument 32 clearly reproved: completely disproved // withdraw: i.e., deprive him of 36 allegeth: advances as an argument 37–38 It… writer: i.e., No one is saying the Holy Ghost “writes”; we say he inspires the writer.
More

Properly answered, if I would hold my peace. But I must put Tyndale again in remembrance, because he believeth nothing but Scripture, and then draweth “all the Scripture” into “God’s promises”—I must, therefore, I say, put him in remembrance that I brought in that authority to show him that God made no promise that he would write all his new testament, nor cause it to be made all in Books… but that he would send his Holy Ghost to “teach” his church, and to “lead” them “into every truth.” And whereas Tyndale saith it is not the use to say the Holy Ghost “writeth,” but “… inspireth the writer”: I say again that the Scripture letteth not to speak of God’s writing, and to tell how he will “write” his new testament, when he saith by the mouth of the

Jer 31:33  
2 Cor 3:3  

prophet Jeremiah, “I shall give my law in their bowels… and I shall write it in their hearts.”

Lo, here he telleth what manner of writing he will use in writing of his New Law… because we shall not excuse ourselves and say that we will not believe no more thereof than we shall find written in Books. He maketh us no promise that he will cause it to be written in Books; but, pursuing these words of the prophet, he said himself—his own mouth—that he would send the Holy Ghost to come “teach” his church and “lead” them “into every truth.” To this will Tyndale haply say, “In that word he meant—and so did the prophet, also—that he would write it in the hearts of the evangelists and apostles, and teach them, and lead them into every truth… which should put all the necessary truth in writing.” Let Tyndale prove this meaning by some one text of Scripture, or some one necessary reason; of which neither himself nor any other of his fellows have found any one yet.

And the words as well of the prophet as of our Savior himself declare themselves to the contrary. For the prophet and the evangelist

Is 54:13  
Jn 6:45

saith that “they shall be all” God’s own scholars; which signifieth that the congregation and company shall be taught by God and his Spirit, that shall write the New Law—the right faith—in the hearts of his church. And our Savior said, “I shall send the Holy Ghost, that shall teach you allthing, and lead you into every truth.”

2 properly: well  4 draweth: i.e., filters  6 authority: proof text  7 all: i.e., all of 7, 12 testament: attestation  7 to be made all: i.e., all to be written  8, 19, 20 Books: i.e., books of Scripture 9–10 it… writer: See note for 331/37–38.  10 again: in response 11 letteth not: does not forbear 14 bowels: guts; innermost being  16 lo: see  17 because: so that 17 excuse ourselves and say: try to exempt ourselves therefrom by saying  20 pursuing: following up on 21 his own: i.e., with his own  22 haply: maybe  23 in that word: by that statement 25 them: i.e., those men // which should put: i.e., who would be putting 27 necessary reason: compelling argument from reason  28 himself: he himself 28 any other of his fellows: i.e., anyone else of his ilk // have found any one yet: i.e., has yet found a one 30 declare themselves to: i.e., show them to be saying  31 be all: all be 32 scholars: pupils 33 company: i.e., whole community  34 God and his Spirit: i.e., God, and in particular God the Holy Spirit 34, 36 iah: who  36 allthing: everything
He said not, “The Holy Ghost shall teach some of you, that shall write it out unto the remnant.” And therefore Tyndale’s comely gloss will not so substantially serve him as he would have it seem. For as that Holy Spirit inspired more than them that wrote… so inspired he the writers in more things than they wrote… which things they taught by mouth, and left it with the people by Tradition, as God left it with them; which thing doth by their

Jn 21:25; 2 Thes 2:15; own words well appear: Iohannis 21; ad
1 Cor 11:2, 23–24 Thessalonicenses; ad Corinthios 11. And if
these plain texts seem not yet sufficient for our part… let him and all his fellows bring forth some half text half so sufficient for their part, proving that all is written, and take altogether.

But yet goeth he farther and would seem of his courtesy to help me somewhat forth, and say more than I could for mine own part… and yet avoid it, too. For thus he saith…

Tyndale
I marvel that he had not brought, as many of his brethren do,
Matthew in the last—where Christ commanded the apostles to go and “teach” all nations, and said not “write.”

More
Indeed, this would have been well brought in there; and many of my brethren have, as he saith, brought it in, and myself also somewhere else (in places more than one)—which I now boast of because ye shall see that Tyndale hath not yet so gaily answered it as to make me ashamed to lay it forth again. For if he could bring out one text so good for him as that is for us—that is to say, that like as my brethren find out that text by which Christ biddeth all his apostles go preach and teach his Gospel, so if Tyndale or any of his brethren could find out any text in which Christ had bidden any of them go write his Gospel—Lord God, how solemnly Tyndale would set it out to the show! And whereas he now maketh little ado of Christ’s word bidding them go preach—he would make much ado of his word bidding them go write. But now ye shall see what answer he maketh, and what he bringeth for the sheet anchor of all his shift… to prove that they wrote every necessary point.

1 that: who 2 remnant: rest // comely: good-sounding 8 well appear: become quite apparent
10, 11 for: i.e., support for 10, 12, 14 part: side of the argument; contention
11 fellows: cohorts; accomplices // text half: i.e., verse that is half
12 take altogether: take all; win the whole thing 15 avoid: refute
17 I marvel that he had not brought: i.e., I’m surprised that he didn’t bring up
18 Matthew in the last: i.e., the last verse of the Gospel of Matthew 23 because: so that
24 gaily: splendidly 27, 29 find out: hit upon / dig up 27–28 biddeth… go: tells… to go
30 solemnly: grandy 31 set it out to the show: put it on display 32, 33 bidding them go: telling them to go
34 sheet anchor: emergency anchor; i.e., last-resort argument 35 shift: machination
35 every necessary point: i.e., everything one must believe or do in order to get to heaven
Tyndale

I answer that this precept “Love thy neighbor as thyself, and God above all thing” went with the apostles and compelled them to seek God’s honor in us, and to seek all means to continue the faith unto the world’s end. Now, the apostles knew before that heresies should come… and therefore wrote that it might be a remedy against heresies; as it well appeareth, John 20, where he saith, “These are written that ye believe, and through belief have life.” And in the second of his first epistle he saith, “These I write because of them that deceive you.” And Peter and Paul thereto warn us in many places. Wherefore it is manifest that the same love compelled them to leave nothing unwritten that should be necessarily required… and that if it were left out should hurt the soul.

More

Lo, now have ye heard his uttermost whereby he proveth us that they wrote altogether that is of necessity to be known. Which he proveth not, as ye see, by any scripture proper for the point—as that any of them had any special commandment to write—but that their charity drove them to it. Which he proveth by a deduction upon this commandment “Love God above all thing, and thy neighbor as thyself.” For thereupon as he deduced before that women may sing Mass, and must in time of need: so he deduceth now that the apostles were by the same charity driven by their writing to provide against heresies which they saw should come; and that could they not sufficiently do but if they provided alike against all heresies; ergo, they wrote every necessary truth. This argument is, God wot, full poor, sick, and sore… and might sit at St. Savior’s a-begging with a dish and a clapper, for anything that it can help itself… it is so blind and lame, and lacketh so many limbs—and yet hath it one the more for me that Tyndale forgot to set in. But yet lacketh he both his legs, and his eyes, and his hands, and his brain too. For he must set in that they which wrote… knew well every heresy that ever should spring after their days; and this must he prove by Scripture.

He must also set in that no more of the apostles knew that point but only those that wrote; or else that the others could not
write, nor God could not teach them; or, finally, that each of them read others’ writing, and so saw that all was written by their fellows—and then carried all their fellows’ writing with them into the countries where themselves preached, and left it there. And this must he prove me by Scripture; for else he saveth not upright the charity of Saint Andrew nor Saint Bartholomew, that wrote nothing at all; nor of Saint Peter in writing less than Saint Paul; nor of Saint John, for leaving out the Consecration at Christ’s Maundy.

He must also put in that they saw that without writing, God could not keep the points of faith among the people; for else the charity strained them not of necessity so sore to put altogether in writing.

He must also put in that all their writing is kept and reserved safe, and ever shall till the Day of Doom; for else, he seeth what followeth. And then knoweth he well that besides corruption of Books, much thereof is lost… but if he will say that in that scripture was nothing necessary but that it is in this that remaineth. And then must he prove me that by Scripture, ere I believe him. And over this must he put in that they have written all thing as clear as they might have done to answer all heretics with; for that thing belonged to charity too, if of charity their purpose was to write against all heresies.

And yet, which I had almost forgotten, he must put in, too, this argument also: that they have given us warning that they have written altogether that either then needed, or at any time after should need, to be believed or done upon pain of deadly sin. For this is one of the very chief points of all; and therefore this must he prove by Scripture. For else they left us in danger to believe some other things more than they write—namely since that some wrote not so much as their fellows, some confess that they taught by mouth more than they wrote… and some wrote nothing at all; and of that the others wrote, good part lost; and of that writing that remaineth, some corrupted by writers, some by printers, and much so hard that no man understandeth.

And finally must he put in, too, this argument also: that after their days Christ would never show nor reveal anything to his Church more… nor bid any of them any other thing believe or do.
than was put in writing already by his apostles; or else that
though he would bid them any further thing at any time after
either believe or do—yet would he never be angry with them though
they would neither believe that he told them nor do that he bade
them... but tell him well and plainly to his teeth that if he would
be believed or obeyed, he should have made his apostles write it! This
point specially must Tyndale among others prove me by plain
and evident Scripture. For else were it, ye wot well, a great peril
for any man to say nay to God's special bidding... though that
special bidding were not specified in Scripture... but if God have
plainly spoken in Scripture that he will never while he liveth
either tell or bid any other thing than he hath already revealed or
commanded in Scripture.

Now see you, good readers, how sick, how sore, and how feeble his
argument is... by which he would prove us that the charity of the
apostles drove them to put all necessary things in writing. But
yet had there, almost, one reason of his passed me unawares... which
if I had left untouched, Tyndale would have said I had
dissembled, and left unanswered his chief reason of all. For whereas
his feeble argument before touched was but the cause that drove
the apostles to leave nothing unwritten—he hath yet one that showeth
the cause why and wherefore God would, himself, have every
necessary thing written; and that, ye wot well, must needs be
strong; and therefore what strength is in it ye shall hear. Thus he
saith...

Tyndale
Now, sir, God hath made his last and everlasting testament, . . . and no
more behind than the appearing of Christ again. And because he
will not stir up every day a new prophet with a new miracle, to
confirm new doctrine, or to call again the old that was forgotten:
therefore were all things necessary to salvation comprehended in
scripture ever to endure.

More
If Tyndale's bare word be worthy to be taken for so great
authority that whatsoever he say, men must believe it only because
Tyndale saith it: then is this argument very sure and strong—
but then it is superfluous and a great deal too long. For then it should

2, 9 though: even if  2 would: were to  2, 12 bid: command  3 believe or do: i.e., to believe or to do
3 though: if  4 that: what  4–5 bade them: commanded them to  5 tell: i.e., would tell
5 well... teeth: i.e., quite bluntly to his face  // would: wanted to  6 made: i.e., had  7 specially: in particular
7, 15 prove: prove to  7–8 plain and evident: clear and conclusive  8 else were it: otherwise it would be
8, 23 wot: know  8 great peril: very dangerous thing  9 nay: no
10 were not specified: i.e., was not articulated explicitly  // but if: unless  // have: has  11 spoken: said
11 while: as long as  14 see you: you see  // sick: diseased / unsound  // sore: blemished / infirm
14, 20 feeble: weak; lame  17, 19 reason: argument  17 passed me unawares: escaped my notice
18 untouched: undiscussed  19 dissembled: deliberately ignored; turned a blind eye to
20 before touched: previously discussed  // was but: i.e., was only about  21 yet: also  // showeth: tells
27 testament: covenant / attestation  28 behind: i.e., is still to come; remains as yet unfulfilled
29 will not: does not want to  // stir: raise  30 call again: bring back to mind
30 the old that was: i.e., an old one that has been  31 necessary to: i.e., needed for  // comprehended: included
34 bare: mere  35 only: just; simply  36 sure: sound  37 should: would
suffice him to say “The apostles have left allthing in writing,” and let all his reasons alone. But surely if Tyndale be no better than other men—so that, as he will believe no man without plain Scripture, no man without plain Scripture is bound to believe him—then is this argument more feeble yet than the other. For he shall never make it strong, neither by plain Scripture nor good deduction, nor necessary consequence, nor any probable reason.

For first, how proveth he that allthing is open? How proveth he that he understandeth every place in Scripture? Every place in Genesis, every place in the prophets, every place in the Psalter, every place in Saint John’s Gospel, every place in Saint Paul’s epistles, every place in the Apocalypse—be all these things open to Tyndale? Is any man so mad to believe him therein upon his word?—because he boldly saith, in many places of his ungracious books, that the Scripture is easy to understand? Which thing he saith of an ungracious mind—to make every simple person bold to take himself for an interpreter!

But I dare be as bold to say that the Scripture, albeit many places be plain, and in the hardest place good folk may take fruit if they play not as Tyndale doth—be bold upon it like Blind Bayard, and think it plain and open—yet is it not so open but that there is many a place, in every part thereof, so dark and of such difficulty… that there neither is nor, I ween, never was since the apostles’ days (nor, peradventure, every man among them, neither) that durst have been so bold to say that allthing was so open to him… but that there may lie yet therein, for all the understanding that men have thereof, many a great mystery hidden that never shall be clearly understood… till such time as God, upon the thing done and shown, shall, by his Spirit promised, sent, and assistant unto his church, in the times convenient and by God appointed thereunto, reveal it; which things shall then be necessary points to be believed, and now neither necessary to believe nor possible to be thought upon.

But when it shall please God any such things to do, show, and reveal—he shall then send no Luthers, nor no Tyndales, nor no Huessgens, nor no friar out of a nun’s bed, to preach it… but he
shall send such holy messengers as he hath been ever wont about
such business to send, that shall not come with a false faith and
evil works (and be accursed out of Christ’s church!), but with the
true Catholic faith, and holy living, and reverent handling
of Holy Scripture, and some of them with many great miracles confounding
the false wonders of Antichrist… as the miracles that
Ex 7:8–12; 8:1–10 Moses wrought confounded the marvels
that were wrought by the witchcraft
of the Egyptian jugglers. And he shall not send such fond
fellows as would be so shameless without any miracle shown to
bid all the world believe them—upon their bare word—in the
understanding of Holy Scripture, against all holy saints and
cunning doctors of fifteen hundred years past… and bear men in
hand that all is open and plain, and prove it by nothing else
but by that there is no place of Holy Scripture so hard but that themselves
can expound it in such wise that it shall serve them
shameful for jesting and railing against God and all good men,
against all good works, against all religion, fasting, prayer,
devotion, saints, ceremonies, and sacraments… and to set forth
vice in boldness of faith, and to praise lechery between friars and
nuns and call it matrimony, and thus make mocks of Holy
Scripture solemnly, with such open, shameless, abominable blasphemy
that if the zeal of God were among men that should be, such
railing ribalds that so mock with Holy Scripture should at every
such exposition have a hot iron thrust through their blasphemous
tongues!

Such false prophets shall God, as I say, send none of his errand!
But Tyndale cannot prove it true that he saith, that all thing is
yet so fully finished but that the time may come when God may yet
show things whereof we yet nothing think, and yet, peradventure,
written of in the Scripture… and may, if he list, do and show also
more things yet, whereof nothing is written… for any word that is
written to the contrary. And that besides Christ’s own appearing
at the Doom there yet resteth some reckonings to come… well and
plainly appeareth by Scripture, both concerning Tyndale’s great
master Antichrist (though Tyndale and Luther list lewdly to rail

3 accursed out of: excommunicated from
5 confounding: bringing to naught; putting to shame
6 false: deceptive / counterfeit
9 jugglers: sorcerers // fond: daft / foolishly confident
10 fellows: lowlifes // without . . . to: i.e., as without having any miracle to show for them, to
11 bid all the world: tell everyone to // bare: mere // in: regarding
12 all: all the
13 cunning . . . past: i.e., learned exegetes of the last fifteen hundred years
13–14 bear men in hand: make to people the assertion
14 all: everything // open and plain: clear and obvious
15 that: i.e., the fact that
16 such wise: such a way
17 shameful: shamefacedly / scandalously // jesting: leveling insults
18 religion: i.e., religious orders / living of religious life
19 ceremonies: (religious) rituals / sacramentals
20 vice . . . faith: i.e., living immorally, in bold confidence in faith
21 mocks: mockerys // solemnly: in all seriousness // open: overt; manifest
24 ribalds: sacrilegious jackasses // mock: trifle
27 none of his errand: i.e., none of on his mission
30, 31 show: actualize / carry out / make known // nothing think: have no thought // peradventure: perhaps
31, 36 list: (so) choose(s) // for: i.e., this possibility not being ruled out by
34 Doom: Last Judgment
36 lewdly: crassly / vilely / ignorantly
with those holy places of Scripture), and also concerning Enoch and Elijah. And therefore where Tyndale saith…

Tyndale

[Because all is done save the Doom,] and because God will not stir up every day a new prophet with a new miracle, to confirm new doctrine or to call again the old that was forgotten: therefore were all things necessary to salvation comprehended in scripture ever to endure . . .

More

. . . lo, now have we heard him say it; and now lack we no more but even to hear him prove it. For when Tyndale proveth not that the thing is so done indeed . . . but layeth us only the causes for which, he saith, God caused it to be done: in this doth he nothing else but tell us what God should have done if he had taken him to counsel.

Tyndale proveth not that God hath shown him that all is done save only the Day of Doom; which he must prove or else we will deny it him. Nor he proveth not that God hath shown him that he would not stir up, if need were, every day a new prophet, and that with new miracles, too, rather than bind himself that he should never teach anything more, or have his old doctrine forgotten, either. Which thing he must prove, or else will we deny it him . . . since God hath taken more labor and greater pain for his Church than that. For he hath shed his blood for it, and might do all that with the least word of his mouth.

And we say also that God hath daily stirred up, and daily doth stir up, new prophets in sundry parts of his Catholic Church—holy doctors, and preachers, and faithful men, and good livers . . . for whom both quick and dead he doth show miracles in his Catholic Church, and thereby approveth the faith and works that they lived and died in, as he stirred up prophets among the Jews in sundry ages, for all the miracles done by Moses—and doth not so for no church of heretics.

Nor he proveth not that the points of faith must needs have fallen away but if they had been written. Which thing he must prove us; for else will we boldly deny it, and go near to prove the contrary. For we see that the Church hath kept divers things

1 places: texts 4, 15 all: everything 4, 16 save: except // Doom: (the) Last Judgment
4 will not: does not want to 4, 18, etc. stir(red): raise(d) 6 call again: bring back to mind
6 the old that was: i.e., an old one that has been 7 to: i.e., for // comprehended: included
10 lo: behold 11 even: only; just 12 layeth: presents to // cause: reasons
14, 20 should: would 14 to counsel: into consultation 15, 17 shown: made it known to
20 old doctrine: former teaching 22 taken . . . and: i.e., gone to more trouble and suffered
23 that: i.e., that would entail // might: could
24 all that with: i.e., all of this stuff (the providing of a new prophet, together with new miracles, every day) with
24 word: utterance 26, 31 sundry: various 27 holy doctors: theologians
27 faithful: faith-filled / right-believing // good livers: i.e., right-living ones
28 quick and dead: i.e., while they are living and after they have died // show: i.e., perform manifest
29 approveth: shows his approval of 31 for: notwithstanding 33 points of: articles of the
33 must needs: would inevitably 34 but if they had: i.e., had they not // written: i.e., written in Scripture
35 go near to prove: come within easy reach of proving 36 divers: several
without Scripture this thirteen hundred years, and, as it is thought, two hundred years before; and is yet as likely to keep it as many more, and twice as many more, if the world last so long.

Now have they been kept so long either by man, or by the devil, or else by God. And if Tyndale say that either man or devil have kept them all this while: we may be bold to tell him that then was God as able to keep them as was any of those both… and needed no more Scripture thereto than needed either man or devil.

Tyndale proveth us not, neither, that when the things were written they were thereby sure, as he saith, to endure forever. For he proveth not by Scripture that the Scripture shall endure forever. For though the Scripture say that the word of God shall last forever, and that there shall not thereof the least letter be lost—yet is that meant of the Son of God, and of the matter, and of the word unwritten, and not of the words written in Scripture… except none of Saint Paul’s epistles be lost, or such as be lost was no Scripture, or that in those epistles were no letters.

Nor Tyndale hath not proved that the Scripture is so clearly written but that God needeth as well to stir up prophets with miracles for the declaration of the truth thereof, while the false expositors be so contentious… as he should have needed for the teaching, keeping, and confirmation of the points of faith unwritten. And, as I before said, even so he doth. And thus ye see that these words are to Tyndale very little worth. But then saith he farther…

Tyndale

By the Scripture the councils general, and not by open miracle, have concluded such things as were in them determined—as stories make mention.

More

Let Tyndale bring forth one story that saith as he saith, and then let him tell us the tale again. I make myself very sure that he shall find no story that shall say that the general councils, in their conclusions, regarded no miracles but only Scripture. For he shall find in the stories that the good holy fathers that were in

1 without: i.e., that are not in
2 yet: also // it: i.e., this set of beliefs for
3, 4 (last) so: i.e., (lasts) that
4, 6 kept: preserved
5 have: i.e., has
6 may be bold to: can with assurance
7 keep: preserve
8 any of those both: i.e., any man or devil
9 thereto: for that
10 sure: made certain; guaranteed
12 say: i.e., does say
14 of the: i.e., with reference to the
15 of: i.e., to
15 the matter: i.e., the things being said in God’s scriptural utterances
16 except: unless
16 none . . . lost: See 1 Corinthians 5:9, where Saint Paul alludes to a previous letter to the Corinthians.
17 such as be: i.e., any such one as is
19 nor . . . nor: i.e., nor has Tyndale // clearly: clearly / completely
20 stir: raise
21 declaration: clarification
22 while: when
23 keeping: preserving
23 points of: articles of the // unwritten: i.e., that are not spelled out in Scripture
24 even so he doth: i.e., God does that very thing
25 to Tyndale: i.e., for the making of Tyndale’s case of
28 councils general: ecumenical councils // open: out-in-the-open; manifest
30, 32, etc. stories/story: historical document(s)
32 as he saith: i.e., what he is saying
33 tell us the tale: i.e., tell us this thing / make us this assertion
35 regarded: took into account
divers of the general councils (of whom there be many that all 
Christian people honor and worship for saints) had many things 
to move them to determine and conclude against heretics; of 
which things the Scripture was one, and was not all.

For when the Arians and the Catholics were in debate upon 
the understanding of the scriptures (as the Catholics be with 
these heretics now), the Catholics did not only see then that the 
heretics wrested and misconstrued the Scripture (as we see that 
these heretics much more miswrest it now), but they saw also 
that the common faith of the Catholic Church was received and believed 
before that heresy begun; and being very sure, by the promise 
of God, that if that faith had been false, the Spirit that God sent unto 
his Church would never have suffered the Catholic Church, the corps 
of Christian people, the Mystical Body of Christ, to fall into that 
belief: they were thereby—with that faith written by the finger of 
God in their Christian hearts—very sure that the Arians were heretics; 
and so should they have been though never word of Scripture 
had been written... and should have concluded against the Arians 
in like wise as they did.

They saw also that God did miracles in his Catholic Church, 
and suffered none among the Arians... saving in the taking of 
Arius' death vengeance upon them to their pain 
and shame, as when Arius' guts fell out 
of his belly into the draught. (As we daily see that he doth, and ever 
shall see that he shall do, in his Catholic Church, and suffereth 
none to be done among all the skulks of heretics, nor never shall 
suffer till the Doom near approach, but only in detecting their 
 wickedness and bringing them to the fire... as our Lady by miracle 
brought Berquin of late, at Paris.) This thing undoubtedly not a 
little confirmed the faith, and made the Church boldly conclude 
against the Arians.

And this thing appeareth well in stories very old and authentic. 
And Tyndale shall, I am sure, never bring us forth his stories saying 
that the general councils had no regard to miracles. And if 
he will say that the stories tell that there was none open miracles 
done at the general councils—yet, I ween, shall he find none such 
stories neither. And if he will say that the stories do not tell of any
open miracles done at the general councils... then shall he tell us a tale to little purpose. For surely, so many as were shown beside, it was a thing that needed not. But then goeth he farther and saith...

Tyndale

And by the same scriptures we know which councils were true and which false.

More

This is a pretty point, lo! For now may ye see for what cause he saith that the general councils made their determinations by Scripture and not by miracle: because he would have it seem that there were nothing of God’s Spirit working with the general councils, but only the wit and affections of men; so that he would, as appeareth plainly by this word, have them serve all of naught, but every heretic left at liberty to say nay to them all.

For he saith that by the Scripture we know which of those councils were true and which false. But where he saith “we” know, I would wit of him which “we” he meaneth; which of his hundred new sects he calleth his “we.” For they agree so evil together that the thing which the one saith that by the Scripture he knoweth for true, the other saith that by the Scripture he knoweth for false.

Tyndale’s master Martin Luther and all the sects in Almaine call for a general council. Now would I wit to what purpose, if all that were concluded therein should be never the surer... but that every froward fool may as well after as he might before, say that he knoweth by Scripture that the council was false, and all that was determined therein was naught. Thus might an Arian and arrant heretic say now that he knoweth by Scripture that all was false that was determined in the councils against the Arians

1 Cor 14:29 of old. Saint Paul will that when one speaketh, the “remnant”—that is, the whole congregation—shall judge. As yet at this day, if a preacher preach heresy, God hath, by the faith written in Christian men’s hearts, made the people able to know him for naught—except it be a false preacher with a false company, willingly drawn together, and fallen from the Church; which false preacher and his company is ever able to be judged by the whole church remaining still in the

1 open: manifest 2 a tale: i.e., something // so... beside: i.e., there being so many done elsewhere 2–3 it... not: i.e., that was something there was no need for 5, 16 true: bona fide; authentic (ones) 6, 16 false: spurious; nonlegit 8 pretty: clever // lo: oh yes // may: can // cause: reason / motive
11 were: was 12 wit: judgment; thinking // affections: inclinations; predilections 13 appeareth... word: is clearly shown by this statement 13–14 serve all of naught: i.e., all count for nothing 14 say nay to: gainsay; dissent from 17, 22 wit: inquire 18, 21 sects: heretical groups
18 agree so evil together: are in so little accord with one another 21 Almaine: Germany 22 call: i.e., are asking 23 should: would // never: not at all // surer: more firmly established; more settled 24 froward: headstrong; obstreperous // may/might: could // well: rightly; justifiably 25 false: nonlegit; not a bona fide one 26 naught: worthless / wrong 29 will: i.e., gives the directive
29–30 one speaketh: i.e., one man in the church is speaking 30 remnant: rest 31 congregation: i.e., assembly of the hearers // judge: i.e., judge whether what he says is true or false 33 naught: bad // except: unless 33, 34, 35 false: heterodox 34, 35 company: assembly 34 willingly drawn: intentionally come 35 fallen: fallen away 36 judged: discerned
former faith. And now will Father Tyndale that every obstinate heretic, every prattling fool, every smatterer in Scripture... shall be judge over all the general councils, and over all the whole corps of Christendom—to tell them all that himself understandeth the Scripture better than they all. Is not this, ween ye, a godly-wise way?

Then goeth he further yet, and saith...

Tyndale
And by the same Scripture shall we, if any new question arise, determine it also. For Abraham answered the rich man, “They have Moses and the prophets—let them hear them”; and said not, “They have the scribes and the Pharisees,” whom they should hear preaching out of the seat of their own doctrine, without Scripture.

More
I had little went that Tyndale would have brought in this point of Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich glutton in hell. For Tyndale seeth well enough that though that same Lazarus was not raised by Abraham and sent unto those folk at his request—yet was another Lazarus raised afterward by Christ, and sent among men again, at good folks’ request; where though he came for the glory of God and for the show of the Godhood of his only Son... yet is it no doubt but though his words be not written, he did in that point also, much good unto men of the mean sort... though some such as were obdurate in malice, as were some Pharisees, or drowned in the credence of their false sect, as were some Sadducees, believed no more him than Moses... but in that point misconstrued the one and mocked or hated the other.

And Tyndale seeth also full well that those words of Abraham nothing touch the New Testament, nor nothing that this question hangeth upon. For those words were spoken by Abraham peradventure long before Christ’s coming, and at the least before any word of the New Testament written. And therefore, though they might be drawn to touch the traditions which the false Pharisees gave unto the Jews—yet could they not be drawn to touch the traditions which the true Spirit of God, by Christ’s promise, hath given unto his Church. And that all those be written...

Tyndale seeth full well those words of Abraham prove nothing at

1 that: i.e., have it that 2 smatterer: dabbler 5 ween ye: i.e., don’t you think 9 determine: settle 9–10: See Luke 16:29. 10, 11 hear: listen to 12 out of the seat: i.e., on the authority // doctrine: set of teachings 12 without: i.e., not found in 14 had little went:... have brought in: i.e., little would have thought... adduce 14–15 point of: i.e., thing about 17 his request: i.e., the request of that rich glutton 18 sent among men again: sent back among men 20 no doubt but: undoubtable that 21 in that point also: i.e., also by what he said after coming back to this life 22 mean: average 23 drowned in: besotted with 24 sect: i.e., distinctive tenets 25–26: See Matthew 22:23–46 and John 12:9–11. 25 in that point: i.e., regarding what Moses and Lazarus each said on that subject 28 nothing touch: apply not at all to // nor nothing: i.e., nor to anything 29 question: i.e., issue of ours 29 hangeth: hinges 30 peradventure: perhaps 31 written: i.e., was written // though: even if 32, 33–34 drawn to touch: stretched to apply to 32 false: aberrant / delusive 35 written: i.e., written in Scripture 36 nothing: in no way
all. And therefore it is to me more than marvel that he is not ashamed to lay those words for this purpose.

For where he saith that every new question that may arise, we shall determine by Scripture: ye see yourselves very well he speaketh of an ungracious purpose—willing to bring in his poisoned heresies under that pretext, since that he knoweth that the Scripture proveth not the perpetual virginity of our Lady, which he would have no man bound to believe; and also concerning the sacrament himself saith is but bread, and that there ought none honor to be done thereto—and falsely defendeth the one by the words of evil-construed Scripture, and the other because it is not commanded in Scripture.

And yet see ye farther that he speaketh as though he heard not his own voice. For he said before that by the Scripture we judge the councils. And then how can anything be determined by Scripture… when of the right understanding thereof there can never any determinate end be made, though all Christendom should come together and agree thereon, but that every foolish heretic may say that all they understood it wrong, and himself only right? This is a substantial reason of Tyndale, be ye sure! But because he will that with Scripture the general councils must be judged: what scripture alleged the apostles for their determination (in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts) where they in their council said, and by their epistle wrote, “The Holy Ghost and we have seen it good to put no more burden upon you than these necessary things… that is to wit, that you abstain from things offered to idols, and from blood, and all thing that is strangled, and from fornication… from which things if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well”?

What scripture laid they for this general council of theirs?

For though there were scripture, in the Old Testament, that forbade those things, and others too—yet was there no scripture whereby they concluded those things to be kept and observed partly forever, partly for a time, rather than the other commandments of the Law. Was not the authority thereof by the reason of Christ’s word “He that heareth...”?

Acts 15:19–29 these things, and others too—yet was
Leviticus 17—19 there no scripture whereby they concluded

1 more than marvel: exceedingly surprising 2 lay: claim support from // purpose: thesis; contention
4, 15 determine(d): settle(d) 5 ungracious: unholy // purpose: intent // willing: wanting
5 bring in: introduce // poisoned: poisonous 6 since that: since 8 bound: obliged
9 himself: he himself // honor: obeisance; i.e., genuflection 10 falsely: with deliberate untruthfulness
10 the one: i.e., the first of these last two assertions 11 evil-construed: wrongly interpreted
11 because: i.e., by the fact that 17 determinate end: definitive settlement // though: even if
18 every: any 19 all they: i.e., all of them // only: alone 20 substantial: solid; sound
20 reason of: argument from // be ye sure: i.e., to be sure // will: maintains 21 with: by means of
22 alleged the apostles: did the apostles adduce 24 their epistle: i.e., letter from all of them
24 seen it: seen it as; deemed it 27 all thing that is: i.e., everything having been
29 laid they: did they claim as support // council: council / counsel 30 were: was
33 those things: i.e., that those things were // kept: i.e., kept in force 34 rather than: in contrast to
Lk 10:16 you heareth me”? Which word had as
ever it had since!

Now, this same authority hath Christ’s church, assembled in the
general councils; and the same Spirit inspireth them, and the
same words of Christ bindeth his flock to obey them, that bound
them to obey his apostles.

Tyndale

“Nay,” saith Tyndale, “not so.” When [M. More] alleged “He that heareth
you heareth me;” and [also this,] “If any man hear not the church, take
him for a heathen,” concluding that we must believe whatsoever
is shaven, in all that he affirmeth, without scripture or miracle:
I would fain wit in what figure that syllogism is made!

More

I would fain wit of Tyndale in what place of my book he findeth
that I make that “conclusion” with which it pleaseth him to belie
me to sweeten his own answer with! For I never concluded nor said
that we were bound to believe all that is “shaven” in all that ever he
saith. But I then said, and yet I say, that these words of our Savior
Christ “Whoso heareth you heareth me” were no more proper commandment
to bind any man to believe the apostles than to believe
the whole Catholic Church, and general councils that represent
that whole body of the Catholic Church; and that they were not
spoken to the apostles only, no more than the Holy Ghost was promised
by Christ to be sent unto the apostles only. And Christ no
more promised to send the Holy Ghost unto the apostles only… than
he promised to be with the apostles only, all the days unto the end
of the world.

Mt 18:17 Now, these words of Christ, “If any man
hear not the church, take him for a heathen”—
every man well wotteth that this is manifestly spoken not of the
apostles only, for their time, but of the Church as long as the world
shall last. For so long shall the Church endure, do these heretics
whatsoever they can to the contrary. And as it is true of every

1, 9, etc. hear(eth) (not): (does not) listen(s) to  1 word: pronunciation  2 strength: force
9 M.: Abbreviation for “Master”; i.e., Mr.  // alleged: cited  11 whatsoever: i.e., whatsoever man
12, 18 shaven: tonsured; i.e., ordained // in all: about everything
12 without: i.e., that is backed up by no  13, 15 I would fain: i’d like to  13 wit: know
15 wit of: hear from / inquire of  16 belie: misrepresent
17 sweeten his own answer: make his own answer more palatable  18 bound: obliged
18 all that is: every man that is  19 yet I: I still
20–21 no . . . apostles: i.e., a mandate no more obliging anyone to believe the apostles in particular
31 wotteth: knows // not of: with reference not to  32 of: to  33 so: that
particular church, and the governors thereof, as long as it swerveth
not from the whole body of the Church universal: so is it much more
properly meant of the whole universal Church itself, and of
the councils general representing that whole Church, whereof
every particular church is but a member.

And therefore, whereas Tyndale saith he would fain find in what
figure the syllogism is made which he saith I conclude: he
must go light a candle and seek up that himself: for it is his own
syllogism and not mine, for himself maketh that conclusion and
not I.

A true syllogism

But my syllogism is this: Every Christian
man refusing to hear, believe, and obey
the Church… is to be taken as a heretic and a heathen; but so it is
that Tyndale—being a Christian man, and taking upon him, in the
understanding of Scripture, to control and condemn the Church—
refuseth to hear, believe, and obey the Church; ergo, Tyndale is to
be taken as a heathen man and a heretic.

This syllogism is mine. And this syllogism, if Tyndale would
fain wit in what figure it is made—he shall find it in the first
figure, and the third mode… saving that the minor carrieth its proof
with it, which would else, in the same figure and the same mode,
have made another syllogism.

Now knitteth he up all this gear with another syllogism of his
own making. And in what figure he maketh that, let him tell
that can; for surely that can I not. These are his words…

Tyndale

Christ’s disciples taught Christ’s doctrine confirming it with
miracles… that it might be known for God’s and not theirs. And
even so must the church that I will believe… show a miracle or
bring authentic scripture, that is come from the apostles, that
confirmed it with miracles.

More

Now may I be bold to make the conclusion of his argument for
him. For since he goeth about in his book to teach not himself, but
others that shall read his book, his conclusion can be no other

1–2 swerveth not: does not deviate  3 properly: literally / essentially  // of the: with reference to the
3 and of: and to  6 he . . . find: he’d like to find out  7 conclude: construct / reason through to its conclusion
8 seek up: search out  9 for himself: i.e., since it is he that
9 maketh that conclusion: does that deducing / draws that conclusion 12, 16 hear: listen to
13 so it is: it is the case; it is a fact  14 taking upon him: i.e., taking it upon himself  // in: regarding
15 control: check for errors / challenge / take to task
18–22: For an extensive explanation of these terms, see the Yale note for 346/6–7.  19 fain wit: like to know
20 saving: except  23 knitteth . . . gear: he finishes off this whole business  25 surely: certainly
27 doctrine: body of teachings  29 even: just // show: produce / present  30 bring: advance; adduce
30 apostles, that: apostles, who  33 be bold: take the liberty  34 goeth about: is endeavoring
but that no man should believe any church without miracle or authentic scripture. Whereof the cause is because he will not otherwise believe any. Let him put that in figure when he can—and set thereto the cause that moveth him thereto, to believe no church without Scripture or miracle—and yet will altogether, with sixteen syllogisms, bring him short home.

For when he saith that Christ’s disciples taught his doctrine “confirming it with miracles,” and “so must” the church that he will believe, or else “bring authentic scripture”: I say that he must prove the thing that he so often saith, and never proveth, nor never can—that is, that the apostles proved every point by a special miracle. Which point I have reproved before; and yet I ask him now again, what miracle wrought the apostles for every point of their doctrine in their letter that I spoke of, mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts? Or where is it written that they wrought any one for them all? I say also that the Catholic Church bringeth miracles for their doctrine as the apostles did for theirs, in that that God ceaseth no year to work miracles in his Catholic Church many and wonderful, both for his holy men, quick and dead, and for the doctrine that these heretics impugn—as images, relics, and pilgrimages, and the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. And these so many, and in so many places, that these heretics themselves cannot deny it, but are shamefully driven to say, like the Jews, that it is the devil that doth them.

I say, therefore, farther, that Tyndale doth but mock and trifle when he saith he will believe no church without miracle or authentic scripture. For he refuseth to believe the Church though it bring both twain. For if we bring authentic scripture, he will not let to say that it is not authentic—as he playeth by the Maccabees, and his master by Saint James’ epistle. If he deny not, then will he say that the Church understandeth it wrong; so that the Church hath need to bring miracles to prove him that the Scripture is the Scripture, and that they all together understand it better than he alone, as well as that the Church is the church. And yet when the Catholic Church bringeth miracles wrought by God in it, and for it, and that plenteously…and no church any one but it: then saith Tyndale that they be all wrought by the devil. And thus ye may see when he hath
all said... he neither regardeth miracle nor Scripture neither, but mocked both twain.

Now have ye heard all that I find Tyndale answer against such things as I laid before (in my Dialogue) to prove that all thing necessary is not written in Scripture. And then what proof he can make for his own part, to prove that all is written, ye have heard already; wherein how little pith there is, every child may perceive.

And then may ye surely reckon that since this is his last book—and the place in which he maketh a special title for the matter—he bringeth in all the best that he can find. And if he find anything elsewhere written (by his master or himself, or any other of his fellows) for that purpose, which he leaveth out here... ye may be fast and sure he seeth well he should have but shame to bring it in. As the words of Christ “Scrutamini scripturas, quoniam 

Jn 5:39  ipsae testimonium perhibent de me” (“Look you in the scriptures, for they bear witness of me”). Which thing no man denieth; but we deny them that nothing witnesseth Christ else but the Scripture alone. For our Savior 

Jn 5:32–39  himself, which said those words, said that Saint John also bore witness of him beside the Scripture... and that his Father bore witness of him beside the Scripture... and that his own works bore witness of him beside the Scripture... and that the Holy Ghost at his coming 

Acts 1:8; 5:32  bore witness of him beside the Scripture;

and his apostles (as himself said they should) bore witness of him beside the Scripture. And now, that all that ever they all witnessed of Christ’s will to be necessarily believed or done is, since those words of Christ spoken, by his apostles written in the Scripture—this seeth Tyndale well that he must prove us by Scripture... and not bind us only to the Scripture by those words of Christ “Search you the Scripture”... which were spoken of Christ before all the new Scripture, and should serve to strain us to prove all thing by the old Scripture, and to believe nothing farther than we find written in the Old Testament. And therefore Tyndale had yet some wit when he left those words out.

And likewise he saw that it had not been to purpose to bring in those words which some of that sect bring forth full solemnly:

1 neither regardeth . . . neither: i.e., pays heed to neither . . . either  2 mocked: i.e., is bluffing about
4–5 all thing . . . not: i.e., not everything essential for salvation is  6 part: contention  7 pith: substance; merit
7 every: any // may: could  8 may . . . reckon: can you safely figure // last: latest
9 place . . . matter: i.e., section of it that he explicitly titles as being on this subject. (See 254/1–2.)
11–12 any other of his fellows: i.e., anyone else of his stripe  12 that purpose: i.e., the making of that argument
13 may: can  // fast and: quite  13–14 should . . . in: i.e., would get nothing but shame by putting it in
14 as: such as  17 deny them: gainsay their claim  17–18 nothing . . . but: nothing else witnesses to Christ but
19 which: who  20 John: i.e., John the Baptist  21, 22, etc. beside the: outside of
25 himself: i.e., our Savior himself  26 should: would
27 they . . . be: i.e., any or all of them attested to be by Christ’s will
28 since . . . spoken: since Christ’s speaking of those words  29 prove: prove to  30 only: solely
31 spoken of: spoken by  32 all the new Scripture: i.e., any of the new Scripture (the New Testament) was written
32 and should: i.e., and thus such a binding would // strain: constrain  33 all thing: everything
34–35 had . . . wit: still had some sense  36 had . . . purpose: would not have achieved the desired result
36 bring in: adduce  37 some . . . sect: some people of that heretical persuasion // full solemnly: very portentously
that is to wit, the words of Saint John in the Apocalypse, where he saith, “If any man anything set to these things… God shall put upon him the plagues written in this book. And also, if any man anything minish of the words of the books of this prophecy… God shall take from him his part of the Book of Life, and of the Holy City, and of those things that are written in this book.”

By which words he meaneth not that no man shall never after be so hardy to write any prophecy, if ever it please God any other thing to reveal. And much less he meaneth to put God to silence, that he shall never any other thing reveal if him list; nor saith not that God hath shown him that he never will. But he giveth a charge that men use diligence and truth in the writing out of his own. And much-like charge (albeit not of like authority) have other writers given for their own books, as it is to see in the end of the Chronicle of Eusebius, translated, I trow, by Saint Jerome; and in Saint Irenaeus' works the same charge given in like wise, with much-like adjuration joined thereunto.

And therefore, as solemnly as some of his brethren bring forth these words of Saint John—Tyndale saw yet that they would not serve, and therefore he left them out.

Now lay some folk for this purpose the words of Moses in the twelfth of the Deuteronomy, where he saith, “The thing that I command thee, that thing only shalt thou do to God… and thou shalt neither anything add nor minish.” Which words be yet, in this matter, less to the purpose than the words before-rehearsed, of the Apocalypse. For whoso look in the place, and read over the chapter… he shall see that Moses said those words only for fear that he had… lest, since he had on God's behalf commanded them some certain sacrifices unto God, the people prone to idolatry would add, of their own minds, either some sacrifice unto idols… or unto God some kind of such abominable sacrifice as the Gentiles offered unto their idols. And for fear thereof he said unto them, “Thou shalt do unto God that thing only that I command thee.”

and “thou shalt neither anything add nor minish.” But he told the cause before, and said, “When the Lord thy God shall have destroyed before thy face the Gentiles upon whom thou shalt enter to take
them in thy possession; and when thou shalt have them in thy
possession, and shalt dwell in the land that belonged unto them:
beware that thou follow not them, after that they shall be, by thy
coming in, overturned; beware, I say, that thou seek not after their
ceremonies and say, ’As these people were wont to worship their
gods, even so will I worship too.’ Thou shalt not do likewise
to the Lord thy God. For they have done unto their gods all the
abominations that our Lord hateth—offering their own sons
and daughters, and burning them up in fire!’ And then setheth
Moses thereunto the words before rehearsed, willing them that
they shall neither leave undone any of those ceremonies and sacrifices
that he had commanded nor add any new kind of their
own mind… lest they might hap to fall to those kinds of
sacrifice of the paynims that were abominable before the face
of God.

Now, what serve these words of Moses to our present purpose?
For first, if Moses had not meant as I say (and as the circumstance
of the text showeth), but had utterly meant to command them
that they should nothing add at all, in no manner thing, unto those
things that he commanded them himself (as the words sound):
then had he forbidden them to believe or obey any prophet that
ever should come after him… except only the prophet of whom he
prophesied, and bade they should hear him. And yet might they
think that prophet restrained by those words, in such things as
should pertain to the service of God.

Also, if that Moses had not meant as I say, but precisely forbidden
them to add anything at all unto his institutions—they might
never have added any new feast of holy days unto those that God
had by Moses appointed them already. And then how might
the feast called Festum encaeniorum have been instituted afterward,
which was long after Moses’ days instituted, and very solemnly
observed… and God therewith so well content that our Savior
honored it with his own blessed presence

But now suppose that Moses had himself meant as straitly
as their unreasonable construction would strain his words to: what

1–2 them in thy possession: dispossessed them / those people under your control
3, 4 beware: take care
3 follow: imitate // after that: i.e., after such time as
4 overturned: overthrown
4 seek not after: i.e., not try to appropriate
5, 11 ceremonies: (religious) rituals
6 even so: in just the same way
7 (un)to: i.e., in worship of
9 setheth: adds
10 before rehearsed: previously related // willing: ordering
12–13 of . . . mind: of . . . accord; on . . . initiative
13 hap: happen // fall to: go in for
14 paynims: pagans
14 before the face: in the eyes
16 what serve . . . to: i.e., what impact do . . . have on
17 meant . . . say: i.e., meant them as I say he did // circumstance: context
18 the text: i.e., that verse
18 uttered: absolutely // them: i.e., the Israelites
19 in no manner thing: i.e., under any kind of circumstance
20 words sound: i.e., words themselves suggest
22–23: See Deuteronomy 18:15.
23 bade: i.e., said
23 hear him: i.e., listen to // in: regarding
24 restrained: restricted // service: communal worship
26 had . . . say: i.e., did not mean those words as I say he did
27 institutions: instructions // precisely forbidden: i.e., was categorically forbidding
27 might never have: could never have legitimately
28 feast: celebration
29 appointed: prescribed for; established for
30 Festum encaeniorum: Feast of Lights; i.e., Hanukkah
32 well content: well pleased / very happy
35–36 meant . . . to: i.e., meant those words of his in as restricting a way as these heretics’ illogical interpretation
would bind them to
would all that serve unto their purpose in our matter? May Christian men
do nothing but that that Moses bade… because the Jews might
do nothing but that that Moses bade? Where were then become
the Sacrament of Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar? “Yea,” say
they, “but this proveth that the Church should add nothing of their
own mind unto God’s word”—for such a note in the Bible some
have set solemnly in the margin upon those words. But I dare be
bold to tell them again that they may better scrape that note out
again than use it unto this purpose. For first, those words proveth
no such thing at all, but if Moses had meant as straitly as they
strain him; in which I have proved that they take him wrong.

Secondly, I say that if Moses had meant as precisely as they
mistake him, yet had it touched but the Jews… and us Christian
men nothing at all.

Thirdly, I say that in the things which Tyndale reproveth
the sacraments of the Church… the Church hath added nothing
unto the word of God. For we say that they be the word of God, well
written in Holy Scripture, as hath been plainly proved them; and
that himself well knoweth, but that he listeth to play his part and
say nay still, be the proof never so clear.

Fourthly, we say that any such thing as the Church useth or believeth
as necessary—though it be not written, yet add they thereby
nothing unto God’s words. For we say that it is God’s word

The authority of the
word unwritten, and of as great authority as is
his word written… as the things that
partly were delivered to the Church by the
apostles, and partly taught unto the Church by that Holy Spirit of
God that was by Christ’s promise sent unto the Church to be with
it forever, to teach it and lead it into every truth.

Finally, for conclusion, to prove you the folly of that allegation—ye
know well all our question is no more but whether the apostles left
every necessary thing in writing, as Tyndale affirmeth. And now
consider you whether this be a good proof or not… though Moses’
words were taken as strait as these men mistake them. Were

not this, ween ye, well argued: “Moses forbade the Jews to add or
minish to or from anything that he commanded; ergo, the
apostles have left no necessary thing unwritten”!

1 serve… contribute to their contention in our controversy  2, 3 that that: that which  // bade: decreed
2–3 might do nothing: i.e., were not allowed to do anything in worshipping  3 where… become: where would then be /
what would then become of  4 the Sacrament of the Altar: i.e., that of the Eucharist  // yea: i.e., well, all right
5 Church: i.e., Church authorities  6 mind: accord  7 solemnly: portentously // upon: i.e., beside
7–8 be bold: venture  // again: in reply  // 8 may… than: would do better to scratch that note back out than to
9 unto this purpose: i.e., to help make this argument of theirs  // but if: unless  // 10, 12 meant: i.e., meant them
10–11 as straitly… him: i.e., in as restrictive a way as these people bind him to  // 12 precisely: literally / categorically
13 mistake him: wrongly take him (to have)  // yet had it: this nevertheless would have
13 touched but: affected only / applied only to  // 14 nothing: in no way
15–16 reproveth the: i.e., argues are not. (See 15/27–32.)  // 18, 30 prove(d): prove(d) to  // 19 himself: he himself
19 but that: i.e., it’s just that  // listeth: wants  // 20 say nay still: keep saying no; persist in denial
20 never so: no matter how  // 21 useth: practices  // 22 add they: i.e., the Church authorities add
30 the… allegation: i.e., the foolishness of heretics’ adducing that scriptural text  // 31 all our: i.e., that our whole
33 good: valid; sound  // though: even if  // 34 strait: i.e., restrictively  // mistake: wrongly take
34–35 were… ye: wouldn’t this be  // 35 ween ye: i.e., don’t you think
36 minish: subtract
Besides that this argument is very foolish in itself, yet have I before, at large, opened you the lacks thereof, where I answered Tyndale concerning his high reason of the apostles’ charity compelling them to leave nothing unwritten. And besides that, one plain difference is there: that Moses was commanded to write, and the apostles were not commanded at all; though God allowed, assisted, and aspired them his grace therein, as he doth many good men in many good works beside any commandment.

And Moses also, commanded to write as he was... was not commanded, yet, to put altogether in writing that the people should be bound to do or believe, by any text that Tyndale hath shown us yet, or ever shall show, I suppose.

Howbeit, as for this allegation—though some others have thought it gay, Tyndale yet perceived it for such as he saw well would not serve him; and therefore he left it out.

Yet are there some, and among them Friar Barnes... that layeth for that purpose the words of our Savior written in the twenty-third of Matthew, where he saith, “Upon the chair of Moses are now set the scribes and the Pharisees. All things that ever they say unto you, observe them and do them; but the things that they do, do not you. For they bind unportable burdens and lay them upon other men’s shoulders, and will not so much as with a finger of their own once stir them.” By these words would Friar Barnes that there should nothing be taught but only Scripture. And over that, he would by these words that a man might break all the laws that the whole Church maketh, beside the express precepts of God contained in the Scripture, without any scruple of conscience... so that he do it secretly, where there were no weak conscience of feeble-faithed folk offended. Whereas undoubtedly those words neither prove his purpose in the first, and prove clean against his purpose in the second. For, beginning with the second... those words plainly declare that, because our Savior both then intended to show and often before had shown that the scribes and Pharisees were naught—yet lest the people might hap to think that he would therefore they should be set at naught and not obeyed... he gave them not warning only, but also plain commandment, that since they were in the authority, and occupied the place, of Moses (that gave the Law), and were the rulers and governors of the people,

2 at large: at length // opened: explained (to) // lacks: deficiencies 3 high: lofty / sublime // reason: argument 5 plain: obvious 6–7 allowed... aspired: i.e., approved of their writing, assisted them in it, and inspired in 8 beside: i.e., that do not fall under 10 altogether: everything 11 bound: obligated // by: according to 11, 12 show(n): set forth (to) / adduce(d) (to) 13 allegation: i.e., sometimes cited text 14 gay: persuasive / promising 16 yet: also // layeth for: adduce for; submit as supporting 17, 30 purpose: thesis 17 twenty-third: i.e., twenty-third chapter 21 unportable: unbearable 23 stir: budge 23, 25 by: on the basis of 23–24 that... taught: have it that there be taught nothing 24 over: on top of 25 that: i.e., have it that 25 might: could 26 beside: other than 27 so that: so long as; provided that 28 were: would be 29 offended: scandalized // undoubtedly: unquestionably 30, 31 in the: i.e., regarding that 30 first: i.e., first thing [teaching of Scripture alone] // clean: totally 31 second: i.e., second one [guilt-free breaking of Church laws] 33 show(n): indicate(d) 34 naught: bad 34 hap: happen 35 they... naught: i.e., have them disregarded 36 warning: instruction // plain: (an) explicit 37 authority: i.e., line of authority 38 that: who
they should obey them and fulfill that which they commanded them. And lest the people should take him as Friar Barnes doth, and ween because he spoke of Moses’ chair, that therefore they should obey him in nothing else but as far as they should read in Moses’ books… and upon everything that they should be bidden, should say, “Show me that written in Moses’ books”—Christ therefore commanded them that they should observe and fulfill all their commandments. Not meaning by that generality that they should obey any commandment that by God were forbidden—nor to set God’s law aside for made in Scripture, where the commandment tended to virtue, good manners, or God’s honor. Now, the words of Saint Augustine which Friar Barnes bringeth in do nothing prove the point that Barnes would prove by them. For he would have it seem that Saint Augustinethose words of Christ as himself doth. But Saint Augustinethere, by the allegory of “the chair of Moses” occupied by “the scribes and Pharisees,” expoundeth those words of a preacher that is not the very, true shepherd in his preaching seeketh nothing but the profit of the sheep and the glory of Christ, but that is a mercenary preacher and a hired, which seeketh his own temporal advantage and commodity. Of whom Saint Augustine giveth warning that yet even such preachers, naught as they be… yet, for the while that they be suffered to preach, in all that they say well and according to the law of God, we should hear them and allow them therein, and learn to live thereafter. But on the other side, if they would, when they have begun with good things for a countenance, to get them in credence… then leave off such things and preach of that they seek for—that is to wit, fantasies of their own invention, and for themselves and their own commodity—therein be they not to be heard or believed. And this is the mind of Saint Augustine, as every man that will consider his words in the place where they be written (the forty-sixth treatise upon Saint John) shall very plainly perceive. And thereby shall he that there readeth them as plainly perceive that those words of Saint Augustine brought forth by Barnes do nothing prove Barnes’ purpose; that is to
wit, that those words of Christ do discharge every man’s conscience of obedience unto any precepts, laws, or traditions of men, other than be written in Scripture.

For the thing that Saint Augustine there saith—divers holy men, treating the same words in the like allegory of doctrine and preaching, do say and confirm in like wise; and never wise man would say otherwise. But the thing that Barnes saith—never was there yet either good man or wise man that would agree. For those words of Christ, saving by way of the allegory, seem not so properly to pertain to teaching of the scribes and Pharisees, as to their commandments, and biddings; as well appeareth by the words following, where he biddeth that they should “observe” and “do” all the things that they say to them. And that he should mean not only the precepts written in the Law, but also their other commandments besides (such as were not superstitious or unlawful to be kept), is clearly declared by the words of Christ following, where he saith in this wise: “For they bind importable burdens and lay them on other folk’s shoulders, but themselves will not put a finger of their own thereto.” As though he would say, “Since they sit upon Moses’ chair, and occupy his place, and be your governors, do ye all that they command you, although the burdens that they bind and lay on your shoulder be so great and heavy that they seem, in a manner, importable; but do not as they do. For they will themselves leave them all undone, and not set once a finger to the doing of them. But I warn you, do not you so.”

I know right well that those words may be well expounded on the other fashion foreremembered, understanding, in the allegory, by the “chair of Moses” the doctrine and law of Moses. And then may those grievous, importable burdens be called the burdens of the Old Law… with which Saint Peter and the apostles were not content that some others would lade the Christian people coming unto Christ; saying that neither themselves nor their fathers could bear them. Thus I know well men may expound those words, and good men, holy men, and cunning men so have done; and others, in like wise, after the manner that I now do; and both twain have therein done very well.

For one text may be diversely, in diverse senses, expounded… though

2 obedience unto any: i.e., of any obligation to obey  3 be: i.e., those that are  4 divers: several
5 in the like: with the same  5, 9 allegory: i.e., analogizing  6 in like wise: in like manner
6–7 never . . . would: never would anyone with any sense  8 wise man: man with any sense
8 agree: i.e., go along with that  10 properly: literally  11 well appeareth by: is made quite evident by
15 superstitious: unreasonable; excessively rigid  15–16 unlawful to be kept: morally impermissible to keep
16 declared: shown  17 in this wise: words to this effect  17, 23, 29 importable: unbearable
21 although: even if  23 in a manner: in a sense  24 them all: i.e., all these onerous biddings of theirs
25 warn: instruct  26 may: can  26–27 on . . . foreremembered: i.e., in that other, above-mentioned way
27 in the allegory: on the analogical level  29 called: identified as
30–31 content . . . would lade: i.e., happy . . . were trying to saddle  33 fathers: forefathers; ancestors
35 cunning: knowledgeable // in like wise: likewise  35–36 after the manner: in the way
36 twain: i.e., of these two groups  37 one: i.e., one same // diverse(ly): different(ly)
Luther and Tyndale will have now but one, till another may better make for their own purpose; for then they will not let to make fifteen. But, though those words may be so expounded—yet, as I said, it appeareth well that the very proper sense is of their own traditions beside Moses’ law… in that Christ said that the scribes and Pharisees did bind grievous burdens and importable, and lay them on other men’s shoulders. For every man well wotteth that neither the scribes nor the Pharisees did bind and lay on men’s shoulders the burdens of the Law, but our Lord himself. And which, at that time while he would yet have them kept, he would not have dispraised with calling them grievous and importable… though the apostles did afterward, when time came to cast them off.

And therefore, as I have said, those words of Christ’s were properly meant of the traditions and commandments of the scribes and Pharisees themselves, beside the Law; which things our Savior there commanded to be kept and observed (wheresoever they were not superstitious, nor contraried not the laws and commandments of God, but were tending to his honor, or to virtue, or to the common weal), for the place and office that the scribes and Pharisees kept, though themselves were naught. And their good traditions did never Christ dispraise—though he sometimes dispensed with his disciples concerning them and the Law too.

Now, there is no man, I think, so mad—when he doubteth not but the servants in a man’s household are so bound to fulfill and obey their master’s lawful commandments that if they would refuse at his bidding to kneel down and say certain prayers with him to-bed-ward (all the whole house together) till he should show them “some such commandment in Scripture,” they were well worthy to go to the devil for their proud disobedience in the defense of their false evangelical freedom—he that doubteth not, I say, of this (of which I think no good man doubteth) cannot be so mad to think that neither bishop nor pope, nor whole general council, nor all Christian people together, though they were all assembled upon a plain, were able so to command so much as a general procession upon any certain day… but that any lewd, lither losel that list not to rise may lie still in his
bed, and say he is not bound to obey “men’s traditions,” nor nothing but Scripture, except for avoiding of slander… and then there shall be so many at the procession that he shall not be missed, and if he be, some man may say he is sick.

Upon these words, concerning their traditions, would I not have been so long, saving that both Friar Barnes royally triumphed with them against the laws of the Church… and also that Tyndale, in his answer to the eighteenth chapter of my Dialogue, bringeth in the same for the like intent. Which intent how properly they prove between them both, now ye may partly see… and yet farther shall, by God’s grace, when I shall hereafter, God willing, come to touch the place in Tyndale’s answer to me.

But now that I have proved that those words of Christ make not only nothing for their purpose against the laws of Christ’s church… but also make plainly for the laws, against their purpose: I shall not need long to tarry you for the other point—that is to wit, to prove you that those words of Christ nothing make against our principal purpose. For they nothing prove that every necessary thing is written… though we construe Christ’s words not of the traditions (of which they be properly spoken indeed), but of the law of Moses… and set thereunto the words of Saint Augustine also, with which Barnes would seem so well to furnish his matter. For first, as for Christ’s words, if they had been plainly and expressly these—“Whatsoever the scribes and Pharisees bid you do that is written in the law of Moses, I warn you, see that you do it”—yet while he said not farther, “And I warn you, believe them not in anything else,” these words were no proof that altogether was written wherein the people should believe them, no more than that allthing wherein they should believe them was written in Moses’ books. Which if it were taken so… then were all that they might teach the people written in Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, by Christ’s word wiped out of credence.

Therefore, by those words—expounding them of the doctrine of Moses, and not of the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees—yet is there nothing proved that they were not to be believed in anything that they should teach beside Moses, nor beside all the Scripture, neither. Nor those words of Christ be not contrary but

1 bound: obliged 2 slander: (giving) scandal 2–3 then there: i.e., then too, there 4 some man may: someone can 6 been: dwelt // triumphed: boasted victory 8 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies 9 intent: implication // properly: well / logically / thoroughly 11 touch: discuss 12 the place: i.e., the section on that subject 13–14 make . . . for: not only in no way support 14, 15, 18 purpose: argument 15 make: militate 16 tarry: detain // for: i.e., for the making of 17 prove: prove to // nothing make: in no way militate 18 nothing: i.e., do not at all 19, 27 written: i.e., written in Scripture 19 though: even if // not of: as referring not to 20 properly: literally 20 of the: i.e., to the 22 furnish: buttress // matter: case 25, 26 warn: instruct 25 while: so long as 26 in: about 27 were: would be // altogether: everything 27, 28 wherein: about which 28 allthing: everything 30 then . . . written: i.e., then would everything that they could have taught the people that is written 31 wiped: i.e., be wiped 33 expounding them of the doctrine: i.e., interpreting them as referring to the teachings 34 not of: not to // in: concerning 36 beside: apart from 37 nor . . . but: i.e., nor do those words of Christ gainsay
that there might be yet at those days truths kept among
people by Tradition from the beginning, which the scribes
and Pharisees both might preach and remember to the people as they
might the Scripture… and be therein believed. And therefore our Savior
said not, “Believe them in nothing but the books of Moses or other
books of Scripture,” but he said, “Do not as they do”… not forbidding
them to believe them in many other things, but forbidding them to
follow them in their vices.

Now, if Christ had said farther to the Jews, “All things necessary
be written, and therefore believe the scribes and Pharisees no farther than
ye find written in Moses and in the prophets”—had this proved
that all thing that Christian men must believe is written in the
apostles and the evangelists? Now, the words of Saint Augustine
which Friar Barnes addeth thereunto… do for this purpose nothing
advance the matter. For when Saint Augustine applieth those words
of Christ to a preacher that is not a very, true shepherd, seeking
only the weal of the flock and the pleasure of Christ… but mercenary
and a hired man, that preacheth for lucre or other worldly
affections of his own; and then saith that in the “chair of Moses”
is understood the learning of the law of God, and saith that
therefore God doth teach us by them, that is to wit, by those
mercenary preachers, too; and therefore when they teach the law of
God, hear them and do thereafter; but and if they will teach their
own doctrine, hear it not, do it not… for such men seek “that is
theirs and not Christ’s,” that is to wit, their own commodity and
not the pleasure of God: “lo,” saith Barnes, “these words of Saint
Augustine be plain against all them that preach anything but the
law of God only.” And forthwith, well and wisely, instead of preaching
he putteth example of statutes-making—as though it were both one
ting, one man to preach, and all the Church to make a statute.
And because ye should see yet his plainness and sincerity therein… he
feigneth that the Church maketh some “openly and directly against the
word of God, and to the destruction of the faith”—as is “that statute,”
saith he, “whereby they have condemned the New Testament, and also
forbidden certain men to preach the word of God… having no
cause against them, but all only their own malicious suspicion.”

1 might be yet at: i.e., could also have been in
3, 4 might: could
3 remember: recall
5, 7 in: regarding
8 follow: go along with / emulate
10 written: i.e., written in Scripture
11 had this: would this have
12 all thing: everything
14 purpose: contention
15 matter: case
16 very: real
17 weal: well-being; good
18 hired: bribed
19 lucre: monetary gain
20 learning: possession of knowledge
21 hear… thereafter: i.e., we should listen to what they say and act accordingly
22 but and if: i.e., but, now, if
23 will: decide to
24 hear: i.e., we should listen to
25 commodity: advantage
26 lo: behold
27 plain: straightforwardly
28 wisely: sensibly
29 putteth: i.e., gives an
30 all the: the whole
31 because:… yet: i.e., so that you can see also
32 feigneth: fictitiously asserts
Now, of truth, there is no such statute made, nor no such thing done, neither concerning the one point nor the other. For as for the “New Testament”—if he mean the testament of Christ, it is not condemned, nor forbidden, neither, no more than was the holy Ark, though every man might not be so bold to touch it. But of truth, there is a false English translation of the New Testament, newly forged by Tyndale, so altered and changed in matters of great weight, maliciously to set forth against Christ’s true doctrine Tyndale’s anti-Christian heresies… that it was not worthy to be called Christ’s testament, but either Tyndale’s own testament or the testament of his master, Antichrist. And therefore that book is condemned, as it is well worthy; and the condemnation thereof is neither openly nor privily, directly nor indirectly, against the word of God, nor tendeth not to the destruction of the faith, but very consonant with the word of God “Auferte malum ex vobismet ipsis”… and greatly tending to the maintenance of the faith.

And concerning that “testament,” I have, both in my Dialogue and in the Second Book of this work, well proved this point; whereunto when Tyndale weeneth to find any farther defense, let him lay it forth!

There is also no statute made by the Church to forbid any man to preach the word of God… having no cause against him but their own malicious suspicion. Nor God, I doubt not, will never suffer his Church to fall so mad as to make such a law. If Friar Barnes find any law made of such matter, let him rehearse it… and I warrant you he shall find no such words in it. There is indeed a law made, both by the Church and, in this realm, by the Parliament too, that no man shall be suffered to preach in any diocese against the bishop’s will. And I ween that law be not against God’s law, nor against reason neither… except either God’s law or good reason should suffer that one man should meddle with another man’s charge, maugre his teeth to whom the charge belongeth… or else should be suffered to sow shrewd seed of heresies, schisms, and seditions among the people first, and then be burned up after, at leisure. Such folk, I suppose, were better prohibited betimes, ere they be suffered long to go forward, to the peril of other men’s souls and their own
too. Such have we had some prohibited here of late… of which one was yet so sore set upon evil preaching that after the prohibition and abjuration too, yet would he preach heresies still… until at the last, God caused him to be taken, and Tyndale’s books with him too, and both two burned together—with more profit unto his soul than had been, haply, to have lived longer and after died in his bed. For in what mind he should then have died, our Lord knoweth; whereas now we know well he died a good Christian man. And when he wist well his revocation could not save his body, yet revoked he his heresies

But so did not Cranmer! and abhorred Tyndale’s books for to save his soul.

Now here serve well the words of Saint Augustine against Barnes… which words Barnes bringeth for him. For when we hear such a mercenary preacher as these heretics be: for the time that we hear them, if they say aught well and according to the Catholic faith (as they cannot, for shame, say all naught at once)—then take it. But when we hear them preach their own heresies for the reward of worldly praise, or delight of their own singular pride, and so seek their own and not Christ’s—then hear them not, but put them to silence and prohibit them to preach anymore.

This allegory will agree with the said words of Saint Augustine, and of Christ’s words, too. And yet so much the better in that these heretics may properly be called not only “mercenaries,” of whom Saint Augustine speaketh… but also very scribes and Pharisees, of worse kind than were those of whom Christ in that Gospel speaketh. For these be false scribes; that is to wit, writers not writing any true books of Scripture, but false glosses and contrary comments upon Scripture, and erroneous books of devilish heresies devised of their own frantic brains… to the color whereof they abuse the Scripture, and when they list they also deny the Scripture. These be also the worst kind of Pharisees. For these have divided themselves not from the other people by any profession of a more honest and more virtuous living… but have divided themselves from the Catholic Church of Christ by abominable heresies, and from all honest people by the contempt of all good works, and by the beastly profession of friars and nuns living together in lechery and preaching their whoredom for honest matrimony.

1 such . . . late: i.e., some such individuals, debarred from preaching, we’ve had here recently // which: whom
2 sore: strongly
3 abjuration: (his professed) recanting
4 taken: i.e., taken into custody
4–5 both two: i.e., both that man and those books
5–6 had . . . have: i.e., there would have been, maybe, had he
7 mind: i.e., state of mind
8 wist: knew
9 revocation: recanting
10 abhorred: repudiated
11–13 the . . . him: i.e., against Barnes those words of Saint Augustine which Barnes adduces as being for him
12 aught . . . to: i.e., anything that is in quite good accord with
13 take: i.e., we should accept
14 delight: gratification // singular pride: i.e., pride in being singular
15 own: i.e., own praise and gratification // hear them not, but: i.e., we should not listen to them, but should
16 allegory: i.e., correlation // agree: be in sync // said: above-mentioned
17 yet so: even that
18 may: can
19 very: actual
20 contrary: i.e., Scripture-contradicting
21 comments: commentaries
22 devised of: contrived by
23 frail: delirious
24 to the color whereof they abuse the Scripture, and when they list they also deny the Scripture. These be also the worst kind of Pharisees. For these have divided themselves not from the other people by any profession of a more honest and more virtuous living… but have divided themselves from the Catholic Church of Christ by abominable heresies, and from all honest people by the contempt of all good works, and by the beastly profession of friars and nuns living together in lechery and preaching their whoredom for honest matrimony.

25 of comments: // separate
26 divided: distinguished / separated
27 honest: respectable; honorable
28 living: i.e., way of living
30 list: choose to // deny the: i.e., deny that the Scripture is
31 divided: distinguished / separated
32, 35 honest: respectable / bona fide
33 living: i.e., way of living
35 the contempt of: i.e., their contempt for
37 whoredom: fornication // for: i.e., to be // honest: respectable / bona fide
These be the things which we should not vouchsafe to hear these scribes and these false Pharisees preach. For these be the devil’s devices and their own. For as for all that is preached consonant to the Catholic faith, is very God’s law, whether it be written or not. Nor Saint Augustine saith not, “Hear them in preaching What God’s law doth comprehend only the Scripture,” but “. . . God’s law” he saith, wherein is comprehended all that ever we be bound to do or believe.

Whereof Saint Augustine doth himself confess that divers things are unwritten—as, for example, the perpetual virginity of our Blessed Lady, which whoso believeth not because it is not written, Saint Augustine calleth a false heretic, in his book written unto Quodvultdeus. And so doth Saint Jerome too, in his book against Helvidius. And all such things be therefore parts of the plants which the Father of heaven planteth by himself, his apostles, his Holy Spirit, and his own Son abiding in his Church—whether they be written or not.

And thus ye see, good readers, that neither those words of Christ nor of Saint Augustine, neither, do prove that the apostles have left all necessary things in writing. And therefore, though Barnes was so fond to bring in that text for this purpose—yet Tyndale perceived well that it would not serve, and therefore left it out.

Yet layeth Friar Barnes another text for this purpose: the words of Saint Paul written unto Timothy, the third chapter of the second epistle, where Saint Paul writeth unto him in this wise: “Abide thou in those things that thou hast learned, and that are betaken to thee… knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from thine infancy thou hast known Holy Scripture, which may instruct thee to health by the faith that is in Christ Jesus. All scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to teach men in justice, that the man of God may be perfectly instructed to every good work.”

I have rehearsed you Saint Paul’s words more fully than doth Friar Barnes… because ye may have some guess why he left the remnant out. For he rehearseth no more but that the Church must neither make law nor statute, nor nothing do but only “preach and minister
the word of God”—and that “nothing adding” nor minishing, but “as Paul saith” to Timothy, “abide in those things that they have
learned and that be committed unto them.”

Now see ye well that Saint Paul speaketh nothing to Timothy
against adding of any good order or statute in his church… but
biddeth him abide fast by those things that he hath learned of
him, and that he hath learned in Scripture—joining to the Scripture
always the right faith of Christ, which he had learned of Saint
Paul. And therefore against making of any law this text serveth
Friar Barnes a straw.

Moreover, it is to be considered that Saint Paul saith not to
Timothy, “Abide in those things that I have written,” but “Abide in
those things that thou hast learned either in Scripture or else otherwise
of me, without Scripture”—as he wrote unto the Thessalonians,

\[2\] Thes 2:15 “Observe ye my precepts which I have
given you either by word or writing.”

And as he writeth unto Timothy before, in
the same epistle: “Have thou the form and fashion of the wholesome
words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love in Christ
Jesus.” He saith not “… the words that I have written unto thee, and that
thou hast read of mine,” but “… the words that thou hast heard of me.”

But yet is there for this purpose, in that text of Saint Paul that
Barnes bringeth forth, another thing to be considered: that where
Saint Paul telleth Timothy that, albeit he have been learned in
Scripture from his childhood, yet he must join therewith the
articles of the faith of Christ. And that it may well appear that he
giveth Timothy this warning to arm him with against heretics
which would labor by some color of apparent scriptures
to destroy the faith that Timothy had learned, as these heretics do
now—it is, I say, therefore to be noted that Saint Paul gave Timothy
that warning that he should stand fast in those things that he
had taught him… remembering “of whom” he had learned them; of
a true apostle, and not of such as they were that would tell him
contrary: false heretics. And so must we against these heretics
that would draw us from the true faith that we have learned… stand
fast and remember of whom we have learned it—of Christ and his
apostles, and, continually from them, of his perpetual apostle the

1 minishing: subtracting 2, 12 abide in: i.e., stay[ing] with; keep[ing] to 4 speaketh: says
5 adding: i.e., the adding  6 fast: steadfastly  8, 26 (right) faith of Christ: (orthodox) Christian faith
Against: i.e., with his argument against the  9–10 serveth… a straw: i.e., gives… a pitiful amount of help
11 considered: noted  12 without: apart from  18 have… of: take as your model and pattern
13 purpose: argument  23 considered: taken note of  19, 21 of me: from me
14 without: apart from  24 albeit he have: even though he has  25 true: truth-telling / bona fide / trustworthy
16 writing: i.e., in writing  26 well appear: i.e., be clearly seen
17 considered: taken note of  27, 31 warning: cautionary exhortation  28 which: who
22 purpose: argument  28 color of apparent scriptures: i.e., misrepresentation of scriptures as being clearly on their side
33 false: mendacious / [a polite-language equivalent of] damn
35 draw us: pull us away 37 continually from: in an unbroken chain starting with / in unchanging continuity with
Catholic Church of Christ, animated and instructed, according to his promise, with his own Spirit this fifteen hundred years—and not by such as these be that now babble against it: false heretics... whose snakish and serpentine generations have evermore hitherto, when they have crept out as adders and snakes in summer, had their heads trodden down by God and all good men.

*2 Tm 3:10–17* Saint Paul told Timothy too... that the Scripture was good and profitable to teach the faithful folk, and to reprove heretics, if he joined therewith always the faith of Christ; without which it would do him no service, for all that he had been learned therein from his childhood. And in that warning given to Timothy, Saint Paul hath taught us also that if we have sure in heart the articles of Christ’s faith, which be surely kept by Christ in his Catholic Church—then shall we be able well to understand the Scripture, so much as shall suffice and be necessary. And but if we have that belief... we shall have no right understanding. But that right belief, and thereby that understanding, had: the Scripture, though all things be not written therein, will yet be profitable and stand us in good stead, not only for our instruction toward the perfection of virtuous living, but also in disputation against heretics... both in the proof of many articles of the right belief, and to prove them clearly that the common consent of Christ’s Catholic Church cannot in Christ’s very, true faith err and be damnably deceived, whether the things believed be written in Scripture or not... and also that his *catholic* church is this common-known church of all Christian nations save such as be by false heresies separated therefrom. And on the other side, without the catholic faith of Christ’s church fastened in our hearts... the Scripture, as it could not have served Timothy without the true faith had in his heart, so can it not serve us, neither to the confusion of heretics nor to the spiritual profit of ourselves.

And thus ye see that Friar Barnes hath very poor help of this text of Saint Paul; which thing Tyndale well perceived, and therefore he left it out. And Barnes himself, perceiving that the most part would make so much against him... took in a little and left the remnant out.
Yet bringeth in Barnes another text of Saint Paul: where he writeth unto the Romans, in the fifteenth chapter, “I dare not speak any other thing than those that God hath wrought by me.” Which words, first, be so hard, as they stand in the place, that the old interpreters stood in great doubt what Saint Paul meant by them; so far forth that by exposition of Saint Ambrose, Saint Paul meant that there was nothing that pertained to the glory of preaching the word of God but that God had fulfilled it in him—as though he would say that all that was to be taught, God had taught the Gentiles by him. Origen expoundeth them in another manner: that Saint Paul in those words meant that he would not take unto himself the praise of other men’s deeds, but would only speak of such things as God had wrought by himself. Theophylact alloweth Origen’s exposition, and yet addeth a third thereto, saying, in the person of Saint Paul, “I boast you not the things that I have not done… but only show you the thing I have done myself. Howbeit, that that I have done… it is not I that have done it, but Christ hath done it by me.”

I show you this, good readers, because ye should somewhat perceive the manner of these men… which use in many things to prove their matters by those texts that are of most difficulty, and such as are least understood. And therefore in the matter of the liberty of man’s will and predestination, and the matter of faith and good works, they pass over the plain texts of the other evangelists with some sleight gloss of their own device… and then for the proof of their own part they run to the hard places of the Gospel of Saint John, or to the Apocalypse, or to the epistles of Saint Paul… in such places as are almost as hard as the Apocalypse. All which when they expound as it please them… then they call them plain, and say that every man and woman may understand them easily; notwithstanding that Saint Peter, being long at school with Christ, and the chief of his apostles, protesteth openly to all the world, by writing, that Saint Paul’s epistles have things hard and difficult. And he saith farther, of such as Barnes is, and Tyndale, and such other heretics their fellows: “Those hard things,” saith Saint Peter, “that are written

1 of: from 3, 13 wrought: worked; accomplished 3, 10, 13, 18 by: by means of; through 4, 26, etc. hard: hard to penetrate / cryptic 4 the place: i.e., that passage 4–5 old interpreters: early exegetes 5 what: i.e., as to what 6 so far forth: to such an extent 6 by exposition of: according to the commentary by // Saint Ambrose: Actually, Pseudo-Ambrose. 9 would: were to 10 expoundeth: interprets // manner: way 11 in: i.e., by 11 take unto: betake to 12 praise of: i.e., credit due for 13 himself: him 13 alloweth: approves of; accepts as correct 14 exposition: interpretation 15 boast you not: do not boast to you of 16 show you the: i.e., make known to you whatever 19 I show: i.e., I’m telling // because ye should: i.e., so that you can 20 manner: strategic approach; modus operandi // which use in: who are wont with regard to 21 matters: theses; contentions 22, 23 matter of: controversy about 24 pass over: i.e., brush aside; dismiss 25 sleight gloss: crafty interpretation / slick spin 25 device: making up 26 part: side of the argument 26, 28 places: passages 27, 28 Apocalypse: Book of Revelation 30 may: can 31 at school with: under the tutelage of 32 protesteth: asserts / proclaims // by: i.e., in (scriptural) 33 have: contain 35–36 heretics their fellows: fellow heretics of theirs
by Saint Paul, men unlearned and unstable do deprave and misconstrue, as they do all the remnant of the Scripture, unto their own

Rom 3:8

perdition.” And Saint Paul saith himself also, that in the matter of good works

those false heretics misconstrue him; and saith therefore that

their damnation is just and righteous.

And thus, as I say, these heretics lay forth for their part hard texts and doubtful, as Barnes doth here… which text, in the place where it standeth, the best-learned men are in doubt how to construe it. Howbeit, let Barnes construe it which way he list, that may have any hold of the words… and it shall never serve for his purpose, neither concerning any forbidding of laws to be made by the Church nor to prove that everything necessary to salvation is written in Scripture… but rather, plain the contrary. For every man well wotteth that every necessary thing is not written by Saint Paul, nor he hath not written everything that he taught, nor everything is not now had that he did write. And therefore this text of Saint Paul brought in by Barnes nothing helpeth his purpose, but rather, greatly hindereth it: which thing Tyndale well perceived, and therefore he left it out.

Tyndale saw well also that anything that his master Martin Luther laid and lashed out against the King’s Highness concerning this purpose, or speaking against the “traditions of men,” serve to no purpose in this matter against the sacraments… or any point of the Catholic faith, which we say be the traditions of God. Whereof—as Tyndale well knoweth—nothing that Luther laid anything prove the contrary, nor anything touch the purpose to prove that all the necessary points of the Christian faith were by Christ’s apostles put in writing. And therefore Tyndale, seeing his master Martin Luther in that point by Rosseus so shamefully soused in the mire before, thought he would beware of that puddle and come no more near it… and therefore left out all that his master had brought in for the matter.

Then was there yet one text remained, whereof many of them were wont to bear them high. And that was the saying of Saint Paul… which text Tyndale hath also brought forth ere this, to prove that we must believe nothing but only Scripture. And that is where he

1 deprave: distort  2 remnant: rest  4 in the matter: on the subject  5 false: deceitful / dastardly
6 damnation: condemnation  7 lay forth: adduce
8 part: side of the controversy  9 best-learned: best-educated; most-learned  10 howbeit: however  11 that . . . words: i.e., that the words can give any support to  12–13 laws to be made: i.e., the making of laws
13 to: for  14 plain the contrary: the exact opposite  15 wotteth: knows  16 nor he hath not: i.e., nor has he  17 nor every thing is not: i.e., nor is everything  18 nothing: in no way
19 hindereth: hurts / impairs  20 served to no purpose: i.e., works to no effect  22 the King’s Highness: His Majesty the King
23 purpose: point 24 serve to no purpose: i.e., works to no effect  25 this matter: i.e., their campaign  27 anything prove: at all proves
28 nor . . . prove: i.e., nor has any aptness for proving  30 Rosseus: See note for 317/36.
31 mire: i.e., slimy and filthy mud  32 no more near: no closer to  33 the matter: i.e., that contention
34 remained: remaining; left  35 bear them high: put on airs; act high and mighty
36 ere: before  37 we . . . nothing: i.e., there’s nothing we must believe
writeth to the Galatians, in the first chapter, that if an angel of heaven would come down and preach any other gospel than himself had done, accursed were he. This text hath now Friar Barnes brought in afresh, for the same purpose, in his new frantic book, and magnifieth much himself therewith, when Tyndale hath left it off for shame. For Tyndale at last, after long looking on it… espied well that it would nothing serve for his matter. For he saw well that Saint Paul meant none other but that an angel were not to be believed if he taught a contrary gospel… and meant not that none angel were to be believed if God sent him both to confirm that and also show somewhat that God would have done farther.

Tyndale saw also that that text saith not that Saint Paul hath written all his own gospel, nor that all his fellows had written it among them all… which he wist well was the point that must be proved. And therefore, as Friar Barnes foolishly bringeth it in… so doth Tyndale wisely leave it out. And surely, as I have said, his wit served him well in leaving out all these. But his wit failed him in one thing: that he had not left out also all that ever he hath himself brought in. All which, as yourselves see well, I have now proved him as little to prove his purpose as himself seeth well that all the others did which for that cause he was ashamed to speak of.

Now have ye heard, as far as I can find, all that ever Tyndale either hath said or can say in this matter—either himself or any man else—for the proof of his own part, or for the disproof of ours. And thereby see ye well that he neither hath proved nor never shall he prove while he liveth, neither himself nor no man else, the thing that he so boldly saith: that allthing necessary for salvation is written in Scripture; nor able is he not, nor no man else, nor never shall hereafter be able, to avoid it… but that God taught, and is not yet so bound but that he may teach, what he will and when he will, with Scripture or without… and may command it to be believed not being contrary to that he hath taught already, and may command some things to be done though they were contrary to some things that he had himself, by Scripture, commanded before.

2 would: were to 3–3 himself had done: i.e., Paul had preached 3 were he: i.e., would that angel be
4, 20 purpose: contention 4 frantic: loony; wildly insane 5 magnifieth: extols / vaunts 6 off: out
6 shame: i.e., fear of shame // on: at 7 nothing serve for his matter: do nothing for his case
8 none other but: nothing other than 9 none: no 10 that: i.e., that gospel that Saint Paul was preaching
11 show… farther: i.e., make known something further that God would have people do
13 written all: put in writing all of // fellows: i.e., fellow New Testament writers 14 wist well: well knew
16 surely: certainly 17 wit: understanding / judgment // in: i.e., in his 18 had not left: i.e., did not leave
20 proved: proved to 21 which: whom 24 in this matter: on this subject 25 part: side of the dispute
27 while: as long as 28 allthing: everything 30 avoid… but: i.e., prove it not true
31 bound: constrained 31, 32 will: wants to
32–33 it to… not being: i.e., to… anything that is not 33 that: that which
33–34 may… though: i.e., could command the doing of some things even if
And I think it not to be doubted but notwithstanding that Moses received the laws and ceremonies in writing, yet received he not (as Tyndale saith he did) allthing so fully in writing but that there remained in the people’s minds, beside the writing, divers things necessary and of great weight that they had received before, and kept peradventure from Adam’s own days, concerning the coming of Christ, and the redemption by him, and the state of souls both in heaven, hell, purgatory, paradise, and limbus patrum.

And it will, whoso list to look therefor, well be perceived in them that wrote after Moses’ days… that the Jews had much open light and knowledge in some such things besides all that that appeareth written… in the five books of Moses; whereby it will well appear that Tyndale saith not true where he saith that Moses did put all in writing.

Ye shall well find also that, notwithstanding all that ever hath been written since, either by the prophets, evangelists, or any other apostle, yet will it never appear that all is written that was taught by mouth… but that the church of Christ hath had taught unto them by the Spirit of God divers truths which no good man can doubt in, whereof the Scripture nothing determineth… and which things, therefore, false heretics bring in question, and let not to say the contrary, as in the common-known examples of our Lady’s perpetual virginity, of the assumption of her blessed body—which God would else have had found in earth, and honored as well as the bodies of any other saints… of whom himself hath caused, by special revelation, divers to be sought out and found, to be worshipped here in earth for his sake, and confirmed it by many manifest miracles, as we find in authentic stories.

By these traditions have we also the praying to saints, and the knowledge that they pray for us… albeit in the Book of Maccabees, yet, that thing well appeareth.

By these traditions have we the holy Lenten fast… which these brothels so boldly take upon them to break, and as Lollards to eat flesh; and which holy fast these fools in their writing call the “foolish fast.”

Saints pray for us. By these traditions have we also the

2 Mc 15:11–16 praying to saints, and the knowledge that they pray for us… albeit in the Book of Maccabees, yet, that thing well appeareth.
By these have we also the Saturday changed into the Sunday, which they care not to turn into Friday now.

By these have we the hallowing of chalices, vestments, paschal taper, and holy water, with divers other things.

By these traditions of that Holy Spirit... hath the Church also the knowledge how to consecrate, how to say Mass, and what thing to pray for and to desire therein.

By this have we also the knowledge to do reverence to the images of holy saints, and of our Savior... and to creep to his cross... and to do divine honor unto the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar—to Body, which is not dead but quick, with that blessed Soul and with them the Godhead inseparably joined—what frantic fool could doubt but it should be with divine honor worshipped, though neither God nor man beside that knowledge had given us warning thereof?

But yet is Tyndale so far beside himself... that he believeth not the Scripture of God, nor the word spoken by God’s own mouth, when he said that it is his own body... and is so blasphemous against God that he calleth it great sin to do to that Blessed Body of Christ in the Sacrament any honor at all, because it is not commanded, he saith, in Scripture.

But thus may ye, good Christian readers, see to what point at last this heresy bringeth these folk. For when they first fall to that point that they regard not God’s word but if he give it them in writing, within a while after fall they down so far that they neither regard his word nor his writing, nor yet himself.

But now is it a world to see what shift these folk be fain to seek. Sometimes they come forth shameless, and boldly tell on their tale. And yet when they perceive, in the midst thereof, that all that hear them wonder on them—then they cast on their hoods and cover their faces for shame.

For sometimes they say they care but for Scripture alone, and set naught by all those that ever wrote since the apostles’ days.

...
Then see they again that to abide by that word were too shameless… and then they restrain it unto this eight hundred years last past, in which they say all is corrupted. And then they grant that before, there were good men that taught the truth… and then they say that we will not believe them, as though themselves would.

   And when we ask them then… which of those old men, before eight hundred years last past, ever said that religious men might run out and wed nuns: to that they say nothing, but fare as though they heard it not.

   But when that my Lord of Rochester in the selfsame matter that we have now in hand, to prove that divers things which the Church useth and believeth, and which were never made by any law written, and yet observed through the Catholic Church… were of such antiquity that every man might well perceive that they came from the very apostles themselves—he laid forth the great cleric and old, ancient father Origen; wherewith, as I have shown you before, Tyndale was very angry, and alto berated Origen and called him stark heretic.

   But yet shall not Tyndale so fear me therewith… but that—to the intent that he shall not blind you and make you ween that all the old fathers were in this matter of his mind… but that ye shall well see that the things which he reproveth and would have you ween were naught worth, because, he saith, they be not in Scripture, be not things devised, as Tyndale saith, by popes and popish within this eight hundred years—I shall, as I promised before (in the Second Book), rehearse you both the words of Origen… and, besides some undoubted holy men since, I shall rehearse you divers others above eight hundred years, and above nine hundred years, and above a thousand, too, of whom my Lord of Rochester hath gathered divers together, and rehearsed in the same matter in his book against Luther; all which, save Origen only, Tyndale dissembleth, because he may not call them heretics, as he called Origen… for whom I have in that point answered Tyndale (in my said Second Book) before.

   Origen, in the fifth homily upon the Book of Numbers, writeth in this wise: “In the observances of the Church, some things there are which must of necessity be observed and kept… and yet the cause why appeareth not to every man. As, for example, that we kneel when we pray; and that of all parts of the heaven, we most
specially turn us toward the east. I suppose that no man lightly
knoweth the cause why. Moreover, of the Sacrament of the Altar, either
the manner in the receiving, or the guise and fashion of the consecration;
and of the formal words and ceremonies used in Baptism,
and of the questions and answers used in the same: who may well
open and declare the reason? And yet all these things though they
be covered and hidden… we bear upon our shoulders what time we in
such wise accomplish and fulfill them… as we have received them of
the great bishop Christ and his children, delivered and commended
unto us.”

Damascene, in the Fourth Book, in the thirteenth chapter, of The Praying
toward the Orient, writeth thus: “This tradition of the apostles is
not written; for many things are delivered unto us without
writing.” And farther, in the seventeenth chapter, where it is written of the
worshipping of the images of saints, he saith that many things
the holy apostles have delivered unto us without writing. Saint

2 Thes 2:15; 1 Cor 11:2 Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, writeth in
this wise: “Stand fast and observe our
traditions which ye be taught, be it by our word or by writing.”

And unto the Corinthians thus: “I commend ye, my brethren… because
in everything ye have remembered me and kept the traditions
as I delivered ye them.”

Dionysius, the first chapter of Ecclesiasticae hierarchiae, of the leaders
and masters of the Christian faith, saith that they delivered us many
things to be kept, partly by writing and partly by their
institutions unwritten.

Saint Cyprian, in his sermon of the Washing of the Feet: “The
High Priest himself is the ordainer and author of his own sacrament.
In all the residue, men were taught by the Holy Ghost. And
likewise as in Christ and in the Holy Ghost is like and equal Godhood:
so is there in their institutions and ordinances like power and

Note equal authority. And no less is it ratified
of God, the thing that the apostles by the
inspiration of the Holy Ghost did institute, than the thing that
himself hath ordained… and hath in remembrance of himself
willed and commanded to be done. Each of them hath their own

1 specially: particularly // no man lightly: i.e., no one really 2 cause: reason
2 Sacrament of the Altar: Blessed Sacrament 3 guise: form 4 formal: i.e., liturgically prescribed
4 ceremonies: rituals 5 used: uttered; spoken // may: can 6 open: i.e., do the explaining
6 declare the reason: i.e., make known the why 7 what time: at whatever time; every time
8 wise: i.e., ways // of: from 9 children: i.e., episcopal sons 11 Damascene: i.e., Saint John Damascene
12 Orient: East 13 written: i.e., written by them / written in Scripture
13–14 without writing: i.e., from outside of Scripture / that are not found in Scripture
14 it . . . of: i.e., he’s writing about 15 worshipping: venerating
16 without writing: i.e., without having done this in writing 17–18 in this wise: as follows
18 stand fast: remain steadfast 19 word: i.e., spoken word // writing: i.e., letter from us
20 Corinthians thus: i.e., Corinthians (in his first scriptural letter to them) thus 23 the first: i.e., in the first
23–24 of the leaders and masters: i.e., about the first leaders and teachers 26, 31 institutions: instructions
27 Saint Cyprian: Actually, Ernaldus, Abbot of Bonnevallis; in about the year 1150. // sermon of: sermon on
28 ordainer: instituter // author: originator 29 in: i.e., in the cases of // residue: rest
30, 31 like: the same 33 of: by // the thing that: i.e., whatever thing
34 the thing: i.e., this thing 35 himself hath: i.e., Christ himself has / God directly has
proper dignity... and each of them hath, in their own kind, equal authority. Nothing may there either be added or withdrawn, nothing neither reformed nor changed."

Saint Hilary, in the Sixth Book of *The Trinity*, when he had made mention of the apostles, writeth in this wise: "Of these apostles am I taught these things that I observe. In them am I so seasoned that the taste can never be gotten out."

Theophylact, upon these words of Saint Paul, "My brethren, stand fast and keep the traditions that ye have learned, be it by my word or by my letters": "Of this truly it is evident that Saint Paul delivered unto them many things to be kept... without writing, and by word of mouth only; that is to say, with lively voice, not by letters all only. For as well be those things to be believed as these. And therefore let us esteem the observances of the Church worthy to be believed... so that if anything be delivered to us by the Church, never ask farther question."

Saint Jerome, interpreting the eleventh chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, saith in this wise: "Saint Paul prevented them, to the intent none of them should say, 'Where is this written?' nor should with any other arguments strive against this reason. And therefore he said, 'We have no such custom, to strive and contend; neither we nor yet the church of God, which is rather given to mildness than to contention and strife.'"

Theophylact expoundeth the same place likewise and saith: "Forasmuch as the Corinthians would perchance color this matter by certain subtleties, and went about it by syllogisms and sophistications, alleging that these things were neither good nor bad, but of their nature indifferent: therefore Saint Paul said, 'We have no such custom—either to be contentious, or a man to let his hair grow in length, or a woman to go bareheaded'; 'neither have we,' said Saint Paul, 'this custom... nor the church of God'—that is, nor the other Christian people neither. 'And therefore by such froward arguments... ye seem to resist and withstand not only me, but also the Church itself."

These words, therefore, of Saint Paul... may make the hearers ashamed to do anything contrary to the custom received by the Church.

Saint Leo (also a holy man and a cunning), in a sermon that

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1 proper: distinctive  // kind: way  5 in this wise: thusly  // of these: by these
9 stand fast: remain steadfast  10 word: i.e., spoken word  // of: from
12 writing: i.e., doing so not in writing  12–13 with lively voice: out loud; orally
13 by letters all only: all only by letters  15 esteem: deem  19 in this wise: i.e., words to this effect
19–20 prevented them: beat them to the punch; headed them off at the pass  21 arguments: objections
21, 22 strive: argue  21 reason: i.e., thing he said  22 contend: be contentious
23 yet the church of God: i.e., even the church of God as a whole  24 contention: i.e., contentiousness
25 place: passage [1 Cor 11:2–16]  26 would perchance: i.e., were perchance wanting to
26 color: cast a false light on; misrepresent  // matter: issue  26, 27 by: via  27 subtleties: sly stratagems
27 went: i.e., going  // syllogisms: i.e., specious syllogisms; subtly skewed logic
27 sophistications: sophistic arguments  28 alleging: submitting  29 of: by
29 indifferent: neutral  31 in length: long  33 froward: perverse; contumacious
34 withstand: oppose  36 Paul: i.e., Paul's  39 cunning: learned (one)
he maketh in the fast at Whitsuntide, saith in this wise:
“There is no doubt, my well-beloved brethren, but that every Christian
observance is of Christ’s teaching… and whatsoever is received of
the Church into a custom of devotion cometh of the apostles’
tradition and of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. Which Holy Spirit
even now also doth rule all faithful hearts with his own instruction,
to make them keep them obediently and understand them wisely.”

Saint Augustine, in the book Of the Baptism of Young Children,
Against the Pelagians, writeth in this wise: “Children which be
baptized be taken in the number of faithful people… and that only by
an old, canonical, and sure-grounded custom of the Church.” And in another
place again, “Now,” saith he, “we have shown you before that the
little child believeth, and that he is accounted amongst men that be
baptized. This holdeth the authority of our mother Holy Church…
and this holdeth the rule of the sure-grounded faith. Whoso runneth
against this fortress—this inexpugnable wall—shall al allto frush
himself.”

Cassian, in the eleventh Collation (the twelfth chapter): “The authority of
the old fathers—and the custom of our elders continued by the
space of so many years unto this day… although the cause of them be
not perceived by us—must we firmly believe. And that custom must
we with perpetual observance reverently fulfill, in such wise as it
was delivered of old.”

Saint Augustine in the 118th epistle, to Januarius, saith thus: “Those
things which are not written and yet we by tradition observe
them—such, I mean, as are through Christendom kept—we may well
understand that they be kept as things ordained and commanded
unto us either by the apostles themselves or else by
general councils (the authority whereof is in the Church most
necessary). As, for example, that the Passion of Christ, and his
resurrection, and his ascension into heaven, and the coming of the
Holy Ghost from heaven, are yearly celebrated with a solemn feast; and
whatsomever thing we find that is observed among all people
where the church of Christ is spread.”

Many things be not found in the writings of the apostles, nor
in the councils of those that came after them… which yet, because
they be kept of all the whole Church, we believe them to have had

1 maketh in: writes on // the fast at Whitsuntide: the fast in the Octave of Pentecost; i.e., the summer Ember Days
2 in this wise: words to this effect
3 doubt: question
4 is… teaching: i.e., came about by Christ’s teaching
5 received of: received by
6 doctrine: teaching
7 even: right
8 keep them: i.e., keep these things
9 wisely: intelligently
10 taken: included // faithful people: believers // only: simply
11 old: ancient
12 place: i.e., place in this same sermon // shown: stated to
13 men: i.e., all those
14 holdeth: i.e., (assertion) is backed by; (assertion) is made on
15 this: i.e., this church // whoso: whosoever
16 inexpugnable: impregnable // al to frush: completely shatter
17 the eleventh Collation: This is now identified as Conference 21.
18 118th: early
19 although… them: i.e., even if their reasons for establishing it and handing it down
20 wise: manner
21 believe: i.e., believe in
22 written: i.e., found in Scripture
24 the 118th epistle: This work is now identified as Letter 54.
26 through: throughout
37 of: by // all the whole: the whole entire
no other beginning but by the tradition and commendation of the apostles unto us by themselves.

Saint Augustine in the Fourth Book of *Baptism, against the Donatists*:

“The thing that the whole Church holdeth, and is not instituted and ordained by councils, and that notwithstanding, hath been ever observed—we very well believe that it never began but by the authority of the apostles’ tradition.”

Saint Augustine in the Fifth Book of *Baptism, against the Donatists* saith: “Many things are there which the universal Church holdeth… and therefore be well believed that the apostles have commanded them, though they be not found in writing.”

Saint Augustine in the eleventh chapter of the Ninth Book of his *Confessions*, writing of the departing of that holy, blessed woman his mother, Monica, showeth that albeit beforetime she had been very studious of the place where she would be buried—longed especially to be laid by her husband—yet at the time that she lay dying, being then far from the place where her husband lay… showed unto Saint Augustine, then present with her, that she cared not in what church they buried her body… but she prayed him very effectually to remember her in his Mass. Which thing I write that

To pray for souls in the Mass
is no new thing. ye may see that the Mass, and praying for souls therein, is not so new a thing as Tyndale would have it seem.

And in the next chapter after, Saint Augustine saith these words (spoken unto God): “Her body was carried forth, we followed, and came again without tears. And over that, in those prayers which we made unto thee when the Sacrifice of our Redemption was offered for her—the corpse being set by the grave, as the manner is there—I wept not in those prayers, neither; but all that day was I in a grievous secret sorrow.”

And afterward, in the last chapter of the same book, Saint Augustine prayeth for his mother unto our Lord, among many other words in this wise: “I, good Lord that art my Praise and my Life, the God of my heart, setting aside for the while my mother’s virtues and goodness (for which I joyfully give thee thanks), will now beseech thee for her sins. Hear me graciously, good Lord… for that Medicine of our wounds which hung upon the cross, and now,
sitting at thy right hand, doth call upon thee for us. I know, good Lord, that she did works of mercy, and that she heartily did forgive
the debts unto her debtors. Forgive thou, good Lord, her debts to
her, such also as she hath fallen in by so many years after the
Water of Health. Forgive her, good Lord, forgive her, I beseech thee,
and enter not with her into judgment.” And afterward he saith,
“And I believe, good Lord, that thou hast done already the thing that
I pray for. For she, when the day approached of her departing, nothing
bethought her how she might have her body costly covered
or dressed with spices, nor longed for a sumptuous sepulchre, nor
cared not to be buried in her own country. These were not the
things that she anything required us… but only desired us to
have her in remembrance at thine altar, to which she had been
accustomed, no day missing, to do service… from which she well
knew that Holy Sacrifice to be dispensed by which the obligation
that made against us was canceled, and by which was
led as a captive in triumph that enemy of ours that keepeth a reckoning
of our sins… and, seeking what he might object, could in
him nothing find in whom we have had the victory. Who can
shed him again an innocent blood for his? Who can restore him
again the ransom that he redeemed us with? To the sacrament of
which ransom of ours, thine handmaid hath bound her soul
with the bond of faith. Let no man pull her from thy protection.
Let neither the lion nor the dragon, neither by force nor by false
sleight, step in between her and thee. She shall not answer that she
oweth thee naught, lest she be therein convinced and cast, and that
thereby her subtle accuser get her. But she shall answer that her debts
be forgiven her… whom no man is able to pay that he paid for us,
when he owed naught for himself. In peace mote she be, therefore,
and her husband too… before whom and after whom she never married
none; whom she like a servant obeyed, bringing fruit to thee
through her patient sufferance, that she might thereby win him
to thee too. Inspire, good Lord my God, inspire thy servants my
brethren, thy children my lords, whom both with word and heart
and writing I serve… that as many as read this may remember at
thine altar thy servant Monica, with Patricius, sometime her

1 call upon thee for us: appeal to you on our behalf; make intercession with you for us
2 heartily: from the heart
3 the debts unto her debtors: i.e., her debtors their debts
3–4 Give to her, good Lord, forgiveness of her debts
4 hath . . . after: i.e., has gotten into in these however many years after getting into
5 Health: Salvation; i.e., Baptism
8–9 nothing bethought her: gave no thought to
9 costly: opulently
10–11 nor cared not: i.e., nor was anxious
12 anything required us: did any requesting of us
15 obligation: contractual bond
16 made: militated
17 a reckoning: an account; a running list
18 seeking what he might object: i.e., looking for something he could bring as a charge
19 had: obtained
20 again: in return
21–21 restore him again: reimburse him
22 false: deceitful
25 sleight: cunning
26 restored nothing: nothing
26–26 convinced: proved reprehensibly wrong; convicted of culpable error
27 subtle: insidiously sly
28 whom: i.e., by him whom
30 that: what
31 none: anyone
32 sufferance: endurance
34 lords: superiors
36 sometime her: her one-time
husband, by whose flesh thou hast brought me into this life, I cannot
tell how. Make them remember with a devout affection them
that were in this transitory life my father and mother, and under thee
my Father, and my mother the Catholic Church, were my sister and
brother, and in the eternal Jerusalem shall be my neighbors
and citizens; which Jerusalem thy people, from their going
forth till their coming home, in all their pilgrimage longeth for
and sigheth. Good Lord, grant this: that the thing which was the
last that ever she desired of me, she may the more plenteously
obtain by the prayers of many more.”

The old holy doctor Saint Chrysostom, in his homily wherein
he showeth that almsdeed, Masses, and Dirges greatly profit them
that are dead, among many other things writeth in this wise:

“It was not for naught ordained by the apostles that in the dreadful
mysteries of the Mass should commemoration be made for them

Note

that be dead. For the apostles knew that
thereby cometh to the souls great
advantage and profit. For when all the people standeth together,
holding up their hands, and the priest fulfilleth his observance,
and that dreadful Sacrifice set forth: how can it be but that
then praying for the souls, we shall obtain?”

Now see you very plainly, good Christian readers, that of the eldest
and the very best that ever have written upon the Scripture of God
in Christ’s church, and which be holy saints in heaven—and
such as suffered persecution for God’s sake—do testify for our
part, that the things which the Catholic Church universally
believeth and useth are nothing to be doubted of… but to be believed
and used whether they be found in Scripture or not. And ye see
that they say that the apostles taught and delivered to the Church
divers things by mouth, beside all that they wrote; which thing
Saint Paul saith also himself; and yet besides that, we see that of
his writing there is part lost.

Ye see also that some such things as Tyndale saith that the
popes have of late feigned themselves for their lucre—as the Mass
and the pains of purgatory—both Saint Augustine and Saint
Chrysostom, and other holy saints, say that the things were
believed, used, and taught by the apostles themselves.

2 make them: have them / get them to
6 citizens: i.e., fellow citizens
6–7 going forth: i.e., setting out on it
7–8 longeth for and sigheth: i.e., longs and sighs for
9 desired: asked
11 old holy doctor: early theologian
11, 36 Chrysostom: i.e., John Chrysostom
11 his homily: This homily is his third one on Saint Paul’s Letter to the Philippians.
12 showeth: states
13 in this wise: i.e., the following
14–15 for naught: for nothing; in vain
14, 20 dreadful: overawing / fear-inspiring
14, 20 set forth: i.e., is reenacted
15 his homily: This homily is his third one on Saint Paul’s Letter to the Philippians.
16 part: side (of this case)
22 of: i.e., some of
26 part: side (of this case)
27 useth: practices
28, 37 used: practiced
29 delivered: imparted / communicated
30 besides: in addition to
31 ye: even
31–32 of... lost: See note for 340/16.
34 feigned: fabricated
36 the: i.e., those
And thus, as for the old holy doctors, ye see how far they go from Tyndale; and therefore of Tyndale or them believe whom ye like best for me... and consider well with yourselves with whither of those two were surer to send your souls.

Yet is there, as old as any that I have rehearsed yet, Saint Polycarp—the disciple of Saint John!—which wrote a book of the traditions given unto the Church by the apostles... which would plainly have proved Tyndale a fool and a liar both, if the book had not been lost. And undoubtedly God would never have suffered it to be lost if he could not have kept his traditions without writing.

Howbeit, what need we better or elder than, as I before have said, the authority of Saint John himself in his last chapter of the Gospel, “Many things were done that are not written in this book”? Or of Saint Paul writing himself to the Corinthians, “All other things I will ordain when I come myself”; and to the Thessalonians, “Keep you my precepts” (or “institutions”) “which I have given you either by word or by my epistle”? By which words it appeareth well that he had written unto them before, that then was Holy Scripture, and yet had been if it had been kept and preserved, and was not without good things therein and necessary... whereof part may be such things as the heretics now do bark at, because the epistle is lost. But God is not lost, that preserveth still the matter though he let go the letter.

Saint Paul also to Timothy writeth of such unwritten traditions well and plainly, in his second epistle, in these words: “Thou, therefore, my son Timothy, be comforted in the grace that is Christ Jesus... and those things that thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, commit them unto faithful men, such as shall be meet to teach them forth to other men.” Those words of Saint Paul do very plainly show that some things there were which Saint Paul taught Timothy, and that in presence of certain good, virtuous witnesses... and which things were, as Saint Ambrose saith, secret mysteries. Which things he there commanded Timothy to commit also to other faithful men, such as should be able and meet to teach, to the intent that they might teach the same things farther; and which be
some of such things as these heretics now bark at, that are
come from mouth to mouth, and from hand to hand, from the
apostles’ days unto our own.

It is a much less thing, also, to believe ourselves to be bound to
do a thing, of necessity, without authority of Scripture… than to
think ourselves without Scripture unbound, and in no necessity,
to do the thing which we find commanded in Scripture. But
we find commanded in Scripture—first by the law of nature, and
after in the law written (the Old Law, with a cause annexed: for
violating of nature; and after again by the apostles, as I have
rehearsed, in the New Law, the fifteenth of the Acts)—that men should
abstain from strangled, and from blood; of which commandment
in Scripture we see no discharge but the custom of the Catholic
Church… and yet hath Tyndale no scruple to eat a pudding
though he see it prohibited by all the laws, and by the apostles themselves,
and by the Holy Ghost too, with like words as they forbade
fornication. And discharge, as I say, seeth he none but the tradition
of the Church; which when he dare believe in leaving a thing
undone that the Scripture so often commandeth, why dare he not
believe the tradition of the Church where it commandeth a
thing to be done that the Scripture doth not forbid, but only
speaketh not of it?

I would in like wise fain wit of Tyndale whether he think any
party of Christian people bound at this day, of necessity, to the

\[Jn \hspace{1em} 13:1–17\] washing of the feet whereof Christ at his

\[Lk \hspace{1em} 22:19\] Maundy gave example and commandment
also—not without a great threatening unto Saint Peter of
loss of heaven but if he suffered him to wash his feet. I doubt not
but Tyndale thinketh himself discharged of that bond; and yet
are the words of Christ’s commandment in that observance as
plain as in the commandment of the Sacrament of the Altar… and
long was it used after in such wise… and Saint Cyprian did in his
days reckon it for a thing necessary. Now let Tyndale tell me whereby
he knoweth himself discharged of that washing, but by the
Spirit of God abiding in his church. And let him then tell me
which church but his Catholic Church. For an unknown

1 bark at: i.e., squawk at / bellow about  1–2 are . . . to mouth: have come down orally
2 from hand to hand: from one person’s charge to another’s  4 less: i.e., less problematic
4 bound: under obligation  6 without: i.e., without articulation of this in; from outside
6 unbound: freed of obligation  7 the thing: i.e., something  9–10: See Deuteronomy 12:23.
9 cause annexed: reason attached  9–10 for violating of nature: i.e., lest nature be violated
11 rehearsed: mentioned. (See 249/17–32.)  \(\text{the fifteenth of the Acts}\): i.e., in Acts 15
12 strangled: i.e., the meat of strangled animals [its not being exsanguinated]
14 scrape to eat: i.e., qualm about eating  \(\text{pudding}\): blood sausage  15 see: i.e., sees
15 laws: i.e., Old Testament laws  16 forbade: i.e., used in forbidding  18 in: i.e., when it comes to
19 commandeth: i.e., commands (such as this abstaining)
19 why dare he not: why does he not dare / how can he dare not  23 in like wise: likewise
23 fain wit of: like to inquire of  24 bound: i.e., to be under obligation \(\text{to}\): i.e., to do
26 \(\text{Maundy}\): Last Supper  28 but if: unless \(\text{suffered}\): allowed  29 but: i.e., that \(\text{bond}\): obligation
30 in: regarding  31 in . . . Altar: i.e., those in his commanding ("Do this . . .") of celebration of the Eucharist
32 used: practiced \(\text{in such wise}\): in such a way; i.e., as being a commandment of that kind
32 \(\text{Saint Cyprian}\): See note for 369/27.  34 discharged of: released from the obligation of
35 his: i.e., Christ’s
church can tell him nothing, and all other known churches besides the Catholic be all known for heretics. Or else let Tyndale tell which of all them is the true church... and why rather that than any of all the remnant.

If the Spirit of God governing the Church, and leading it into all truth, put us not in surety and certainty of the truth—how could he be to us, as he is named, Paracletus, that is, a comforter, if we were left so comfortless that we were uncertain whether the whole Church were in damnable error instead of the right faith?

Take away that Spirit from the Church... and how can Tyndale

Acts 8:16; Mt 28:19 excuse the apostles of their baptizing in the name of Christ only, when Christ had himself commanded them to baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost? How will he excuse Saint Paul for taking away the circumcision which God had before commanded, and said that it should be his everlasting token and covenant; and Christ kept it himself; and Saint Paul circumcised

Gal 5:2–6; Gn 17:10–14 Timothy himself, and yet afterward forbade it? How knew he when he

Lk 2:21 should do the one and when the other? By bare imaginations of his own mind? Nay, by that spirit they knew it... which as it ruled them, so ruleth it the Church in the necessary points of faith, and ever shall unto the world’s end.

“God proved,” will Tyndale say, “their doctrine with miracles.” So doth he, say I, the doctrine of his whole Church continually. For therein he worketh miracles continually—and in all the churches of heretics is there wrought never one. Weeneth Tyndale that our Lord had the cure of his apostles whom he ordained for his church... and that he hath no cure of his church for whom he made his apostles?

And if Tyndale list so precisely to lean to “Scripture only” that he will not take the common Catholic faith for an interpreter, he shall find it very hard to defend some such points as be not only true, but be also such as if the Church would say contrary, yet would he say they were true.

4 remnant: rest 6 surety: assurance 7 named: called / declared to be
11 excuse... their: excuse the apostles for / justify the apostles 15 taking away: (his) doing away with
16 token: insignia 19 it: i.e., circumcision 21 bare: mere
21 imaginations of: conceptualizings done by / ideas coming from 23 in: concerning
28 weeneth Tyndale: does Tyndale think 29 had the cure: i.e., had the backs; took care
30 hath no cure: i.e., does not have the back; doesn’t take care 32 list: wants / chooses // precisely: strictly
32 lean to: rely on; go by 35 would say contrary: i.e., were to say the contrary of
For Tyndale setteth not so much by Baptism but that he will agree that faith justifieth without Baptism. And yet take away the credence of the Catholic Church… and he shall never be able, while he liveth, so well to prove by Scripture that a martyr may be saved and brought to heaven without Baptism but that these words of our Savior shall always stand still in his light:

\[ Jn \ 3:5 \]

\[ "Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto non potest introire in regnum Dei" \] ("Whoso be not born again of the water and the Spirit cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven").

Now, whereas Tyndale teacheth, after his master Martin Luther, that as often as a man only repent, though he be never in mind to do penance nor be confessed neither… his “only faith” shall save him, and getteth him forthwith full remission both of sin and pain: if he will give credence to the Church, he shall find that faith of his full false. And if he will not give credence to the Church, but precisely stand to the Scripture: then shall he find yet that faith more false, if he will be bound as precisely to the words himself as he would bind other men. For he shall never be then so well able to prove that any man falling to deadly sin after Christendom once had, shall be by any repentance restored again… but that there will stand still in his light the words of the Apostle

\[ Heb \ 10:26–27 \]

saying, “When we willfully sin after the knowledge of the truth had, there is not now left us any sacrifice for sins, but a terrible expectation and looking for of judgment, and of fierce and rageous fire which shall consume the adversaries.” There will also stand in his light these words of the Apostle: “It is impossible that they which have been once illumined and have tasted that heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted also the good word of God, and the virtues of the world to come, and are fallen down, should be renewed again to penance—crucifying again for their own part the Son of God, and having him as in derision.”

If Tyndale say that he can so construe these texts as they shall not hurt his heresies—I deny not that he so may do; and I can, too, so construe
them that they shall not hurt the truth, that is to wit, the Catholic faith. But yet this I say: that when he and I have both done what we can... yet whoso list to hold that heresy against his “repentance” and the Church’s “penance” too... shall not lack words wherewith he may seem, to such as will set the Church at naught, to maintain his part as well as we both maintain ours. And therefore, I say, taking away the credence from the Catholic known church (for no church unknown can be believed, since it cannot be heard; and all other known churches be false, or else let Tyndale, as I have often said, tell me which of them all is the true, and why we should therein believe him)—the credence, therefore, as I say, taken from the Catholic known church... there can be

Note nothing sure, but allthing uncertain:
both traditions of the apostles, expositions of Scripture, and the very Scripture itself, too.

And, unto the other side, if the credence of the known, Catholic church abide—as it needs must abide if the scripture abide by which it is promised by Christ that himself and his own Holy Spirit shall dwell therewith all days unto the world’s end—then be we sure not only which are the holy scriptures and the sure, wholesome expositions thereof, but also which are the traditions delivered unto the Church by God... of which some were delivered by the apostles themselves, and some by his Holy Spirit since. And whatsoever Tyndale babble to the contrary... God is yet at as much liberty to teach his Church further what truth he will hereafter, and to deliver it what tradition he will hereafter, and to command his whole Church to believe and obey him therein—as well, I say, hereafter as ever he was before.

For I would fain wit of Tyndale, if the whole Church shall never believe nor do nothing as of necessity but that is already written in Scripture: why shall any one man be bound to believe or do anything as of necessity, though God bid him by mouth... if it be not written in Scripture? And if he will say, "No more may any one man be bound, neither!"—then putteth he away, quite, all revelations... which I never heard any man hitherto deny but that God may reveal and man be bound to believe and obey. And surely if he grant that any one man may be bound thereto—so may,
then, for aught that I can see or aught that he can say, the whole Church in like wise.

Finally, there is no doubt but that ere the New Testament was written... men were bound to believe things without Scripture.

And then—since Tyndale will nothing believe us without Scripture, and he may not look of reason that we should any more believe him without Scripture than he us—let Tyndale now tell me, therefore, by which text of Scripture, in all that is written, is that bond released and discharged, and where are we either commanded or licensed nothing to believe but if it be contained in that scripture that is now written? Which thing if he cannot show (as he cannot indeed), then abideth that bond still, to believe the things that the Catholic Church teacheth us as the word of God to be believed, and yet unwritten... as the same bond stood and bound us before, to believe those necessary things that now be written.

Now, if Tyndale answer this argument and say that he needeth not to lay forth any text of Scripture discharging us of that bond... but that it is enough for him to prove that all thing that is of necessity is by the apostles written... and that no such thing as we be bound to believe or do is by themselves unwritten—if Tyndale answer us thus, then is he but where he was. For then shall we yet again bid him do as he needs must and never may: bring in one text of Scripture by which he may prove that all such things be written.

Which thing when he cannot do... if he will then be plain and confess the truth that he cannot prove his own part; but will then bid us prove our own part, and will tell us that, like as he saith that the apostles did put all in writing, whereof he faileth his proof, so we say that they did leave divers things unwritten... and that of those be some of such things as the Church now believeth and observeth that are not written in Scripture; and will bid us go prove him that for our part, and will say that else he is no more bound to believe us than we be to believe him—if Tyndale will, as I say, confess the truth that he cannot prove his own part, and therefore will bid us go prove ours—then shall we tell him that we prove ours by the manifold plain texts of Holy Scripture

1. aught: anything
2. wise: manner
3. ere: before
4. 4, 14, etc. bound: obligated
5. nothing: not at all
6. may not look of reason: cannot reasonably expect
7. bond: obligation
8. released: rescinded
9. discharged: abrogated; done away with
10. licensed... be: given permission not to believe anything unless it is
11. abideth that bond still: that obligation continues to remain in effect
12. as... unwritten: i.e., are to be believed as the word of God, and that are still not in Scripture
13. as: just as
14. written: i.e., written in Scripture
15. and say: i.e., by saying
16. all thing: everything
17. to lay forth: i.e., set forth; present
18. of necessity: i.e., essential for salvation
19. bid him: tell him to / challenge him to
20. as: i.e., what
21. may: can
22. plain: candid; frank
23. 26, 27, 34 part: contention
24. 27, 31, 35 bid us: tell us to / challenge us to
25. all: i.e., it all; everything
26. whereof he faileth his proof: whereof he lacks proof / which he has failed in his attempt to prove
27. divers: a number of
28. of those: among those
29. prove: prove to
foreremembered (both of Saint John and of Saint Paul)… and might
yet add divers others with which
Rosseus, an Englishman, hath long ago
proved that point unto Luther… and that so clearly that, as Tyndale
knoweth, Luther was never able to answer one word again. And
I say further that we prove our part—that is to wit, that the
apostles gave things unto the Church without writing, which
have in the Church continued beside the Scripture—this, I say, we
prove to Tyndale by the selfsame means by which Tyndale
proveth us that he knoweth the Scripture to be the Scripture. For if
he will say, as he saith in his book against me, that he knoweth
the Scripture by the same means that the eagle knoweth her birds…
meaning that as she knoweth them by a secret inward instinct of
nature, so he knoweth the Scripture by a secret inward instinct
of the Spirit of God—I say that we know the traditions taught by
God and his apostles by the same secret inward instinct of the
same Spirit. But then say we farther that the same Spirit did
teach the Church to know which was the very Scripture, before it
did teach it Tyndale. And Tyndale had not believed that the Scripture
was the Scripture if the Church had not told him so. Nor
the Holy Spirit had not wrought with Tyndale toward the belief
thereof… if Tyndale, when the Church told him so, had done
as he doth—set the Church at naught. For since that he so hath
done… he not only believeth not the traditions of God given to his
church by his apostles and his word unwritten, but also believeth
less of the Scripture than he did before. And I say that God by his
word unwritten did teach his church to know his words written,
and his traditions also which he taught the Church by his apostles;
and made the Church agree therein by his Spirit which maketh
men of one mind and one custom in the Church, and which
Spirit keepeth both the words written and the words unwritten in
perpetual knowledge and observance in his church… according
as the very Word of God unwritten—that is, his natural Word, of himself
begotten—seeth necessary, abiding with his church forever
according to his own promise. And now if Tyndale ask with
which church—I say with his Catholic church; with his
church in which only church he worketh miracles; with his
church which he commandeth men to hear and obey; and,
finally, with the same church by which church Tyndale learned to

1 foreremembered: mentioned above // of: from // might: could  2 yet: also // divers: several
3 Rosseus: See note for 317/36.  5 again: back / in rebuttal  6 part: contention
7 writing: i.e., writing them / putting them in writing  8 beside: alongside  10 proveth: i.e., proves to
12 birds: chicks  13, 14, 16 secret: sense-imperceptible // inward: inner
13–14 instinct of nature: natural instinct  14–15, 16 instinct of: instinct coming from / prompting by
18 which: i.e., which set of writings // very: i.e., real  19 it: i.e., this to // had not: would not have
20–21 nor: i.e., would not have worked // had the Holy Spirit have worked // as he doth: i.e., what he now does
23 set the Church at naught: disregard the Church // since that: because  28, 39 by: via
30 custom: established practice  35 according to: in accordance with; in fulfillment of
37 only church: church alone  38 hear: listen to
know which is the Scripture. Which church let Tyndale tell me why he should not as well believe when it telleth him, “These things the apostles did teach and deliver without writing,” as he believeth it when it telleth him, “These books the apostles did write.”

If nothing had been written… Tyndale must have believed the Church in altogether. And why should he now, for the writing of part (for that all is written, ye see well he cannot prove), believe the Church the less in the remnant, that remaineth yet unwritten; or for that that was written at one time, believe the Church the less in all that it teacheth after unwritten? Which thing Tyndale doth, and that so far forth… that whereas God worketh miracles in his church to make the Church and the doctrine thereof known for true… Tyndale then, under the false pretext of favor to God’s writing, blasphemeth all his unwritten words and himself too, with calling God’s miracles nothing but devils’ wonders!

And this doth Tyndale… because he would not in any wise that the Church had any credence farther than it can prove by the written words of some apostle… whereas he wotteth well that the apostles wrote not all that they taught, and also that God ordained his apostles for his church, and not his church for his apostles… and doth therefore more esteem and more set by his church than by any of his apostles, or all the whole twelve together. And yet will not Tyndale believe for God’s word anything that the Church teacheth for his word, but if he find it written in Holy Scripture; whereas if he believe not the Church, he can never tell of any part of Scripture whether it be Holy Scripture or not.

But his dealing well declareth wherefore he would have nothing believed without Scripture. The cause is none other but because he would have nothing believed of no man but what he list himself. For he will not stick to deny some part of Holy Scripture for Holy Scripture… and expound all the remnant in such false, foolish fashion that, among his other hundred heresies, he would make us so mad to believe that friars may wed nuns, and that no man should worship the Precious Body and Holy Blood of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

And, finally, thus ye see that Tyndale and such others as would have us reject and refuse all that God hath taught his church but if it
be proved by Scripture... be not only unable to prove or
defend that heresy... but also do handle the Scripture itself in
such a shameful wise that if other men, whom they reprove, did
not handle it better, it had been better to have left altogether
unwritten and never had Scripture at all. And we must needs
perceive that without the belief and credence given unto the
Catholic Church of Christ, we could be sure of nothing; but that,
as Saint Paul saith, the Church is the pillar and strength of the
truth.

And thus end I my Third Book containing the answer of his
two special chapters—the one, “Whether the Word Were before
the Church, or the Church before the Word,” and the other, “Whether
the Apostles Left Anything Unwritten, Necessary to Soul Health.” In
which two points as gloriously as he glittered in his own eye—
every man seeth now how foul a fall he hath... whereby more than
half of his heresies are utterly drowned in dirt.

And now shall I (God willing) in my Fourth Book... as soon as my
time shall serve me... so confute his false faith, and so show which
is the church, that I shall leave Tyndale never a church for his
flock... but the church whereof the prophet speaketh, “Odivi ecclesiam
malignantium” ("I have hated the church of malicious folk")—which
church is very proper for him. For all that ever Tyndale writeth,
when it is well considered, is powdered with malice toward all good
men, both religious that live here in earth and saints that are
living in heaven.

Thus endeth the Third Book.
The Second Part
of the Confutation
of Tyndale’s
Answer

In which is also confuted the
church that Tyndale
deviseth.
And the church also that Friar
Barnes deviseth.
Made by Sir Thomas More, Knight.

Printed at London
by William Rastell.

1533
CUM PRIVILEGIO

7, 9 deviseth: concocts / envisions  10 made: written  14 cum privilegio: duly licensed
The Fourth
Book

Whether “the Church” Can Err

Tyndale

There is another question: whether the church may err. Which
if ye understand of the pope and his generation… is verily as hard
a question as to ask whether he that hath both his eyes out be
blind or no, or whether it be possible for him that hath one leg
shorter than another to halt.

More

Who would not now ween that this man had a plain, clear,
open cause and easy to defend, when that even in the beginning, in
so few words, he concludeth all the matter at once… and that with
examples so plain and evident that every man must needs agree
them to be true? But when ye shall again see that his examples are
no more lightsome than unlike the matter that he resembleth them
unto… and that he either of wiliness will not, or for lack of wit
cannot, perceive and see the point that he should touch: then shall
every wise man well perceive and see that his solemn show of
such confidence in his evil cause is nothing but a plain proclamation,
made by his own mouth, of his own rebuke and shame.

For here would I wit what thing Tyndale meaneth by the “pope”
and pope’s “generation.” If he mean his carnal kindred, or the
pope and his cardinals, either: he then winketh of wiliness, and
will not see the mark. For he knoweth very well that neither of these is
the thing that we call “the Church” when we speak of the catholic
church of Christ that cannot err.

If he mean by “the pope and his generation” all the Christian
nations not being cut off nor cast out for their obstinate malice,
nor of willfulness departing out by seditious schisms: then seeth
he the mark, at the leastwise. But then, while he saith that all these
nations may and hath all this eight hundred years so entirely fallen
into heresies and damnable errors that by all this eight hundred

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5 may: can  6 of: i.e., as referring to  6, 23, 28 generation: offspring / family  6 verily: really
9 another: i.e., the other  // halt: limp  11 ween: suppose  // plain: patent / incontestable
12 open: i.e., open-and-shut  // cause: case  // that even in the beginning: i.e., right at the outset
13 concludeth . . . once: settles the whole issue immediately  14 plain and evident: clear and obvious
14 agree: grant  15 again: then again; on second thought  16 lightsome: flippant  // matter: thing
16 resembleth: likens  17 either of: either out of  17, 25 will not: chooses not to; refuses to
17 wit: good sense  18 point . . . touch: target . . . hit  19 every wise man: everyone with any sense
19 solemn: grand  21 rebuke: disgracefulness  // shame: shamefulness  22 wit: inquire
23 carnal kindred: blood-related kinfolk; natural family  24 winketh of: shuts his eyes out of
26 catholic: universal  29 for: on account of  30 of willfulness: of their own volition
31 while: since  32 may and hath: i.e., could be and have been  33 by all: for all; throughout

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years last past unto Luther’s days, nor yet unto this day neither, there hath been no one known congregation anywhere, wherein the professing of the very, right, catholic faith of Christ hath been so surely kept that it might there be surely learned and known: then I say Tyndale is as blind as he that lacketh both his eyes… in that he seeth not that by this way he maketh our Savior Christ, that is very Truth, to say very false where he saith, “I am with you to the end of the world,” and would make him that whoso would not hear “the church” should be reputed and taken as paynims and publicans—and in many a plain text of Scripture more, as I have before shown (as well in my Dialogue as mine other three, former books of this present work) and yet hereafter shall further.

Moreover, if Tyndale say that all this known corps of Christendom have all these eight hundred years been in a wrong belief… where hath been all this while the right congregation of Tyndale’s church, that hath had the true belief? And let him tell us then which congregation it was, or where any such is yet, of whom we may surely learn the true faith and true virtues.

If he say that it hath been among these, and was in this church, but not of this church… but they have lurked there, a few faithful folk, among the great many multitude of the faithless, and have ever been to the world and outward sight of man unknown… not so much known as one of them to another, but yet very well known to God: to this—besides that if they have lain all this while lurking therein, they have been, then, idolaters by their own judgment, in As all heretics do! image service and praying to saints (if Tyndale’s doctrine be the true faith), and stark hypocrites in being of one belief in their hearts and pretending another both in their words and deeds; and besides divers other invincible reasons with which I have already reproved that fond opinion in the Second Book of my Dialogue, whereunto Tyndale hath made so bare answer that it had been more wisdom for him to have let it all alone and meddle nothing therewith, as every child, almost, may well perceive, that list to look on them both and advisedly compare them together, as I shall
myself set it forth unto them when God shall, after other things done, give me time to come thereto; and besides divers other arguments, evident and plain, which I partly have, partly shall, allege and bring forth in this present work—this one can he never avoid while he liveth: that God had then left every man perplexed, in doubt, and out of certainty, what way he might surely take and cleave unto, either in the doctrine of faith or knowledge of virtuous living.

For if he say that we need no known company, but every man may read the Scripture himself: every man, he wotteth well, cannot read, nor every man understand it though he have it in his own tongue… but by the reading without a reader, may soon fall into the damnable error of Arius, Helvidius, and many another heretic more… which of the Scripture, through their own pride, took occasion of their heresies.

If he then say that of that unknown congregation we may have a true reader: where shall I seek him, and whereby shall I know him? If I happen on him, how shall I be sure? For in this great known congregation, we be safe against all such peril. For we be all agreed upon the necessary articles of the faith. And if any would preach and teach the contrary—as he that would, percase, teach that confession is not necessary, and that penance needeth not, and that of the seven sacraments, five serve of naught, and the sixth of almost as little… and that of the seventh all Christian nations be, and all this fifteen hundred years have been, in a very damnable error—he that thus would preach and teach such abominable heresies as now Tyndale doth, he may be soon controlled, accused, and corrected… except he run away, as Tyndale doth.

And whereby can we be sure that his teaching which is accused is false, and theirs true that correct him… but by that we be sure that the common faith of the Catholic Church is true… and that the Catholic, known church cannot err in that faith which from hand to hand hath been taken and kept from Christ’s days and his apostles’ hitherto? Which faith must needs be true by Christ’s promise made unto his apostles, as teachers of his
church, and not for themselves but for his church: that is to wit,

Mt 16:16–18  
Mt 28:20; Jn 14:16–17

the faith that Saint Peter professed

should not fail, and that God would be

with them all days unto the end of the

world. And that the faith of the known, Catholic church that
correcteth the false faith of the false preachers and heretics… is the
same faith which the holy doctors of Christ’s church in every age
have believed and taught… Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, Saint
Ambrose, Saint Chrysostom, Saint Gregory, and Saint Cyprian
do well and clearly testify by their books. For which holy doctors
our Lord hath shown many a wonderful miracle.

A false preacher

These things and many others maketh

us sure that the preacher which preacheth

against the faith of this congregation is a false preacher, and a
false writher and wrester of Holy Scripture… how solemnly soever
he paint it.

And if we were not sure by these means that the faith of this
known, Catholic congregation is true… how should I be sure of
the preacher of that unknown congregation which Tyndale
calleth “the church”? How should I know, I say, whether that preacher
say true or not? For he hath no known congregation to reprove
him or allow him the surety whereof might make me sure that he
saith true or false.

But then must I, saith Tyndale, try him by the truth of Scripture.

What if I be unlearned? What if I can read, and have it in my
language, and yet understand it but slenderly? What if I be well
learned, and the false preacher as well learned as I? Though he were
no better—yet he shall have text against text, and gloss against
gloss… and when shall we then agree? Or if I give place to him, or
he to me… how shall yet the number of unlearned hearers be satisfied
with our doubtful disputations, if they were not sure, by the common
faith of the known, Catholic church, which of us lied, ere ever we
came together? By which they that never read any Scripture be
now, by the Holy Ghost that hath planted the true faith in his
Catholic Church (the holy doctors whereof have in every age been
approved by miracles), so inwardly sure of the truth that a poor

1 themselves . . . his: i.e., their own benefit . . . that of his  
2 the: i.e., that the  
6 false [preachers]: falsehood-telling / mendacious  
7, 10, 35 holy doctors: (sainted) theologians  
9 Chrysostom: i.e., John Chrysostom  
10 Gregory: i.e., Gregory the Great  
11 shown: performed  
13 well and: very  
14, 15, 27 false: falsehood-telling / mendacious  
15 writher: twister  
16 wrest: distorter  
15–16 how . . . it: i.e., no matter with how sincere and authoritative an air he camouflages it  
17 sure: assured; made certain  
18, 20 should: i.e., could  
18 of: about  
20–21 that preacher say: i.e., what that preacher is saying is  
21 reprove: express disapproval of; criticize  
22–23 allow . . . saith: i.e., provide him the ground of certainty whereby I could be sure whether what he is saying is  
24 try: test  
25, 30 unlearned: i.e., totally uneducated; illiterate  
26 but slenderly: only to a small extent  
27 learned: educated  
28, 29 gloss: interpretation  
29 give place: yield; defer  
31 with: by  
31 sure: i.e., rendered sure  
32 earthly: i.e., thanks to  
33 common: i.e., universally-shared-by-Catholics  
34 tied: i.e., was lying  
32 ere: before  
33 by: i.e., to  
36 approved: i.e., proved God-endorsed  
36 so inwardly sure: i.e., made so deeply certain
simple woman, if Tyndale and I brought the truth in debate and question, and that I were waxen so mad to grant him that his false heresies were true... she would not let to believe, and say so too, that we were two mad fools and false heretics both.

And that this is true shall much the better appear when we well examine and consider what congregation Tyndale calleth the catholic church.

Tyndale

I say that Christ's elect church is the whole multitude of all repenting sinners that believe in Christ, and put all their trust and confidence in the mercy of God... feeling in their hearts that God for Christ's sake loveth them and will be—or, rather, is—merciful unto them, and forgiveth them their sins of which they repent... and that he forgiveth them also all the motions unto sin of the which they fear, lest they should thereby be drawn into sin again. And this faith they have without all respect of their own deservings; yea, and for none other cause than that the merciful truth of God the Father, which cannot lie, hath so promised and so sworn.

More

Now hath Tyndale here defined and described us what he called "the church." And forasmuch as his title is, of his chapter, the question "Whether the Church Can Err"... and that he now, for the clearing of the question, declareth that there be two churches—the one which he saith that we take for "the church," which he calleth the pope and his generation, and saith that there is no doubt but that church both may err and in deed so doth... and the other church, which himself calleth the very church, is this that he now defineth—it would seem that he would affirm that this church which himself describeth were the church that cannot err. Wherein what his final and resolute sentence is, ye shall, in his other chapters hereafter following, at a long length very scantly perceive... except his words be somewhat opened and a little more clearly declared than, as it appeareth by his writing, himself would they should be. And nevertheless, I trust they shall be.

Wherefore—to the end ye may the better understand whereabout he goeth... and that he longeth to lead us in darkness, and feed us...
forth with his high, solemn follies that he would were not understood—
let us a little examine the parts of his definition and
description of “the church.”

Where he saith that “Christ’s elect church” is the “whole multitude”
of all repentant sinners that have the conditions further expressed
in his description—we must first ask him how taketh he
there this word “elect.” It had been good reason that he should
have declared whether he mean elect and chosen as our Savior
Christ did elect and choose his church and congregation out of
the Jewish and the Gentilish, to be dedicated unto his service—after
which manner he first elected and chose his twelve apostles, though

Jn 15:16 they were not all finally good, of whose
Jn 6:71 election he said, “Ye have not elected me,
but I have elected you,” and also said

unto them, “Have I not elected and chosen you twelve, and one of
you is a devil?”—or else that he mean by the “elect” church the
church of the final elects and predestinates to glory, being thereunto
predestinate in the prescience and purpose of God before the
creation of the world.

This point—whether he mean that his “whole multitude” of “repenting
sinners” be the one elect church or the other—hath he not
expressed, but hath left us at large to guess and aread (upon his
dark riddles after following) which of these two elections he
meant. Howbeit, for aught that I can see, his description agreeth
with neither of them both.

For as for the first kind of election, after which Christ hath
chosen his catholic church out of the Jewish and Gentilish, to be his
church here in earth: in this kind are there penitents and impenitents

In the true church are both good and bad. For penitents are
good and bad—as our Savior showeth himself in the parables
Mt 13:24–30 both of the field with good corn and
Mt 13:47–50 cockle, and also the net with fishes
Gn 7:2 good and bad…and the Scripture
showeth by the ark of Noah with beasts
clean and unclean…and Christ with his aforesaid words to his

1 high: i.e., high-level / high-flown // solemn: impressive-sounding / authoritative-sounding // follies: idiocies
1 would were not understood: i.e., would have people not recognize as such
5 conditions: characteristics / qualifications // expressed: articulated; spelled out 6, 24 description: delineation
6–7 how taketh he there: how he applies there / what he means there by
7–8 it . . . declared: i.e., it would have been only reasonable of him to have clarified 8, 16, 20 mean: i.e., means
10 after: in accord with 11 manner: mode of procedure 12, 17 final(ly): ultimate(ly)
12 of: about 17 predestinates: people predestined 18 prescience: foreknowledge
18 purpose: determination 22 expressed: articulated // at large: free // aread: try to figure out
22 upon: on the basis of; from 23 dark: cryptic 24 howbeit: but be that as it may // aught: anything
24 agreeeth: matches up 26 after: i.e., by 27 catholic: universal 28 in earth: on earth
28 in this kind: i.e., in the elect church of this kind 32 showeth: makes known 33 corn: grain
36 showeth: indicates // beasts: animals 37 aforesaid: above-mentioned
Jn 6:71 apostles, “Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?”

Now, as for the elect church of predestinates: if he speak thereof as it may be verified in every time since it began (as he must if he speak to the purpose), then are there therein accounted not only repenting sinners, but sinners also some that yet repent them not; and some also that never did the thing whereof they should repent—as was our Blessed Lady while she lived here, and our Savior himself also, for any sin of himself. For he was never penitent sinner… but, being sinless himself, painfully paid for ours. So is not the elect church “all repenting sinners” only, except that either Christ were no man or were also a sinner… or else his manhood not part of this church, but the church of predestinates headless. And in this I speak of that elect church of predestinates… concerning only the congregation of such as shall be saved in the kind of man. For as for to consider angels therein, is very far from this matter.

Yet are there also in this church of elects many that never came to the faith, but are yet enemies thereunto—as Jews, Saracens, or Turks, not yet converted unto the faith. And therefore this elect church will in no wise agree with the definition or description of Tyndale. I would that he therefore, to give his matter more light, had shown us, as I say, which kind of election he meaneth.

Howbeit, we shall guess at his mind as near as we can and make the best of his matter… and then see whether the best be able to stand. He may seem to mean by “Christ’s elect church,” of his description, a part of the elect church of the second manner: that is to wit, as many thereof as be repentant sinners with those other conditions that are expressed in his description. For other than this, I cannot divine what he should mean. But then, as those repentant sinners be a part of the church predestinate… so be they a part of this Catholic church here militant, after the first kind of election, in which are both good and bad… of which whole number the good are the one part.

Yet leaveth he us, after this way, in another doubt: whether the repenting sinners may afterward fall to sin again, and from repentance and so to repentance again, and yet again therefrom.

3, 13, 14 predestinates: i.e., the predestined 4, 35 may: can 5 to the purpose: i.e., with relevance to the point at issue // accounted: counted / included 6 sinners also some: also some sinners 6, 7, 17 that: who 6 yet repent them not: are not yet repentant 6 some also: i.e., also some persons 7 the thing: i.e., anything // should: would 8 while: i.e., throughout the time that // for: i.e., as far as concerns 9 of himself: i.e., committed by him 11 except that: i.e., unless it is the case that 11, 12 were: was 12 his manhood: i.e., that his human nature is 13 headless: i.e., is headless 15 the kind of man: humankind 16 is: i.e., that’s // far: i.e., far off 16 matter: issue // 17 yet: moreover 17–18 never came to: i.e., have never come into 18 yet: as yet 18 as: such as // Saracens: Arab Muslims 19 Turks: Turkish Muslims 20 wise: way 20 agree with: match up with // fit 20, 26, 28 description: delineation 21 would: wish 21 give his matter more light: shed more light on his contention 22 shown: told // meaneth: has in mind 23 mind: thinking 24 matter: case 24–25 able to stand: able to hold up; tenable 26 manner: kind 28 conditions: characteristics / qualifications // expressed: articulated; spelled out 29 divine: figure out / imagine 31 after: according to 32 good: i.e., good people 34 after this way: i.e., by this route // doubt: uncertainty 35 to sin again: back into sin // from: away from 36 so to repentance again: i.e., likewise go back to repentance
He leaveth us also in doubt whether this “elect church” of his description may be deceived and err, or not. For in these two points he wrappeth us up with riddles that he giveth us to read in other chapters—how they may sin and yet sin not, err and yet err not—and readeth his riddles himself, also, so fondly that an old wife would be ashamed to read such riddles so foolishly by the fireside among young children. And yet in this one point, whether “the church” may err or not, is in effect all the whole matter and purpose of his book.

And finally, for all that ever he saith, he leaveth it in doubt whether his repentant sinners—since he granteth that though they “may not sin,” yet they may sin, and that in like wise, though they “cannot err,” yet they can err—be of this “elect church” of his description in these times only in which they sin not nor err not… or else in all those times, too, in which they both sin and err. And here speak I of such sin as is of its nature deadly, though the soul die not by eternal damnation therefor… because he repenteth that sin again ere he die. And I speak of that error, also, which is of its nature sinful and damnable though the soul suffer not eternal damnation therefor… because he repenteth that error afterward, and returneth again to the truth ere ever his body die.

Of all these doubts the more part he never moveth; and such as he moveth in other chapters after, he so fondly assoileth that all the world may see that he nothing seeketh but corners to creep in, where he may lusk and lurk in the dark; out of which we shall, I trust, so bring him into the light that his eyes shall daze to look thereon.

But in the meanwhile this ye see: that howsoever he mean by the “elect church” of his repentant sinners, with all the “feeling faith” that he can frame thereto—yet since men can never know which be they, there can no man have any surety by that church of the true doctrine of God… no more than a man could by that unknown church know which is the true Scripture of God. And therefore is this “elect church” of Tyndale’s description devised only to juggles with, and to deceive our sight, and not to serve in this matter to any substantial purpose.

1 *doubt*: uncertainty (as to)  2, 4, etc. *may*: can  2 *deceived*: misled  // *in*: concerning  3 *wrappeth us up*: besets us / befuddles us  // *giveth*: i.e., enables  3, 5, 6 *read(eth)*: answer(s) / solve(s)  5, 24 *fondly*: ridiculously  5 *wife*: woman  8 *matter*: content  // *purpose*: argument  10 *in doubt*: in question; up in the air  12 *may not*: cannot  // *in like wise*: likewise  13 *of this*: i.e., members of this  16 *deadly*: mortal; lethal  17, 20 *therefor*: for it  18 *repenteth that sin again ere he die*: i.e., has by repentance taken back that sin by the time he dies  19, 21 *error*: going astray; professing of a wrong belief  21–22 *returneth . . . die*: i.e., has come back to the truth by whatever time it is that his body dies  23 *doubts*: questions  // *more part*: greater part; majority  23, 24 *moveth*: brings up  24 *assioileth*: resolves  25 *creep in*: sneak into  26 *lusk*: skulk; move about furtively  // *lurk*: lie low  27–28 *his . . . thereon*: i.e., it will daze his eyes to look at it  29 *howsoever*: i.e., whatsoever  31 *frame*: i.e., contrive and attribute  32 *have*: obtain  // *surety*: certainty  // *by*: from  32 *of*: i.e., of what constitutes  33, 34 *true*: authentic; bona fide  33 *by*: by means of  34 *which*: i.e., which set of writings  36 *juggle*: do some sleight-of-hand with; pull a fast one  37 *purpose*: effect
But yet that it can not only do no good, but is also dreamed out by him to do much harm… ye shall plainly perceive if ye consider what “repentance” and what “faith” he meaneth. For these words will sound very well in the ears of such simple souls as do not, while they read them, consider what manner things Tyndale meaneth by them, and what thing he calleth “repentance” and believing in Christ with a “feeling faith.” But on the other side, he that considereth that Tyndale would have us so to believe in Christ that we should set his Tyndale’s “feeling faith” holy sacraments at naught, and that we should believe that all Christian people have hitherto believed wrong, that have believed that men ought to be shriven, or receive any penance at the priest’s hand, or that have believed that there is any purgatory after this present life, or that put any faith in the Sacrament of the Altar, or any other thing believe thereof than that it is only a sign, memorial, and token of Christ’s death and Passion, and that every man is in a false belief that will any other honor do thereto than only this bare belief… whereof plainly followeth that once to kneel or pray thereto were open and plain idolatry; and that he would have us also believe that to say the Mass with the holy Canon therein, as all Christian realms do, and so many hundred years have done, were heinous deadly sin… and that it were sin also to believe that man, by good works wrought in faith, any reward meritetb toward God… or, finally, that any of the old holy doctors of Christ’s church, since Christ’s days and his apostles’ hitherto, were in the right belief before holy Luther’s days and his own (for sure am I that there was never none of all them that in belief did agree with these twain, nor these twain between themselves)—he that this “feeling faith” considereth, in Tyndale’s teaching… shall soon feel that all his holy, solemn tale of all his “feeling faith” is not worth a fly, but very faithless heresy.

And also, when he heareth him so saintly speak of “repenting”… and then considereth that he would have us repent that ever we were shriven (for shrift he calleth the false invention of Satan) and would have us also to be such as repent that ever they were of the right belief, and such as would have friars and nuns repent their religion and run out and wed together—he that considereth this shall, I say, see that Tyndale’s elect and chosen church...
is a church of chosen heretics, of contrary belief to the church
of which Saint Jerome was a Doctor… and Saint Augustine, and
Saint Gregory, and Saint Ambrose… and all the other old holy
fathers from the apostles’ days hitherto… or else must Tyndale tell
us, once again, some one of all them that believed it lawful for a
monk or a friar professed unto perpetual chastity to run out of
religion and go wed a nun.

Now am I glad, yet, that he cometh forth with repentance, at the
leastwise one way or other. For “faith alone” was wont to do all,
through all a man’s life. And when it was proved them by plain
and evident Scripture that faith could not avail without charity…
then fell they to gloss it and say that faith could never be without

1 Cor 13:2 it. And then being therein reproved
Jas 2:14–18 plainly by Saint Paul and Saint James

both… yet stand they still by their
word, and defend their words only by words against all reason,
and against the plain words of God—not unwritten, which they set not
by, but the very written words in plain and evident scriptures—for
all that they say they believe nothing else! And in that point I
believe them well, and in more, too. For where they say that they believe
nothing but Scripture, I think they say true… for they believe nothing
beside the Scripture, nor yet the Scripture neither, as their
own writings do full clearly declare.

But, now—since they say still that “faith alone” sufficeth, and yet say
that there must be charity too… and now say there must be repentance
too—they say none other thing, in effect, but that it is enough
to have faith alone if a man have other virtues too… and that it
sufficeth to have faith alone, so that faith be not alone; for and it
be alone, then is it no faith at all. Is not this another goodly riddle
whereby Tyndale teacheth allthing plainly?

Nor this point will never be well patched with his “feeling” faith
and “historical,” as ye shall hereafter hear, when we come to the
chapter.

But yet again, in the meanwhile, because he speaketh of “repentant”
sinners that they make the elect church of Christ: I would
wit of him whether one part of repenting must not be to
repent heresies. If not… then Christ’s elect church may keep them

1 to: i.e., to that of 2–3: These four were in More’s day the only Doctors of the Church formally recognized as
such by the Western Church. 3 Gregory: i.e., Gregory the Great // and all: i.e., and to what was taught by all
3–4 old holy fathers: i.e., classic theologians 4 hitherto: i.e., up to ours 5 lawful: licit; morally permissible
6 chastity: continence / celibacy 6–7 ran out of religion: abscond from religious life 9 wont: i.e., supposed
9, 30 all(thing): everything 10 proved: i.e., proved to 10–11, 18 plain and evident: clear and conclusive
12 fell . . . say: they resorted to explaining that away by saying 13 reproved: refuted / proved wrong
15–16 their word: i.e., what they said 17–18 set not by: have no regard for 18 for: despite
19 that they say they: i.e., their claiming to 21 but: other than // say true: are telling the truth
22 beside: apart from // yet: even 23 full: quite // declare: show 28 so that: provided that; so long as
28 and: if 29 goodly: splendid 31 this . . . with: will this point ever be well put together with
31–32 his . . . “historical”: i.e., his thing about “experiential” versus “intellectual” faith
34 speaketh of: says about 35 make: make up; constitute 36 wit: inquire
37 repent: i.e., repent of holding / retract 396/37–397/1 may keep them still: can continue to hold them
still, and be a church of heretics. And on the other side, if a
man must repent his heresies, then ask I Tyndale again, how
shall an unlearned man know which they be? “The preacher shall
tell them,” saith Tyndale. So say we too. But what if the preachers do
not agree therein? How shall he know the true preachers from the false?
“Let him look on the Scripture,” saith Tyndale, “and thereby shall he
judge them—by the right rule of the word of God.” But thereto I say
that all things that we be bound to believe and observe is not
written in Scripture, as I have in the Third Book more than plainly
by the plain Scripture proved. And besides that, unlearned men are

Note not able—nor every learned man, neither—
surely to discern and judge the true
sense of the Scripture in a great thing grown in debate and controversy,
where plain texts of Scripture seem to speak for both
the sides. And therefore it must needs be that there is by God
provided and left some such surety as may bring us out of all
such perplexity. And that is, as I have said, his Holy Spirit sent
and left perpetually with his church, to lead it so, by his own

Jn 14:16–17; 16:13 promise, ever into all necessary truth,
that whoso hear and believe his church
may be sure that he cannot be deceived; but that if a false teacher
would lead men out of the right faith, the church of Christ shall

1 Tm 3:15 reprove him and condemn him, and
put the people in certainty. For which
cause Saint Paul saith that “the church” is the “firm establishment
and the pillar of truth” for the inviolable surety of doctrine. And
therefore that can never be no church but a known church.

But then saith Tyndale that it is true that there is all surety in
the church of Christ. But he saith that the church of Christ is
only the number of “repenting sinners” that have the “feeling faith”
which himself describeth. Then we ask him, “Whereby shall a man
know them, and be sure of them… so that he may use them  for his
sure and undoubtable judges between the two contrary preachers of
which the one is true, the other false?”

“It maketh no matter,” saith he, “though ye know them not.” How
shall I then be put in surety by them, but if I know that they be
the church with whom God promised to leave his Holy
Spirit… and whom he willed every man to hear and to obey? “Ye shall perceive it,” saith he, “by that ye see they be good men, and show the fruits of faith in their living.” I cannot be thereby sure… since a hypocrite may feign them. And also himself granteth, after in his chapter, that they “sin and yet sin not”… so that though they “sin not” (because of their “feeling faith,” and their repentance following), yet they may, right often, do sin, in such wise that they may do, and indeed do, many such abominable deeds as men be hanged for, and worthy, for much less; and such that themselves should for the same, saving for their “feeling faith,” be damned in hell perpetually… from which no “historical faith” could keep them, as Tyndale saith.

Now, then, if he say true… it is impossible for me to know the elect church of feeling faithful, repentant sinners, to take the sure judgment by.

Then if he walk, as it were, in a maze, and come to the first point again and say, “It forceth not, for they shall be discerned by the Scripture itself”—that gap have I so stopped already that he shall stick still at a stake and rest his bones in the bushes ere ever he get out there. Wherefore when he shall see himself unable to defend his own chosen, unknown church in the point in which it should specially serve—that is, for the sure teaching of the true faith—he shall then find none other shift but to look whether he might make the Catholic, known church to fall in the like default… and shall ask us how we do know the true church of Christ, by whose doctrine we may be sure of the right belief. Whereunto we shall answer that therein can no man be deceived. For it is the common-known Church of Christ, which is in this world very sickly, and hath many sore members (as hath sometimes the natural body of a man)… and some sore astonied, and for a time cold and dead… which yet catcheth heat and life again, if it be not precided and cut off from the body.

This Catholic, known church is that mystical body, be it never so sick, whereof the principal head is Christ. Of which body whether

No man in the Catholic Church can be deceived. Church of all Christian people not gone out nor cast out. This whole body both of good and bad is the Catholic Church of Christ, which is in this world very sickly, and hath many sore members (as hath sometimes the natural body of a man)… and some sore astonied, and for a time cold and dead… which yet catcheth heat and life again, if it be not precided and cut off from the body.
the successor of Saint Peter be his vicar general and head under him, as all Christian nations have now long taken him… is no part of this question. For to this matter it is enough that this Body Mystical of Christ, this Catholic Church, is that body that is animated,

Ps 67:7 (Vulgate) hath life spiritual, and is inspired, with the Holy Spirit of God that “maketh them of one faith in the house of God” by leading them into the consent of every necessary truth of revealed faith, be they in conditions and manners never so sick, as long as they be conformable and content in unity of faith to cleave unto the body.

Of this church can we not be deceived, nor of the right faith can we not be deceived while we cleave to this church… since this church is it into which God hath given his Spirit of faith, and in this church both good and bad profess one faith. For if any profess the contrary faith—be it any one man or any one country—they be controlled, noted, and reproved by the whole body, and soon known from the body. Now, if it happen any privy heretics to lurk in this body, yet all the while they agree with the body in open profession of faith, and teach nothing contrary… they cannot beguile us, though they may by secret heresies of their hearts sinfully deceive themselves. And when they teach the contrary—then are they, as I say, reproved openly by the body… and either reformed and cured, or else cut off from the body and cast out thereof. So that this church is known well enough… and therefore may be well used as a sure judge for to discern between the true doctrine and the false, and the true preacher and false, concerning the right faith and the discerning of the true word of God, written or unwritten, from the counterfeit word of man… and in the discerning of the right understanding of the Scripture of God, as far forth as of necessity pertaineth unto salvation.

How Tyndale’s chosen church may be known And this advantage that I speak of have we by that this church is known—whereas Tyndale’s chosen church of “repenting sinners,” we can never know them but if we see them walk in our church in procession with a candle before the cross, or stand before the pulpit with a faggot in their necks. And yet can we not know them so, neither… for they may seem repentant openly and yet think in their hearts full shrewdly, as they commonly do. Now,

3 to: with respect to // matter: issue 5 with: by 7 the consent of: i.e., unanimous consensus regarding 8 in: in terms of 8–9 conditions and manners: i.e., moral states and behaviors 9 never so: no matter how 9 conformable: disposed to conform // content: willing 11 of this: by this // deceived: led astray 12 be deceived: make a mistake // while: as long as 13 it: the one 14 good and: i.e., the good people and the // one: the same 14–15 the contrary faith: i.e., a contrary belief 15 controlled: taken to task // 16 noted: stigmatized // 16, 21 reproved: censured // 16 soon: readily 17 if… in: i.e., if any clandestine heretics happen to be lying low within 18 open: overt; public 19, 24, etc. may: can 20 secret… of: i.e., heresies held secretly in // deceive themselves: lead themselves astray 24 sure: reliable; sure-to-be-right 24, 26 discerning; distinguishing 25 the true preacher and false: i.e., the preacher telling the truth and the one not 26 true: genuine; actual 27 written or unwritten: i.e., whether written in Scripture or not written there 29 of… unto: in an essential way is connected with 31 that: the fact that 33 know them: i.e., know who these people are // but if: unless 33–35 walk… necks: These were things done by people abjured of heresy. 35 faggot: bundle of sticks 35 in: i.e., tied around 36 so: in that way // openly: outwardly 37 full shrewdly: very wickedly
whereby we shall be sure that this known, Catholic church is the very, true church that is to be believed... and that no man may be surely believed that agreeth not with the faith of this church—albeit I have, both in my Dialogue and in sundry places of my three former books of this present work, well and plainly proved you—yet shall I finally, before I finish this work, by such clear, open marks and tokens show you, with evident reason and plain Scripture furnished, that no child shall after need anything to doubt thereof.

But now consider, in the meanwhile, that Tyndale’s definition or description of “the church”... by which he calleth it the number of “all repenting sinners” with all his other conditions adjoined thereunto... is first full of darkness; and when it is opened... it agreed neither with one church nor other. And yet is it by another point of his own false doctrine utterly destroyed. For he teacheth plainly

Oh, what a saying is this! that whosoever do after Baptism sin once of purpose (willingly, and not only of weakness and infirmity), he shall never be saved, but all his repentance after, though he trust never so much in God, and have after never so sure faith in him, shall never serve him to salvation, but he shall be finally damned; as I shall show you further after. And then ye see plainly that his definition of his “elect” church is by his own doctrine destroyed. For the elect church cannot be the number of all repenting sinners that trust to be saved in Christ’s Passion, if some such repenting sinners shall never be saved by his Passion, as Tyndale plainly lieth. And therefore since he hath failed of his definition of “the church,” and thereby lost and spilled all his purpose—let us now consider whether he handle any more wisely the remnant of his goodly matter.

Tyndale

This faith have they without all respect of their own deservings; yea, and for none other cause than that the merciful truth of God the Father, which cannot lie, hath so promised and so sworn.

More

I doubt not, good readers, but ye remember well that all the doctrine of Christ’s church is full of warning that no man should put

1 whereby: by what means; how  
2 may: can  
3 agreeth not: is not in conformity  
5 well and: good and; quite  
6 marks: indications  
7 tokens: signs  
8 anything to doubt thereof: be in any doubt about that  
9 consider: take note  
10 description: delineation  
11 conditions: qualifications  
12 darkness: obscurity; nebulousness  
13 a saying: an assertion  
14 of purpose: purposely  
15 never so: no matter how  
16 only of: just because of  
17 serve: i.e., bring  
18 after: later on  
19 sure: firm a  
20 finally: irreversibly  
21 of his definition of: i.e., in his attempt to define  
22 spilled all his purpose: wrecked his whole argument  
23 wisely: astutely  
24 remnant: rest  
25 goodly matter: splendid case  
26 all respect of: i.e., any eye to  
27 the merciful truth of: i.e., by his merciful pledge  
28 which: who  
29 but: i.e., that
a proud trust and confidence in his own works, nor once think
that he can of himself alone, without God’s gracious help, do

The true doctrine of
Christ’s church

any good work at all... and great cause
hath to fear and mistrust all his own
works, for imperfect circumstances

seldom perceived by himself. And also that in all that a man may
do, he doth but his only duty; and that the best work were
naught worth to-heaven-ward of the nature of the work itself—not
were it for the liberal goodness of God, that listeth so highly to
reward it... and yet would not reward it so, saving for the Passion
of his own Son. All these things, and many such others more, be so
daily taught and preached in the Church... that I trust, in good faith,
that almost every good old wife can tell them.

And therefore it appeareth well that Tyndale varieth not with us
for so far... but that he meaneth a far further thing where he
saith that the “elect church” trusteth so utterly to be forgiven all
sin, and “motions unto sin,” without any “respect of their own
deserving”—and plainly meaneth therein (as in other places also he
plainly declareth himself, which I have in my former books
proved and reproved) not only that men should not need, but also
that it were sin, to go about any good work wrought with grace,
in faith, to deserve anything toward the getting of full and perfect
forgiveness.

To this point cometh Tyndale’s holy “feeling faith,” that feeleth
always full forgiveness, without any regard or respect of man’s
own endeavor to deserve it. This false-feeling faith hath Tyndale
taken of Luther... when he and all the rabble of their sect say that
faith of necessity bringeth forth good works, as the fruit of the tree
of faith. And yet they say that good works be naught worth, and thereby
make they the tree of faith little better. For what good tree can it be,
whereof the good fruit is naught worth?

But Tyndale and Luther both lie loud in both the points.
For both may a man have the right faith idle and workless, and
therefore dead and fruitless—dead, I say, not in the nature and
substance of belief and faith... but dead as to the attaining of
Good works purchase heaven. — and also, good works wrought in faith, hope, and charity be very profitable toward obtaining of forgiveness and getting reward in heaven… except the Scripture of God be false, when it saith that as the water quencheth the fire, so doth almsdeed void sin; and except our Savior himself say false, where he saith, “Give your superfluous substance in alms, and then, lo, Lk 11:41 are ye all clean.” And in like wise where Mt 10:40–42 he promiseth reward in heaven, in sundry Lk 16:19–31 plain places of Scripture, for good works done here in earth.

Now, if Tyndale answer that the good works be nothing worth of themselves, nor without faith, as he answereth me in his answer to the Third Book of my Dialogue: then may every child see that he is driven to the hard wall, and fain to seek a shameful shift. For what thing is aught worth of itself to-heaven-ward, without God’s grace and the great goodness of God? No fiery charity, though men would burn for God’s sake, could deserve heaven of itself, without Rom 8:18 the liberal goodness of God. For as Saint Paul saith, the passions of this world “be not worthy to win the glory to come, that shall be shown upon us.”

And if he say that good works be naught worth because they be naught worth without faith… so might he as well say that faith were naught worth because it is naught worth without charity. So that ye may plainly see that he seeketh nothing but shifts… which will yet serve of naught when he hath altogether done.

Good works are to be feared. For ye may, finally, perceive that though every man may well fear that the works which himself hath done, seemed they never so good, were yet, for some lack upon his part in the doing, so imperfect in the deep-secret sight of God that they were unworthy to serve him or be anything rewarded—and also that, were they never so pure and perfect, they were not yet worthy such reward but of God’s liberal goodness—yet is it a very false faith and a pestilent heresy to believe as Tyndale here teacheth us: that God will save such as may purchase: See 54/11–19. 3 forgiveness: i.e., forgiveness of the debt of punishment 4, 6 except: unless 5 almsdeed: almsgiving 6 void: i.e., cancel the debt of punishment for // say false: tells a falsehood 7 superfluous: surplus // substance: wealth 8 in like wise: likewise 10 plain places: explicit texts 11 in: on 14, 25, 27 may: can 14 every: any 15 the hard wall: an impregnable impasse / desperate straits 15 fail: constrained 15, 25 shift(s): maneuver(s) / subterfuge(s) 16 aught worth: worth anything 16 to-heaven-ward: i.e., for getting to heaven or being rewarded there 17 fiery charity: i.e., charity however fiery 18 would: i.e., were to literally // deserve: merit 20 passions: sufferings 21 worthy: of sufficient value 21 shown upon: revealed in 22, 23, 24 naught worth: of no worth 23 might: could // well: rightly 24 were: i.e., is 25 plainly: clearly 26 serve of naught: i.e., do nothing for him; get him nowhere 26 hath altogether done: i.e., has tried them all / is all done 27 feared: regarded with distrust 29, 32 never so: no matter how 30 for: on account of // lack: deficiency // imperfect: defective 31 unworthy to serve him: not of sufficient worth to do him any good 32 anything: at all 33 were not yet worthy: i.e., yet would not be deserving of 34 pestilent: pernicious / extremely dangerous 35 believe as: believe what // such as may: i.e., those who will
work without any respect or regard unto their deserving; as
though he rought not whether they did good or ill, but will save all
such as him list, do they what they list, only because him list…
and that himself so listeth for none other cause but only because
he hath so promised and sworn.

For surely, neither is the promise the cause (as I have in mine
other book shown), but the goodness of God which caused him so to
promise; nor, also, he hath not so sworn, nor so promised, neither,

Ps 101:3                              that he will save man without any
Mt 25:31–46                           regard of good works… but hath both

Note                                promised and sworn the clean contrary:

Ps 101:3                              that but if we work well if we may, or
Mt 25:31–46                           repent that we did not and be in purpose to do… else shall our faith

10                               stand us in little stead, but greatly aggrieve and increase the pain

of our damnation. And now that his faith is proved very plainly
false and faithless… it is a world to see how royally he runneth forth
in the praise, as though it were proved true.

Tyndale
And this faith and knowledge is everlasting life; and by this we
be born anew, and made the sons of God, and obtain forgiveness
of sins, and are translated from death to life, and from the
wrath of God unto his love and favor. And this faith is the mother of
all truth, and bringeth with her the Spirit of all truth—which
Spirit purgeth us, as from all sin, even so from all lies and error

Ps 101:3                              noisome and hurtful. And this faith is the foundation laid of the
Mt 25:31–46                           apostles and prophets, whereupon Paul saith (Eph 2) that we are

20                               built… and thereby of the household of God. And this faith is the

rock wherein Christ built his congregation.

More
Lo what a praise he hath made you of this faith that feeleth that
folk should need to do no good works; how he calleth it “everlasting
life” to come to the bare knowledge of that faith that shall
take away from us all respect and regard of deserving any
reward or thank, the rather for any good works. For if men
might have any such respect… then were it great peril lest men
would fall the more to do them! For other great peril I see none,

1 work: act // any respect: i.e., giving any thought 1, 10, 33 regard: consideration
1 deserving: i.e., thereby meriteth something 2 rought: cared 2–3 all such as: i.e., all those
3 him list: he chooses to // what they list: whatever they please 4 himself so listeth: he so chooses
4 none: no 4, 6 cause: reason 6 surely: assuredly
6–7 mine other book: i.e., the previously published part of this work. (See 106/7–17.)
11 clean contrary: complete contrary; exact opposite 12 but if: unless // work well: do good works
12 may: can 13 be in purpose: intend; are resolved // do: i.e., do some
14 stand us in little head: do little for us // aggrieve: worsen / intensify 16 world: wonder
17 the praise: i.e., his extolling of it 24 even: just 25 noisome: noxious // hurtful: harmful
25 of: by 27 of the: i.e., made members of the 30 lo: look
30 praise he hath made you of: i.e., laudation he has made you of / panegyric he has written you on
31 should need to do no: i.e., need not do any 32 bare: mere 33, 35 respect: thought
33 deserving: earning / meriteth 34 thank: credit // the rather: i.e., and especially
35 might: i.e., could legitimately // have: take // were it great peril lest: i.e., would there be the great danger that
36 fall: come
considering that we be well taught to put no proud confidence in

\[ \text{Put no proud confidence in works.} \]

them, but refer all the thank of them to God, by whose help and grace we do them.

Now wot ye well that no good man can deny but that for lack of such works, men shall be damned, as Christ saith himself in the Gospel. And hard it were that, the good nature of God being more ready to reward than to punish... would punish us for the lacking, and not reward us for the having; namely since himself saith, in the same Gospel, that he shall give men heaven for their almsdeed.

But Tyndale, as he denieth the one, so denieth he the other too, and with some fond gloss will void the Gospel and all... and then go boldly forth with his “faith” and boast it, and say, “This faith and knowledge is everlasting life.” But all faithful folk will say again, “This faith and knowledge is everlasting death.” For this faith hath Luther and Friar Huessgen both, and yet be far from everlasting life. For besides that abominable heresy itself (against all regard of good works), they be not agreed in belief concerning the Sacrament of the Altar—the one believing it to be very bread, the other nothing else but bread, and false both twain. And Tyndale followeth the falsers of them both. And so this faith delivereth them not from lies—besides that they both, and Tyndale with them, do believe, if they lie not, that it is lawful for monks and friars to break their vowed chastity and run out and wed nuns. Which point of false faith is no part of the foundation that the apostles built upon... but Saint Paul preached the contrary, saying that vowed widows willing to wed should have “damnation” because they had frustrated and broken their “former faith,” that is to wit, their faith given to God in their vow of abstinence from all carnal knowledge of man... against which faith they would now wed, and give a second faith unto man in marriage. But now goeth Tyndale forth with his tale, and would seem to prove it true by Scripture.
Tyndale

Christ asked his apostles (Mt 16) whom they took him for. And Peter answered for them all, saying, “I say that thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, that art come into this world.” That is, “We believe that thou art he that was promised unto Abraham should come and bless us and deliver us.” Howbeit, Peter yet wist not by what means. But now it is opened throughout all the world: that, through the offering of his body and blood . . .

More

Here it is necessary that every wise reader mark well and consider the cause and purpose of Tyndale in bringing in this confession of Saint Peter’s faith… where he said, “Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, that art come into this world.”

Ye shall understand that Tyndale and his master Martin and his fellows, forasmuch as they be fallen from the right belief in many great articles of our faith… and considering that with such slender proofs as Tyndale bringeth for his part, and thereto so plainly reproveth, every good Christian man that any care hath of his own soul will be sore afraid to put it in jeopardy of damnation by falling in any point from the faith of Christ’s whole Catholic Church for the word of a fond wedded friar or any fond fellow of his—he deviseth here to take away that fear, and to make men believe at the leastwise that so a man believe the thing that Peter then confessed… it sufficeth enough for salvation, though he believe no further articles besides. And thus far sufficeth for him to make folk the less afeard to draw toward him. But bringing us once so far forward… then will he further for his purpose say that not only no man is bound upon damnation to believe any more, but that, further, it is damnable in some things to believe more… and that in some things it neither availeth nor hurteth to believe any more. And therefore it is wisdom to stay well ourselves in the beginning. For Tyndale saith, as I have in my First Book shown you, many things against divers of the sacraments which he saith is deadly sin to believe. And here he putteth for faith enough, the faith that Saint Peter confessed. And in his chapter answered in my Third Book of this work—“Whether the Apostles Left

2 for: i.e., to be 4, 13 that art come into this world: This was actually said by not Peter but Martha; see John 11:27.
6 howbeit: however // yet wist not: did not yet know 7 opened: revealed
10–11 mark . . . bringing in: i.e., note well, and take into consideration, Tyndale’s reason and purpose for adducing
11–12 confession . . . Peter’s: i.e., profession Saint Peter made of his 15 fellows: i.e., fellow heretics
15, 20 from: away from 15 in: concerning 17 slender: flimsy; unsubstantial // bringeth: advances
17 part: side of the argument // thereto: moreover 18 reproveth: proves fallacious
18 any care bath of: has any concern for; cares at all about 19 sore: terribly // in jeopardy: at risk
21 fond: foolishly self-confident // fellow: cohort / follower 22 deviseth: schemes
23 so: provided that; so long as 24, 35 confessed: professed 24 it sufficeth enough: i.e., that is plenty sufficient
25 thus far: i.e., going only that far 26 afeard: afraid 27 so: that
28 no man is bound upon: is no one obliged on pain of 29, 30 in: with regard to; about
31 it . . . to: wisdom dictates that we // stay well ourselves: well restrain ourselves / keep a good grip on ourselves
32 saith: makes mention of 33 against: about // divers: several 34 is deadly sin: i.e., it is damnable sinful
34 putteth for: posits for; proposes as being
Anything Unwritten That Were Necessary to Salvation”—there saith he that to believe or not believe the Assumption of our Lady, or her perpetual virginity, and many such others more, is but a belief of a history and nothing doth pertain unto salvation.

And hereafter, in his other chapter “How a Christian Man Cannot Err, and How He May Yet Err”—in that chapter he saith that the very Christian man cannot err in anything that should be against the promises which are in Christ… and in other things their errors be not unto damnation, though they be never so great. Whereof he by and by putteth example of the perpetual virginity of our Lady—in the not-belief whereof, he saith that a man being led of ignorance, by the words of the Gospel, to believe that she were not a perpetual virgin… might in case, for lack of the contrary teaching, die in that misbelief and yet take no harm thereby, “because it hurteth not the redemption that is in Christ’s blood. For though she had none but Christ, I am,” saith Tyndale, “therefor never the more saved; neither, yet, the less though she had had. And in suchlike a hundred, that plucketh not a man’s faith from Christ, they might err and yet be never the less saved, though the contrary were written in the Gospel.”

Lo, here have I, well-beloved readers, nothing letted, partly to repeat again his words written in his other chapter before, partly to anticipate his words written in his other chapter after. Which words of his I have out of both places taken into this… to the intent that, albeit I partly have and partly shall touch them in their own proper places, yet ye should see the whole sum and effect of this tale concerning the faith before your face laid together… which he draweth in pieces and pulleth into sundry parts because he would, by his will, fain steal away from us in the dark, and leave us without any plain perceiving of his ungracious mind.

But now that I have laid, in effect, all his whole opinion together as touching the faith (saving his only difference and division of “historical faith” and “feeling faith,” which I shall reserve unto its proper place), I shall a little examine this faith of his, that ye may look thereon in the light, and see whether it be sufficient for your salvation or not.

1 were necessary to salvation: i.e., one must believe or do in order to get to heaven  
2 the: i.e., in the history: historical narrative  
3 nothing doth pertain unto: has no bearing on  
4 very: i.e., true / really  
5 err: i.e., make any error that would go  
6 in other: with regard to other  
7 may: can  
8 never so: no matter how  
9 by and by: immediately  
10 puttheth example of: gives as an example  
11 in the not-belief whereof: i.e., regarding the not-believing in which  
12 which he draweth in pieces and pulleth into sundry parts because he would, by his will, fain steal away from us in the dark, and leave us without any plain perceiving of his ungracious mind.  
13 as touching: as regards  
14 saving his only: with the one exception of his  
15 though: even if  
16 nor: not at all  
17 tharfor never: for that; on that account  
18 yet: moreover  
19 suchlike a hundred: a hundred suchlike things  
20 do not pull one’s faith away:  
21 nothing letted: not at all forborne  
22 although  
23 touch: discuss  
24 tale: story / talk  
25 different  
26 by his will: by his preference / if he could manage this  
27 clear: ungracious; ungodly; evil  
28 mind: intent  
29 division: separation  
30 historical: i.e., intellectual. (See note for 314/6.)  
31 opinion: set of views  
32 thereon: at it
First, in this faith that Saint Peter confessed is never a word of purgatory.

Now doubt I not but that Tyndale, when he readeth this word, will well and merrily laugh thereat and say, “No more there needeth!” For that faith, will he say, will put out and quench the fire of purgatory clean.

Then will we ask him how will he laugh at the fire of hell; for of that fire is there nothing spoken in that confession neither, but that he might, for all that confession, ween well enough that there were no hell. If Tyndale will say nay… “for he must needs believe that the thing from which Christ, the ‘Son of the Living God,’ was come into the world to redeem mankind must needs be hell”… and that therefore Peter’s confession includeth of necessity the belief of hell: I answer Tyndale again that therein was no necessity. For Peter might believe at that time, for any word that was in his confession, that Christ’s coming was only to redeem us, not from hell, but from the loss of heaven; from which he might think, peradventure, that all mankind were banished unto such a place as was limbus patrum—though out of pain, yet suspiring

Untbaptized children sighing after the sight of God and joy of heaven—and into such estate as children live in that die unbaptized. Which though they enter not heaven, because they die the children of wrath unreconciled—yet the merciful anger of God driveth them not down into sensible pain and to the feeling of the infernal fire.

This faith might, peradventure, Saint Peter have, for anything spoken of in his confessed faith; yea, and might have therewith also a belief that for actual sins, men were punished after this life, some less while, some longer, and yet none everlastingly… but every man at length brought unto peace and rest, though never no man to the bliss of heaven but only by Christ’s coming. And thus might Saint Peter have rather a belief of purgatory than of hell, for any word mentioned in his confession, wherein he confesseth not the belief of either other. Saint Peter also nothing there confessed of Christ’s Passion, descension into hell, resurrection, nor of his ascension… which things be not only principal points of our faith, but also some such as God’s promise specially dependeth upon.

Unto which promises Tyndale restraineth all our necessary
faith. Howbeit, of truth, Tyndale restraineth it therein too sore. For then we be not bound to believe that the Holy Ghost were equal with the Father and the Son, for that was no promise made unto us. And yet are we bound to believe that truth, whereof is also nothing spoken in Peter’s confessed faith.

Therefore it will be very hard (if impossible be hard) for Tyndale to sustain that the faith which Saint Peter confessed then, were sufficient to serve every Christian man now. And therefore let no man take any boldness upon Tyndale’s tale to think as he would have him: that only the thing that Peter there confessed were enough now to believe… and that in all other things that the Church believeth, which Christ and his Holy Spirit have taught his Church since, were but things indifferent, and nothing forced whether they were believed or not.

Tyndale shall be constrained to come to this even by his own words—albeit that he affirmeth for fast and sure somewhat more than he may make good. For he saith that Peter meant by his words, “We believe that thou art he that was promised unto Abraham should come and bless us and deliver us.” And yet, he saith, Peter wist not by what means Christ should deliver us. “But now it is open,” he saith, “throughout all the world: that through the offering of his body and blood. . . .”

Now, if Peter at that time knew not the thing that must now needs be believed upon pain of damnation—ye may thereby see that the faith which Peter confessed then is not enough now for every man to be saved by… but we be bound to the belief also of such things as God hath revealed, and made open to be believed, unto his church any time since. Or else must Tyndale tell us at what time God bade whoa and gave us leave to believe him no further, whatsoever he would further say to us.

Consider yet also that Tyndale agreeth that the very, true Christians of his elect, unknown church… do believe the article of the perpetual virginity of our Lady as soon as they be taught it, and acknowledge their former error; whereby he granteth that he which doth not so is none of the elects. Then say I that thereupon it followeth, by his own words, that the article of the perpetual virginity of our Lady is a necessary article of our faith.

And thus always must Tyndale, upon his own words, confess that all the articles revealed further by Christ unto his church must
be believed as firmly as the faith that was by Peter confessed… or else we be not only discharged of the belief of our Lady’s perpetual virginity, which Tyndale is now yet brought unawares to grant for an article necessary, since it is now taught and known… but also of the belief of Christ’s death, descension, resurrection, ascension, and of the Godhood of the Holy Ghost, with divers other necessary points more.

But here it is to be considered that Saint Peter in confessing Christ to be the “Son of the Living God”… did confess the very point whereupon all the whole faith hangeth. For in that point alone he confesseth that all his doctrine must needs be believed for true, and all his commandments fulfilled. And thereupon it followeth further that, since Tyndale will believe no more of his doctrine than he can find written in the Scripture (whereas the Scripture itself saith that all was never written); nor will not also believe and obey Christ’s church, according to Christ’s commandment—nor will not so much as know it, but fondly frameth an unknown, whom he for lack of knowledge can neither believe nor obey—it followeth, I say, that Tyndale believeth no piece of the faith that Saint Peter confessed! And so he doth but prattle and prate of “feeling faith”… without the feeling of any faith at all, or any true belief, historical or other.

And yet goeth he forth in the boast of that article of the faith which, as himself confesseth, was out of Peter’s confession. For he saith that Saint Peter was not aware of Christ’s Passion when he made that confession.

Tyndale

. . . that offering [of Christ’s body and blood] is a satisfaction for the sin of all that repent, and a purchasing of whatsoever they can ask to keep them in favor, and that they sin no more.

More

How Christ’s offering up of himself is a satisfaction for all that repent

Truth is it that the Passion of Christ and offering up of himself unto his Father upon the cross is a satisfaction for the sin of all that repent—so that

1, 8, 9, 11, 22 confess(eth)(ed)(ing): profess(es)(ed)(ing) 2 not only discharged: freed not only
2, 5 of the belief of: i.e., of having to believe in
4 necessary: i.e., that one has to believe in order to get to heaven 5 descension: descent (into the underworld)
6 Godhood: divinity // divers: several 8 considered: noted / taken into consideration
10 hingeth: hinges 16 all was never: i.e., not everything he taught was ever
19 know it: i.e., acknowledge that it is Christ’s church // fondly: ludicrously // frameth: hypothesizes / posits
19 unknown: i.e., unknown one 20 knowledge: i.e., ability to identify 21 piece: part 22 so: thus
24 historical: i.e., intellectual. (See note for 314/6.)
25 goeth . . . that: i.e., he proceeds with a vaunting of an / he goes ahead and vaunts an
26 himself: he himself
26 confesseth: admits // out of: not included in 26, 28 confession: profession of faith
27 was not aware of: i.e., i.e., knew nothing about
32 ask: i.e., possibly need
32 to . . . favor: i.e., in order to be kept in good graces with God
34 truth is it: true it is
37 so: provided
we repent aright and effectually, by confession, contrition, and by penitential deeds; revenging our sins upon ourselves with good works of charity, the more largely increased, toward our neighbors; doing fruitful penance, bringing forth the fruits

Mt 3:8; Acts 26:20 of penance… and, according to the counsel
Col 1:24; 1 Pt 4:8 of Saint John the Baptist, not slight fruits, simple and single, but fruits good, great, and worthy… and yet not of themselves worthy, but such as the satisfaction of Christ maketh worthy, without which we could nothing satisfy… but with which we may, since his pleasure is that we so should, and not so take his death for so full satisfaction of altogether, that we should therefore be careless and slothful to do any penance ourselves for our own sin.

Tyndale will say to this that he can be content that we should do good deeds… but not by way of penance for our sin; and that we should sometimes fast, and otherwise afflict our flesh, to the intent to tame our flesh against the sin to come… but nothing to punish it the more for any sin that is past.

Now is this teaching of Tyndale much like as though he would advise us, “Be never the better because thou hast been naught; do never the better because thou hast done evil; run never the faster forth in virtue because thou hast long sat still in sin.”

But Saint Paul, against Tyndale’s doctrine, ran forth the faster because he began later, and took the more pain for the faith because he had been a persecutor of the faith. And though he never thought thus… “If I had been sooner converted, I would have done less good”… yet had he this mind: that because he began so late, he would do the more… and because he had been bad, he would be the better…

Rom 6:19 as himself counseleth others—“As ye have exhibited and given your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity, from iniquity to iniquity… so now again exhibit and give your members to serve righteousness, that ye may be sanctified.”

Tyndale

And Christ answered, “Upon this rock I will build my congregation”—that is, “Upon this faith”—“and against the rock of this
faith can no sin, no hell, no devil, no lies, none error prevail.”
For whatsoever any man hath committed… if he repent and come
to this rock he is safe. And that this faith is the only way by the
which the church goeth unto God, and unto the inheritance of
all his riches… testify all the apostles and prophets, and all the
Scripture, with signs and miracles, and all the blood of martyrs.
And whosoever go to God and to forgiveness of sins, or salvation,
by any other way than this… the same is a heretic—out of the right
way, and not of Christ’s church.

More
Lo, these words of Tyndale seem very gay and glorious. But
when ye shall well examine them… as gay as the head glittereth with
the pretext of Christ’s own holy words, yet shall ye find the tail
of his tale as poisoned as any serpent. For where he boasteth and saith,
“Against the rock of this faith can no sin, no hell, no devil, no lies, nor
none error prevail; for whatsoever [sin] any man hath committed, if he
repent and come to this rock he is safe,” ye may not forget that he meaneth
always that he which repenteth and cometh to the rock of this
faith is safe, for all his sins, without confession or any endeavor
through good works toward satisfaction; and so his whole tale is a
false heresy.

Ye shall also consider that his tale hangeth evil together… and
the words by which he proveth that “against the rock of this
faith there can no sin, nor no devil, nor none error prevail”
do not prove that point nothing at all. For though it were true
that he saith, that whatsoever sin a man have committed, “if he
repent and come to the rock of this faith he is safe”—yet might the
devil prevail against the rock of that faith… since it might be that
the devil might bring a man having that faith into a deadly
sin that he should haply never repent. And therefore, if Tyndale
will boast that the devil cannot in any person prevail against
the rock of that faith, but that the rock of that faith shall save any
man that once getteth up thereon, he may not set “if” nor “and” thereunto…
but he must tell us then that either whoso stand upon that rock
shall not sin at all, or else that he shall be sure to repent his
sin, or, finally, that sin he never so fast, he shall be safe enough
whether he repent or not. For else may the devil prevail against

1, 16, 24 none: no 3, 17, 19, 27 safe: i.e., saved 3 way: route 5 riches: wealth / riches
5 testify: attest; bear witness 7 go to God and to: i.e., sets out to find God and 8, 9 way: path
8 out of: off of 9 of: i.e., a member of 11 lo: oh yes 12 gay: brightly / showily / attractively
13 pretext of: veneer of / façade of being supported by 14, 20, 22 tale: speech 14 poisoned as: i.e., venomous as that of
15 may: i.e., must 18 he which: whoever 19 for: despite; regardless of 20 toward: i.e., toward the making of
21 false: [a polite-language equivalent of] damn 22 consider: i.e., note 22 evil: poorly
23 nothing: i.e., in any way 24 nothing: i.e., in any way 25 nothing: i.e., in any way 26 though: even if
28 might: be: i.e., could happen 29 deadly: mortal 30 haply never: perchance never / turn out never to
31 will: wants to 33 set: attach 34 whoso stand: whosoever stands 36 never so: no matter how
36 fast: steadily; incessantly 36 safe enough: i.e., plenty saved
the rock of that faith, by bringing a man that standeth on it into mortal sin which he shall never repent.

In like wise, where he saith that none error can prevail against the rock of this faith that Saint Peter there confessed, I would fain wit whether he mean that whosoever once believe it can never fall from that belief, nor by any error believe the contrary; or else that a man may fall from it by error…but then if he repent and return again thereto, he shall be safe. If he mean in the first manner, he must then put away his “if”… and not say, “If he repent his error and return again to the rock of that faith, then he shall be safe”… forasmuch as by that meaning, he shall never fall in error, and therefore shall never need to repent. But then must he prove us by Scripture that privilege given of God to every man that hath once gotten that faith; which point he shall never prove while he liveth, but that a man that hath it may by his own default, malice, or negligence, either at the instigation of the devil or of such heretics as are worse than the devil, fall again therefrom… as many hath done ere this, that once believed full right, till the spirit of pride, envy, and malice, blown into their hearts by the devil or the devil’s instruments, have brought them into the wrong.

Now, if he mean in the second manner—that is to say, that a man which hath that faith may fall therefrom… but for all that, the gates of hell cannot prevail against any man that once hath it, because he that falleth from it shall be safe if he repent his error and return again to it—if he mean thus, he saith nothing to purpose, except he say (which he shall never prove) that whoso have it and fall from it shall be sure that he shall repent and return again; for else the gates of hell may prevail against him for lack of repenting and returning.

And then, yet further, if he say (which he shall never prove) that whosoever once have that faith, if he fall from it shall be sure to repent and return again and so shall be safe by repenting—he must then, as I said before, put away his “if”… and not say “if he repent,” but he must say boldly that he surely shall repent and return, and so by repenting and faith be saved.

And thus, good readers, ye see that this man fareth as one that walked barefoot upon a field full of thorns, that wotteth not where to tread.
I would be very loath to mistake him, or willingly to let pass and dissemble any sense that he might mean in his own words, by which his saying might be saved and be borne. But in good faith, I see no further thing that he might possibly mean in his words that “hell gates shall not prevail against the rock of that faith” but this that I have already shown you… since he meaneth it of every man, that hell gates shall not prevail against the rock of that faith in any man—except he would mean that a man may fall from that faith, and never after repent nor turn again… but yet the gates of hell cannot prevail against the rock of that faith, because a man cannot sin all the while he keepeth that faith. And if he mean so… yet saith he then as false as anything can be false.

1 Cor 13:2
For Saint Paul saith plainly that he may keep faith and yet fall from charity.

15 Which thing if Tyndale gloss and say that then his faith is dead, and a dead faith is no faith… and that therefore while he keepeth faith waxeth not dead in the nature of belief, he cannot sin, because that when he sinneth he killeth his faith: I answer that though faith by sin wax dead, it waxeth not dead in the nature of faith or belief… no more than the soul that dieth by deadly sin waxeth dead in the nature of the soul, but is a quick soul still as he was before, though he be out of grace… as the dead faith is out of the lively works of charity, and is as Saint Paul said of wanton widows, that the widow “which liveth in delices is dead even while she liveth.”

But, now, if he mean but so—that faith is so strong of itself for our salvation that sin nor error cannot prevail against it, because faith will always prevail against them till some of them enter in and kill it—this were a goodly boast of him to say; that “the church be none but elects, and all that be elects have the right belief which Saint Peter confessed… and they may be bold and sure that they which have that faith be God’s elects, and in his favor, and ever shall be by reason of that faith; for Christ said that upon the ‘rock’ (that is to wit, upon that faith) he would build his church, and that against the ‘rock’ of this faith ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail’ (that is to say, against this faith can no sin, no hell, no devil, no lies, no error prevail), for there shall no sin.

1 mistake him: take him wrongly // willingly: deliberately // let pass: leave unmentioned
2 dissemble: turn a blind eye to // mean . . . words: i.e., take his own words in / mean for his words to be taken in
3 his saying: what he says // saved: defended // borne: sustained 3–4 in good faith: in all honesty
4 in: by // 6 shown: told // meaneth: says // 8 except: unless // would: were to // 14, 15 could
8, 14 from: away from // 9 again: back // 11–12 if . . . so: if that is what he means // 12 then: i.e., then something
13 plainly: straight out // 15 gloss and say: i.e., should try to explain away by saying // 16 while: as long as
17, 19, etc. wax(eth): becomes // because: by reason of the fact // 19 though: even if // 21 deadly: mortal
22 is: i.e., that soul is // quick: living // he: i.e., it // 22, 23 our: devoid // 23 lively: life-filled / active
24 as Saint Paul said of: i.e., like what Saint Paul said about // wanton: loose-living // which: who
25 in delices: for sensual pleasures / in self-indulgence // 26 if . . . so: if that’s all he means
26–27 is . . . salvation: i.e., has in itself such power to save us // 27 sin . . . cannot: neither sin nor error can
28 against them: i.e., against sins and errors // 29 were . . . say: would be a fine boast for him to make
31 confessed: professed // may: can // 31–32 bold and sure: fearlessly sure // 32 they which: those who
nor no error prevail against this faith but if it kill this faith.”

Tyndale to put a man in surety of heaven by the strength of faith in
this fashion—that none error shall prevail against faith, as long
as the faith prevaleth against it, nor till the faith be the feebler
and be overcome and killed—doth much like as though he would
say to you, “Be bold, I warrant you, and fear no death, for you have
life in you, and as long as your life lasteth you can never be dead;
and likewise, as long as ye keep the true faith ye can never be
false heretics… nor as long as ye stand still in the state of salvation
ye can never be damned.”

Here were a goodly tale, were it not? And since that neither this
may serve him nor any that I have touched before… and utterly I cannot
divine what he might mean else, taking the way that he taketh,
in swerving from the known, Catholic church unto his unknown
church of elects, whom he calleth all repentant sinners that believe
the faith that Saint Peter confessed: I cannot perceive, nor, I
trow, no man else, but that his words will evil stand together.

And yet, when he hath thus wisely handled it… then, as though the
matter were well and sufficiently proved, goeth he forth with the
boast and saith…

Tyndale
That this faith is the *only* way by the which the church of
Christ goeth unto God, and unto the inheritance of all riches…
testify all the apostles, and prophets, and all the Scripture, with
signs and miracles, and all the blood of martyrs. And whosoever
goeth unto God and forgiveness of sins, or salvation, by any
other way than this… the same is a *heretic*—out of the right way,
and not of Christ’s church.

More

Lo, here be lusty, high words either false or else of little effect.
For if he mean that no man may go to salvation by any other
thing *without* this faith that Saint Peter professed—then
be they true. But then are they to no purpose spoken, nor have no
place in this matter, in which he reproveth the known church in
that they go by confession, contrition, works of penance, and
works of mercy, toward the remission of the debt of their pain
and satisfaction. For himself cannot say nay but that we do

1 *but if it kill*; unless it kills  2 to… by; i.e., in giving as a guarantee of one’s making it to heaven  3 none; no
4 *feebler*; i.e., weaker combatant  6 *be bold*; i.e., you can be daring  //  *I warrant you*; i.e., take this from me
5 *fear no death*; i.e., have no fear of dying  9 *false*; falsehood-believing / damn  //  *nor*; i.e., and
6 *stand still*; continue to remain  //  *salvation*; i.e., grace  11 *were*; would (be)  //  *goodly tale*; fine thing to say
7 *since that*; given that  //  *this*; i.e., this possible interpretation  12, 31 *may*; can  12 *serve*; be of avail to
8 *touched*; mentioned  //  *and*; and that  12–13 *utterly*… *else*; I have absolutely no idea what else he could mean
9 *way*; route  14 *swerving*; deviating  16 *confessed*; professed  17 *trow*… *man*; feel sure, can anyone
10 *words*; statements  //  *evil stand*; poorly hang  18 *wisely*; brilliantly  18–19 *the matter*; the case; his contention
11 *well and*; quite  //  *forth*; on  23 *richesse*; wealth  24 *testify*; attest; bear witness
12 *matter*; argumentation  //  *reproveth*; finds fault with  35 *they*; i.e., its members  //  *by*; i.e., by the route of
13, 22 *way*; route  14 *swerving*; deviating  16 *confessed*; professed  17 *trow*… *man*; feel sure, can anyone
14–17 *pain and satisfaction*; i.e., taking punishment, and making satisfaction, for their sins  37 *say nay but*; deny
all agree that with all that ever we can do, we cannot get forth one inch to heaven-ward without the faith that Saint Peter confessed.

Now, if he mean not that way, but that we be plain heretics and out of Christ’s church if, having that faith that Saint Peter confessed, we go to heaven-ward with any other thing besides that testify all the apostles and prophets, and all the Scripture and signs and miracles, and all the blood of martyrs—then Tyndale is a stark heretic, in so saying. For all these will testify that we must believe many things more than Saint Peter did there confess—or else we shall not only be discharged of believing the sacraments of Penance, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony… but Baptism also, and the Sacrament of the Altar too. For of none of all these did Saint Peter make any mention in his confession there; nor so much as of Christ’s death neither, whereof, as Tyndale saith, he had at that time no knowledge. So that in Tyndale’s affirming that the only faith there by Peter confessed is sufficient and the only way to heaven, we shall have Tyndale himself to testify that Tyndale himself saith untrue.

Yet would I fain, in good faith, find and bring it forth, if I could anything imagine, that he might seem to mean right; nor never will I wittingly for the preferment of my part construe mine adversary’s words wrong. And therefore, what if we might understand Tyndale thus: as though he meant that the faith there confessed by Peter is for every man sufficient… because that whoso believe that Christ is the Son of the Living God, it cannot be but that he shall believe also that he is true in all his words; and therefore he that so believeth cannot fail to believe therewith… all that ever Christ shall teach him.

Albeit that this will not very fully serve him, and also himself speaketh nothing of it—yet is this, as help me God, the best gloss that I can devise for him. But now doth himself cast away this defense… when he saith, in the second chapter following, that there is none error noisome but if it be against the promises; so that in all other things he granteth and affirmeth plainly, by express words, that a man may err without peril, even though that the

2 to-heaven-ward: toward heaven  3, 6, etc. confessed: professed  4 he . . . way: i.e., his meaning is not that 4 plain: literal  5 out of: not in  6 go to-heaven-ward: try to get to heaven // with: by means of 6–8 that testify . . . martyrs: i.e., what . . . martyrs attest that we should  8 is: i.e., becomes 9 stark: glaringly manifest // testify: bear witness  10 things more: more things 10 confess: i.e., profess belief in  11 discharged of believing: i.e., freed of having to believe in 12 Extreme Unction: the Anointing of the Sick // Order: Holy Orders  13 Sacrament of the Altar: Eucharist 15 confession: profession of faith  17 the only faith: i.e., just the belief  19 saith untrue: tells an untruth 20 fain, in good faith: gladly, in all honesty 20–21 bring . . . right: i.e., bring forth whatever right meaning, if I could think of any, he might seem to have 22 wittingly; knowingly // preferment: boosting // part: side of the argument 25 because: by reason of the fact  25–26 whoso believe: whosoever believes 27 he is true in all his words: he is trustworthy in all his statements / everything he says is true 30 serve him: take care of him; help him out  30, 32 himself: he himself  31 as: so 31 gloss: elucidation / spin  32 cast away: throw out  33–34 there is none error: i.e., no error is 34 noisome: noxious; really harmful // but if it be against: i.e., unless it has to do with // in: with regard to 35 granteth: avows  35–36 express words: explicit statements  36 may: can // though that: if
truth contrary to his error be written in Holy Scripture; which is a marvelous word in mine ear. For by this ye may see that he agreeth that a man may believe that Christ is God’s Son and yet believe the contrary of some things that Christ shall tell him, though he tell it him in Scripture. And therefore he will, ye see well, none of my gloss, because he will not stand in my danger for it.

And indeed, albeit himself shall for himself never find a better… yet mine will not sufficiently serve him neither. For a man might believe that Christ were God’s Son, and thereby believe also all that Christ would teach him—but yet might it be that he would believe no more than those things only that Christ would teach him personally present with him, by his own mouth. For though he believed that Christ were God’s Son, and would believe therefore all that he would tell him, yet might he, for all that, mistrust and not believe all other men that would, either in word or writing, tell him a tale as told to them by Christ’s own mouth. Yea, and this might he do although they proved it with miracles… if he were

Mt 12:24 of Tyndale’s stomach, that can, as the Jews could, ascribe God’s miracles to Beelzebul, and call God’s high, marvelous works illusions and wonders of the devil—as he calleth all the miracles wrought by God in his church since the apostles’ days.

This might one do that believed Christ to be God’s Son, and to have redeemed us, also, by his blood. And this doth indeed both Tyndale and Martin his master, which believe of Christ’s words no more than is written… nor of the written words no more than they list… and the remnant but as they list, since they draw them to what sense they list, against all the old holy doctors, and all the church of Christ. And thus it appeareth that neither my gloss nor any gloss else can save Tyndale’s tale from plain, pestilent heresy… both in that he saith there needeth no more to be believed, and also in that he saith that the belief alone is sufficient for salvation… and that it is heresy to say that besides the belief, any man unto salvation should need anything else. For though he put in, for shame, repentance thereunto, with ifs, as ye see—yet shall ye perceive, as well in his chapters following as in this same chapter after, that he putteth faith alone for sufficient, and repentance as
a shadow that never can but follow it. And yet all his things ever
so darkly that he would fain leave himself some starting hole.

But surely it is hard for him to start out from these plain words
of his own, “Whosoever go to God by any other way than this faith that
Saint Peter confessed… the same is a heretic—out of the right way, and not
of Christ’s church.” For this is no more to say but whosoever besides
the bare belief, with as bare repenting, add confession, or for
sin punish himself by penance, or doth the better after because
he hath done evil before, and hopeth that God shall either
reward him the more or have the more mercy on him or in
purgatory punish him the less—he is a stark heretic. And of
truth, so he is indeed, if this false tale be true… and all true men,
and all holy saints, and all Holy Scripture, false.

But now goeth he forth, not in the proof but in the praise, and

Tyndale
For this knowledge maketh me a man of the church.

More
Which knowledge? The knowledge that a man needeth no more
articles in his faith now than Saint Peter confesseth then? And that
he may not, besides repentance and belief, use any other way to
heaven; that is to wit, he may not therewith use as a way to
heaven or to remission any sacramental shrift, or penitential
works, or deeds of charity toward satisfaction? The knowledge of
this faith maketh Tyndale a “man of the church,” as he saith. But of
which church, trow ye? Truly not of the church of Christ, which
besides that faith hath instituted the faith in his blessed sacraments
and divers other articles besides… and which hath plainly declared that
albeit the knowledge of him-and-his-pleasure by faith be such a way
toward heaven that without it we cannot come thither, yet if we join
not to that knowledge good deeds or purpose of good works,
neither can that knowledge nor repentance, neither, serve us for a
sufficient way to heaven. And therefore Tyndale is not by this
knowledge made a man of Christ’s true church; but since he is content
with the bare knowledge and setteth all good works at so short,
he is made thereby a man of the false church of the devil, that is a
liar himself and father of all such liars.

1 never can but: i.e., can never fail to; cannot help but // things: combative contentions // ever: always
2 darkly: unclearly // would fain leave: i.e., hopes to be leaving // starting hole: escape hatch
3 start out from: i.e., find an escape hatch in // plain: straightforward; unambiguous // go: i.e., tries to go
4 confessed: professed // out of: off of // way: path // of: i.e., a member of // but: than that
5 (the) bare: (that) rudimentary // evil: ill; badly // a stark: a downright / an absolute
6 11–12 of truth: truth to tell // tale: narrative // true: orthodox / truth-telling / upright
7 false: unorthodox / mendacious / false // proof: i.e., proving // praise: i.e., extolling / bragging
8 confesseth then: i.e., professes at that one time // 22 way to: i.e., way to get to
9 to remission: i.e., to obtain remission of sin and of the punishment due for it // shrift: confession
10 toward satisfaction: i.e., performed with a view toward making amends for one’s sins and paying off the debt
of punishment for them // 25 maketh: i.e., does make // 26 trow ye: do you suppose
11 Christ, which: Christ, who // 27 that faith: i.e., that belief that Saint Peter professed // divers: several
12 which: who // 28 albeit: though it is true that // knowledge: i.e., knowing // 30 come thither: get there
13 purpose of: the intention of doing // 35 bare: mere // setteth: i.e., sells... so // 36 who: who
Tyndale

The church is Christ’s body (Col 1). And every person of the church is a member of Christ (Eph 5). Now, it is no member of Christ that hath not Christ’s Spirit in it; as it is no part of me, nor member of my body, wherein my soul is not present and quickeneth it. And then if a man be none of Christ’s, he is not of the church.

More

Here Tyndale runneth in juggling, by equivocation of this word “church.” For—whereas himself hath before this time confessed in writing, in this same book to which I answer now, that “the church” in many places of Holy Scripture is the whole multitude that profess the faith of Christ, whether they be good or bad—here he fareth as though there were no man of “the church” but only good folk alone in whom is the Spirit of Christ… with an example put of the body having some dead part hanging thereon, wherein were not the soul to quicken it and give it life, which therefore, he saith, is no part of the body. But he forgetteth that sometimes there is some member astonied and lacketh both life and feeling… which yet, by the reason that it is not clean cut off and cast away, receiveth after life and feeling again… as many a deadly sinner doth in the body of Christ’s church take life again, that hath in sin lain full long dead.

But now is he yet of this mind, that the faith which himself hath described is the thing that, it once gotten and had of any man, keepeth in the Spirit of God so fast in his heart that he is surely a quick member of the church that is Christ’s body… and that he cannot lose that faith nor that Spirit at any time after that he hath once gotten it… so that he have it, as he saith in another chapter after, feelingly and not only historically.

And whosoever have not the faith that he describeth him, he reckoneth for a heretic… and only his faith for the true, and the believers thereof for the true church.

Now, his faith have ye heard often enough: that only faith sufficeth, or at the leastwise with repenting; and that shrift, or penance toward heaven or remission of sins, is heresy; and that to worship the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar is dishonor to God; and that there is no purgatory; and that friars may well and

2 person of: person in / member of
3, 4 Christ: i.e., Christ’s body. (See Ephesians 5:29–30.)
3–4 it . . . that . . . it: i.e., that person . . . who . . . him or her 4 as it: i.e., just as that thing
5 quickeneth: i.e., which is not animated by 6 none of Christ’s: i.e., not a member of Christ’s body
6 of the: i.e., a member of the 8 runneth in juggling: resorts to playing games / pulls a fast one
8–9 equivocation . . . “church”: i.e., using the same term, “church,” in different senses within the same syllogism
9, 22 himself: he himself 9 confessed: acknowledged 10 answer: i.e., give answer
11 places: passages 12 fareth: acts 13 of: i.e., in 14 put: given 15 dead: nonliving
16 quicken: animate 17 member: bodily part 18 astonied: i.e., that is numbed 18, 19 life: animation
19 clean: completely 19–20 receiveth after life and feeling again: later gets back animation and feeling
20 deadly sinner: committer of mortal sin 21 take life again: come back to spiritual life
21 full: very 23 described: delineated / prescribed 24 fast: entrenchedly
25 surely: assuredly / securely 26 after that: i.e., after such time as
27 so that he have it: provided that he has it 28 feelingly: experientially 28 historically: i.e., intellectually
29 describeth: delineates for / prescribes to 32 only faith: faith by itself 33 shrift: confession
34 toward: i.e., done with reference to 36 may well and: can quite
lawfully wed nuns; and a great rabble of such devilish heresies more, of such manner, suit, and sort that, as our Savior said unto Saint Peter at the confession of his faith, “Thou art blessed, Simon the son of Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father, that is in heaven,” so will he say to Tyndale, for confessing of this false faith of his, “Thou art accursed, Tyndale, the son of the devil; for neither flesh nor blood hath taught thee these heresies… but thine own father, the devil, that is in hell.” And thus well hath he acquitted him in this chapter.

Here endeth the confutation of this chapter of Tyndale, “Whether the Church Can Err.”

Here followeth the next chapter of Tyndale, in which he saith that a true member of Christ’s church sinneth not, and that he is yet a sinner.

Tyndale
How a true member of Christ’s church sinneth not, and how he is yet a sinner.

More

Now come we to the special point wherein Tyndale giveth us a glorious demonstration of his excellent, high wit and learning, far surmounting the capacity of poor popish men to perceive: how it might be possible that any man sinneth not and yet, for all that, sinneth always still. But to the intent that Tyndale shall have no cause to say that I deface his gay, goodly tale by mangling of his matter and rehearsing him by patches and pieces, ye shall first, concerning this point, hear all his whole chapter together, without any word of his either omitted or changed; and after shall we consider and examine the parts. These are, therefore, his words…

Tyndale
Furthermore, he that hath this faith cannot sin; and therefore he cannot be deceived with damnable errors. For by this faith we be, as I said, born of God. Now, he that is born of God cannot
sin, for “his seed dwelleth in him; and he cannot, therefore, sin, because he is born of God” (1 Jn 3). Which seed is the Holy
Ghost, that keepeth a man’s heart from consenting unto sin. And therefore it is a false conclusion that Master More holdeth, how that
a man may have a right faith joined with all kinds of abomination
and sin. And yet every member of Christ’s congregation is
a sinner, and sineth daily, some more and some less. For it is
written (1 Jn 1), “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.” And again, “If we say we have
not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.” And
Paul (Rom 7) saith, “That good which I would, that do I not; but
that evil which I would not, that do I. So it is not I that do it,” saith
he, “but sin that dwelleth in me.” Thus are we sinners and
No sinners if thou look unto the profession of our hearts toward the
law of God, on our repentance and sorrow that we have, both
because we have sinned and also because we be yet full of sin
still, and unto the promises of mercy in our Saviour Christ, and unto
faith. Sinners are we if thou look unto the frailty of our flesh,
which is as the weakness of one that is newly recovered out of a
great disease... by the reason whereof our deeds are imperfect, and by
the reason whereof also, when occasions be great, we fall into horrible
deeds... and the fruit of the sin which remaineth in our members
breaketh out. Notwithstanding, yet the Spirit leaveth us not, but
rebuketh us and bringeth us home again unto our profession... so
that we never cast off the yoke of God from our necks, neither yield
up ourselves unto sin for to serve it, but fight afresh and
begin a new battle.

More

Lo, now ye have heard his whole holy sermon together, by which
he teacheth us that a true member of Christ’s church doth both ever
sin and never sin. But as for the one part, that the true
members of Christ do sin... we shall not much trouble him with
the proof; albeit in that he saith that every true member sinneth
and ever sinneth (as he saith in more places than one), if he take
“sin” for actual sin (as he must here take it, or else he speaketh
little to the purpose), men might peradventure lay a block or
twain in his way, that would break his shins ere he leapt over
it. But letting that part pass, let us see how he proveth the
other: that a true member of Christ’s church sinneth not. Lo, thus
he proveth it...
Furthermore, he that hath this faith cannot sin, and therefore cannot be deceived with damnable errors.

Here he telleth us that no member of the elect church of his faith can be deceived with any damnable error—and proveth it by that none of them can sin. And indeed it followeth: He cannot sin; ergo, he cannot be damnably deceived, since every damnable error is sin. But now let us see how he proveth his antecedent, that no man having that faith can sin. He proveth it thus…

For by this faith we be born of God. Now, he that is born of God cannot sin, “for his seed dwelleth in him; and he cannot, therefore, sin, because he is born of God” (the third chapter of the First Epistle of John). Which seed is the Holy Ghost, that keeps a man’s heart from consenting to sin. And therefore it is a false conclusion that M. More holdeth, that a man may have a right faith joined with all kinds of abomination and sin.

Consider now, good reader, that Tyndale telleth us here three things, to prove thereby that whoso get once the faith that Saint Peter confessed can never sin after.

The first is that by that faith we be born of God. The second is that whoso is born of God hath the seed of God in him. The third is that whoso have the seed of God in him cannot sin.

Upon these three he concludeth that whoso get once that faith can never sin after.

Let us now consider the first, where he saith that by faith we be born of God. And therein dare we be bold to tell him that though it be true that by faith we be born of God, as he now saith, yet is it false that by only faith we be born of God—as he falsely meaneth, and in many places as falsely for truth affirmeth, where he would make us ween that because we be born of God and
become his children by faith, we were therefore born of God by
only faith. As wisely as if he would say that because he was begotten
by his father, he was therefore begotten of his father only,
without any mother.

And this his folly himself so well perceiveth that in many
places he laboreth to cover it with sophistication, in using
this word “faith” for faith and hope together; yea, and sometimes for
charity therewith also… and then would make us ween, with such
wise juggling, that “faith alone” were faith, hope, and charity, all three
together, because that else the faith were but dead. And therein
useth himself as wisely as if he would say that “the body alone”
eateth, drinketh, walketh, believeth, loveth, and altogether; and
when his folly were reprov’d, would then say that he called “the
body alone” the body with the soul therein, because the body without
the soul were but a dead body that could nothing do.

And thus ye see that ye shall not need to be deceived by his first
point: that we be born of God by faith.

His second point is that every man being born of God hath
the “seed of God” dwelling in him. I will not here contend with him
whether the “seed of God” that dwelleth in the children of God be the
Holy Ghost, or the faith, or the grace of God… nor in what wise God
and his Holy Spirit dwell in good folk. But letting such
disputations pass, this will I say: that if the seed of faith being
only faith abide in him, it is not a thing that shall so surely keep
him from sin but that he may sin deadly, and the seed of
such faith stand still with his sin; and the man, for all the seed
of such faith dwelling in him, may be by sin the child of the
devil, and so may die and go to the devil.

Belief alone is a great occasion of returning to God.

But yet is the seed of faith alone—that
is to say, the belief alone—a very great occasion of returning to God at his
calling-again by the offer of his grace, and thereby to get again both wholesome hope and charity. But not
so great an occasion thereof but that the man may keep still his faith
and his belief alone and, without hope or charity either, by malice
or negligence first fall to sin, and after continue still in sin,
and refuse the grace of God, if he will… as well as the devil did in the
beginning, and so doth ever still, and will do still in hell as long as God dwelleth in heaven.

Now, if the “seed” of God in the Christian man be meant his grace by which men come to faith, hope, and charity, and do good works with, not without the consent and applying of their own free wills thereto—such folk as have use of reason, working with God for their poor part toward their own salvation with the instrument that God of his only goodness hath made and given them thereunto—if he mean that this seed of God’s grace dwelleth still in man, to keep him from falling to sin: I say that it is very true, as long as man will cleave thereunto and let his own will work therewith. But whensoever he will withdraw his own will therefrom, to follow the world, the flesh, or the devil: then, like as his will departeth from grace, so doth ordinarily the seed of grace depart out of him.

Now, if he mean by the “seed” of God that the Spirit of God dwelleth in the Christian man by any other, special manner of dwelling, above such dwelling as he dwelleth in other men by his power and presence of his Godhead, than only by his favor and grace—which other special manner, if Tyndale mean any such, I cannot conceive, since I make myself sure that he meaneth no such dwelling in unity of person as the Second Person of the Godhead dwelleth with the manhood of Christ—yet if he devise and mean any other manner of dwelling by which the Spirit of God dwelleth with the faithful man… I say that the Spirit dwelleth in him and helpeth him to continue such as long as the man will by the applying of his own will continue with the Spirit. But I say that the man may by the frowardness of his free will (at the motion of the flesh, or instigation of the devil, or enticement of the world)—his faith remaining—fall from charity, and put the Spirit from him. As

Mk 5:1–17 did the people of Gerasa which, seeing Christ’s miracle wrought upon the mad man (out of whom he did cast the devil!), because he drove the devil into their hogs and thereby drove their hogs into the sea… though well they perceived what a mighty lord he was, and of what goodness too, in that they saw him deliver the man from the legion of devils, and therefore loved him somewhat, of likelihood, and would
have been glad to have had him dwell still with them... yet fearing that by the casting out of more devils they might afterward haply lose more of their hogs, they prayed him courteously to get him quickly thence.

Yet God, when man hath put him out of his dwelling... doth of his great goodness not always utterly leave him for his unkindness... but though if the man die ere God come in again, God shall of justice for his unkindness condemn him, yet he hovereth still about the door of his heart, always knocking upon him to be by the free will of man let in with his grace into the house of man’s heart again... according to the words of our Savior in the Apocalypse,

Rv 3:20

where he saith, “I stand at the door, knocking.” Howbeit, a man may be so froward and obstinate in sin, and when he hath expelled God out of his heart, may drive him, with sin upon sin and despiteful circumstances, so far off from the door (as some of these heretics do, which in despite of virtuous vows of chastity, run out and wed nuns and live in lechery... and in despite of the Lenten fast, eat flesh upon Good Friday... and in despite of the Blessed Sacraments of the Altar, cast the Precious Body of Christ out of the pyx) that God shall justly, for the hugeness of their abomination, withdraw himself so far that he shall peradventure never approach near unto them again, nor never after offer them his grace. And then must they needs never cease falling till they come down to the devil. Thus, finally, concerning his second point... “faith alone” may dwell in a man, and deadly sin, together. But lively faith—that is to wit, faith not alone, but coupled with hope and charity and will of good works—cannot dwell with deadly sin... neither with manslaughter, adultery, nor any suchlike... but as the one cometh in, the other goeth out, whether the sin be committed of malice, weakness, or frailty; whereof Tyndale very stiffly teacheth us untruly the contrary.

All sins be not of one weight. And yet I say not that all sins be of one weight... concerning the difficulty of returning to repentance, or the degrees of pain in hell after the final impenitence, or punishment in purgatory for lack of penance
here; but for that if they die before they return by grace and
good will unto penance, they be all perpetually damned in hell, the
one as well as the other (though the one not so much as the other),
contrary to Tyndale’s aforesaid false conclusion; whose proof in that
point specially dependeth upon his third article, whereof the
words be true and his understanding false. For his third point, ye
wot well, is this: that whosoever have the seed of God dwelling in
him cannot sin.

This point, ye remember, he proveth by the words of Saint
John in the third chapter of his first epistle. Which epistle is
undoubtedly one of the most hard and dark places of all the New
Testament… and whereof sundry great heresies have risen, and
sundry more there may, through such malicious minds as read the
Scripture to none other intent but to wrest every word unto the
worse part… and of the plainness and simplicity that the apostles
used in the manner of their words, take occasion to turn their
earnest, godly sentence into frivolous cavillations and sophisms;
as not only divers heretics have done of old, but also Tyndale
hath now of new—both renewed their old and added some of his
own, more pestilent and more foolish, also, than all the old heretics
durst for very shame have spoken of. And whereas all the old holy
doctors used always to make open and expound the hard and dark
places of Scripture by such others as were plain, clear, and evident:

The use and custom
of heretics

their heresies, seek out the hardest places
that can be found in Scripture… and all
the plain, open words in which can be no doubt nor question, they
come and expound by those places that be dark, obscure, and hard to
understand; much like a blind guide that would, when men were
walking in a dark night, put out the candle and show them the
way by the lantern.

This way useth Tyndale universally, as well in every other thing
that he taketh in hand to prove as in this point specially—that he which
hath once the faith can never sin, because he hath the seed of God
dwelling in him. For whereas it is evident and plain by clear and
open texts of Scripture, full and plenteous in every part thereof, that
there is no man here (except some special revelation thereof) so
Temper God’s mercy with the sure of his own final salvation, nor of his own present estate neither, but that he hath good cause to fear, and temper his hope of God’s mercy with the dread of his justice, lest his overbold hope may hap to stretch into presumption and occasion of slight regarding sin: Tyndale would expound them all against them all, by one dark text or twain taken in this epistle of Saint John... by which he would make us believe that Saint John teacheth divers of the most pestilent heresies and most repugnant unto God—and that in his justice and his mercy both, with the most occasion given unto the world unto the two most heinous sins and most contrarious in themselves, that is to wit, presumption and despair—that ever any heretic devised.

For he gathereth and affirmeth upon Saint John’s epistle (in his false exposition, and also in his aforesaid beginning of this chapter)... that Saint John teacheth them all these false heresies following.

First, that whosoever have once the true faith can never after sin of malice or purpose, but that all the sins that he can after fall unto shall be but of weakness and frailty—be they murder, adultery, perjury, sacrilege, incest, or treason, or any other abominable deed, be it never so detestable sin.

Secondly, that of all such sins, he that hath once at any time gotten the faith shall have ever after the grace to repent.

And thirdly, that at the bare repenting, without shrift or penance, he shall have forthwith forgiveness of all sin and pain—so that any satisfaction shall not only nothing need, but is also (as he saith) a damnable thing to do it for hope or desire toward any remission either of sin or pain, and a damnable error to believe that God hath ordained any punishment or pain, either in purgatory after this world or by any affliction in this world, for any sin that any man once having the faith committeth and repenteth him of, were it never so abominable.

For in his Exposition of the First Epistle of Saint John, he is come so much further than ever he came before (as far as I remember) that there like (as I have shown you before) in the preface he denieth not only purgatory but also all punishment—here he teacheth also that

1 temper: i.e., temper hope of // sure: certain // nor of: nor about
2 estate: i.e., state of soul
3 overbold: excessively confident
4 may hap: i.e., should happen // stretch: extend; cross the line
5 they all // all: i.e., all those texts as meaning the opposite of what they say and mean
6 dark: unclear // taken: come upon
7 by: on the basis of
8 would: wants to
9 divers: several // pestilent: pernicious // repugnant: antithetical; in opposition // unto: to
10 in: regarding
11 heinous: grievous
12 contrarious in themselves: mutually opposed
13 devised: thought up; contrived
14 gathereth... Saint: i.e., extrapolates from, and affirms as supported by. Saint
15 his false exposition: I.e., Tyndale’s Exposition of the First Epistle of Saint John. false: so-called
16 exposition: explanation
17 them: i.e., him and his like-minded fellow heretics
18 false: untrue // trumped-up // damn
19 of: out of // purpose: i.e., purposely
20 but of: i.e., committed only out of // frailty: i.e., human frailty; susceptibility to temptation
21, 22 never so: no matter how
23 sin: i.e., a sin
24 bare: mere // shrift: confession
25 have forthwith: immediately receive
26, 29 pain: i.e., debt of punishment
27 any... also: i.e., not only will any making of satisfaction be totally unnecessary, but also it is
28–29 as he saith: says he
30 toward: i.e., of
31 is come: i.e., has gone
32 came: i.e., went
whoso get once the true faith, which he calleth the “feeling” faith, hath a sure, undoubted knowledge that he is in the state of grace, and an elect that can never be damned.

Now, of these abominable heresies what bold occasion of sin men may catch, and how they repugn against the justice of God—I refer it unto the wisdom of every good Christian reader. Then

The “story” faith teacheth he, on the other side, that whosoever, after his Baptism had, and the “story” faith (that is, he saith, the faith with which we believe the articles of the faith as men believe a story or a chronicle), do any deadly sin of purpose—that is to wit (as he saith), not of weakness or frailty, but of malice or willingly, with a consenting to the sin—that man shall never after be forgiven, in this world nor in none other. For every such sin, saith he, is the “sin against the Holy Ghost”… which shall, saith he, never be forgiven, notwithstanding any repentance and penance taken and done therefor.

And to the proof of this pestilent heresy, he draweth the covert and obscure words of our Savior Christ in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, the twelfth chapter; and also the dark and hard words of Saint Paul.

Which places of themselves all old holy doctors confess for diffuse and almost inexplicable… saving that they all expound them contrary to Tyndale’s heresy, by the articles of the known faith of Christ’s Catholic Church, and by many plain, open texts of Holy Scripture.

Of which two things Tyndale the one dissembleth, and the other despiseth… and believeth the old heretic Novatian, the first author of that abominable heresy, better than Saint Cyprian, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrose, Saint Gregory, and all the old holy saints that have written against it… and better than the whole Catholic Church of Christ of this fifteen hundred years, that ever hath taught the contrary, and ever since the first invention of that heresy have continually detested and condemned it as one of the most execrable heresies that ever the devil devised.

For as Tyndale’s other heresy fighteth against God’s justice, so doth this directly fight against his mercy… and putteth almost
all Christian people in utter despair of heaven, if men were so mad to believe one heretic or twain better than all the old holy saints, and all the whole church of Christ.

This heresy, as I began to tell you, Tyndale—among his others foreremembered—laboreth to establish... not only by the dark and hard places of Scripture foreremembered, but also by certain words in this First Epistle of Saint John... where is no more color to speak thereof than of the man in the moon, as every man may soon perceive that readeth him.

But now, for our present purpose, to touch his heresies of this chapter of his, of sinning without sin... I shall touch you the place in that epistle of Saint John whereby Tyndale would prove you that whoso get once the faith which he calleth the true faith and the “feeling” faith can never sin deadly after. By which ye shall plainly see how plainly he misconstrueth the Scripture to the mischief of men’s souls. The words of Saint John be these:

Every man that is born of God doth not sin, for the seed of him abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

In the understanding of these words vary Tyndale and we. And whether he or we misunderstand it, that let us now examine. First, we shall, I suppose, agree together both that to be “born of God” is in the Scripture nothing else but to be the child of God... and to be “born of the devil” is to be the devil’s child.

We shall, I think, also agree together in this: that to be “born” of God, or to be the “children” of God, is not meant to be his natural children, as our Savior Christ is by reason of his Godhood..., but, by faith, hope, and charity, and the sacraments, and the following of Christ in good works, and keeping of God’s commandments, to be members of his mystical body of his elect church.

But herein, peradventure, shall Tyndale and we begin to vary, not only for that I say “by the sacraments and good works,” of which Tyndale will not hear; but also for the elect church that is Christ’s mystical body whereof God’s children be members here in earth. For albeit that he is so wavering in his words that he wotteth not...
where to hold him, and therefore speaketh so darkly that he would be
loath to be understood—yet he will call, as it seemeth, no man a member
of Christ’s “elect church” but him that is elected finally to
bliss and salvation. And I call here the “elect church in this world”

The elect church neither all that are chosen into Christendom
and the profession of the Catholic
faith, nor only those that shall be finally saved, but all such as for
the present time so stand in the state of grace that if they die
before they fall therefrom, they shall be saved. Of which folk many fall
after from it, and so be damned in deed… which folk before their
fall be the children of God, say I. And when they be fallen into
deadly sin, then cease they to be the children of God, and be become
the children of the devil, till they be born of God again by
grace through penance, and become the children of God again.

And in whichever of these two states a man finally dieth in—
in that he perpetually dwelleth, and is thereby forever either the
child of God in his church of the final elects in heaven, or else
the child of the devil in the church of the final reprobates in hell…
according to the word of Holy Writ that “if a tree fall south or north, in

Eccl 11:3 what place soever it fall, there shall it remain.”

But here saith Tyndale that whosoever have once the
faith which he calleth after the “feeling” faith, he hath the seed of
God, the Spirit of God, in him. And because he hath the Spirit of
God in him… therefore, he saith, by the authority of the aforesaid words
of Saint John, that man can never sin deadly. So that by that
reason, whosoever have once the faith is one of the final elects.

Now see you in what manner Tyndale taketh these words. But
against his taking stand all the old holy doctors of Christ’s
church from the days of himself and his apostles hitherto. Of
all whom let Tyndale tell me the name of any one that ever did
understand these words of Saint John in such wise as Tyndale
doeth: that whosoever get once the right faith of Christ—and put
therewith as great a feeling thereof, with hope and charity thereto, as
ever holy Tyndale himself felt in his days—could never after
fall into deadly sin, or not so deep into it that he might after be
perpetually damned in hell. Let Tyndale, I say, tell me any one of

1 hold him: i.e., settle himself and stay put  // darkly: unenlightenedly; unintelligently
3 finally: irreversibly  7 shall be finally: will end up being / will in the end be
9 before they fall: i.e., without being fallen  9–10 many fall after: i.e., many do afterward fall
10 damned in deed: in fact damned  12, 26, 36 deadly: mortal(ly)  15 finally dieth: ends up dying
16 that: i.e., that one  // dwelleth: stays; remains  17, 27 final elects: i.e., irreversibly elect
18 final reprobates: i.e., irreversibly reprobate  23 calleth after: later calls
25 by the authority of: i.e., claiming as proof text  27 reason: reasoning  28 manner: way
28 taketh: interprets  29 taking: i.e., way of interpreting them
29 old holy doctors: i.e., former biblical exegetes  30 hitherto: up till now
32 understand: construe / explain  // wise: a way
33 faith of Christ: Christian faith  // put: i.e., let’s posit  34 thereto: as well
35 felt in: i.e., has felt in all  36 might: could  37 tell: name
the old holy saints that in this “exposition” ever took his part… and let him take all my teeth, and my tongue too.

Now, if never any good man understood Saint John so before, but all holy men clean the contrary—by what reason looketh Tyndale now that we should now begin to believe him alone, in the understanding of these words of Saint John, better than all good cunning men this fifteen hundred years before him?

Now is his “exposition,” besides this, not only against the Catholic faith of all Christian people, and the plain determination of Christ’s church… but also against many plain, open places of Holy Scripture besides… which were in so plain and clear a matter almost a lost labor to rehearse. And yet, lest an unlearned reader might hap anything to doubt, I shall rehearse you some.

*Rv 2:1–5*

What say we by the words of the Spirit revealed unto Saint John against the bishop of the church of Ephesus… whom whereas God praised for many great virtues in such wise that it appeared that he was at that time in grace and God’s right special favor, yet said he unto him, “I have, for all this, a few things against thee, because thou hast left off thy first charity. And therefore remember from whence thou art fallen, and amend and do the good works which thou were wont to do. For else will I come shortly to thee, and I will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent and do penance.”

Doth it not here plainly appear that he which hath gotten so the faith—and that the living faith, too—that he worketh so well therewith that the light of his faithful lively works shine bright before the face of God… may yet by declining from that fervor of devout works into some slothful slackness, though much of his virtue tarry, fall yet so low at last that God shall reject him and cast his candlestick, whereof the light shall be worn out, quite out of its place? If this might not be… God would not tell him it both might and, except he amended, should.

*1 Cor 10:12*

Doth not Saint Paul say, “He that thinketh that he standeth, let him beware he fall not”?

1 old holy saints: holy saints of old
2 5, 11 in: with regard to
3 exposition: explanation; elucidation
4 took his part: i.e., backed him up
5 understood: construed
6 so: in that way
7 clean the contrary: in the exact opposite
8 reason: reasoning; logic
9 looketh Tyndale: does Tyndale expect
10 alone: by himself
11 the: i.e., the right
12 better: more / rather
13 cunning: knowledgeable
14 open: readily understood
15 places: passages
16 were: would be
17 wise: a way
18 grace and: i.e., the state of grace and in
19 for: notwithstanding
20 left off: ceased to have
21 thy first: your initial; i.e., the love you had at first, which was that of
22 whence: where
23 amend: mend your ways / reform yourself
24 except: unless
25 doth . . . appear: i.e., is it not here made crystal-clear
26 which: who
27 faithful: faith-filled
28 shine: i.e., is shining
29 may: can
30 tarry: remain
31 worn out: faded away
32 quite: totally
33 amended: mended his ways / reformed himself
34 should: would
35–36 beware he fall not: take heed lest he fall
It appeareth there plainly, by the circumstances of the place, that he speaketh there to them whom he reckoned for good men and faithful. For to those that stand he giveth the counsel to beware they fall not. Which by Tyndale, if they once in faith feel themselves stand, they need not, for they cannot fall deadly. But Saint Paul there meant deadly falls, as both by his words before and after appeareth.

He saith also, to the Romans, in the tenth chapter, “They” (that is, the Jews) “are broken off for their lack of belief. But thou standest by faith—be not proud thereof, but fear.”

There showeth Saint Paul effectually, by a long process, that likewise as he which lacketh faith may by grace come to it… so he that hath it and standeth in it hath cause to fear, because he may by his own default fall from it.

1 Tm 6:10

Saith he not also, “The root of all evils is covetise; which while some folk coveted, they walked out of the way from the faith”?

2 Tm 2:17–18

He saith also, “Hymenaeus and Philetus are fallen from the truth… saying that the resurrection is passed already; and they have perverted the faith of some persons.”

Here showeth Saint Paul plainly that men may have the faith and lose it; and that can they not, I suppose, without deadly sin.

Peradventure Tyndale will say that he speaketh only of elects—and that I cannot prove these texts to be spoken of elects. Thereo say I that he calleth every man an elect that is only born again of God by faith, and that believeth to be saved by the mean of Christ; and of such speak these texts; and therefore they speak of his elects.

Then will he peradventure say that he meaneth of a “feeling” faith only. I know not what he meaneth by his “feeling” faith… but I wot well these texts speak of good faith, and lively faith, that worketh with love. If he find any other feeling, let him tell us.

And yet, if there be any other feeling of faith than believing, loving, and working… the selfsame, too, seemeth by Saint Paul that it may be left off again and lost, as appeareth by the same words of

1 it . . . place: i.e., it is clearly evident there, from the context of that verse 2, 24 speaketh: i.e., is speaking 2 faithful: i.e., right-faith-possessing 3 that stand: who are standing 3–4 beware . . . nor: take heed lest they fall 4 by: according to // stand: i.e., to be standing 5 need not: i.e., need not do 5, 6 deadly: mortal(ly) 6, 36 appeareth: is made evident 11 effectually: conclusively / powerfully // process: discussion 13 cause: good reason // may: i.e., could 14 default: fault 14, 19 from: i.e., away from 16 covetise: i.e., the love of money 16–17 which . . . coveted: i.e., for the time which some folk spent craving it 17 walked out of the way from: i.e., were walking astray from; were not on the path of 20 resurrection . . . already: i.e., resurrection of the dead has already taken place // perverted: overturned; toppled 22, 36 may: can 23 deadly: i.e., committing mortal 24, 30 peradventure: perhaps 24 speaketh: is speaking 25 spoken of: i.e., referring to // thereto: to that 26 only: i.e., at least 27 to be: i.e., one is 27 mean: mediation 28 such: i.e., such men 28–29 speak of his elects: i.e., do refer to the people who are by Tyndale’s definition the elect 30 meaneth of: means; is talking about 30, 31 feeling: i.e., felt / experiential 31 wot: know 32 lively: living; active // worketh: operates 33 find: i.e., finds spoken of in them 34 feeling: experiencing 35 working: operating // the . . . seemeth: i.e., of the . . . it seems said 36 left off again: i.e., dropped back out // by: from
Heb 6:4–6  his, in the sixth chapter unto the Hebrews, of which words Tyndale taketh his chief hold of the other part of his heresies—that is to wit, that whoso sin once deadly after his baptism, shall never after be forgiven. Saint Paul’s words are these: “It is impossible that they which have once been illumined, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, and be after all this fallen down… should be renewed again by penance, forasmuch as they, as much as in them lieth, crucify again the Son of God, and have him in derision.”

Lo, sirs, whereas Tyndale speaketh of “feeling” faith… Saint Paul speaketh here of them that have felt the “taste” thereof. And whereas Tyndale speaketh much of the “word of God”… Saint Paul here speaketh of them that have felt the taste of the “good word of God.” And whereas Tyndale speaketh much of being “born again of the Spirit”… Saint Paul here in like wise speaketh of them that have received the Spirit. And yet, for all that they have been “illumined,” and have felt the taste of the celestial gift, and been “partakers of the Holy Ghost,” and have felt the sweet taste of the “good word of God,” and of the “powers of the world to come”—yet saith he, contrary to Tyndale’s teaching, that they may, for all this, fall down so far into deadly sin that it is impossible for them to be renewed again by penance.

What hath Tyndale here to say to Saint Paul? Surely for the defense of this foolish heresy, nothing hath he to say at all, that any good color hath. But when he shall be fain to give over this… then will he comfort himself with that that Saint Paul here seemeth to further his other heresy: that every deadly sin after baptism should be irremissible.

Scripture doth not vary in sentence. But out of that comfort shall I drive him shortly. For I am sure the places of Holy Scripture, written all by one Holy Spirit, varieth not in sentence. And whereas these words, as well appeareth by the old holy writers, be full of hardness and difficulty, yet that the sentence cannot be such as may serve Tyndale’s
heresy—that shall we, leaving all their expositions (which are all clean against him), make him open and evident by the plain and clear words of the holy prophet Ezekiel, whose words, lo, be these, in the eighteenth chapter…

Ez 18:21–24

“If a sinner repent him of all the sins that he hath done, and keep all my commandments, and deal justly and righteously: he shall live, and shall not die. Of all the iniquities that he hath wrought I will none remember; in the righteousness which he hath done shall he live. Is it my will, saith the Lord God, that the wicked man should die, and not rather that he should be converted from his ways and live? But truly, if the righteous man turn himself away from his righteousness, and work wickedness in any of all those abominations which the wicked man is wont to work, shall he live? Of all the righteousness that he hath done shall none be remembered; but for the offense which he hath committed, and in the sin that he hath done… for those shall he die.”

Lo, sirs, here is more than I promised. For here be both his heresies destroyed at once. For God here, by the mouth of this holy man, promiseth, without any manner exception, that whensoever the wicked man will turn, he shall be taken to grace. And in like wise, whencesoever the righteous man sin, his former righteousness shall not save him from damnation. And this sentence our Lord hath set so sure

Ez 33:12

that he repeateth it again in the thirty-third chapter, in this wise: “The righteousness of the righteous man shall not save him in what day soever he sin. Also, whencesoever the wicked man turn from his wickedness… it shall not hurt him. And the righteous man cannot live through his righteousness, in what day soever he sin.”

Here have ye, good readers, heard this sentence by the word of God, in this one holy prophet, doubly confirmed, and thereby Tyndale’s double heresy doubly also condemned.

And yet lest Tyndale might say, “Why should you not as well expound and gloss Ezekiel by Saint Paul, as Saint Paul by Ezekiel? Namely since Saint Paul came after, and therefore of God’s mind may tell us further!”—it appeareth, I say, that our Lord will not that these words of Ezekiel be glossed by any other words, though they be spoken by God himself… but that his other words, if they
seem contrary, shall be, rather, expounded by these. And thereof he giveth us open warning in his words following, and saith...

Ez 33:13–16  “Yea, and though I would say to a righteous man that he shall live, and he then, trusting in his righteousness, commit and do wickedness—all his righteousness shall be forgotten; and for the iniquity which he hath wrought, for that he shall die. But if I say to a sinner, ‘Thou shalt die’... and he then repenteth him of his sin, and doth judgment and justice, and that the same wicked man restore the pledge that he hath of another man, and also make restitution of stolen goods, and walk in the commandments of life, and do nothing that is unright: he shall live, and shall not die but be saved, and none of all the sins which he hath committed shall be laid to his charge. Judgment and justice hath he done, and therefore shall he live and not die.”

Lo, good Christian readers, here see we very plain that we were far unwise if we would follow the folly of Tyndale, either in bold, presumptuous hope or foolish, fearful despair... either weening that after any “feeling faith” once had, any deed that we could after do could be no deadly sin... or that for any deed done after our baptism, we could by penance never be saved after. We may be very sure that, as Saint Paul plainly reproveth the one, and is hard to perceive what he meaneth in the other: so, that he meaneth not as Tyndale telleth us, we may well know... not only by all the old holy-doctors-and-saints that expound Saint Paul, in that he saith it is “impossible to be renewed by penance,” that it is impossible to be by penance renewed unto the state of baptism—and by that Note this declaration. exposition they destroy yet a third heresy of Tyndale, concerning his full remission, of sin and pain and all, forthwith, as soon as he repenteth—but also be we well learned here, by the prophet Ezekiel, that although it may peradventure be that a man may go forth in sin so far that he shall never have grace of repentance after offered unto him, and for that cause ought every man stand in Fear to sin. great fear to sin, how great faith soever he feel... yet if we begin once to repent, we may be sure that God offereth grace and will perfect our penance with increase of his grace, and will pardon the death due for our deadly sin, but if we fail on our part to go forward with his grace, and that we foolishly fall therefrom.

1 by: i.e., by way of  2 open warning; explicit notice  3 yea, and though: indeed, even if  3, 17 would: were to 4 and: if  8–9, 14 judgment and justice: i.e., what is right and just  9 that: i.e., it transpires that 9–10 restore . . . of: i.e., does return the collateral he has received from  13–14 laid to his charge: held against him 16 plain: clearly  // were: would be  // far: extremely  17 folly: i.e., insane lead  // either in: into either 17 bold: overconfident  18–19 either . . . had: i.e., thinking either that once we’ve gotten any “feeling faith” 20, 39 deadly: mortal  21, 37 may: can  22 plainly: explicitly  // reproveth: condemns  // one: i.e., one view 22–23 is hard to perceive: it’s hard to tell  23 in: with regard to  24 as . . . us: i.e., what . . . us he does 24 by: via  25 old holy-doctors-and-saints: i.e., early, sainted biblical exegetes 25–26 expound . . . that: i.e., interpret . . . as saying that  26, 27 renewed: made new / regenerated 28 exposition: explanation  // destroy: demolish  29–30 concerning his . . . of: i.e., about a sinner’s getting . . . of his 30 pain: i.e., debt of punishment for it  31 learned: instructed  32 peradventure: perhaps 38 pardon: refrain from exacting; countermand  39 but if: unless  40 that: i.e., it comes about that
Now, against all these evident places of Scripture plainly contrary to Tyndale’s “exposition”… what thing hath Tyndale to defend his exposition with? If he name any men… he shall name you none but a few known, condemned heretics, against all holy-doctors-and-saints and the Catholic faith of all Christian people. If he pretend any places of Scripture… he shall allege a few dark, hard, and obscure, or nothing pertaining to the matter, against a great many manifest, plain, and evident, and clearly proving his exposition false.

Finally, ye shall find that the whole purpose of Saint John in that epistle nothing maketh in this world for Tyndale’s intent, but rather, clearly the contrary.

For Saint John intended there, not to show them that whoso is once good can never after be bad, as Tyndale saith he meant; but utterly to give all the world warning that, be men at one time never so good, yet whenssoever after they do naught, they be naught, and by their evil-doing lose their goodness. And likewise as before, while they believe well and work well, they be all that while born of God, and be God’s children, and have his seed in them: so whenssoever they fall from faith to heresies, or from good works to deadly sin, then lose they the seed of God and be born of the devil and become his children.

And that Saint John in this point meant none other than thus… the whole process of his epistle, one part compared with another, doth more than plainly declare. For he showeth that the devil is the father of evil folk, and they his children by following him in their sinful works; as our Savior said to the Jews, “Ye be of your father, the devil, and his desires will ye do.” “And the Son of God,” saith Saint John, “came into this world, and here appeared, to dissolve and break the works of the devil. And every man that is born of God” (that is to say, “that is God’s child”) “doth not sin, because the seed of God abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God and is God’s child”; as though he would say, “. . . for if he fall to sin, then ceaseth he to be born of God and to be God’s child, and beginneth to be born of the devil and to be his child.”

And therefore it followeth forthwith in the text, “By this be the children of God and the children of the devil open” (that is to say, “By this may ye see who be the children of God and who the children of the devil”). “For he that is not righteous is not the child of God;
nor he that loveth not his brother.” And after he saith, “Every man that hateth his brother is a manqueller; and ye know that no manqueller hath everlasting life abiding in him.”

Lo, good reader—whereas he said before that the child of God cannot sin, because he hath the “seed of God” abiding in him: here he saith, for all that, whosoever hate his brother is a homicide, and therefore hath not “everlasting life” abiding in him. Which is the thing that he before called the “seed of God,” whether he meant thereby lively faith, grace, or the Spirit of God. Of which three the first two be the beginning and the entry into everlasting life, which shall be perfected by glory… and the third is himself everlasting life, of his own omnipotent nature.

And thus, have he the seed of life never so strong and sure at one time, while he is the child of God: yet whersoever he falleth after to the hatred of his brother, he loseth that life by the committing of deadly sin, and becometh the child of the devil.

To this will Tyndale peradventure say that I pass over and dissemble the weight of Saint John’s words that he allegeth, and that I wink and will not perceive how plainly they prove his purpose.

“For though it be true that whersoever a man hateth his brother, he is a homicide and sinneth deadly, and hath not everlasting life nor the seed of God abiding in him: yet followeth it not,” will Tyndale say, “that he that hath once the feeling faith, and thereby is born of God, and thereby hath the seed of God in him, may sin deadly and lose the seed of God. For he cannot lose it but by sin. And the seed of God once being in him… he cannot—because of that seed!—be suffered to hate his brother of purpose, and so to do deadly sin and lose the seed of life; but ever is he, by the strength and virtue of that seed of everlasting life, preserved from all falling into deadly sin. And that I prove,” will Tyndale say, “by the plain and open words of Saint John before alleged… where he saith that he that is born of God ‘cannot sin, because he hath the seed of God abiding in him.’ He saith not, ‘. . . as long as he hath it’; but he saith he ‘cannot sin, because he hath it.’ Signifying plainly that he can never sin, because he hath the thing in him that will never suffer any deadly sin to enter. And the reason that is made against me upon other words of the same epistle… avoideth,” will Tyndale say, “mine exposition nothing at all. For likewise as it

1 after he: i.e., a little afterward John 2 manqueller: murderer 4 lo: look 6 hate: i.e., hates 6, 21 homicide: committer of homicide 9 lively: living; active 13 never so: no matter how 13 strong: strongly / firmly 16, 21, etc. deadly: mortal(ly) 17 peradventure: perhaps 17–18 I . . . weight: i.e., I’m sidestepping and smokescreening the import 18 allegeth: cites 18–19 I . . . purpose: i.e., I’m shutting my eyes and refusing to see how clearly those words prove his point 23 hath once: i.e., at some time has gotten 24 may: can 27, 36 sufferted: allow(ed) 27 of purpose: intentionally 28 virtue: power / operative influence 29 preserved: protected 30 plain: straightforward; unambiguous 31 open: transparent; clear 31 alleged: cited 34 plainly: obviously 36 reason: argument 37 upon: on the basis of 37 avoideth: refutes 38 exposition: explication 40 it: i.e., this argument
is made against a man once born of God, to prove that he may be after born of the devil: it may as well be made of any angel in heaven. For if any angel in heaven would fall from the love of God into malice… he should be turned from an angel into a devil. But likewise as that case can never fall, because the seed of God is in that angel… which so keepeth him, and ever shall, that he cannot have that evil will so to do: so doth the seed of God once entered with the feeling faith into a soul… so preserve it and keep it, by the mighty power of that seed, that that soul cannot fall into that malicious will that may make any deed of his to be deadly sin. And that this is so, I say yet again that the words of Saint John which I have before alleged do very plainly prove… in that he saith that whoso is born of God ‘cannot sin,’ ‘because he is born of God,’ and ‘because he hath the seed of God abiding in him.’ And he saith after, in another place of the same epistle, that he which is born of God, ‘his generation”—that is to wit, his being born of God by the seed of God, whereby he is begotten and born of God—‘doth preserve and keep him.’”

In this wise will Tyndale peradventure answer me. And surely I can myself devise no more effectual words that he might speak for his part; for in good faith, if I could I would. For never will I purposely leave his part any more faintly defended than mine own, as far as myself can see anything that himself might say.

But, now, to this answer we shall tell him again that between man and angel is there almost as great difference in this matter as there is between them in their substance and nature. For the blessed angels, that stood still with God in the devils’ fall, were forthwith so surely confirmed in grace that they can never fall into sin after, nor do anything whereof God will command them the contrary. And of this in them be we sure in faith, by the word of God taught unto his church; and they sure in knowledge, by his promise made unto them with his word which he, by a means to us not imaginable, continually speaketh unto them in the contemplation and beholding of his Almighty Godhead. But as for man… we find no such promise made unto him, that when he is once good, he can never after wax naught; but we find in Scripture the contrary, as I have by plain Scripture proved already before.

1 against: with regard to  1, 2, 10 may: i.e., could  2 after: afterward // well: rightly // of any: about any 3 would fall: i.e., were to fall away  4 should: would  5 case: scenario / hypothetical // fall: occur / happen 6, 8, 18 keep(eth): safeguard(s)  7 evil: bad  8, 18 preserve: protect  10 deadly: mortal  12 alleged: cited 12 whoso: anyone who  15 place: passage // which: who  16 to wit: i.e., to say  19 in this wise: thusly 19 peradventure: perhaps // surely: assuredly  20 devise: think of // effectual: cogent  20, 23 might: could 21, 22 part: side (of our argument)  21 in good faith: in all honesty; really and truly  22 faintly: weakly 25 again: in response // 26 in this matter: concerning this issue  27 substance: essence 28 stood still: remained steadfastly // in: i.e., throughout the time of  29 surely: securely / definitively 31 this: i.e., this impeccability / this indefectibility  34 the: i.e., their 35 Almighty Godhead: i.e., Almighty-Godness; Almighty Divinity  36 when he is once: i.e., once he has become 37 wax naught: go bad  38 plain: explicit / crystal-clear
We see also that the catholic faith of all Christian people is to the contrary. For all Christian people, except a few heretics, both now believe and all this fifteen hundred years before ever have believed that good men and children of God may fall into deadly sin, and become children of the devil… and yet

Ez 18:21–24; 33:12
Rom 11:20–24
1 Cor 10:12; 16:13
Ps 33:18–19; 34:15
texts also of Holy Scripture plainly prove that good folk may fall and perish. And the Scripture is full of good counsel… advising all good men to stand fast always and ever live in fear of falling, but if any special revelation be given to some certain man beside the common, ordinary course.

We find also plain examples, both in Scripture and at our own eyes, of many virtuous children of God that have fallen from that estate and become by sin the children of the devil.

For letting pass over Judas, that from the child of God, and from a holy apostle, turned into the traitor of God and child of the devil of hell, we have seen overmany in our own days in whom we have had experience of the like. As of Friar Luther, Friar Huessgen, Otho the monk, Pomerane the priest, and Friar Lambert. For as for Zwingli, I never heard of any good virtue in him. But all these others were the good children of God once, at such time as grace and devotion brought them into religion. And yet can now no good man doubt but by the breach of their holy vows and promise made to God, and running out in apostasy, and living in lechery under pretense of matrimony—and, for their more courage and boldness in such bitchery, to bear it to better, out shameless with ungracious company, making a shameful sect thereof and an abominable heresy—they be now fallen from Christ, and have expelled the seed of God out of their hearts by sin very devilish-deadly. And yet dare I not despair of any of all these, nor of Tyndale himself neither. For all his own rule whereby he teacheth that they which willingly sin, and of purpose maliciously impugn the known truth, as they and he do, shall never come to grace of amendment nor ought not to be prayed for—yet dare I neither, I say, despair of any of them nor of himself neither… but hope yet and pray, both, that
God may amend them all, if none of them be dead in their sin
and gone to the devil already. For then is there in them peccatum
1 Jn 5:16 ad mortem that Saint John speaketh of; and
vain were it then, and sin also, any more
to pray for them than for the devil. Quia in inferno nulla est redemptio…
and the wretches lie there now blaspheming God, and are his unchangeable
enemies, as is the devil.

But these reasons and these examples, I say with the consent of
all the old holy expositors of Saint John’s epistle before, make
us to perceive surely that Saint John did never mean by these
words after such manner as Tyndale expoundeth him now: that because
the seed of God is once in him, therefore there can never any
deadly sin enter after. For Saint John himself, in the same
1 Jn 5:21 epistle, counseleth every good man to
stand still in his goodness, and beware that
he fall not into idolatry. Which he might have bidden all God’s children care never for, if they were, as Tyndale saith, sure by their feeling faith that they could never fall thereto, because the seed of God was once within them.

But as I said before, Tyndale in these words of Saint John
taketh occasion of the simplicity used in the manner of speech in Holy Scripture, to make cavillations and seek out sophisms upon every word. And whereas Saint John saith that the child of God “cannot” sin… meaning not precisely that he cannot sin
deadly by any manner means, but that it is a great occasion to keep
him from sin, and that he that doth deadly sin is not God’s child but the devil’s—Tyndale affirmeth him plainly  to mean that
he which is once God’s child can never sin deadly after. As
though every man that would say, “An honorable man’s child,
and virtuously brought up, cannot fall to shameful, vicious
living, for his good education shall bridle him, and dread of
shaming himself and his friends must needs restrain him,”
might not mean by these words that the young man should have a great occasion to continue good, but must needs mean that it
were impossible for him to be other than good… and that he never could after forget his bringing up, and shake off shame and fall to naught.

2–3 peccatum ad mortem: i.e., the “sin unto death”        4 vain: in vain; useless // were it then: would it then be
5 Quia . . . redemptio: For in hell there is no redemption. (This is part of a response in the Office for the Dead.)
6–7 his unchangeable enemies: i.e., unalterably inimical to him        8 reasons: considerations
8 consent: concurrence        9 expositors of: commentators on        10 surely: with certainty
10–11 mean by . . . after such manner: mean . . . in such a way        12 once: at some time // him: i.e., someone
12 there: i.e., into that person        13 deadly: i.e., guilt of mortal        15 stand still: continue to stand; keep persisting
15–16 beware . . . not: take care not to fall / take heed lest he fall        16 might have been: could rightly have told
17 care never for: to never worry about // by: i.e., on account of        18 that . . . thereto: i.e., never to be able to
fall thereinto        19 once: once and for all        21 occasion . . . used: i.e., advantage of the unsophisticated/artless way
things are said        22 make cavillations: split hairs // seek out sophisms: come up with specious arguments
22 upon: about        24 precisely: literally        25, 26, 28 deadly: mortal(ly)        25 manner: kind of
25, 34 occasion: motivation / inducement        26–26 to . . . sin: i.e., for him to keep from sinning        26 doth: commits
28 vicious: vice-ridden; immoral        31 dread: fear        32 friends: loved ones; relatives and friends // refrain: restrain
33 might not: i.e., could not possibly        34 continue: stay        35 were: i.e., is        36 bringing up: upbringing
36 shame: i.e., regard for propriety or decency        36–37 fall to naught: turn bad / turn to evildoing
Or if one would say, “A man that taketh his wife for very love, can never fall to adultery, the love that he hath to her must needs keep him to her; nor she cannot, for very shame, beguile him, for the love that he beareth to her”—do not folk speak in such fashion? And yet, though they mean that these things be great occasions to contain the parties in faithful matrimony, they mean not that it can never happen otherwise.

In such manner of wise meant Saint John in those words, when he said, “He that is born of God sinneth not, for he hath the seed of God in him; and therefore he cannot sin, because he is born of God”—he meant, I say, not that it is impossible for him to sin deadly, but that it is a great help and occasion to keep him from deadly sin.

Yet will not Tyndale let to stick still in his error, and say that Saint John plainly meant “that it is impossible for him to sin that hath the seed of God in him; for he saith that he which once hath the seed in him cannot sin after deadly, by no manner means, because he hath the seed of God in him once.”

To this I say that in the example that I before did put, neither the man nor the wife that come together for great love can fall to adultery, because the love which is in each of them toward the other cannot suffer it. And truth it is as long as it lasteth and endureth in them. But either of them both yet may so far fall in love with some other that the hot love which they had between themselves may cool and clean be quenched—as is the fire with casting on water enough.

Saint John, therefore, writing those words, and understanding as indeed he doth—not, after a sophistical fashion, that it were utterly impossible for him at any time after sin deadly that hath once the “seed of God” in him, but well and reasonably meaning after the common manner of speaking, that it shall be a great occasion for him to abide good still, and that as long as the man keepeth that “seed of God” (whether Saint John took it for lively faith, grace, or the Spirit of God) and cleaveth thereunto, so long he cannot sin deadly—Saint John, I say, so saying and so meaning, spoke as became the right evangelist of Christ. But Tyndale—telling Saint John’s tale and meaning thereby as he would make us ween that Saint John meant,
that is to wit, that whosoever is once born of God neither shall sin after deadly nor never can, because the seed of God is in him able to preserve the man and to keep out sin—speaketh as wisely as if he would first make me this argument, “He that turneth the spit sitteth by the fire; but he that sitteth by the fire cannot be cold, because he hath a good fire by him: ergo, he that turneth the spit cannot be cold,” and when he had made us once this argument, would then ween he had plainly proved that whosoever had once turned the spit could never be cold after in his life. For surely after Tyndale’s understanding of Saint John’s words, the reason is much like. For likewise as while a man sitteth by the fire, he cannot be cold, because the fire is by him that keepeth him warm: so while the seed of God is in the man, he cannot sin, because the seed of God being in him doth keep and preserve him from sin. But likewise as the broach-turner that sitteth warm by the fire may let the spit stand, and suffer the meat to burn, and walk himself out in the snow till his teeth chatter in his head for cold, and never catch heat again but fall stark dead on the ground: so he that is once God’s child, and hath the seed of God in him, and therefore cannot sin deadly as long as he keepeth it and cleaveth fast unto it, may by the folly and frowardness of his own free will expel the seed of God, and reject his grace, and neglect his Holy Spirit, and fall to deadly sin, and continue therein, and die therein, and go to the devil therein too.

And so, as it is true to say that “he which hath a good fire by him cannot be cold,” meaning thereby, as long as he keepeth him by it: so is it true to say that “whoso have the seed of God in him cannot sin deadly,” meaning thereby, as long as he keepeth it. And thus meant Saint John.

And as he that would say “Whoso sitteth by the fire can never be cold,” meaning thereby that he could never go from the fire and so catch cold after, were a very, stark fool: so he that would say that “whoso have the seed of God in him cannot sin,” meaning thereby that he could never after lose that seed, by the folly or frowardness of his own will, and thereby sin deadly and be damned too, were much more than mad. And, sirs, thus meaneth Tyndale… and would make us all so wise as to ween that Saint John meant so too; whereof we see plain the contrary, not only by many other, plain

1, 18 is once: at some time is  2, 20, etc. deadly: mortal(ly)  3, 14 preserve: protect  3 wisely: sensibly 4, 6, etc. spit: roasting skewer  5 but: i.e., and  7 when . . . once: i.e., once he had made us  8, 36 ween: think 9 surely after: i.e., certainly concerning  10 understanding: interpreting  11 reason: reasoning 10–11 much like: very similar  15 may: i.e., could  15–16 let the spit stand: i.e., let . . . be; leave the spit alone 16 suffer: allow  17 catch heat: get warm  20 may: can 21, 33 folly: foolishness  16 let the spit stand: i.e., let . . . be; leave the spit alone  22 neglect: disregard; turn a deaf ear to  25 keepeth him: keeps himself  26, 29, 32 whoso (have): whoever (has)  30 from: away from 21, 33 folly: foolishness  22 neglect: disregard; turn a deaf ear to  25 keepeth him: keeps himself  31 catch: get  31, 35 were: would be  31 very, stark: literal, outright  36 wise: sensible 36 meant so: meant that  37 plain the contrary: exactly the opposite  41 is once: at some time is
places of Scripture, but also by many other places of Saint John in
the selfsame epistle, with all the old holy saints that ever expounded
that epistle of Saint John.

And since Tyndale so stiffly sticketh in this point—that the seed
of God once had in a man's heart doth keep him forever after
from every deadly sin—let him tell us wherefore it keepeth him not
forever from every deadly sinful deed. For Tyndale saith himself
that though the seed shall keep him from all deadly sin... yet
it shall not keep him from adultery, nor manslaughter, nor such
other "horrible deeds" as poor unlearned people in some countries be
wont to call deadly sins.

And therefore, good Christian readers, I shall in this point end with
the good, wholesome counsel of Saint John by which in the selfsame
epistle, against Tyndale, expressly he biddeth us all beware of
all such heretics as would make us ween that some were God's
wanton cockneys in such a special wise that whatsoever they do, nothing
could displease him... and some others so little set by, and so far
out of his favor, that no repentance, no penance, no faith, no hope, no love of God and their neighbor, could bring them in his
favor. Against which fond and frantic imagination... Saint John,
though he say, "Whosoever confess that Jesus is the Son of God dwelleth
in him and he in him," yet he warneth us well and plainly that he
would no man should beguile us and make us ween that with that confession
and that belief alone he were a good man... but saith, "By
this shall ye see who be children of God, and who children of the
devil; for he that is not righteous is not of God." And saith also, "Little
children, let no man beguile you. He that doth righteousness is
righteous, and he that doth sin is of the devil.”

Now may we clearly perceive that these only words, of Saint
John, utterly destroy Tyndale’s heresy grounded upon his false
exposition of Saint John’s other words. For when Saint John saith
here himself that the children of God and the children of the
devil be manifest and open by their outward works—how can
that stand with Tyndale’s exposition and his heresy depending
thereupon, by which he saith that the true members of the elect
church may fall into the doing of “horrible deeds,” through the “fruit
of the sin remaining in their members and, upon great occasions,
breaking out of their members”… and yet, for all those horrible deeds
done by them, they be the children of God still, and never become the

1 places: passages 2 old holy saints: holy saints of old // expounded: i.e., wrote commentaries on
4 stiffly: obdurately // sticketh in: holds firm on; refuses to budge on  6, 7, etc. deadly: mortal(ly)
6 wherefore: why 9 from: i.e., from committing // manslaughter: murder 10 unlearned: uneducated
10 countries: rural areas 12 in: on 15, 23 ween: think 15 some: i.e., some people
16 wanton cockneys: spoiled, pampered pets // wise: way 17 set by: regarded 18, 19 no: i.e., no amount of
19 in: into 20 fond: ridiculous // frantic: wildly insane // imagination: idea 21 say: i.e., says
21–22: See 1 John 4:15. 21 confess: i.e., professes 22 warneth: cautions // well and: quite
23 would no man should: would have no one 23, 27 beguile: delude; fool 23 confession: profession
24 he . . . man: i.e., one would be a good person 24–28: See 1 John 3:10; 3:7–8. 29 only words: words alone
30 destroy: demolish 31, 34 exposition: explanation 33 manifest: i.e., manifested
33 open: i.e., exposed as such // outward works: external acts 34 stand: square // depending: based; resting
36 may: can 37, 38 members: bodily parts 37 great: strong; powerful // occasions: inducements
38 for: notwithstanding 39 be . . . still: continue to be the children of God
children of the devil, for all the doing of their horrible deeds, because they do them not of malice nor of purpose, but of frailty only, and weakness?

Ye see, good readers, openly, that if Tyndale in this his heresy, and false exposition of Saint John, said true... then should Saint John

1 Jn 3:10 himself say untrue where he saith that by the outward deeds the children of God and the children of the devil be made manifest and open. For they were not open by the deed if, notwithstanding the most horrible deeds that could be devised, yet their secret, unknown faith and frailty did ever keep it secret, hidden, and unknown whether they were, at the deed-doing, the children of God or the devil. And therefore—whereas Tyndale would make us ween that himself and his holy fellows had by their “feeling faith” the Spirit of God in such a special manner entered into their holy breasts that none of their abominable deeds could be any deadly sin, because that the Spirit, saith he, dwelleth still within them—Saint John saith, in the very end of that third chapter, “Whoso keepeth God’s commandments, in him God dwelleth. And by that mark we know,”

Ps 76:12 both vows against the commandment of God, which hath in Holy Scripture expressly commanded them to keep and fulfill their vows—Saint John, I say, declareth against Tyndale’s doctrine, clearly, that when we see such deeds in them, we may well perceive by them that there is at that time never a whit of God’s good Spirit in them.

But, now, no man doubteth whither of the two better understood Saint John—whether Tyndale, or Saint John himself. And therefore, good Christian readers, while ye see that these holy fathers and authors of these heresies, preaching so saintly of their “feeling faith,” boast themselves and their fellows for the sure children of God, that, because of the Spirit, can never sin of purpose, and therefore never sin deadly, but be certain and sure of grace and salvation; and yet ye see, for all this, that, being professed monks and friars, they fall to the fleshly feeling of nuns, of long purpose, and still

1 for: notwithstanding  2 not of: not out of  2, 36 of purpose: purposely / premeditatedly 4 openly: clearly
4 this his heresy: this heresy of his  5 false: so-called / false  // exposition: explanation
5 said true: was telling the truth  5–6 should . . . say untrue: would . . . be telling an untruth  7 outward: external
8, 9 open: i.e., exposed as such  9 were not: would not be // the most: i.e., its being one of the most
10 devised: imagined  13 make us ween: have us think  14, 35 fellows: cohorts / followers
14, 34 feeling: felt; experiential  16, 37 deadly: mortal(ly)  16 because: by reason of the fact
17 still: uninterrupted  18 whose: whoever  19 mark: telltale sign
24–25 breach of their both vows: i.e., breaking of both of them’s vows  26 which: who  29 in: i.e., done by
29 may well perceive by them: i.e., can well tell by those deeds of theirs  30 never a: not one
31 doubteth: i.e., is in any doubt as to // whither: which  33 while: when
34 authors: founders / originators // saintly: sanctimoniously  36 that: who
39 purpose: purposefulness // still: continually
persevere therein, and finally divers die therein, too: ye may believe here Saint John—that, say they what they will, they be the devil’s children in deed, and all their holy doctrine is utterly nothing else but very frantic blasphemy.

And therefore, finally, whereas Tyndale knitteth up all his matter with a quip against me, and saith that because every man that once hath the right faith is born of God, and thereby hath the seed of God in him, which preserveth him so that he can never sin… “therefore it is,” saith he, “a false conclusion that M. More holdeth, how a man may have a right faith joined with all kinds of abomination and sin”: ye see now that his own conclusion is so clearly proved false that it letteth my conclusion nothing at all. And yet shall I further touch his quip where it shall have better place, after that we shall come to the chapters in which he shall open and declare his uttermost what he calleth “faith.” But first will I consider a little his further progress in this chapter, in which he goeth forth in this wise…

Tyndale

And yet every member of Christ’s congregation is a sinner, and sinneth daily, some more and some less. For it is written (1 Jn 1), “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” And again, “If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” And Paul (Rom 7) saith, “That good which I would, that I do not; but that evil which I would not, that do I. So it is not I that do it,” saith he, “but sin that dwelleth in me.”

More

Lo, now ye hear his worshipful riddle… in the first part whereof he hath already shown us that a true member of Christ’s church sinneth not, because it hath the right faith… and so is born again of God and hath his Spirit, and because of that can never sin. And now he showeth us, in the other part of his riddle, that every true member of Christ’s church, for all that he never sinneth, yet he sinneth daily. And as he proved the first part by the words of Saint John falsely taken and understood—so doth he now prove us the second part by the words of Saint Paul, understood and construed as falsely as ever he construed Saint John.

1 finally divers die: several end up dying 3 deed: actuality // utterly: absolutely
4 frantic: deranged; loony 5 knitteth up: finishes up; concludes
5 all his matter: i.e., this whole discussion of his 6 quip: gibe / dig // against: at
6 and saith: i.e., saying 7 once hath: at some time has gotten 8 preserveth him so: so protects him
9, 11, 12 conclusion: proposition / thesis 9 holdeth: maintains 10 how a man may: i.e., that one can
11 clearly: completely 12 letteth: counteracts // nothing at all: not in the least 13 touch: address
13 quip: gibe / barb 14 that: i.e., such time as // open: clarify 15 declare: explain
15 his uttermost: to the best of his ability 16 his further progress: i.e., what he goes on to say
17 goeth forth in this wise: proceeds as follows 20, 33 daily: every day / all the time
21–22: See 1 John 1:8. 21 have no: are without 22–23: See 1 John 1:10.
22 make him: i.e., make him out to be; call him 24 which: i.e., thing which
24 would (not): i.e., (do not) want to do 27 worshipful: impressive; awe-inspiring 28 shown: told
31 showeth: tells 32 for all: notwithstanding 34, 36 falsely: wrongly 34 taken: employed
34, 35 understood: interpreted
The relics of original sin

For whereas Saint Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, speaketh of the pronity and motions in the flesh remaining, as the relics of original sin, whereby we be tickled toward great actual deadly sins, and daily fall into venial: Tyndale, as appeareth by his words next after following, would we should ween that Saint Paul meaneth that every true member may daily fall into great “horrible deeds,” as perjury, manslaughter, and adultery, of weakness and frailty… and that all those abominable deeds be no deadly sins yet, but venial every one, because it is not the man that doth it, but the sin that dwelleth in him. And while Saint Paul saith the words of himself… Tyndale so layeth them forth that he would we should take it that Saint Paul himself, or at the leastwise, if not himself, yet the sin that dwelled in him, committed in very deed many such “horrible deeds” as the devil and the flesh did move and stir him to. And then was it well likely that he did enough. For well ye wot, the devil would not fear to set his flesh on fire, and tempt him to lechery and manslaughter both… while he feared not to tempt our Savior himself to gluttony, covetise, and pride, devil-worship,

and self-slaughter too. And Saint Paul himself confesseth that for a medicine preservative against pride, there was given him the “angel of Satan,” the “prick of the flesh,” to dab him in the neck, and make him stoop, and beat him.

And it appeareth plainly that Tyndale taketh Saint Paul’s words spoken of himself, to signify not only stirring and incitations toward deadly sinful deeds… but also the very deeds committed and done, as he calleth it, of “frailty,” by the violence of those motions. For if he mean not so, he laid those words nothing to his purpose, as it appeareth openly by those his own words following…

Tyndale

Thus are we sinners and no sinners. No sinners if thou look unto the profession of our hearts toward the law of God, on our repentance and sorrow that we have, both because we have sinned and also because we be yet full of sin still, and unto the promises of mercy in our Savior Christ, and unto our faith. Sinners are we, if thou look unto the frailty of our flesh, which is as the weakness of one that is newly recovered out of a great disease… by

1, 3 relics: residual effects 2 speaketh: is speaking // pronity: proneness 3, 29 motions: inclinations / urges 4 tickled: stimulated; goaded // actual: i.e., personally committed (as opposed to inherited original sin) 4, 27 deadly: mortal(ly) 5 appeareth: is shown 6 would we should ween: would have us think 7 may daily fall: can fall all the time // as: such as 8, 18 manslaughter: murder 8 of: out of 9 be … yet: i.e., are yet not mortal sins 11 while: since // the words of: i.e., these words with reference to 12 that … should: as to have us 14 very deed: actual fact 15 move: prompt 15, 26 stir(ring): prod(ding) 16 well likely: quite likely // enough: plenty // wot: know 18 while: given that 19 covetise: avarice 23 prick: thorn // dab: stick 25 appeareth plainly: is clear to see 26 of: about 27 incitations: incitings 28 by: because of 29 so: i.e., that // laid: adduced 30 nothing to his purpose: i.e., to no avail for his argument 30 as it appeareth openly: i.e., as is clearly shown 30–31 his own words following: i.e., words of his own that immediately follow them 33, 36, etc. unto: at 34 on: at 36 be … still: still are, constantly, full of sin 38 as: like 39 one that: someone who // out of: from // great disease: serious illness
the reason whereof our deeds are imperfect, and by the reason whereof also, when occasions be great, we fall into horrible deeds, and the fruit of the sin which remaineth in our members breaketh out. Notwithstanding, yet the Spirit leaveth us not, but rebuketh us and bringeth us home again unto our profession... so that we never cast off the yoke of God from our necks, neither yield up ourselves unto sin for to serve it, but fight afresh and begin a new battle.

More

Lo, good Christian readers, here have ye heard a full un-Christian tale of an evil Christian man. For now see ye clearly that by plain, express words, Tyndale telleth us that a true member of Christ’s church breaketh out into “horrible deeds” when the “occasions be great”… and yet he saith that, for all that, he sinneth not deadly. And this is the thing for the proof whereof he bringeth forth his before-rehearsed words of Saint Paul… by which he would make it seem that Saint Paul did himself so too.

And yet keepeth he his accustomed guise, as far as he can, in covering himself and coloring his matter from knowledge. And therefor he cometh in with “sinning and yet not sinning.” And for the reading of that riddle, he saith that the true members of Christ’s church are “sinners and yet no sinners.” And among them he setteth himself… saying of himself and his fellows:

[We be] no sinners if thou look upon the profession of our hearts toward the law of God, and on our repentance and sorrow that... we have sinned and also because we be yet full of sin still, and on to the promises of mercy that is in our Savior Christ, and unto our faith. And sinners are we, if thou look to the frailty of our flesh, ... [by which] we fall into horrible deeds and the fruit of sin which remaineth in our members breaketh out.

Here would I that Tyndale should somewhat more clearly tell us what he meaneth in this matter: whether he mean that a true member sinneth not deadly all the while that he resisteth, and doth not, the sinful horrible deed, as, for example, manslaughter or adultery; and that then again he sinneth not when that after the deed done, he repenteth and is sorry for his evil deed, and is forgiven of God through the promises of mercy in our Savior.
Christ, for the repentance and sorrow, and for the faith—let Tyndale, I say, tell us whether he mean thus... or else that himself and his other fellows, the true members of Christ's church, do not sin deadly in the very time, neither, in which they consent to do those horrible sinful deeds; or rather, in the time while they be in the doing; for consent to the sin, he saith they never do.

By these words of his, “[We be] no sinners if thou look to the profession of our hearts to the law of God, and unto our repentance and sorrow that... we have sinned,” it may seem that he meaneth the first way; that is to wit, that they sin not all the while that they resist the motion to the deed, and that they sin not, also, when that, after the deed, they take repentance and sorrow therefor.

Now, if he mean to read his riddle on this fashion, then he assoileth his strange riddle as bluntly as an old wife of Culham did once among scholars of Oxford that sojourned with her for death. Which while they were on a time, for their sport, proposing riddles among them, she began to put forth one of hers too, and said,

The old wife of Culham's riddle  "Read my riddle, what is that I knew one that shot at a hart and killed a haddock."

And when we had, everybody, much mused how that might be, and then prayed her to declare her riddle herself... after long request, she said at the last that there was once a fisher that came aland in a place where he saw a hart, and shot thereat, but he hit it not... and afterward he went again to the sea and caught a haddock and killed it. And surely Tyndale readeth his riddle much like, if he understand by his riddle “they sin and yet sin not” that they sin not while they resist the motions, nor when they repent the deed... and that they sin while they be in doing. For that is no more to say but in one time they sin, and in another they sin not; and when they sin, then they sin, and when they sin not, then they sin not. Were not here a wise riddle, ween ye, and well declared, if he mean it thus? And that he so meaneth, I say it seemeth by his words before-rehearsed... and also by these that he saith: “the Spirit [calleth] us home again.” Whereby it seemeth that he meaneth we were once gone from home and afterward be brought again.

Howbeit, on the other side, he may peradventure mean by these words “[we be] no sinners if thou look to the profession of

1 for: on account of  2–3 his other fellows: i.e., the others of his stripe  3 deadly: mortally
7 by: i.e., by reason of  7, 37 to: at  8 unto: at  9–10 meaneth... way: i.e., his meaning is that first one
11 motion: inclination; pull // when: i.e., at the time  12 take: conceive // therefore: for it
13, 25 read(eth): decipher(s)  13 on: in // assoileth: solves  14 strange: weird
14 bluntly: inelegantly / pointlessly  14, 18 wife: inn's-landlady  15 scholars of Oxford: Oxford students
15 that sojourned: who were staying // for: on account of // death: i.e., the Black Death; the plague
16 which... time: i.e., during which time while they were one day
16 for their sport: i.e., for their amusement // for fun // proposing: posing  18 read: answer // what: which
18–19 one that: someone who  19, 23 hart: i.e., deer  20 much mused: tried hard to figure out // might: could
21 prayed: asked // declare: i.e., give us the answer to  22 fisher that came aland: fisherman who came ashore
24, 35 again: back  25 surely: assuredly // much like: in much the same way  27 motions: promptings; urges
28 doing: i.e., the doing of it  29 but: i.e., but that  31 were not here: wouldn’t there be // wise: brilliant
31 ween ye: i.e., don’t you think  32 declared: explicated  33 by: from // before-rehearsed: above-quoted
34 home again: back home  36 howbeit: however // side: i.e., hand // peradventure: perhaps
our hearts toward the law of God” that even, still, in the very time in which they go about to bring their “horrible deeds” to pass, and in which they do them, too… yet profess they the law of God still with their heart. And so may he seem to mean as well by other words, in the chapters following, as by these words, in this present chapter, where he saith, “We cast never off the yoke of God from our necks, neither yield ourselves unto sin for to serve it, but fight afresh and begin a new battle.” By these words it seemeth, and of truth so, I trow, he fully meaneth (as appeareth by sundry other chapters of this book, and yet most especially by his Exposition upon the First Epistle of Saint John), that though they sin in that they have the motions of sin, the relics of original sin, remaining in the flesh, yet because they be born of God by the right faith (that is, as Tyndale expoundeth it, by the belief of the faith confessed by Saint Peter, that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God and our Redeemer), and because they have that belief not only through the words of men preached unto them (which faith is, as he saith hereafter, but “historical,” faint, and soon gone), but have it engraved in their hearts by God… which he calleth hereafter the “feeling” faith… by which faith he saith that they feel themselves to believe in God, and put their whole hope and trust of salvation in God by the Passion of Christ, without any respect of any good works; and feel and be sure that God loveth them, and that they be in his favor, and be true chosen members of his elect church, and shall never be damned; and by this feeling faith be born of God, and that therefore they have the Spirit of God in them, by reason whereof they can never sin deadly… for the Spirit (saith he) shall never suffer them to sin of purpose, but all the horrible deeds that they shall do shall be only of weakness and frailty of the flesh upon great occasions, when the fruit of sin that remaineth in their members breaketh out: for this cause he saith that though the motion of the flesh toward horrible deeds be sin, and therefore they sin—yet because of their feeling faith, they keep still in their hearts their profession toward the law of God. And when they have done the deeds and taken a fall… yet cast they never off the yoke of God off their necks… nor yield themselves unto sin to serve it, but when the rage is once past, then rise up like lusty galliards again, and fight afresh, and cry a new field anew, and begin a new battle; and then is (saith he) all forgiven them quite, and they clean assoiled of God, both from sin and pain…

1 still: constantly; uninterruptedly 2 go about: set out 3–4 profess . . . still: they continue to profess the law of God 4, 5 by: by reason of 7 neither: nor 8 it seemeth: i.e., he seems to be saying // of truth: actually // trow: feel sure 9 appeareth: is evidenced 10 exposition: commentary 11 motions of: i.e., inclinations toward 12 relics: residual effects 14 confessed: professed 16 have: i.e., come by 17 but: merely 18 historical: i.e., intellectual. (See notes for 314/6 and 398/11.) // faint: tenuous 19, 24, 32 feeling: i.e., felt; experiential 22 respect of: regard to 26 deadly: mortally 27 suffer: allow 27 of purpose: purposely 28 only of: i.e., done only out of 29 great: strong; powerful 29 occasions: inducements / provocations 30 members: bodily parts 31 though: even if 31 motion: inclination / prompting / pull 32 be sin: i.e., is sinful // therefore: on that account 33 still: uninterruptedly; all along 36 when . . . past: once the fit of passion is over 37 lusty: vigorous 37 galliards: valiant men // cry a new field: i.e., declare a new war 39 quite: entirely 39 clean assoiled of: completely absolved by // both from: i.e., of both // pain: i.e., debt of punishment for it
and no pain shall suffer any time after for the sin passed before, neither in purgatory nor in this world neither. And therefore neither in going about their “horrible deeds” nor in the committing of them, he saith they never sin deadly nor never can, be the deed never so abominable… and such as far less were deadly and
damnable in another man, that were not so born of God by such a feeling faith as they be, nor had received the seed of God in him as they have; which seed once had can never suffer them to
sin of purpose, and therefore never deadly, after.

Albeit that, as I have often told you, Tyndale, partly for the uncertainty of himself in his opinions, after which he grasped and long felt about, here and there, in the dark, ere ever he well wist where he would rest and settle himself; and partly because he perceived in his own conscience his heresies not only so
naughty, but also so sottish, that he was ashamed of them… and therefore ever so labored to set his words in such obscure and doubtful fashion that he might have always some refuge at some starting hole—yet of very truth, in conclusion, when he saw the world wax in some parts of Almaine so surely fixed and confirmed in all kind of heresies that there could none error so foolish nor so frantic be devised but a man might be bold to set it forth, and should not fail to find fond fellows enough to follow it; hoping then that he should, little and little, at length bring the people of this realm unto the same point: he hath finally so set forth the matter, in this book of his Answer unto my Dialogue, and yet much more openly in his Exposition upon the First Epistle of Saint John, that any learned man which advisedly readeth those twain shall never after doubt but that his riddle of the true member of their elect church “sinning ever and yet sinning never,” he meaneth very plainly and expressly in such manner as I have now last declared you. And therefore let us now consider how he may maintain his meaning, and what good fruit will follow thereupon in the feeling of such holy members.

Since Tyndale agreeth that both Luther and himself, and all other the true members of the “elect church,” may do great “horrible” deeds such as he denieth not to be in other men deadly and
damnable, we must ensearch with him and ask of him what is the thing that maketh the same horrible deeds which should be

1 pain: punishment // passed: having taken place 3 going about: deciding to commit /
taking steps toward committing 4, 5, etc. deadly: grievously / mortally 5 never so: no matter how
5 such as far less were: i.e., such that one far less bad would be 6 in: i.e., for // that were: who was
8 had: gotten // suffer: allow 9 of purpose: purposely // after: thereafter 10 albeit that: even though
10 for: on account of 10–11 the . . . in: his own uncertainty regarding / his lack of stability in
11 opinions: heterodox views 12 ere: before // well: i.e., really 13 wist: knew // would: wanted to
14 conscience: conscience / consciousness // nor: i.e., to be not 15 naughty: evil // sottish: stupid; boneheaded
16 labored: endeavored // set his words: couch his assertions // such obscure: i.e., such a murky
16 doubtful: ambiguous 17, 21 might: could 17 have always: always take // at: i.e., in
17–18 starting hole: loophole 18 of: in // in conclusion: in the end 19 wax: become // Almaine: Germany
19 surely: securely 20 kind: manner / kinds 21 frantic: wildly insane // but: but that // be bold: venture
22 fond fellows: i.e., lowlifes idiotic // follow: subscribe to 23 and: i.e., by // at length: eventually
25 yet . . . openly: i.e., much more openly yet 27 which: who // advisedly: carefully; reflectively
27 twin: two (works) 30 declared: shown 31 maintain: attempt to defend 33 agreeth: grants
34 other the: the other // may: can 35 in: i.e., for; when committed by
36 ensearch with: do some investigating with / make inquiry of 37 should: would
deadly in another, to be not deadly in Luther or him, or any such other true member of their “elect church.”

He will peradventure answer us and say it is no deadly sin in them because that God doth afterward, upon their repentance and sorrow taken for their sin, forgive them the death and all manner of pain due to that horrible deed by them before committed… and that therefore it is not deadly to them, because by God’s remission and pardon it is provided that they shall not die. This answer of Tyndale is very slender… for it implieth the contrary of that it should prove.

For it declareth that the deed is deadly—and that he sinneth deadly. For else God did not pardon him the death upon his repentance, if death were not due to his deed.

And I do not now lay to them the time before their consent unto the deed, nor the time of their repentance after their evil deed, but the time in which their will consented and agreed to do it, and the time in which they did it indeed; in this meantime, say I, they sin deadly indeed.

“Nay,” saith Tyndale, “for afterward we repent, and by and by God forgiveth us the death, for his mercy in our Savior Christ, and for our faith, and for his promises.”

This wise answer is much like as though he would tell us that one which had robbed a church were a thief and yet not a thief. A thief because he had stolen away the chalice, and yet not a thief because the King had given him a pardon.

Tyndale will yet haply say that the thief was not sure before that he should have his pardon after… but Luther and he, and such other true members of their “elect church,” be sure, by God’s promises, that upon their repentance they shall have their pardon.

But then ask we him again, though he know by the promise that upon repentance he shall have pardon—how knoweth he, and what promise hath he, that when he hath committed horrible deeds, he shall have after the grace given him to take such repentance as the pardon shall follow?

Hereto shall Tyndale say that himself and his fellows do feel, by their feeling faith, that they be born of God, and that they have his seed within them… by which they be well assured that they shall never do any such deed as they shall spiritually die for… but
is very sure, and feeleth well, by his feeling faith, that the Spirit will call him home again after, be he never so far gone, and will cause him to repent, and so get him his pardon.

Of this opinion be they very surely… whereof, ye see well, followeth no little occasion of bold setting forward unto sin. For if a prince would promise every man a pardon beforehand that would so surely trust upon his promise as, whatsoever he should do, he would not let to come and ask it… no man doubteth, I suppose, what plenty this promise would make of all kind of unthrifts. But as for God, though he have made a true, faithful promise of pardon to all true repentants and penitents, what mind or purpose soever they had before (the truth of which promise Tyndale yet mistrusteth in them that sin willingly and of purpose, and plainly saith that they shall Mark this bridle. never have pardon), yet hath our Lord of his goodness and wisdom left one bridle bound about men’s heads to refrain them from boldness of sin: that is to wit, that they cannot after their sinful deeds repent again of themselves, without his special grace. Which though he doth of his goodness commonly offer—yet be they not put in surety before, that it shall be so offered unto them… but that if they so boldly make themselves sure thereof before, that the courage thereof give them occasion to sin… it may be the cause that God shall clearly withdraw it from them and never offer it them after. And this uncertainty of grace to follow is the bridle that refraineth our boldness; whereas Tyndale and his holy fellows, the “true” members of Christ’s church, feeling by their “feeling faith” that after their “horrible deeds” done, they shall undoubtedly take repentance and so get their pardon… have this bridle of dread cast off their head, and therefore are ready, like unbridled colts, to run out at rovers in all horrible deeds, whithersoever the occasions of their wild affections, and the sin, as Tyndale saith, “breaking out in their members,” list to carry them. For when they be carried out upon occasions by the devil and the flesh—then Tyndale calleth it but frailty and infirmity, and no will, in no wise, nor no malicious purpose. And therefore of this heresy, without which they cannot defend their others, ye see what good fruit must follow. And yet suppose that Tyndale’s false heresy were true, and that they were as certain and sure of repentance, and thereby of remission and pardon, as they say they be. This

1 is: i.e., the elect person is // well: rightly; correctly // feeling: experiential; felt 2 never so: no matter how
4, 6 surely: firmly // would promise: i.e., were to promise // who 7 let: forbear / hesitate
9 kind: i.e., kinds / manner // unthrifts: nogoodniks; miscreants 10 have: i.e., has // faithful: solemn / ironclad
11 mind: attitude; disposition // purpose: intention // truth: trueness / trustworthiness
12 mistrusteth: disbelieves in // in: with regard to 13 willingly: volitionally // of purpose: purposely
14 mark: take note of // have pardon: obtain pardon / get pardoned
16–17 refrain them from boldness of sin: i.e., restrain them from sinning presumptuously and recklessly
18 of themselves: by their own power // put in surety: put in certainty; guaranteed // boldly: confidently
20–21 make themselves sure: assure themselves // course . . . them: i.e., course this gives them is for them
21–22 occasion to: i.e., an occasion of // clearly withdraw: completely withhold
24 refraineth our boldness: curbs our boldness / keeps us from getting presumptuous // fellows: comrades / followers
26 their . . . done: doing their “horrible deeds” // undoubtedly: undoubtedly // take repentance: become repentant
27 dread: apprehensiveness // cast off: thrown off of // at rovers: helter-skelter // in: into
29, 32 occasions: inducements // affections: feelings / inclinations // members: bodily parts // list: choose
31 out: away // frailty: susceptibility; human frailty // in no wise: by no means // false: false / damn
would not yet maintain his matter. For though that a traitor were so well acquainted with the condition of his king that he verily knew that when he had all wrought that he could in his traitorous purpose against him, he should yet after obtain his pardon, and thereupon boldly so did, upon some occasion and hope of some high promotion, and afterward were not deceived but obtained his pardon in deed: yet had he been, for all that, a stark traitor in the meanwhile, and had deadly trespassed, though the death followed not, but the fault were fully forgiven. And so much the more traitorous wretch, in how much the prince were of his nature more benign and merciful. And thus ye see plainly that Tyndale, to prove his riddle true that “though he sin he sinneth never deadly,” must seek some better shift than this.

Tyndale will say that his fellows and he do not sin deadly in the time of the doing of such horrible deeds, because (as they say) they do them not of purpose nor willingly, nor do not consent unto sin “to serve it”… but all the while that they go thereabout, and all the while also in which they be in doing, they resist it in their wills, and have still in their hearts their profession to the love of the law, and be sorry that they shall break it… and, finally, do break it against their will, by great occasions given which carry them forth to the doing of those horrible deeds, in a rage of the sin breaking out of their members. Which horrible deeds, after the rage once past, they repent always, and forthwith be clean forgiven.

Is not here, good reader, a goodly defense and a godly? And undoubtedly this is their very defense in defending themselves from deadly sin, as Tyndale’s own words, as well in this chapter as in others following, do plainly and clearly show.

But now seeth every good Christian man well enough that they be wickedly occupied in seeking, as holy David saith, excuses for their sin. For there is no man that doth any such deed against his will… but, albeit that he resist the motion of the devil and the flesh at the first, and, cleaving to the contrary stirring of God and his good angel, repugneth and striveth against the sin, and is peradventure loath to be brought thereto—which doing is very good, and thereby good

\[1\] not yet: still not // maintain his matter: uphold his contention; support his claim // though: i.e., supposing
\[2\] condition: disposition // verily: really // all wrought: brought about everything / carried out all
\[3\] purpose: design / scheme // after: afterward // so did: i.e., did carry out that traitorous scheme
\[4\] occasion: incitement // promotion: advancement // were not deceived: did not turn out to have been mistaken
\[5\] obtained his pardon in deed: did in fact obtain his pardon // stark: no-bones-about-it; flat-out; definite
\[6\] deadly trespassed: i.e., committed a crime meriting the death penalty // fault: offense // 9, 10 were: was
\[7\] in: relative to // prince: sovereign // of: by // deadly: mortal(ly) // seek: seek out / resort to
\[8\] shift: tactic // fellows: comrades / followers // 16 of purpose: purposely
\[9\] willingly: volitionally // 17 go thereabout: take steps toward it // doing: i.e., the committing of it
\[10\] still: unceasingly // by: because of // occasions: powerful inducements // rage: violent flare-up
\[11\] of their members: from parts of their body // after . . . is over // once past: i.e., once . . . is over
\[12\] forthwith: immediately // clean: completely // 26 goodly: splendid // godly: i.e., godly one
\[13\] undoubtedly: unquestionably // 27 very: actual // defending themselves: i.e., claiming immunity
\[14\] albeit that he resist: even if he resists // 34 motion: prompting // 35 stirring: prodding
\[15\] repugneth: fights // peradventure: perhaps // loath: disinclined / unwilling
folk finally cast off and overcome all those temptations through the grace of God working with them—yet such as in conclusion fall to the doing of those horrible deeds which they be tempted to… though they be not fully so evil as others that resist the devil nothing at all, but rather run on apace toward hell themselves than tarry till the devil come to carry them… yet do they undoubtedly through their own fault fall from the grace, willingly, that helped them while they resisted. And as it were a coward that had fought a while, would suddenly cast away both buckler and sword, and fall down at his enemy’s feet, and yield himself into his enemy’s hands—so do these folk which commit those horrible deeds after a while resisting… by which, by God’s help, they should have had the victory if they would have persevered in the fight; they change their mind by the fault of their own free will, through the delectation of the sinful deed, and so consent unto the same, and then seek themselves the way to come thereto, and the devil helpeth them to find it… and so break they willingly God’s commandment, and fulfill the pleasure of the devil and the lust of the flesh. Which willful falling from God and his grace, unto the devil and the flesh… what good man doubteth to be damnable, deadly sin? And therefore when Tyndale telleth us that Luther and he and such other true members of their church, when they commit any such horrible deeds, do not commit them willingly, because they do commit them upon great occasions, and be carried away, spite of their teeth, with the rage of the sin that breaketh out of their members—saving my charity, sir, I beshrew their knavish members out of which their sin breaketh forth with such a rage! Let them cast on cold water, with sorrow, and quench that rage!

Good counsel
For without the fault of their own free will, all the devils in hell can never cast upon them such a heat that shall be able to bring them into that violent, invincible rage, to compel them unwillingly to do such horrible deeds. For God hath promised, as in plain Scripture appeareth, that he will never so suffer them. “God is faithful,” 1 Cor 10:13 saith Saint Paul, “which shall not suffer you to be tempted above that ye may bear… but with the temptation shall also make you a way to get out, so that

1 cast: throw 5 nothing: not / in no way  // apace: at quite a speed 6 tarry: wait around 8–9 as . . . would: i.e., as would be a coward he who, having fought a while, were to 9 cast: fling 9 buckler: shield 11 so . . . which: i.e., that’s what these folk do who 12 a while: i.e., for a while 12 should: would 14 mind: intention 14 through the delectation: i.e., by thinking about the pleasurableness / by taking pleasure in the thought 18 lust: desire 19 willful: deliberate 20 deadly: mortal 24 great: strong; powerful 24 occasions: inducements / provocations 24–25 spite of their teeth: in spite of themselves; despite their best efforts to the contrary 25 with: i.e., by 25, 27, etc. rage: hot passion 25 of their: from their 26, 27 members: bodily parts 26 saving: without prejudice to // beshrew: excoriate; scathingly castigate // knavish: ignoble; depraved 28 cast on: i.e., throw on them some // with sorrow: i.e., for crying out loud; for heaven’s sake 29 the fault of: fault on the part of; culpability of 32 invincible: unconquerable 32 unwillingly: involuntarily; nonvolitionally 34 so suffer: i.e., allow that to happen to 35 which: who 35 suffer: allow 36 above that: beyond what // may: can 37 with: i.e., together with his allowing of 37 make . . . out: i.e., provide . . . out of it // so: i.e., such
ye may well wield it.” And when Saint Paul himself, lest the

2 Cor 12:7–9
greatness of his high revelations might
have set him up in a high pride,

had through God’s great, merciful goodness the “angel of Satan,” the
“prick of the flesh,” given unto him to beat him, and that in such
wise that he was fain thrice to cry to God to take it away—our Lord
again showed him that it was not good for him to lack it so soon,
nor to have it so suddenly taken away from him… but showed him that

The force of the grace of God
his grace was sufficient. Whose strength
working with the
in man’s feebleness so worketh with the free

free will of man
will of him that purposeth to continue
good, that all the devils in hell shall never
be able to put him in such a rage that may carry him toward
horrible deeds one hairbreadth forward against his will. And thus

ye see that Tyndale, as touching his royal riddle of “sinning and
sinning not,” is now brought to that point that he cannot read his
own riddle himself… except he will peradventure say that it is
never deadly sin, though it be done willingly, but if a man
“consent to the sin,” and then will understand thereby that he consenteth
not “to the sin” that consenteth to the deed, but if he consent
that the deed should be sin—and, so, that he which agreeeth to do
adultery doth not sin, because he doth not consent that adultery
should be sin, but rather would it were none. Except Tyndale
mean some such far-fetched wise invention… else can I not, in good
faith, perceive how he can help Luther and himself and other
holy heretics, the true members of their “elect church,” from
consenting to sin… when they do, as he confesseth, “horrible deeds,”
upon “great occasions,” through the “rage” of sin budding and
bringing forth the fruit that breedeth out of their ungracious
“members.”

For if he look for any help of these words where he saith that
they yield not themselves unto sin “for to serve it”—as though other
folk, when they do sin, do intend to serve sin… but they, for
holiness of their “feeling faith,” in the doing of their sins do
not intend to serve the sin, but to make the sin to serve them
and do them pleasure at their own lust and liking—let him for
answer look how Saint Augustin mocketh in like case an old
philosopher... which, being asked why he was not ashamed to have
a harlot as other ribalds had, answered for his defense that there
was great difference between his deed and theirs. For as for them,
they had not the harlot but the harlot had them. But as for him, he

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A proper answer, I tell you! had the harlot, and not the harlot him. And
there was, by Saint Sim, a proper
reason and a trim! A fair boast for a philosopher, to have a harlot at
his will, that lay with every man beside at her will! Now, Tyndale
maketh here a like boast for to excuse him and his fellows, saying,
“We fall, when the occasions be great, into horrible deeds, and the fruit of the
sin which remaineth breaketh out, but yet we never yield ourselves
unto sin to serve it”... meaning, of likelihood, that the sin shall
serve them, as the harlot did the foolish philosopher. But our Savior

Jn 8:34 himself wipeth away clean all the worship
of Tyndale’s word, when he saith
plainly that whosoever do sin is by the doing become “the bond
thrall of sin.” And so, by the very, true tale of Christ, Tyndale’s false
tale is avoided. For whenssoever he yieldeth himself to do horrible
deeds—which he saith they fall in upon great occasions, when the
fruit of the sin remaining in their mischievous members
breaketh out at large—then, forthwith, for all their feeling faith, by
their foul fleshly feeling in the doing their filthy devilish deed,
yield themselves to serve the sin, and by the sin to serve

the devil... and the devil to serve them again, first here for a little
while with a little filthy pleasure, and after in hell forever with
blowing the fire about them.

For as touching Tyndale’s words following, where he saith they
will rise and “fight afresh and begin a new battle”—these words
make nothing to the purpose; for they were never able to rise
again alone. And if God lift them up, as many times he doth—yet
were they not sure that he so would, for he doth not ever so to every
man. And of which sort himself is, that can he never tell, whatsoever
he babble.

35 And also, if he did always so, and that they were also sure before, that
he would always so do after—yet can it not serve Tyndale in this point.
For we speak of the deadly sin in the time of his fall—and of the servitude and thralldom that he lieth in all the while that he lieth prostrate under the devil’s foot—and not that after that God hath gotten him up again; and therefore those words will not help.

Howbeit, of truth, Tyndale’s words written a little before, if they were true (as they be not), would make more for the proof of his purpose—where he saith that though they “fall into horrible deeds upon great occasions when the fruit of the sin remaining in their flesh breaketh out of their members,” yet they “never cast off the yoke of God from their necks.”

These words, if they were true, would make indeed somewhat for their purpose. For if it so were that, for all the doing of their horrible deeds, they did never cast off the yoke of God from their necks—then might it seem that in the time of the doing they did not yet sin deadly, since their necks were yet still bound within the yoke of obedience to the love of God, and that they had not shaken that yoke off.

But, of truth, those words are untrue. For when they do those horrible deeds which God hath upon pain of eternal death precisely forbidden them… and which no temptation can cause them so to do against their will but that they might by God’s help leave it undone if they would, since God never useth to deny the help of his grace till man leave of his hold by sloth or frowardness of his own free will—therefore, I say, when they do those horrible deeds through the fruit of their sin breaking out of their beastly members, they do, by the disobeying of his precept, shake off the yoke of God for the while… as an evil-tached horse shakes off sometimes the bridle and runneth out at large. And then again if it happen that at God’s calling-on, they repent and do penance, and purpose to amend and be better, then is the yoke put on again… as an unbridled horse sometimes when he is followed standeth still and stayeth at his master’s whistling, and suffereth his bridle to be put on again.

Now, if Tyndale say still that because of his “feeling faith,” which when he hath once gotten he saith he can never lose after… and that therefore he can never after do deadly sin, not even while he is in
the doing of such horrible deeds as he consenteth that he may fall in through the fruit of the sin that breaketh out of his members—I would ask him yet once again, what is the thing that, after the rage passed, he so sore should repent and sorrow? For (as himself saith that through such repentance he may have remission)—why should he be so sorry for the deed, to the intent to be by sorrowful repentance made partner of pardon and mercy and restored to life, if he committed in the doing no manner of deadly sin?

If he say for sorrow that he hath offended God, which grieveth him for the love and reverence that he beareth him, and not for any fear of hell… which fear is but servile and bond, and therefore not meet for such holy folk as Luther is and himself: I answer him if that he say true that he consented not, but all was done against his will… God was not angry with him nor offended by him, nor his “sin” no sin at all. For as Saint Augustine saith,

A saying of Saint Augustine if it be done without the will, it is not sin.

Finally, if he stick still in this point—that in the doing of those horrible deeds, their lively, feeling faith (which cannot, as they say, but work well) standeth still in them, all the while that they be doing these horrible deeds that they fall in upon great occasions, through the fruit of the sin that breaketh out of their members… and that they, therefore, do not those horrible sinful deeds themselves, but the sin that remaineth in their members… and that they resist the deed all the while they be in doing, and do not consent nor agree thereunto, nor do it not with their heart, but only with their members—it will be then a wondrous case, in my mind, to consider, what manner a meditation and what manner conflict have they in themselves between their heart and their “members”… when the “fruit of the sin that remaineth in their flesh” against the “profession of their heart to the law of God” breaketh out of their “members” into such “horrible deeds” as take their bodies, that were the members of God, and make them, as Saint Paul saith, the members of a stinking harlot. First, when the devil, upon some sight of a wanton woman, putteth that suggestion in their hearts—they make no cross, of likelihood, neither on

1 he consenteth that he: i.e., Tyndale concedes that an elect person 1, 5 may: can 2, 21 in: into 2, 22, 24, 26, 29, 31 members: (external) bodily parts 3–4 rage passed: fit of passion is over 4 he: i.e., the elect person // sore: intensely // repent: i.e., repent of // sorrow: be sorry for 4 as himself: i.e., since Tyndale 5 he: i.e., one // have: obtain // remission: forgiveness 7 partner: a recipient 8 deadly: mortal 11 bond: slavish 12 meet: fitting 13 if that he say true that he: i.e., that if he is telling the truth in saying that that elect person 13 all: i.e., all of that deed 14 God: i.e., then God 15 no: i.e., any 18 stick still in: still refuses to budge on / still persists in arguing 19 lively: living; active 19–20 as they say: according to them 20 but work well: i.e., fail to produce good works 20 standeth still: uninterruptedly remains 21 great: strong // occasions: inducements / provocations 25 doing: i.e., the doing of it 27 wondrous case: curious situation / weird scenario 27 in my mind: as I see it 28 manner (a): kind of // meditation: rumination; thinking-out 32, 33–34 the members: parts of the body 34 first: at the first; in the beginning 35 some: i.e., their catching some // wanton: loose 36 cross: Sign of the Cross // of: i.e., in all
their forehead nor on their breast, nor anywhere about their body. For such blessing and crossing Tyndale calleth “wagging with fingers in the air,” and “dumb ceremonies” and “image service.” But like holy spiritual fathers born again of God and the Spirit, they resist

manfully first, and a great while. But when they resort unto her and talk with her more and more—and all against their will, ye wot well… for the devil driveth them thither, and he must needs go whom the devil driveth—then, all the way they go, they say to God and themselves, “Iwis, though I go thither with my feet, yet I will not agree to go thither with mine heart, lo. Nor I would not come at her at all, good Lord, saving that upon the great occasion that I had when I saw her once… I then liked her so well that I am now carried thither even in a rage. But yet, for all the rage, I will not cast off thy yoke, good Lord, but I will carry thy yoke still about my neck to bed with her, and put it about her neck too, and yoke us both together. And yet, after all this, lo, when all the rage is past that now harrieth me forth in a heat through the fruit of sin which, remaining in my flesh, breaketh out of my members… then will I repent it, good Lord, and be sorry therefor, and return again from her to thee, or else bring her, yoked with me, too. And then will I pray thee of pardon. And then thou must needs, good Lord, forthwith, at the first word, give me full remission of sin and pain and all, by our Holy Father the Pope’s leave, so that I shall never be punished therefor, neither in hell, purgatory, nor in this world neither. And this good mind, good Lord, will I keep still and never let it fall out of my heart; so that all the while that I lie bassing with Bess, and I am doing that horrible deed with my body… yet will I never agree thereto with my heart. Or if I mishap, for weakness and frailty, to consent unto the deed… yet will I never consent to the sin of the deed… for it shall never be sin by my consent. Or if I do consent to the sin… yet will I not consent of purpose and of malice, as the devil doth, but of weakness and frailty, as other holy folk do. Nor, at the furthest, I will consent no further to the sin but that the sin shall serve me, and not I to serve the sin, in no wise; I will be well ware of that. For, I thank thee, good Lord, the seed of thy Spirit that through my feeling faith is in me can never suffer my heart to consent to be servant to any sin, how horrible sins and how many soever

1 about: on or near  2 crossing: making of the Sign of the Cross  3 dumb ceremonies: meaningless rituals  4 service: worship  5 first: at first // and: i.e., and for  6 resort unto: make their way to / go up to  7 wot: know  7, 9, etc. thither: there  7 must needs: must inevitably; of course must  9 iwis: certainly  10, 16 lo: see  10 I would not come at: i.e., would I approach  11 saving: were it not for the fact  11 great: strong // occasion: inducement; enticement  13 even in a rage: i.e., in a literal heat of passion  13 for all the rage: i.e., notwithstanding that heat // cast: throw / take  16 yet: furthermore  16 all the rage: i.e., this whole fit of passion // past: over  17 harrieth me forth: rushes me forth / carries me off  18 members: bodily parts  19, 23 therefore: for it  20 pray thee of: beg of you  21 thou must needs: you of course have to // forthwith: immediately  22 pain: penalty  22–23 by… leave: with… permission  25 mind: disposition  25 still: continually  26 bassing: making out / messing around  27 mishap: have the bad luck  28 for: on account of  29 sin: i.e., sin aspect  31 of purpose and of: purposely and out of  32 of: (only) out of  33 I will consent no: i.e., will I consent any  34 in no wise: by no means  34–35 be well ware of: i.e., be very careful not to do  36 suffer: allow
my members do. And therefore even while I am in doing... the thank be thine, good Lord, I do never sin deadly, nor never shall, nor can; nor never am by any sin out of thy favor, nor never stand out of the state of grace for any sin that I do or can do, be they never so many or never so horrible... and such as one of these peevish popish papists shall be damned to the devil if they do but the fifteenth part of some such one, and all for fault of such a feeling faith, and such good meditations, as I have."

Is not here a godly meditation, trow ye? Forsooth, I suppose ye shall not find such another in all the meditations of Saint Bernard, as holy a man as he was. And I assure you, Tyndale and his fellows, if their holy heresies be true... must needs in the doing of every such horrible deed as Tyndale telleth us that they fall in by the rageous occasions of the sin breaking out of their wretched members—they must, I say, needs have some such manner of meditation in their holy hearts, if they shall both do those horrible deeds and yet in the time of the doing never consent unto the sin to serve it, but continually keep still in their minds the profession and purpose toward the law of God... and, in all the time of their horrible doing, never once shake off the yoke of their bond toward God... but both abide bound still unto God and yet run loose, at large, after the devil. These twain both at once... without some such meditation can never stand together.

Finally, for conclusion of this his worshipful chapter of “ever sinning and never sinning,” whereas Tyndale, as though he had clearly proved the thing whereof he proveth nothing, concludeth against me in this wise—“And therefore it is a false conclusion that M. More holdeth, how that a man may have a right faith joined with all kind of all abomination and sin”—I conclude against Tyndale that he concludeth clearly the same. And yet conclude I farther, for all that, that I concluded true and that he concludeth false. And thus—because that in this chapter Tyndale is, as it seemeth by his “ever sinning and never sinning,” set upon reading of riddles for his recreation—I put him my riddle too: that he and I be agreed, and yet we be not agreed; and that he saith as I say, A right faith may stand and abide with an abomination, and yet I say not as he saith. For whereas I said, and true I said, that a right faith may stand and abide with all abomination...
meaning thereby that the true, right belief of all the articles of
the Catholic faith may be in a man, and yet he may (that belief still
standing) fall into many deadly sins, without any wrong opinion
taken against the right belief: now cometh Tyndale and agreeth
unto that; so that he and I be therein agreed. But then would he fain save
his worship with saying nay; and therefore he denieth that we be
agreed. For he saith that the thing which I call the right faith is not
the right faith. For though a man believe, saith he, never so right,
without any wrong opinion in any article of the faith... yet but if
he have true trust and full undoubted hope in God, and charity therewith
also, which, saith he, must needs ensue thereupon, else hath he no
right faith. And so Tyndale avoideth me not with any proving
that abomination and sin cannot stand with the thing that is
indeed a right faith... but that abominable sin cannot
stand with the thing which himself calleth the right faith... because
it pleaseth not him to call a “right faith” that belief that is
right enough and hath none article wrong therein for as far forth as
pertaineth to the nature of only faith, but if it be both faith and
hope, and charity too; wherein among all learned men that hear us
both and see his subtle shift, he winneth so much worship thereby
that he may surely be much ashamed thereof, as often as he thinketh thereof.

But mark well, good reader, that he cometh forth after and saith
that himself and such others (his holy companions, the true
members of their “elect church”) as have the “right” faith, and the “feeling”
faith, too—that is to wit, after his own doctrine, full faith, full hope,
and charity both—so surely that it can never fall from them... may
yet, for all their right faith, fall into abominable sinful deeds, upon
great occasions breaking out of the fruit of the sin that remaineth
in their sinful members; and may for a space persevere in those
horrible sinful deeds; and yet, all that while, their right faith doth
continue, and their abominable sinful deeds, together. And so, by
Tyndale himself, all abomination and sin may stand together
with the right faith—that is, not only with the right belief alone,
as I affirmed, but with the right belief and with good hope and charity
too, as Tyndale saith; which I say is plainly false. For surely the
thin subtlety thereof, my gross wit can in no wise perceive.

2 he may: he can 3 deadly: mortal 3–4 any... taken: i.e., his taking, or having taken, any wrong stance toward
5, 7 agreed: in agreement 5 fain: i.e., like to 5–6 save his worship with: i.e., save face by 6 nay: no
8 never so: no matter how 9 any wrong opinion in: i.e., taking any wrong stance regarding 9, 18 but if: unless
10 have true: i.e., has real // full undoubted: totally doubt-free 12 avoideth: rebuts
13, 33 (all) abomination: (all kinds of) abominable vice 13, 15, 33 stand (together): coexist
15 himself: he 18 it: i.e., that belief 20 subtle: deft / sneaky // shift: pulling of a switcheroo
20 worship: respect 23 mark: note 24 himself: he himself 26 to wit: i.e., to say // after: according to
27 both: i.e., too // surely: securely 27, 30, 33 may: can 29 great: strong // occasions: incitements
30 members: bodily parts // a space: some time 32 by: according to 36 plainly: patently
36 surely: assuredly 37 thin: rarefied // subtlety thereof: i.e., abstruse logic of that argument
37 gross wit: thick wit; dense intellect // can in no wise: i.e., can by no means / cannot at all
And thus, good Christian readers, for conclusion, ye now clearly see to what foolish conclusion he hath brought himself in conclusion… and all this chapter of his, with his royal riddle of “sinning and not sinning,” is royally run to right naught.

How a Christian Man Cannot Err, And How He May Yet Err

Tyndale

And as they sin not, so they err not. And, on the other side, as they sin, so they err—but never unto death and damnation. For they never sin of purpose, nor hold any error maliciously (sinning against the Holy Ghost), but of weakness and infirmity—as good, obedient children, though they love their father's commandments, yet break them oft by the reason of their weakness. And as they cannot yield themselves bond unto sin to serve it…

even so, they cannot err in anything that should be against the promises which are in Christ. And in other things their errors be not unto damnation, though they be never so great, because they hold them not maliciously.

More

I shall, good Christian readers, make no long work about this chapter. For since the whole sum thereof is, as ye see, nothing else in effect but that the true members of Tyndale’s “elect church” do often err and yet never err, even in like manner as they often (or, rather, always) sin and yet never sin; which his manifold foolish heresies, in “ever sinning and never sinning,” I have many manner wise plainly refelled and confuted in the chapter next before: I may, therefore, and will, take a great deal the less labor and business in this. I will, therefore, but put you in remembrance that all his matter standeth only in this: that his true members of his “elect church,” after that they have once gotten the true faith that Saint Peter confessed… understanding the same in such erroneous wise as Luther and Tyndale teach them, with many plain, pestilent heresies therein, as I have before openly and clearly declared you; and when that they have once attained that faith, not with a historical manner,
as a man may believe a story, but with a feeling fashion, as the child believeth that “the fire is hot” because he hath burned his finger, as Tyndale will tell you in another chapter after—whoso (saith he) hath once in such a fashion attained and gotten that faith (that is to wit, whosoever is once infected with those heresies in such a fast feeling fashion) can never after err damnably. And why? For two causes, saith Tyndale. One, because that like as they cannot sin of purpose, but of weakness and infirmity… so can he never err in anything at all that should be against the promises that are in Christ.

Another cause is because what other error soever such a true, faithful, elect member of his “elect church” happen to fall into, so that it be not against the “promises that are in Christ,” cannot be damnable, be it never so great—although the truth that is contrary to that error be written, saith Tyndale, even in the very Gospel itself. And why can it be no deadly sin? Because, saith Tyndale, that an “elected member” of his cannot hold it maliciously.

So that by this ye may clearly see that Tyndale affirmeth and teacheth for a truth that in all other things beside the promises… a true member of his “elect church” may sometimes err, but never maliciously—and that is to wit, never but of weakness and infirmity, as himself hath often already declared. And therefore they cannot in any such thing sin deadly nor damnable, be the thing never so great, and also written in the very Gospel, as he saith after too.

By this also ye may clearly see that concerning the “promises that are in Christ” he saith that a true member cannot err at all, neither maliciously nor of frailty. For since he granteth error of “infirmity” in other things only, that touch not the promises… ye may clearly perceive that concerning the promises, he holdeth that a true member of his “elect church” cannot err at all, in any manner of wise—neither of malice nor purpose, nor frailty, nor weakness, nor infirmity. So that, as he putteth in all other points only malicious error to be deadly sin and damnable… so putteth he concerning the promises, ever manner of error to be deadly sin and damnable—be it of purpose and malice, or of infirmity, frailty, or...
weakness—and for that cause a true member of his “elect church”
can never fall therein.

For if he meant not thus—he would not so divide these two kinds
of error… one against the promises, and the other against other
things, as ye see him do… but if it were to teach us that the one were
deadly sin and damnable every way, and the other never
dannable but if it were held of malice… and that therefore
the true member of his “elect church” may err in the one kind, so
it be not maliciously, because that else it is not dannable nor
deadly sin. But in the other, concerning the promises, he can
never err at all. And why, but because that every error therein
were deadly sin and dannable… and that one of his heresies is, as
ye have heard before, that a true member of the elected church can
never sin deadly? And this ye see, therefore, is his plain doctrine;

which what truth it hath we shall now plainly show you.

Let us first begin with errors against the promises in Christ.
And therein let Tyndale tell us first wherefore a true member of his
“elect church” cannot err in anything that is against the promises
that be in Christ… in such wise as they may in other great articles of
the faith that be no promises. What hath he other to say but because
that every manner error, though it be not held maliciously, is
yet deadly sin and dannable if it touch any promise; and that
none other error is deadly sin or dannable, which toucheth
no promise, but if it be held maliciously?

Then must we further ask him whereby he wotteth, and whereby he
proveth, that every manner error in every article of any promise that
is in Christ is deadly sin and dannable, though it come but of
weakness and frailty; and none error in any other article, be it
never so great, is dannable and deadly but if it be held of malice.

We must ask him whereby he knoweth that it is enough for his
salvation to believe the promise of God in Christ that through Christ
he shall be saved… and believe not that Christ and the Holy Ghost be one
equal God with the Father, by which three-Persons-and-one-God he shall be
saved. For that Christ is one God, equal, with the Father, it is no promise
made unto us; nor that the Holy Ghost is so, neither; but it is a thing by
God told unto us. And I marvel much by what means Tyndale can
prove us that there is any less peril in not-believing of God’s
other words than in the words of his promises... since he bindeth us to believe them both alike.

The cause of our salvation is not the belief of the promise, nor the trust therein neither, of any proper nature of that belief in the promise—no more than the nature of our good works is able of itself for our salvation—but the ordinance of God, that it pleaseth him to save us for our obedience of his commandment both in the belief and the work. For as he could, if it so pleased him, bring us all unto the bliss of heaven without any good work at all—so could he, if he list, bring us all thither without any faith at all. For he could bring us thither without any knowledge given us thereof till we came thither and had it.

Wherein standeth the cause of our salvation

So it appeareth clearly that the cause of the salvation standeth all in the obedience of God’s commandment... whereby he biddeth us, and by his bidding bindeth us, to captivate our understanding into the obedience of faith and believe his promises.

Now, if this be thus, as of truth it is... what doubt is there but that we be, as upon like reward, so upon like peril and pain, bound to believe all other things that God telleth us, as well as the things which he promiseth us?

And therefore if Tyndale will to the contrary look to be believed of any man in this point... he must, according to his own rule, bring forth plain and open Scripture... by which God hath told us, by writing, that if we believe once his promises, “Care for no more.” For as for all other things, that be no promises, he will that we be at liberty to believe as we list... so that there be no malice in us. And why at more liberty of believing God in his other words than in his promises? I cannot perceive what cause Tyndale can imagine... but if he be so mad to think that God will in all his other tales that him list to tell us—though they be written in the very Gospel, as Tyndale saith after—have us yet at liberty in believing him, because himself would be at liberty to tell us for his pleasure sometimes true tales, and sometimes such as Tyndale telleth, that is to wit, untruth and lies.

Surely this is a marvelous tale of Tyndale, in my mind... and a marvelous difference that he putteth between the belief of the promises and the belief of all the other articles of the faith. As though the belief of the promises only, were so far above the
belief of any other article… when every man that any wit hath
may well and clearly see that the belief of the promises do so
depend upon some other articles that the belief of those articles
gone, the belief of the promises and altogether were gone. As
whoso were (as many have been) so mad to believe that there were
no God at all—with him were God’s promises quite gone. And
his sin were as great that erred in not believing there were any
God, as his that believing there were a God, erred yet in that he
believed not that ever he made any promise to man. And yet in

Mt 16:16; Jn 11:27 “God’s promises” Tyndale meaneth only
the promises of God made unto mankind;

for so far go Saint Peter’s words “qui in hunc mundum venisti,” is Tyndale’s
exposition too. And therefore as for Tyndale, ye see well, so that he
believe that his “elect church” of mankind shall be saved… he may
without any peril choose whether he will believe that ever any
angel is eternally saved or not—notwithstanding that Christ said
Lk 7:28 of Saint John the Baptist that the least in
heaven was greater than he. Yet because it
was but a tale told by the mouth of Christ, and not a promise made—
and especially since it was no promise of any gift given to man—
Tyndale may distrust it and deny it if he list, if his wit have
any such “weakness,” and so that he do it not of malice… for all that it is
plainly written in the very Gospel, and there told by God’s own
mouth!

Concerning yet the promises made to man… let us consider
which things be promises, and which things be not the very
promises, but other articles besides. That we shall be saved through
Christ and by Christ’s Passion… is a promise. And yet that Christ
himself was the same very person by whom that deed should be
done… is more properly a tale than a promise. And it may be that a
man believing the promise that mankind shall be saved through
Christ… may yet err in not believing that Jesus, the son of Mary, was
that Christ. And of truth, either in that error or very near to that
error be all the whole sect of Jews. So that it is as great peril not

Mt 17:5
Gn 22:18 “This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I
much delight,” as not to believe him in his

1 wit: sense  2, 14 may: can  2 well and: quite  2–3 do so depend: does in such a way hinge
4 altogether: i.e., all  // were: would be  4–5 As whoso were: i.e., For example, whoever would be
5 mad: i.e., demented as  5, 7, 8 there were: i.e., there is  6 were . . . quite: would . . . be totally
7 his sin were as great that: i.e., as great would be the sin of him who  8 his: i.e., that of him who
9 in: i.e., by  12 “qui in hunc mundum venisti”: “who has come into this world.” (This was actually
said by not Peter but Martha; see John 11:27.)  13 exposition: interpretation. (See 330/16–20.)
13 as for: according to  13–14 so that he believe: i.e., so long as he believes
18–19 it . . . told: that was just a statement uttered  21 distrust: doubt  // list: so chooses  // wit: mind
22 so: provided  // of: out of  // for all: notwithstanding  25 yet: now  26, 29 very: actual
29 should: would  30 is more properly: is, strictly speaking, more  30, 35 tale: statement
30 may be: is possible  32, 33 Christ: (the) Messiah  32 may: could  // in: i.e., by  33 of truth: in fact
34 be . . . sect: i.e., is everyone in the whole entire religious community  35, 37 in: with regard to
promise made unto Abraham that of his seed should such a savior come. For it is not all one to promise that of him should one come by whom the world should be saved, and to tell him, “This is the man that in my promise I spoke of.” For a promise and a tale be not both one thing. For though every promise be indeed a tale (since no man can make a promise but if he tell it), yet is not every tale a promise, every child perceiveth. And therefore Saint Peter took a sure way when he said, “Thou art Christ, that art come into this world”…

taking it for a principal point to believe God’s tale. For the tale, that this was he—which, as our Savior said, the Father in heaven had himself told unto Peter—that tale Peter confessed; that Jesus was Christ, which was then come into the world. But the promise, which was the saving of the world that should be wrought in him—that thing Saint Peter spoke not of there, as a thing believed and looked for before; nor of the means of the saving, that it should be by his Passion. That thing Saint Peter, as Tyndale saith, at that time knew not of; so that the tale and the promise were not all one.

But surely, concerning the belief of God’s promises… Tyndale seemeth to fare as the Jews do. For like as many of them believe that through Christ the world shall be saved, and yet they lose the fruit of that belief because they will not know who is Christ: even so,

Jn 14:16–17 Tyndale saith that he believeth Christ’s promise made unto his church here in earth, that his Holy Spirit shall be therewith unto the world’s end, and

Jn 16:13 teach it and lead it into every truth; but he loseth yet the fruit of that belief (if he believe it as he saith he doth) because that he will not know which is Christ’s church here in earth. But like as the Turks instead of the true Savior of the world worship the false deceiver Muhammad… so Tyndale instead of the true, Catholic church of Christ—of which church Christ would that every man should learn the truth which the Holy Ghost, by Christ’s promise, teacheth, and ever shall teach, unto it, and which church must for that cause needs be a congregation known—Tyndale taketh not only a secret, scattered company unknown, but also a rabble of false, malicious heretics
teaching to the doctrine of God’s Spirit abiding, by Christ’s promise, in his Catholic Church, even clean the contrary!

And also, whereas Christ when he turned the bread into his own precious Body, and the wine into his blessed Blood, and commanded the same to be done forever in his church after in remembrance of his Passion, and did in so commanding make a faithful promise—that himself would be forever with his church in that holy sacrament… and for a perpetual memory of his bitter Passion that he suffered for us, would give his own flesh that suffered passion, and his own blood that was shed in his Passion, to abide perpetually with us, according to his own words spoken unto his church when he said, “I am with you all days unto the end of the world”—Tyndale will not now believe that promise at all… but, as I have in my First Book by his own words proved you, maketh mocks and mows at that Blessed Sacrament, and calleth it but cakebread, and reasoneth it rather for starch (full like a stark heretic, God wot!), and saith it is neither body nor blood at all.

And thus, whereas he so highly magnifieth the belief of God’s promises only, setting all other articles of the faith as things of a second sort—himself believeth, as ye see, the promises as little as the other.

But now let us go further in his words, and see for what cause he saith that none other error, in anything save the promises, can be damnable, be they never so great. Lo, thus he saith…

Tyndale
In other things [that be not the promises], their errors be not unto damnation, though they be never so great, because they hold them not maliciously. As now, if some, when they read in the New Testament of Christ’s “brethren,” would think that they were our Lady’s children after the birth of Christ, because they know not the use of the speaking of the Scripture, or of the Hebrews, how that nigh kinsmen be called “brethren,” or haply they might be Joseph’s children by some first wife; neither can have any to teach him, for tyranny that is so great—yet could it not hurt him, though he died therein, because it hurteth not the redemption that
is in Christ’s blood. For though she had none but Christ… I am therfore never the more saved; neither, yet, the less though she had had. And in suchlike a hundred, that pluck not a man’s faith from Christ, they might err and yet be never the less saved; no, though the contrary were written in the Gospel. For as in other sins, as soon as they be rebuked they repent—even so here, as soon as they were better taught, they should immediately acknowledge their error and not resist.

More

Here have ye, good readers, the reason and the cause wherefore the true members of Tyndale’s church can never sin deadly though they err in any article that is no promise, be the article never so great. The cause is, saith he, because that likewise as in all other sins, as soon as they be rebuked they repent—even so, as soon as they be better taught, they repent their error and believe the truth, and resist not; and for that cause it is no deadly sin in the mean season, before they be rebuked and taught better, although they died in those errors, were the articles never so great, and the contrary truth written in the Gospel, so that they be none of the promises.

This is the whole sum and effect of this whole chapter, though he trifle with other things between. And therefore will we first ask him by what scripture, or by what reason, he proveth that every person which is elected to be saved shall repent as soon as ever he is rebuked of any sin that he doth.

He will show, peradventure, that David did so, and haply some others too. That will be a very bare argument. David was an elect person… and he did so, ergo every elected person doth so? This argument will be very like the form of arguing that young children use in grammar schools: “Asinus meus habet aures, et tu habes aures, ergo tu es asinus meus” (“Mine ass hath ears, and thou hast ears: ergo, thou art my ass”)

First, I suppose that Tyndale will himself agree, whatsoever he saith here, that such rebuking at which his elect person shall always so soon repent and return, had need to come after the rage passed, as himself saith that when the rage is past he shall repent. For if such a rebuker come while the rage is on him, while the man is forward upon his voyage and, as Tyndale saith, upon his
“great occasions” carried forth with concupiscence “through the fruit of the sin that breaketh out of his members”—the rebuker may fortune at that time to speak twice ere he go back again with him.

Yet is there many a man in heaven that hath after baptism fallen full often to sin, and not repented always at the first rebuke… but, notwithstanding many rebukings and much calling upon, both by their friends and good ghostly fathers, have yet lain long therein… and for all that, have after amended and proved full virtuous men; and else God forbid. And this point is so open and evident… not only in Scripture, but also at every man’s eye… that I nothing fear but that every wise man will in this point take Tyndale’s tale for a very false invented folly.

And then since he maketh this point the ground of the other—that is to wit, that every elect person shall in like wise at the first teaching, as soon as he is better taught, repent every error that he holdeth—it shall well follow that the second is as false and as foolish as the first; and so is it in very deed.

For it may be, full well, that a right good man may be misled by such as Tyndale is… and through such folks’ false persuasions may fall in errors and heresies more than one, not only beside the promises, but also in the promises too… extending some too far and cutting some too short, as Luther, Huessgen, and Tyndale do. And their untrue doctrine may be so deeply entered and rooted in the good simple soul that when he is by better men better taught, he shall not repent his errors at the first nor at the second time neither, but defend them many a time and oft… and yet shall at length, with help of God’s grace, apply his will rather indifferently to perceive the truth than frowardly to stick still in heresy… and so shall fall into the right way again, and very clearly see that those blind heretics had led him in darkness before.

For else, if Tyndale said true, that every elect person would be reformed at the first… it must follow that whosoever did not, when he were better taught, return and be reformed at the first, were a final reprobate and should never be saved. And then were it vain to talk with him other than once, if he would not turn at the first, as soon as he were once well taught. For by Tyndale’s tale, he that is
elect shall by and by assent unto the truth, as soon as it is told him, and forthwith repent his error.

If the old holy-doctors-and-saints had been of Tyndale’s mind, they should have left in heresy many a man whom they could not convert at the first, and yet converted them after very well. And truly, if Saint Ambrose had taken it for an undoubted token of invincible malice in heresy whensoever himself was not at the first teaching believed and obeyed… it is very likely that he never should have converted Saint Augustine to the truth, from more errors than one.

For though Saint Paul counsel Titus

that the man which were a heretic, he should after one warning or twain eschew—yet meant he not to forbid him the oftener calling upon him after, with good and wholesome counsel.

For as Saint Chrysostom saith, if the devil do not despair to turn a man at last from God unto himself, though he missed his purpose oftentimes before—and that so far forth that he letted not to assay Job again and again, for all the patience that he found in him, and all the praise also that God gave him himself—it were a great shame if a good man should despair to convert a sinner from the devil to God because he cannot bring it to pass at once. And yet by Tyndale’s doctrine, if a sinner did not repent at the first rebuking, and he that were in error leave his error at the first true teaching… we must needs perceive thereby that he were none elect, and consequently that he were a plain reprobate, that finally should be damned whatsoever were said or done unto him… and that it were therefore in vain to go anymore about to turn him again to God, but leave him still to the devil. Were not this, ween you, good readers, a godly-wise way?

I dare boldly say that Tyndale himself, if he should meet with a man of the true, Catholic faith, and should find him fast therein when he would teach him his heresies—though he could not at the first teaching, nor at the second neither, bring him from the truth, yet would he not leave him so by his will… but would assay him oftener, and press upon him still, not without hope to win him and beguile him at the last. Now say I, then, to Tyndale, that his hope of the man’s change to his sect, either because himself

1 by and by: immediately 2 repent: i.e., renounce 3 old holy-doctors-and-saints: early sainted theologians 4, 9 should: would 5 first: i.e., first attempt 6 truly: indeed // undoubted token: sure sign 6 invincible: insuperable 12 which were: i.e., who is 13 twain: two 16 do: does 17 to: i.e., of getting to 17–18 missed his purpose: i.e., failed to achieve this goal of his 18 that so far forth: i.e., is to such an extent undespairing of this 18–19 letted not: did not forbear 19 assay Job: put Job to the test 21 were: would be 21, 31, 32 should: were to 21 to: i.e., of being able to 24 leave: abandon; give up 27 finally . . . were: would end up being damned no matter what was 28 were . . . about: would therefore be useless to make any further attempt 29 again: back 29 but . . . devil: i.e., but rather, one should just let the devil keep him 29–30 were not this: wouldn’t this be 30 ween you: i.e., don’t you think // godly-wise way: religiously sensible approach 31 meet with: encounter 32 fast: unbudgingly fixed 33 would: tried to 34 from: away from 35 so: that way 35 by his will: i.e., if he could help it // assay: assail / make attempts with 36 after: more often (than twice) 36 press upon him still: keep pestering him 38 sect: i.e., heretical mindset
shall, in the laboring of him to draw him to it, play the devil’s part, and think that though an elect shall turn from evil to good always at the first motion, and that therefore if he turn not at the first, it is in vain to go anymore about him… yet a reprobate, though he turn not from his present good state unto sin at the first, shall turn after well enough… and therefore he will labor him still to his sect—and then, in thinking thus, Tyndale taketh the Catholic faith for good and his own sect for naught—or else, if he take the Catholic faith for false, from which he goeth about to get the man… and his own sect for good, to which he laboreth to bring him: then I say that since he will not leave off when his doctrine is resisted at the first, he condemneth plainly the whole tale that he telleth here. For if every person elect shall, as he saith here, repent his error always at the first, as soon as he is taught the truth… then this man that at the first, after the truth once taught him by Tyndale, did for all that resist it… made Tyndale surely to know that he was none of the elects, and that he therefore was a reprobate of God, that finally should be damned with the devil; and so should Tyndale lose no more labor about him.

And this were thus, after Tyndale, though the man’s error were but in such articles as be no promises. For if it were in any of the promises that Tyndale should find a man after baptism believe as the Church believeth, against the heresies that he believeth—that is to wit, believing against Tyndale that God’s promise of salvation in the blood of Christ doth not quite put away shrift and all penitential works toward satisfaction, and all punishment for any sin repented, to be sustained either in this world or purgatory… but that so to believe and trust in God’s promise is a damnable error against God’s promise—if Tyndale, I say, find such a man, he should by his own tale here perceive that man forthwith for a desperate heretic… because that, if himself say true that none elect person can after his baptism ever fall into any error concerning any of the promises, then should himself know that he whom he found in that error concerning God’s promise were a final reprobate… and then should let him alone and lose no labor in turning of him. And saving my charity, I beshrew him heartily that he doth not so!

1 laboring of: working on
3 motion: prompting
4 in vain: useless
6 labor him still: i.e., keep trying to win him over
7 and then: i.e., in which case
8 naught: bad
9 from: away from
11 leave off: desist
12 condemneth plainly: dooms manifestly
13 tale: story
14 repent: i.e., renounce
15 once: i.e., was once
17 none: not one
18 a … be: i.e., one of God’s rejects, someone who would end up being a . . . be: i.e., one of God’s rejects, someone who would end up being none
19, 35–36 lose no (more) labor: waste no (more) effort
20 were thus: would be the case
22 laboring of: working on
24 quite: utterly
25 quite: utterly
27 repented of: repented of
28 so to: i.e., to in Tyndale’s way
30 tale: account
31 a desperate: a hopeless; an irremediable
34 ought to: i.e., be
35 would: he
36 in turning of: i.e., trying to convert
37 that he doth not so: for his not doing this
But thus, good Christian readers, ye may well perceive that there is no truth in Tyndale’s tale. And that the proof of all his whole conclusion in this chapter—that none elect can fall into any error against the promises…and that in all other articles they repent their errors as soon as they be taught the truth, and that they repent all their other sins as soon as they be rebuked—hangeth all by the moonshine. And that neither of both his heresies toward the proof whereof he would make this conclusion serve—of which two the one is that none elect person can after his baptism repent sin of purpose nor willingly, and the other, that necessarily dependeth thereupon, that whosoever after baptism break any of God’s commandments willingly and of purpose shall never after be saved—can take here none anchor-hold at all. But as they be, both twain, by the blast of the devil’s mouth blown out abroad against the strong rocks of Christ’s Catholic Church and the mighty majesty of God…so be they, both twain, there fallen to wrack and shattered all to fitters.

Yet for because that Tyndale in such things as be no promises—in all which things, he saith, be they never so great, the elect may err and die in that error, for lack of good teaching, and yet never be damned therefor, because they “hurt not the redemption that is in Christ’s blood”—because Tyndale, I say, for his example of such kind of things as be no promises, putteth the perpetual virginity of our Lady…it is good to consider in what manner he handleth it.

Tyndale

If some [of them; that is to wit, the true members of the elect church], when they read in the New Testament of Christ’s “brethren,” would think that they were our Lady’s children after the birth of Christ, because they know not the use of the speaking of the Scripture, or of the Hebrews, how that nigh kinsmen be called “brethren,” or haply they might be Joseph’s children by some first wife; neither can have any to teach him, for tyranny that is so great—yet could it not hurt him, though he died therein, because it hurteth not the redemption that is in Christ’s blood.
More

Consider, good reader, how many things here fall upon Tyndale’s head at once, by his own fond handling of this example. First, it is folly for him to put that for “tyranny” now, any man should lack teaching that those children were not born of our Lady’s body… since that article is as well and commonly known as any of the promises… and as long hath been known, and as fully, and as commonly believed through Christendom, as any other article of the Christian faith. And none article is there, almost, in the Christian faith, which hath not had more heretics against it than this article of our Lady’s perpetual virginity; so that it is now so well known, and that solution also, of nigh kindred called “brethren” among the Hebrews, that Tyndale never needed to encumber his book therewith.

Besides this, himself and his own doctrine destroyeth his own solution. For he saith that we be bound to believe none article but if it be proved by plain Scripture. Now, though he teach now the true members of his “elect church” the thing that every child can tell already—that among the Hebrews, the near kinsmen were called “brethren”—what hath he taught them thereby? Any other thing than that the Scripture doth not prove that our Lady had ever any more children than Christ? He doth not yet by the Scripture teach his true members to perceive that she had no more, but only that the Scripture saith not plain the contrary. But then doth he by his own rule beside… teach them that they may believe at their liberty, if they list, that she had more children indeed. And furthermore, he teacheth them that they should in no wise take it for any sure article of their belief that she was a perpetual virgin and never had more children than Christ. This point he teacheth plainly, after his master Luther, as ye have heard already, throughout his whole title wherein he laboreth to prove that the apostles have left nothing unwritten the belief whereof were necessary to salvation. Which false assertion of his I have in divers places of my former books clearly confuted… and in the end of my Third Book have answered, and avoided, all his whole chapter thereof. But now, since in this present place Tyndale himself grangeth that the cause why an elect person shall be saved though he happen to err and think that our Lady was not a perpetual virgin is because that he shall repent that error when he is taught the contrary: plain it is to any man that

2 consider: note 3 by: by reason of // fond handling of: i.e., foolish way of giving 4 folly for: i.e., ridiculous of // put: assert // for: on account of 4–5 any . . . teaching: i.e., someone might miss out on being taught 8 through: throughout 9 none: no 12, 15 solution: explanation 12 nigh kindred: close male relatives (having been) 13 encumber: clutter up 14 himself: he himself // destroyeth: i.e., undo the intended effect of 15 be . . . none: are not obliged to believe any 16 but if: unless 16, 23, 28 plain(ly): clear(ly) / explicit(ly) 18 tell: reel off; spit out 18 near kinsmen: close male relatives 24 beside: i.e., that is not found in Scripture / additionally 24–25 may . . . liberty: are free to believe 25 list: want to // had . . . indeed: did in fact have more children 26 in no wise: by no means // sure: definitely true / ironclad 28 after: in line with 30 title: i.e., section 30 laboreth: endeavors 31 were: i.e., is // to: i.e., for 32 divers: several 32 my former books: i.e., the previous Books of this work of mine 33 clearly: thoroughly 34 avoided: refuted 34 all his whole: his whole entire // thereof: i.e., on 35 cause: reason 36 and think: i.e., by thinking 37 because that: because // repent: repent of / renounce 38 plain: obvious
himself therein confesseth now that it is a necessary article for salvation—that to every man, at the leastwise, to whom it is opened and taught—since the cause of his salvation which before believed the contrary... is, by Tyndale himself, the repenting of his former error.

Now, then, it is so that Tyndale doth in sundry places confess and agree that this point cannot be proved by plain and evident Scripture. Ergo, he confesseth here plainly the contrary of that he so fastly before hath affirmed, while he taught that there is no thing to be believed for a surety but if it be proved by plain and evident Scripture... and that the apostles have left nothing unwritten which men are bound to believe upon pain of damnation.

This doctrine of his master and his own hath he, as ye now see, by his own handling of this matter, here utterly destroyed and damned.

Now, if he will, haply for shame, labor to seek some shift, and say that he meaneth no more but to put this difference between the articles of the faith in the promises and all other articles: that none error in any of the others is damnable till the man that misbelieveth be better taught the truth... and that then he is bound to believe them, whether they be in Scripture or not; but in the belief of the promises, every error and ignorance also is damnable ere ever they be taught... for no man shall be saved but if he be taught them and have the faithful belief of them—thus must Tyndale needs say, for aught that I can see... or else must he confess that one piece of his doctrine plainly destroyeth another, concerning his difference between the promises and other articles.

But yet abideth still against him that since he confesseth the perpetual virginity of our Lady... to be, now that it is taught, necessary to be believed... which is not written in Scripture—still, I say, standeth it stiffly against him that he hath destroyed all his principal ground, whereabout his master and himself have taken so great labor to make men ween that no thing was necessarily to be believed but if it were evidently written in Holy Scripture.

But now, concerning his difference between the necessity of the belief of the promises, and the belief of the other articles... we shall tell him that it will be peradventure hard for him to prove his saying true, especially taking the promises as himself taketh them.

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1 himself: i.e., Tyndale himself  1, 5, etc. confess(eth): acknowledge(s)  2 that to: i.e., necessary for
2 opened: disclosed  3 his... which: the salvation of him who  4 by: according to // repenting: renouncing
5 so: the case  6 agree: concede  6, 9–10 plain and evident: clear and conclusive
7 plainly the contrary: the exact opposite // that: that which; what  8 fastly: unbudgingly // while: when
8–9 there is no thing to: i.e., no thing must  9 for a surety: i.e., to be definitely true  9, 23, 34 but if: unless
11, 20 bound: obliged  13 master: i.e., master’s  14 handling: treatment // matter: subject
14, 31 destroyed: demolished  15 damned: condemned / shot to hell  16 haply for shame: i.e., maybe to save face
16 labor... shift: i.e., try to come up with some subterfuge  17 put: assert; claim there to be
18 in: having to do with  19 none: no  // in: regarding  23 ere: before  24 faithful: i.e., right
24 thus: i.e., something to this effect  25 aught: anything  26 plainly: obviously / directly // destroyeth: undoes
28 abideth still: there still remains  31 stiffly: inexorably // all his: his whole  32 ground: leg to stand on
32 whereabouts: i.e., for the having of one  32–33 taken so great labor: gone to such great effort; worked so hard
33 ween: think // was necessarily to: i.e., has to  34 were evidently: i.e., is conclusively  35 his: i.e., his asserted
37 peradventure: perhaps  37–38 his saying true: true what he is saying
Acts 2:41 For in the beginning, upon the first preaching of Saint Peter, when there were so many so suddenly christened thereupon… whereby can Tyndale prove that all they were fully taught the faith of the promises before they were baptized, or that none died ere ever they were taught any further; or that if they died forthwith upon their baptism, that then their christendom stood them not in stead, for lack of further instruction of the promises? Concerning which I dare be bold to say that they were never taught the doctrine that Tyndale calleth so necessary that he teacheth the lack of that faith in the promise to be damnable. For they were, I say, never taught that they must believe that the promise should save them and get them of all their sins at any time after their baptism committed, at their bare repentance, always full remission of sin and pain and all, in purgatory or in this world either, and without any regard of any good work at all, or of any purpose thereof, other than bare repentance and faith in the promises. I dare well say they died, all that were then baptized, ere ever they heard anything of this point of faith in the promises… which was never thought upon by Saint Peter nor any of his fellows then, nor yet no man else till it was devised by the devil and put forth by heretics when charity waxed cold many a winter after.

If Tyndale make us many questions of them that were so suddenly christened so many at once in the beginning: we will yet be bold to tell him that many children die now soon after that they come from christening, ere ever they be washed out of the chrism… of which I suppose that some were never taught fully the faith of the promises ere they died.

If he say to this that though they were not taught it actually, yet by the gift of God in the sacrament it is taught and infused into their souls habitually: then will we ask him whereby he proveth, then, his difference between the faith of the promises and of the other articles… but if he prove us that only the faith of the promises is infused, and of the other articles not. Which when he proveth you, believe him; and in the meanwhile, believe that his evasion is not worth a fly.

If he will say that the children baptized, and so, forthwith, departing, have no faith at all… but be saved only by the faith of

3, 23 suddenly: extemporaneously / speedily 3, 24 christened: baptized
3, 31 whereby: by what means; how 4 all they: all of those people 5, 18, etc. ere: before
7 christendom: i.e., having been baptized 8 stood them not in stead: was of no avail to them
8, 23 of: about 8, 24 be bold: venture 12 should: would 13, 16 bare: mere
14 pain: i.e., the debt of punishment for it 16 purpose: intention 20 fellows: i.e., fellow apostles
21 waxed: went 24 yet: also 25–26 that they come from christening: i.e., getting baptized
26 be washed out of the chrism: i.e., get the chrism washed off 29 actually: actively
30 infused: infused 31 habitually: i.e., as something latent there 32 his: i.e., his asserted
33 but if: unless 35 evasion: dodge 37 so: thereupon
37 forthwith: i.e., immediately after being baptized 38 departing: i.e., leaving this life; dying
their friends, and by that our Lord hath received them to the 
Sacrament of Baptism, and by the Sacrament of Baptism hath 
received them to grace and glory, without any faith of their own: 
then giveth he to the sacrament, against all his other doctrine, a 
great efficacy of grace, and maketh it not only a sign. And yet 
granteth he then, besides, the thing that he denieth: that is to 
wit, that some may be saved being ignorant… not only of some 
of the promises, but also of them all.

Besides this, if we would grant him the thing that he can 
ever prove—yet were he never the nearer. For though it were true 
that without belief of all the promises, no man might be saved, 
but that the bare ignorance of any of them were damnable; and 
that the ignorance of any other article were not damnable, nor 
the contrary belief, till they were opened and taught: yet since men 
were (as Tyndale hath here confessed) bound upon pain of 
damnation to believe the perpetual virginity of our Lady (and to 
repent their former error to the contrary) as soon as they be 
taught it, notwithstanding that it cannot be proved by plain 
evident Scripture—then must Tyndale grant that it is likewise 
of every other like article; that is to say, of every article which 
is true and must be believed when it is taught, besides the promises, 
though it cannot be proved by Scripture, no more than the article 
of the perpetual virginity of our Lady.

Then ask we Tyndale how knoweth he those articles which be 
necessary articles of the faith, of which articles the contrary belief 

The articles of our faith were damnable after the truth of those 
unwritten are known only articles taught, the same articles not 
by the Church. being written in Scripture. Doth Tyndale 
know them by any other means than by 
the Church… since they be not taught him by Scripture? For it were 
hard that he should in such a matter believe the authority of any one 
man, but if that either God bid him believe him, or that, for lack of 
Scripture, he prove the truth of his doctrine by miracle, or by 
miracle prove himself to be appointed by God to teach him… by 
reason whereof he might be believed though he prove not every 
particular point of his doctrine by a several miracle… except as 
great or greater miracles be done, or have been done, by some that
teacheth, or hath taught, the contrary. In which perplexity God will
either never bring us or never leave us.

1 Lk 10:16 Therefore conclude I that Tyndale must
2 Mt 28:20 needs grant that he knoweth not those
3 Jn 14:26; 16:13 articles but by the Church. Which church
4 hath proved itself by millions of
5 miracles, and which church God biddeth him believe, and saith he
6 will dwell therewith always, and send his Spirit to teach and inform
7 it, and lead it into every truth.

10 Of this church, therefore, must Tyndale learn those articles, or else
cannot be bound to believe them (and to repent his former errors
to the contrary), but if he say that himself have them, by special
revelation of God, privately shown unto himself. And then, if he
say so, he must either believe them alone... or else, if he will be

15 believed in them, and have other men believe them with him, then
must he prove us them by Scripture or miracle. And since I dare
answer for him that in such articles he lacketh those two... there
is no remedy for him but he must needs confess that he is taught
the surety of those articles, and learneth which they be, only by the

20 church of Christ.

Then ask we Tyndale further, which is that church of Christ
by which he is taught to know those necessary articles from all
others... the belief whereof is not necessary to salvation. He cannot
say that he learned it of any unknown church, for no such company
can he know for “the church”... but he must needs confess that
he learneth to know those articles by the known church. And then,
by which known church? Let him name any which he will,
except the known, Catholic church which himself impugneth...
and he shall name a company of no credence in that point. For by
his own agreement they must lack Scripture for those articles (for
of such articles we speak), and they have no miracles. Wherefore,
finally, when he hath all done... this article alone, of the perpetual
virginity of our Lady (the contrary error whereof, after the truth
taught, himself confesseth to be damnable), driveth him, of very
fine force, to confess that the church by which he knoweth the
undoubted truth of this article, since he knoweth it not by plain and
evident Scripture, is not his own secret, unknown church of

1 in: into / in // perplexity: quandary 7 biddeth: tells him to 10, 13, 24 of: from 11 bound: obliged
11 repent: renounce 12 but if: unless 12, 28, 34 himself: he himself 12 have: i.e., has had
13 shown: made known // himself: him 14 say so: says this // alone: by himself 14, 27 will: wants to
15 in: with regard to 17 in: i.e., for // two: i.e., two kinds of proof 18 remedy: alternative
18, 25, etc. confess(eth): acknowledge(s) 19 surety: definite correctness
19 which they be: i.e., which beliefs are those infallible ones, the articles of the faith // by: i.e., by and from
21 which: i.e., which church 23 others: i.e., those others // to: i.e., for 24 it of: i.e., this from
24, 29 company: group of people 26, 27 by: via 28 except: other than
28 impugneth: calls into question / assails as errant 29 of no credence: i.e., that has no credibility
29 point: i.e., regard 31 of such articles we speak: i.e., it’s of such articles that we’re speaking
32 hath all done: i.e., is all done; has said everything he has to say 34 taught: i.e., has been taught
34–35 very fine: veritable sheer 36 undoubted truth: definite correctness
36–37 plain and evident: clear and conclusive
elects (which, as ye see, himself cannot yet well describe us), nor
any known church of heretics, but the very common-known
Catholic church which himself goeth all this while about to
impugn and destroy. In which only church Christ hath
promised to dwell and abide, to teach it every necessary truth, unto
the end of the world… and unto the only faith of which church he
hath promised and given the gift of working miracles. Which
miracles since we clearly see persevere and continue in this church
only… we may clearly thereby see that this church only is that
church also to which only the other promise, of the Holy Ghost’s
perpetual residence and inspiration, was made.

To this point isTyndale now, good Christian reader, driven of
necessity… but if he will say that this whole multitude of the known
Catholic church is not the very church, but only the good men, and
elects, that be within the same.

Now, if he ween to escape out so… he shall be soon set in. For then
at the leastwise he acknowledgeth that there are no good men out of
this church… nor no man hath any true, sure faith but it be learned of
this church, or of some members of the same. And then, since himself
and his fellows be out of this church (both willfully first
departed out, and after worthily cast out), themselves be none of them of
whom the truth can be learned. Also, to say that he therein believeth
only the good men of the known church—that thing hath himself
made impossible to serve him. For they be, by him, the only elects,
which may, by his own doctrine, though they can do no deadly
sin, do “horrible deeds” yet, and so seem very naught. And in this
common-known church, the common-known faith or belief is all one
both with the good and the bad, though the living be diverse.

If Tyndale dare deny that… let him look in the works of Saint
Augustine, Saint Jerome, Saint Cyprian, Saint Ambrose, Saint
Basil, Saint Gregory, Saint Chrysostom, and all the other old holy-
doctors-and-saints of every time this fifteen hundred years… and
he shall not for very shame say nay but that, against Luther and
him, those holy saints had the same faith that the common Catholic
laypeople have yet unto this day; as, for example, that it is a
horrible abomination that any monk or friar should wed a

1 himself cannot yet: i.e., even he cannot // describe: delineate for; demarcate for 2 very: very same
2, 27 common-known: common-knowledge 3 himself… about: he is all this time endeavoring
4 impugn: cast doubt upon / discredit // only church: i.e., one and only church; church alone
5 necessary truth: i.e., truth one must believe in order to get to heaven 6 the only: only the
8 persevere: keep happening // continue: stay 9, 10 only: alone 13 but: unless 14 very: true
15 elects: i.e., elect 16 ween: i.e., thinks 17, 20 out: outside 18 sure: definitely correct
18 but it be: i.e., that has not been / that he has not learned // of: from 19 of some: from some
19, 23 himself: he himself 20 fellows: cohorts / followers // willfully: voluntarily
21 after… out: afterward deservedly excommunicated // themselves… them of: i.e., they are not any of those from
24 impossible to serve him: incapable of availing him 24, 25 by: according to 24 the only elects: only the elect
25 which may: who can // can do no deadly: cannot commit a mortal 26 so: thus // naught: evil
27 all one: entirely the same 28 living: i.e., way of living // diverse: different
31 Gregory: i.e., Gregory the Great // Chrysostom: John Chrysostom
31–32 old holy-doctors-and-saints: renowned sainted theologians 32 time: i.e., time in
33 not for very shame say nay but: i.e., for sheer fear of embarrassment refrain from denying
nun. Wherein if Tyndale dare say that I lie… let Tyndale, as I have often said, bring forth of all the old holy saints some one that said the contrary; which I am very sure he cannot. So that finally, Tyndale is come again to the same point: that he must, in faith and belief of such articles, believe the common consent of the whole Church… and not take his doctrine of any one man, or any few, that would in faith vary, swerve, and fall from the common faith of the whole Catholic Church; not though there fell away, parcelmeal, so many that they left the Church for the fewer part.

Two things whereby the true church may be known

For God shall, for the knowledge of his true church, evermore among many other things specially provide twain. One, that they which depart out thereof shall never agree together in one belief. Another, that the light of miracles shall never shine among any of their churches, but only in his old, true, Catholic church remaining. And therein shall they still continue, without any wonders wrought in any of the false, counterfeited churches of heretics, until that Antichrist shall come himself… which, as help me God, I very greatly fear is now very near at hand. But when he is once come… our Lord be thanked, he shall not very long endure ere Christ shall himself, with the blast of his blessed mouth, blow that proud beast to naught.

Now, good Christian reader, since it is proved plainly upon Tyndale’s own handling of this article of our Lady’s perpetual virginity that Tyndale could not have learned the truth of that article of any man but if he learned it by credence given to the common-known church, which he will not know for the very church, but impugneth it; and since himself granteth also that the contrary error of that article is damnable after the truth taught, forasmuch as his own elected persons that so have erred before cannot be after saved but by repentance of that error: he must needs confess also that of all other like articles which come in question, and are not in the Scripture either spoken of at all or not plain and evidently proved… the sure truth and certainty cannot be had by no man but it be first commonly learned of the same church—by credence given thereunto, for the trust of Christ’s promise made thereto, that himself and his Holy Spirit would forever be resident therein, and teach it every necessary truth; that

1 wherein: about which  2 old holy saints: holy saints of old  4 finally: in the end
4 again: back  5 the . . . consent: i.e., whatever is the universal consensus  6, 27, 36 of: from  7 vary: dissent  7 parcelmeal: piecemeal; little by little
9 for the fewer: i.e., the less numerous  11 part: side / party  12 specially: particularly  13 depart out thereof: depart from it; leave it  13–14 agree . . . belief: all agree with one another on one creed
16 still: always  17 wrought: i.e., being wrought  18 as: i.e., so
22 ere: before  24 upon: from  25 handling: treatment / discussion
27 article: i.e., article of the faith  27, 36 but (if): unless  28 common-known: common-knowledge
28 will not know for: refuses to recognize as  29 impugneth it: assails it as errant
29, 38 himself: he himself
30 contrary error of: i.e., the holding of the error directly opposite to
31 taught: i.e., has been taught  32 after: afterward  34 in: into  32 are not . . . spoken: i.e., are . . . not spoken
35 plainly and evidently: clearly and conclusively  36 commonly: i.e., in the usual, general way / communally
Mt 28:20; Jn 14:16–17 is to wit, every truth to the belief
Jn 14:26; 16:13 whereof he would have his people bound.

Now followeth it further, good Christian reader, upon this, that Tyndale is in this matter so caught in a net of his own making... that he must either lie tumbling still therein like a fool—and the more he striveth therewith, the more always mesh and entangle himself faster and faster therein—or wisely give up his heresies and renounce his former errors... and from henceforth utterly acknowledge and confess that against his whole purpose he is upon his own words clearly convinced and concluded, not only that the very church is the common-known church, which hitherto he hath denied and stiffly striveth against, but also that in the sacraments, vows,

Mt 16:18–19; 18:15–18 faith, and good works, and finally every thing
Lk 10:16 wherein the Catholic, known church and himself have been at variance... he must learn the truth of the same church, and therein believe that church, and give credence thereunto. Which if he do not endeavor himself to do, but resist their doctrine... God, which hath commanded him to believe and obey the Church, shall never work with him toward the belief.

And thus, good Christian readers, for the final conclusion of this chapter... here ye may plainly see that I might well, if I would, with this same chapter make an end of all the whole matter. For ye will remember that all our matter in this book is, between Tyndale and me, nothing else, in effect, but to find out which church is the very church. For since he seeth himself plainly bound to give credence to that church whichever be it... he therefore in all his book bringeth it into darkness, and laboreth to make it unknown... because he would not by the knowledge thereof have his heresies known and reproved.

And now ye see that, as our Lady would, by his foolish handling of the article of her perpetual virginity he is quite overthrown... and hath it plainly proved unto him, upon his own words, that the very church is none other but this that he denieth: that is to say, the common-known Catholic people—clergy, layfolk, and all—which, whatsoever their living be (among whom undoubtedly there are, of both sorts, many right good and virtuous), do stand together
and agree in the confession of one, true, catholic faith, with all old
holy-doctors-and-saints, and good Christian people besides, that are
already passed this fifteen hundred years before, against Arius,
Otho, Lambert, Luther, and Wycliffe, Zwingli, Hutten, Hus, and
Tyndale, and all the rabble of such erroneous heretics.

And therefore, as I say, saving that I will go further to show you
somewhat of his further folly—else might I well even here both
end this present chapter and also this whole work… wherein with a
few of his own wise words, Tyndale hath confounded himself
and destroyed all his whole matter.

For as touching his accustomable railing in the end of his
chapter, with which he would seem to touch the Catholic
Church… it is all so clean against himself, and so clearly describeth
and depainteth himself and his own fellows, that if we would
labor sore to find out what evil we might say by them, we
could find no better thing to put us in remembrance of every
point of their mischievous matters than Tyndale’s own words that
he writeth here himself. Lo, thus he saith…

Tyndale

But they which maliciously maintain opinions against the Scripture…
Here should he say, ‘as, for example, they that maintain that friars
may wed nuns.’… or that that cannot be proved by Scripture… One of
these things is, as ye have heard, the perpetual virginity of our
Lady; which himself hath confessed, in this same chapter, that
the true members of his “elect church” must needs believe after that
they be once taught it. And then, if themselves be bound to believe
it, they be bound to stand thereby and maintain it. And so speaketh
Tyndale clear against himself. . . . or such as maketh no matter unto the
Scripture… He meaneth such things as were not of necessity requisite
to be written in Scripture; and therefore he writeth like himself.

For there is not one article of the faith that of necessity needed to be
written, but that God could both have taught them and kept them
without writing. As he hath taught and kept some—as, for example,
the perpetual virginity of our Lady, which Tyndale hath both denied
and confessed, and denied again, and wotteth never where to hold him,
the devil so troubleth his brains. . . . and to salvation that is in Christ,
whether they be true or no. . . . The Church hath none such as make no
matter to salvation. For everything that God will have believed

1 one: i.e., one same
2 and: i.e., and all the
3 that are already passed: i.e., who have already gone on to the next world within
4 Otho / Lambert: See note for 438/20–21.  // Hutten: Ulrich von Hutten (d. 1523).  5 all the: the whole
5 rabble: pack / motley crew  // erroneous: errant; deviant
6 will: want to
7 folly: foolishness  // even: right 9 wise: brilliant  // confounded himself: confuted himself / done himself in
10 all his whole matter: his whole entire case 11 as touching: as regards  // accustomable: typical
12 touch: i.e., be criticizing / be landing blows against
13 clean: completely
14 fellows: allies / followers
15–16 would . . . by: i.e., were to try hard to discover what bad thing we could say about
17 mischievous: baneful / disastrous  // matters: theses 20 against the: i.e., that go against; that contradict
22 that that: that which; something that
24, 25 confessed: professed (belief in)
26–27 after . . . once: once they’ve been
28 believe: i.e., believe in
29–30 like: i.e., as suits
31 kept them: i.e., kept them known
32–33 never where to hold him
34 troubleth: addles
35 none such as: i.e., no teachings that
36–37 have no impact on
pertaineth to salvation... since the contrary belief is disobedience to God, that so taught it his church because he would have it believed. And that the perpetual virginity of our Lady is of such sort, Tyndale hath himself openly and plainly agreed; and yet would he now secretly steal back again. Not wittingly, peradventure, but that the devil pulleth him back by his coatskirt unawares.

... and for the blind zeal of them make sects, breaking the unity of Christ's church, for whose sake they ought to suffer all things; and rise against their neighbors (whom they ought to love as themselves) to slay them: such men, I say, are fallen from Christ and make an idol of their opinions. For except they put trust in such opinions and thought them necessary unto salvation, or with a cankered conscience went about to deceive, for some filthy purpose... they would never break the unity of faith or yet slay their brethren.

Now, good reader, consider who make sects, that is to say, sundry parties and divisions, and breaketh the unity of Christ's church: whether the Catholic Church, that was agreed all of our mind—believing purgatory, and the equal Godhood of Christ with his Father and the Holy Ghost, and the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar, and all the other holy sacraments, and the perpetual virginity of our Lady, and prayed unto her and other holy saints, and did reverence to their relics, images... and kept holy days and fasting days, and believed all, very fast and firmly, that it was abominable sacrilege for a friar to wed a nun—in all these things, and many other good things more, were all good Christian people agreed in one by the Spirit of God, without any variance (as appeareth plainly both by the old, continued books of service used in the churches through Christendom and by the books of the old holy-doctors-and-saints in every age of time) saving only when such heretics as Arius, Wycliffe, Luther, Lambert, Huessgen, Hus, and Tyndale, and such other like, here and there, some in one time, some in another, and the very worst in our time, have been by the devil stirred up to destroy the true faith and vary from the Catholic corps of Christendom and make new, fond sects of their own foolish brains. And whereas he speaketh of killing and slaying “their brethren,” himself can tell well enough that good Christian princes and other virtuous people did in the beginning greatly forbear such heretics... till that

2 to: i.e., of // that: who // it: i.e., it to 4 agreed: granted 5 secretly... again: stealthily backtrack on that 5 wittingly: consciously // peradventure: perhaps 6 coatskirt: coattail 7 for... them: i.e., on account of their blind zeal for those teachings // make: create 7, 15 sects: religious factions 8 suffer: bear with 9 rise against: take up arms against / set upon 10 fallen: fallen away 11 except: unless 13 cankered: corrupted // went about: were contriving 14 yet: even 15 consider... make: i.e., ask yourself who it is that creates 17 agreed all of: i.e., in unanimous agreement with 17 mind: way of thinking; stance // believing: i.e., believing in 19 Blessed... Blood: i.e., Real Presence 23 fast: steadfastly 24 in: regarding / on 26 agreed in one: i.e., brought into unanimous agreement 26 variance: disagreement / dissidence 27 appeareth: is shown // continued: remaining; extant 27 books of service: liturgical books 28 through: throughout // old: i.e., renowned 28–29 holy-doctors-and-saints: sainted theologians 31 such other like: suchlike others 33 stirred up: incited 33 destroy the: i.e., attack, with intent to destroy, the 33–34 and vary... make: i.e., by diverging... concocting 33 vary: dissent / diverge 34 fond: ridiculous // sects: belief systems // of: out of 35 himself: he himself 36 can... enough: is plenty well aware // princes: rulers 37 greatly forbear: treat with much forbearance; to a great extent tolerate // that: i.e., the time came that
they were finally fain, in avoiding of their seditious trouble, and for the repressing of their inemendable malice, to follow the example of Saint Paul... and, as he betook some of them to the devil, to the punishment of their bodies in help of their souls or ceasing of their sinful blasphemy... so, by temporal laws and bodily punishment, to finish the infinite malice and intolerable trouble of those heretics, for the safeguard of good people in peace and tranquillity. Which common peace and quiet if the heretics had not perturbed... they had been themselves much more easily handled. But as Tyndale knoweth that this is true... so knoweth he well again that the heretics have been those that did in Christendom begin to fight, kill, and slay, before that themselves were killed and slain, or anything fought with; and that they began to be killed and fought with by their own importunate malice, whereby the Catholic people were constrained and compelled to kill them in the necessary defense of innocents. And that this is true... Tyndale knoweth very well both by the stories, as well of England as of other places, and also by the experience of his own days in Almaine, through the cruel insurrection there of his own fellows, the heretics of his own sect. Which rose there and robbed, burned, and killed, not one naughty knave or two in a town, as good kings and princes do these horrible and incorrigible heretics (and yet sometimes scant one in ten years, and in some good town not once in tenscore years), but whole goodly monasteries they burned up and destroyed; and somewhere—all the churches, almost, through the whole country—robbed, despoiled, and bore away all that ever they found; despitied the saints’ images, relics, the crucifix, and the Blessed Sacrament; robbed, mayhemmed, and murdered many good, virtuous people. And by God’s good sufferance, they ceased not at the clergy... but, feeling fruit, went further and fell to their lords’ lands. So that they that winked and cared not for God’s part were fain to wake within a while and care for their own part. And then they fell upon the heretics again, and killed of them above threescore thousand in divers places, all in one summer. Since which time, in Switzerland, even this last year, Zwingli set his heretics in a rage again, to pillage and despoil the true Catholics.
of his own country. But God gave the victory to his faithful folk, that were full loath to fight with them, saving that the very force drove them to the field, where they bore over their enemies. And Zwingli himself—

the archheretic of all—was there deadly wounded and taken, and after that burned up. Such fair fortune had Tyndale’s master there… of whom he took his heresies against the Blessed Sacrament. And therefore, whereas Tyndale speaketh of killing of heretics, whom he calleth his Christian “brethren”… he knoweth it well himself that his own unhappy fellows, the heretics, I say, themselves began first that guise. And as they began it, even so they keep it still. And surely there is no doubt but that Tyndale himself hath longed long, and yet ever looketh for, that as the Lutherans and Zwinglians have begun to rise and ruffle in rebellion in sundry parts of Almaine… so he might see his disciples assay some feat here. But I trust in God’s grace and in the King’s goodness, their hearts shall all faint ere they come thereto. And if the devil were so strong with them as to stir them up… I would wish Tyndale among them, and Friar Barnes too. For I little doubt if they did, but both captains and company, as Zwingli and his ambushment came shortly to mischief, if God sit where he sat, should have like luck.

Now is this a plain conclusion: that both they that trust in their own works… Lo what a peril here were if a friar should put any trust in chastity and keeping of his vow! But and if he trust in lechery, with wedding of a nun, then is he safe enough… because that work is not his own work, but the work of the devil, and of the sin that breaketh out of his “members.”… and they also that put trust in their own opinions… be fallen from Christ, and err from the way of faith that is in Christ’s blood… and therefore are none of Christ’s church, because they be not built upon the rock of faith. This doth himself, and his fellows that are heretics! For the articles that the whole Catholic Church put trust in be not the opinion of any man, but the sure doctrine of God. Whereof the certainty of the truth dependeth upon the promise of our Savior himself, which hath promised that the Holy Ghost shall teach his church all truth and lead it thereunto. And therefore if it be true, as indeed it is, that they which trust in their own works, and make idols of their own opinions, and break the union
of the Church, and make sundry sects, and kill their Christian brethren, be fallen from Christ and from the way of faith that is in Christ’s blood… and therefore are none of Christ’s church, because they be not built upon the rock of faith: then must it needs follow that Luther, Lambert, Zwingli, Huessgen, and Tyndale, and all others of their sundry sects, be fallen from Christ and are from the way of faith that is in Christ’s blood… and therefore are none of Christ’s church, because they put trust in their own vain inventions and make idols of their own false opinions. For which they break the peace and unity… both of the Church and of the faith, by making of sects and sowing sedition and dissension to stir up rebellion and insurrection against their neighbors and their governors, and thereby cause the robbery, pillage, despoil, and murder of their good, Catholic, Christian brethren. And do put also their trust in

The works wherein heretics put their trust

their own works—not in fasting, praying, alms, or any good work; but in destruction of monasteries, casting out of religion, expulsion of chastity, with wedding of nuns and living in lechery, profaning of churches, polluting of altars, blaspheming of saints, rashing down their images, casting out their relics, despiting our Lady, defiling the crucifix, and, finally, mocking and mowing at the Blessed Sacrament. And thus abusing themselves, they declare, lo, very clearly, that they be not built upon the rock of faith… but with the breath of damned spirits be blown down to the devil. I pray God amend them and set them on that rock again. And here an end of this chapter… in which ye see, lo, to what pleasant pass, first his royal riddles of “sin and not sin,” “err and not err”… and after, his royal railing of “making sects,” “breaking of unity,” “killing of Christian brethren,” “trusting in their works,” is by the perceiving of his own words finally brought unto; and every mischief that he layeth against the known, Catholic church, each after other, fall in his own neck… where that faggot lieth so surely bound on his shoulder that as long as he liveth, with all the shifts he can find, he shall never well shake it off.

1 make: i.e., create        1, 6, etc. sects: religious factions
2, 6 fallen: fallen away       // way: path
3, 7 none: i.e., not members        6 from the: i.e., off of the
8 inventions: contrivances        9 break: disturb / violate
13 pillage: fleecing       // despoil: despoliation
16 alms: almsgiving        17–18 casting out of religion: throwing (people) out of religious life
18 chastity: i.e., vowed sexual abstinence / vowed celibacy
19 polluting: desecrating
20 rashing: tearing
20 images: statues        20–21 casting out: flinging away
21 despiting: denigrating       // defiling: befouling
22 mocking and mowing at: derisively bowing and scraping to / making derisive fun of
23 abusing: misconducting / defiling       // declare: show
26 on that rock again: back on that rock
27 pleasant: felicitous       // pass: outcome       // royal: magnificent / grandiose
28–29 royal railing of: grandiose railing about
30 perceiving: understanding
31–32 mischief that he layeth: i.e., charge of wrongdoing that he makes
32 each after: i.e., one after the
32 fall in: i.e., falls on
33 faggot: bundle of sticks. (See note for 302/9.)       // surely: securely
34 shifts he can find: maneuvers he can come up with
Faith Is Ever Assailed 
and Fought With.

Tyndale

Moreover, this faith which we have in Christ is ever fought
against, ever assailed and beaten at with desperation… not when we
sin only, but also in all temptations of adversity, into which
God bringeth us to nurture us, and to show us our own hearts, the
hypocrisy and false thoughts that here lie hidden; our almost no
faith at all, and as little love, even then, haply, when we thought
ourselves most perfect of all. For when temptations come, we cannot
stand. When we have sinned, faith is feeble. When wrong is
done us, we cannot forgive. In sickness, in loss of goods, and in
all tribulations, we be impatient. When our neighbor needeth our
help that we must depart with him of ours, then love is cold.

And thus we learn and feel that there is no goodness, nor yet power
to do good, but of God only. And in all such temptations our faith
perished not utterly, neither our love and consent unto the law of
God… but they be weak, sick, and wounded, and not clean dead.

More

This chapter hath Tyndale put in for no great effect but
only with a comely flourish to set out and furnish his heresies
of the chapter next before. Wherein he teacheth that in the true
members of his “elect church,” the faith doth never fail but ever
continueth, and that therefore they do never sin deadly, how

A fond opinion horrible deeds soever they do, as he confesseth
that they do many… and yet sin
never deadly, because they do them not of malice nor of purpose,
but of frailty only, and of weakness, through the fruit of the
sin that remaineth in their flesh and breaketh out of their seely
weak and frail members.

Now, for the further garnishing of this his horrible heresy,
hath he brought in this chapter… in which he neither proveth anything
thereof nor anything goeth about to prove… but only falleth
to preaching, and telleth us full holily that the faith is ever fought
against, as though no man had ever heard that before. Whereas
every child well wotteth that the “faith” is always assaulted and fought
against... whether he speak of his own false faith and heresies, or of
the true, Catholic, faith of Christ. For like as the true, Catholic
faith is and ever hath been oppugned and assaulted, by the devil and
all his disciples such heretics as Tyndale is, from the beginning
unto this present time: so hath ever his false faith and heresies
been impugned, assailed, and condemned... by God and all his
prophets, by Christ and all his apostles, and all his holy-doctors-
and-saints, and by all the whole corps of Christendom, from the
beginning hitherto. And this conflict and battle shall
never cease till Christ shall finally reform the world and
1 Cor 15:24–28 finish it, and deliver the Kingdom to
the Father.

And as for every man’s faith privately—who knoweth not,
though Tyndale tell us not, that the devil daily laboreth to quench
it, as he laboreth to destroy hope and charity and all other virtues?

Nor this we need not to learn of Tyndale neither—that men by
temptations learn to find and feel that there is no goodness, nor
yet power to do good, but of God only—if Tyndale mean that as the
truth is: that all goodness cometh of God, and that man hath none,
nor none could have neither man nor angel, but by God’s gift...
nor could have yet any power to do good if God would withdraw
his grace. Howbeit, if he mean in this place as he saith, with his
master Martin, in many places—that man hath no power by the
freedom of his will to do any good... in working, himself, with
Man’s free will worketh God’s grace, and in resisting of temptation,
with God’s grace. too, and working with God in the
keeping of himself from sin... but
must needs in all such things sit still himself, astonied and
amazed in a reckless sloth, and let God work alone—then say I
that Tyndale’s holy sermon is very damnable heresy.

Now, where that in all the sins that he rehearseth he saith that
“our faith perisheth not utterly, nor our love and consent unto the
law of God,” but that “they be weak, sick, and wounded, and not
clean dead”—I say that his tale is to little purpose. For if by “faith” he
mean the belief... then is it not of necessity lost at all in no deadly
sin, except heresy. For the right belief and other deadly
sins may stand together well enough. For a man may believe

2 faith of Christ: Christian faith // like: i.e., just
3 oppugned: controverted
6 impugned: found fault with; opposed as erroneous
7–8 holy-doctors-and-saints: sainted theologians
8 all the whole: the whole entire
9 hitherto: to this day
10 finally: definitively
11 finish it: bring it to an end
13 privately: i.e., as held personally, internally
13 who knoweth not: who of us does not know
14, 15 laboreth: strives
14–15 quench it: snuff it out
15 as: i.e., just as
16, 18, 19 of: from
17 feel: perceive experientially
18 yet: even
21 yet: still // would: were to
22 howbeit: however // with: in line with
28 astonied: benumbed
29 amazed: stupefied // reckless: negligent // sloth: indolence
30 damnable: execrable
31 where... saith that: i.e., where he says that in all the sins that he mentions
32 consent: assent
33 clean: completely // tale: assertion
34 is it not of necessity: it is not necessarily
35 in no: i.e., in the committing of any
35, 36 deadly: mortal
37 may: can // stand together: coexist
truly and do falsely, believe right and live wrong, believe well and be naught.

And yet may he be an elect person and fall from the true faith, that is to say, the true belief, and lose it utterly, believing lies and heresies... and fall from grace for the time, and yet after that, with help of grace, find the faith and fall thereto again, and finally die therein.

And if Tyndale here by the name of “faith” understand hope and trust in God, as he juggleth continually with that word—for such equivocations and diverse understandings of one word serve him for his goblets, his galls, and his juggling stick in all the proper points of his whole conveyance and his legerdemain—but, as I said, if by “faith” he mean hope: I grant that it dieth not always with the sin, nor goeth not therewith away. But it waxeth by Tyndale’s doctrine oftentimes over great. For by the dreadless trust of their teaching, the man falleth into boldness of sin. In which

Note

when he hath fearless long continued... he waxeth forceless and careless, and setteth not by sin, till suddenly the devil out of his high heart and haughty courage striketh him into cowardous dread and utter desperation. For the outrageous increase of their hope is no very right hope, though it be a greater hope than it should be... no more than the heat of a fever is a right natural heat, though the body be more hot than it was in health. And therefore in such affections the soul sometimes falleth from one contrary quality into another... as the body in an ague changeth from cold to heat, and from heat sometimes into cold again. Of which manner of changes of the soul whom the devil driveth out of one vice into its contrary... may be well verified these words of Holy Scripture, “They shall from cold water of the snow go into far passing heat.” And yet I say that with these sins, a true member may lose all hope and fall in despair... and after, by grace, come unto hope again. Now, where he saith that “love and consent to the law of God” is not lost by a true member of the “elect church”: I wot not whether Tyndale’s “love” remain or no... but I am sure that by sin, Christian charity goeth away. For neither charity nor grace can stand together

Note

Jb 24:19 cold water of the snow go into far passing heat.”

1 truly and do falsely: i.e., in conformity with the truth and act against it 2 naught: bad
3 yet may he be: he may, moreover, be  fall: fall away 5 from: i.e., out of the state of
6 fall thereto again: i.e., come back into it / start practicing it again  finally die: end up dying
8 understand: i.e., gives us to understand; signifies  jugglem: prestidigitates / plays games
10 one: i.e., one same  goblets: conical cups  galls: little balls juggling stick: magic wand
11 proper: particular 12 points: instances conveyance: underhand dealing
12 legerdemain: trickery / pulling of a fast one 14 with: i.e., in the committing of 14, 18 waxeth: becomes
14 by: via 15 over great: overly great; excessive dreadless: carefree
16 of their teaching: i.e., that they teach people to have he has in their teaching
18 forceless: indifferent careless: unconcerned seteth not by sin: i.e., thinks nothing of sinning
19 high heart: puffed-up disposition / high-spiritedness 20 haughty: supercilious / inflated dread: fear / anxiety
21 desperation: despair 22 outrageous: inordinate 24 affections: maladies
25 contrary... another: i.e., unfavorable condition into the opposite one 26 an ague: a malarial fever
27 of which: by which 30–31 far passing: very extreme 32 may: i.e., could in: into 33 after: afterward
34 consent: assent 35–36 wot... no: i.e., don’t know whether what Tyndale calls “love” remains or not
36 sure: i.e., know for a fact sin: i.e., mortal sin stand together: coexist
2 Cor 6:14–15 with sin. For as Saint Paul saith, “What fellowship can there be between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial?”

I say also that all his gay, goodly tale that he telleth us here of his elect members with their holy “feeling faith”… to whom he would approper some special privilege of keeping still faith, hope, and charity with all their heavy heap of horrible devilish deeds—I say that as far forth as in his words is any truth, his privilege is not proper to the members of his “elect church,” but common to the very, final elects and to the final reprobates too. For both the one and the other may sin and repent, and amend and sin again, and amend again, after that Tyndale hath fingers on his hands, and toes on his feet, too. But he that finally repenteth his sins in a

An elect foreseen right fashion is an elect foreseen to God from the beginning. And he that finally dieth impenitent, as divers wedded friars die in their lechery… or he that, after Tyndale’s doctrine, repenteth without care of shrift, and dieth in a false heresy against his holy housel: such folks be finally reprobates, foreknown unto God, before the world was

A reprobate foreseen wrought, that they would finally, for impenitence, fall utterly to naught.

And the other part of his tale, which cannot be verified in the reprobates, that is to wit, the keeping of charity still in the doing of horrible deeds, cannot be verified in the elects neither. And so is his tale on every side foolish, false, and naught. For the seemly setting forth whereof, to make it appear fair and likely… because he can neither bring reason, Scripture, nor other good authority—ye shall now see what example he bringeth forth.

Tyndale

As a good child whom the father and mother have taught nurture and wisdom loveth his father and all his commandments… and perceiveth of the goodness shown him that his father loveth him, and that all his father’s precepts are unto his wealth and profit, and that his father commandeth him nothing for any need that his father hath thereof, but seeketh his profit only; and therefore hath a good faith unto all his father’s promises, and loveth all his commandments, and doth them with good will, and with
good will goeth to school. And by the way haply he seeth company play… and with the sight is taken and ravished of his memory, and
forgetteth himself, and standeth and beholdeth and falleth to
play also, forgetting father and mother, all their kindness, all
their laws, and his own profit thereto. Howbeit, the knowledge
of his father’s kindness, the faith of his promises, and
the love that he hath again unto his father, and the obedient
mind, are not utterly quenched, but lie hidden, as all things do
when a man sleepeth, or lieth in a trance. And as soon as he hath
played out all his lusts, or been warned in the mean season… he
cometh again unto his old profession. Neverthelat, many
temptations go over his heart, and the law as a right hangman
tormenteth his conscience, and goeth nigh to persuade him that his
father will cast him away and hang him if he catch him, so
that he is likely a great while to run away, rather than to return
unto his father again; fear and dread of rebuke, and of loss of
his father’s love, and of punishment, wrestle with the trust which
he hath in his father’s goodness, and, as it were, give his faith a fall; but
it riseth again as soon as the rage of the first brunt is past, and
his mind more quiet. And the goodness of his father and his old
kindness cometh unto remembrance, either of his own courage or
by the comfort of some other. And he believeth that his father will
not cast him away or destroy him, and hopeth that he will no
more do so. And upon that he getteh him home dismayed, but
not altogether faithless. The old kindness will not let him
despair. Howbeit, all the world cannot set his heart at rest
till the pain be past, and until he have heard the voice of his
father that all is forgiven.

More

I neither have yet ever heard nor never look to hear any very
wise word in all Tyndale’s works. But yet I heard I never a more
peevish process than this his holy preaching is; nor, therewith, more
pestilently perilous, while he pretendeth to make this chapter of
faith, and then juggleth it into trust and hope—and yet would make
us believe that neither nother at any time faileth any man that once
hath gotten them, nor that any man which once hath the faith that
himself describeth, and thereby is once a true member of his “elect
church” (as every man is, by his doctrine, that once attaineth that faith),
can at any time after lose it nor fall away therefrom, and for that

1 by: along // haply: maybe 1–2 company play: i.e., some of his companions playing
2 ravished: dispossessed 5 his own profit thereto: i.e., also what’s good for him 5, 26 howbeit: however
6 faith of: belief in 7 again: in return 7–8 obedient mind: obedient disposition; intention to obey
10 played . . . lusts: played out all his desires / played to his heart’s content // warned: alerted / admonished
10 mean season: meantime 11 again: back // old: former // neverthelater: but at the same time
12 over: through // right: veritable 13 goeth nigh to persuade: comes close to persuading
14, 23 cast him away: throw him out / disown him 19 rage: ferocious intensity // brunt: i.e., attack on it
20, 25 old: long-established 21 of his own courage: i.e., just naturally; spontaneously
22 by the comfort of some other: i.e., via the encouragement given him by someone else
24 do so: i.e., do so than he’s thinking he will // him: himself // dismayed: apprehensive 27 pain: punishment
27 past: over // have: has 27–28 the voice of his father: i.e., his father say 30 look: expect // very: really
31 wise: sensible // word: statement; assertion 31–32 more peevish: sillier 32 process: discourse; speech
32 this . . . preaching: i.e., this holy preaching of his 33 pestilently: perniciously; noxiously // while: when
33 pretendeth to make: i.e., claims to be making // of: about 34 juggleth: equivocates / prestidigitates
34 yet: moreover // would: attempts to 35 nother: the one nor the other
35 faileth: becomes deficient or absent in 36 which: who 37 describeth: prescribes 38 by: according to
cause can never do deadly sin, though he do never so many
damnable deeds; or, to call them as himself calleth them,  
horrible deeds. For as for damnable, haply Tyndale will say
they be not, be they never so horrible, because the “seed of God,” that
is to wit, their “feeling faith,” can never suffer such true members
of his “elect church” do those horrible deeds willingly or of purpose,
but only for weakness and frailty—for which they can be,  
saith he, no deadly sins in those blessed bodies, be the deeds never
so devillish.

And now, to prove us this wonderful, strange paradox, this
opinion inopinable, to be very plain, open, evident, and clear…
he furnisheth it with examples so feeble and so dim that the faint
sight of our sore eyes can scant attain to perceive how the
examples anything touch the matter.

For whereas he should, to make us clearly behold it, put his examples
in great and horrible deeds, such as himself before, in
another chapter, confesseth that his holy members do—he forgetteth
here now such horrible deeds as would make the readers abhor the
doers of them, and speaketh fair and easily that they be “feeble” sometimes
in temptation, and then they “cannot stand”; and that after they
have sinned, their faith is faint; and when they should help their
neighbor, their “love is cold”; and they be not patient in tribulations;
and when they suffer wrong, they “cannot forgive,” lo, and
when men take away their goods, they be angry, so they be, lo.

Lo how angry Tyndale is with his true members of his “elect
church,” and how sore he layeth their sins to their charge! And
yet, because we should take their faults for much the slighter, he
diminiseth all the matter, and maketh it much the less, by resembling
and likening them to a good little child—as though
their faults were all but childishness!—and, as it were, a babe that
weepeth and waxeth angry with the kite for catching away his
bread and butter, and would complain to his mother, and bid her
go take a rod and beat the kite.

But since that Tyndale now goeth about to play the master, and
set all the Catholic Church again to school… and would have us
learn such hard lessons as we never heard of the like… as that men
may commonly do mischievous deeds without any deadly sin,
because they do them not willingly where nobody compelleth them—
let him at the leastwise, since he will make us all young children,
teach us our lesson as a good master teacheth his young children.
And let him not teach us our lesson in a small, ragged hand wherein
a young beginner can scant perceive one letter from another… but
let him teach us in a fair great letter of some text hand that is
more easy to learn upon. And therefore we shall pray him to let
pass over, for this once, his long childish example of his good
child which for all the nurture of his father and his mother, and
all the wisdom that he learned of them, and all his love to them and
to their commandments, and all the trust in his father’s promises,
for which he goeth with good will to school… finding yet by the way
some companions that fall to play, is ravished of his remembrance…
and, forgetting father and mother and all their promises,
and all their kindness, and all their laws, and all the wisdoms that he
learned of them, and all his love to them and
for his lusts played out,
Tyndale’s tragical process of remembrance of his “old profession,"
with temptations over his heart, and the law his “right hangman,”
tormenting of conscience, fear of destruction, and almost desperate
dread of hanging. Now let Tyndale, therefore, instead of this
child, take for example some of the true members of his own
“elect church,” that hath the feeling faith of his own false heresies…
and not a little child, but a great, sloven slouch that out of his
boy’s age is twenty winters stepped into his knave’s age. Then let
Tyndale put in him for example not, as he doth here, the being
angry with them that doth him wrong, or lack of due love to the
liberal help of his neighbor’s need—with which mind and soft
examples of infirmity, feebleness, imperfection, and frailty,
Tyndale covereth and keepeth aside the hateful hearing and

1 compelleth them: i.e., is making them do them  2 make: i.e., have  3, 21 master: schoolteacher
4 ragged: irregular; erratic  4, 6 hand: script  5 scant: scarcely // perceive: tell; distinguish
6 fair: nice / perfectly legible // great letter: i.e., all-caps set of letters // text: textual // upon: by means of
7 pray him to: ask him to please  8 pass over: go undealt with // once: i.e., time  9 which: who
9 nurture of: i.e., moral training given him by  10, 16 of: from  11, 11 to: for  12 for: on account of
12 with good will: very willingly  12, 22 by: along  13, 29 that: who  13 fall to play: start playing
13 ravished: dispossessed  15 wisdoms: wise precepts  16 nurture-tutture: soft, gentle moral training
16 taught: i.e., gave  17 standeth . . . on: keeps standing there, watching // after: i.e., then
17 falleth to work: i.e., starts taking part  18 at: i.e., in // pretty: i.e., innocuous little // plays: games
18 of likelihood: most likely  19 as: such as; like  20 Quating: Quoits  22 stripes: lashes
22 tarrying: dawdling  23 meet: fitting // lusts: desires (are)  24 theatrical: melodramatic
24 process of: spiel about; song and dance about // old: former  25 right: veritable  26 desperate: despairing
27 dread: fear // hanging: i.e., getting hanged  28 take for: use by way of // some: i.e., some one
29 false: vile  30 great: big // sloven slouch: slovenly lout  31 boy’s age: age of being a boy
31 knave’s age: i.e., time of being a full-fledged scoundrel  32 put: suppose // for: i.e., for his
33–34 due . . . help: i.e., the due love that would lead him to a generous alleviating  34 mind: i.e., mental focus
34 soft: mild; benign  35 frailty: susceptibility  36 aside: away // hateful: repugnant

40
beholding of their abominable deeds—but let him put for example that his true member, this Jack Slouch that we speak of, is so frail and so feeble in temptations that, through the fruit of the sin remaining in his flesh and, as Tyndale saith, “breaking out” at his “members,” he falleth into horrible deeds (for that is Tyndale’s word), as into adultery with his mother, poisoning his father, and murdering his brother; in sacrilege and incest, as Friar Luther doth with his nun; fall to mocking of Almighty God, as Tyndale doth in the Blessed Sacrament.

Now, since we have for example taken no little, pretty sins, but great and horrible deeds... and have also taken for example no little, pretty boy, but an old, great knave fit and meet for the matter, as in whom may well and conveniently be verified all Tyndale’s tragic terms of temptations and tormentry, destruction, hangman and gallows and altogether: let us in this abominable beast now, and in these horrible crimes, as in a great text hand, look upon our lesson that Master Tyndale teacheth us, and see whether there be written therein the thing that he would have us learn... or whether that (since we have now such a book with so great large letters as we can spell upon and do together or self) it shall peradventure appear that he went about before with a small, ragged hand to beguile us and make us read false.

Ye remember, good readers, that he saith that his true members upon great occasions, as upon the sight of such things as delighteth them, be ravished of their memory and forget themselves (as his little good child doth at the sight of the play), and so continueth still in the following and fulfilling of his lust as it were a man in his sleep, or one that lay in a trance; and neither is his faith lost, in all that while, nor his love to the law of God... but though they lie hidden, yet they continue still, both twain, and his hope and his trust in God also. And therefore, though our Jack Slouch do all those horrible deeds that we did put for example—yet, being a true member of Tyndale’s “elect church,” because of his feeling faith which so lieth hidden in his heart that he feeleth nothing thereof... he consenteth not in his mind to none of those deeds, nor doth none of them willingly nor of purpose, or at the leastwise

1 put for: i.e., give as his 2, 32 Slouch: Lout 2 frail: morally debilitated 3 feeble: lacking in resistance 4 saith: i.e., puts it 4–5 his “members”: parts of his body 6 as: such as 7 in: into 7 incest: See note for 44/2. 9 in: with regard to / of God in 10, 11 for: i.e., for our 10 pretty: decorous / minor 11 great: serious; weighty 12 little, pretty: cute little 12 an old: a full-grown / an inveterate // great: big-time // knave: scoundrel // meet: suitable 13 as: i.e., as someone // may: can // well and: quite // conveniently: properly / congruously 14 tragical: melodramatic 15 altogether: all 16 great: large // text: textual 17, 22 hand: script 17 upon: at // Master: Schoolteacher 19–20 so great large: such big capital 20 spell upon: make out and read // do: do so // self: each of us on our own 21 peradventure: perhaps 21 appear: become evident // went about: was trying 22 ragged: irregular; erratic // false: wrongly 24 great occasions: powerful inducements // as upon: such as upon 25 ravished: dispossessed 26 play: playing // so: i.e., so such a one 27 still: always // lust: desire // as: i.e., as if 29 to: for 30 still: uninterrupted // both twain: i.e., both of those two things (that faith and that love) 32 put for: give by way of 36 willingly: volitionally // of purpose: purposely
not maliciously (for that word into his old tale putteth Tyndale of new in his false Exposition upon the First Epistle of Saint John), and therefore in him there can none of all those horrible deeds be damnable or deadly sin.

We might here let Jack Slouch alone… and ask Tyndale whether another slouch of his acquaintance—his own master Martin Luther, not only a true member but also one of the chief members of his “elect church”—hath lain all this while asleep, by the space of so many years together, since he first ran out of his order in apostasy, and after wedded his nun, and yet continueth with her still. This friar and his nun drank well, of likelihood, ere they went to their bridebed, if they lie still and sleep yet.

But forasmuch as Tyndale will not agree that Friar Luther’s lechery with his nun is any evil deed at all, but very well done and virtuously—therefore, though we need none other example against his frantic heresy to the ears of any good Christian man, yet for Tyndale himself we must leave Luther lying still asleep with his leman, and return again to Jack Slouch… whose deeds Tyndale will grant and agree to be horrible, though he deny them to be damnable because of Jack’s feeling faith… which, though he feel it not because he lieth asleep, keepeth in him still yet the love to God’s law, and suffereth him not to consent unto the sin, nor to do any such deeds willingly nor of purpose, or at the leastwise not maliciously.

Let every man here, against Tyndale’s foolish tale and shameless invention, take testimony and witness of his own wit… whether he that by the devil’s enticement defouleth his mother, poisoneth his father, and murdereth his brother, and mocketh Almighty God, and such other horrible and abominable deeds, oftentimes doth deliberately, with long device and study bestowed about it, do this gear willingly and consent thereunto… or else doth all unwillingly, as he were asleep or in a trance. Let Tyndale tell us what he will… he shall, I ween, find no wise man in this point agree—that these beasts do their detestable deeds unwillingly, without consent unto sin.

Now, touching Tyndale’s other goodly refuge—that the horrible deeds of his true members of his “elect church” be never

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deadly sins, because they do them never of no malice—this is, be ye sure, a very comely device which every wise man, ye wot well, must needs allow and commend. For in our example of Jack Slouch... what indifferent judge would not hold the good man excused of all those abominable deeds if it might appear to the court that the defouling of his mother was not for any despite or malice borne to his father, but of unnatural affection and very beastly lust... and also that the poisoning of his father grew not of anger or evil will to his person, but of love and longing for his substance; and such other excuses like, for all his other detestable crimes, whereupon it might appear that none of them all rose of anger or evil will... but some of pride, some of covetise, some of lechery, or such other ribaldrous appetite; what could his judge in such case say to him, for very pity, if the poor man said once he were sorry... but stroke his head and bid him go home and be a good son and do so no more? And therefore, forasmuch as the same Jack Slouch doth none of those detestable deeds of pure malice to any other body, but of some kind of affection toward himself, his love is not utterly quenched... and therefore he is one of Tyndale’s elects that sinneth never, how bad soever he be.

For whereas, finally, Tyndale teacheth us that his true members of his “elect church” do never sin deadly because that after the lusks have played out all their lusts, then they repent again and remember themselves and their Father’s former kindness, and be sorry—this is a fair tale of a tub, told us of his elects. For every man well wotteth that thus do the final reprobates, and be by due repentance divers times in their lives restored again to the state of grace. And then by this tale of Tyndale were there no deed damnable nor deadly sin in any man, were it never so abominable... but only those last sins in which he died impenitent. And then were all Tyndale’s high descriptions and differences of elects and reprobates all brought to this point at the last: that their deeds be all one, and their fashions and their faiths and their loves to the law of God alike changeable through the remnant of their lives, saving that the one sort die repentant, and the other sort impenitent. And this is the same thing that we say. And so is Tyndale, after all his long, foolish variance, at last, maugre his teeth, against his purpose compelled to say the same that we have always said and he always denied.
But then say we one thing further: that whereas the elects be, by his own agreement, the penitents only, and the true repentants—neither himself, which repenteth not his abominable heresies, but stubbornly standeth by them and saith he will die in them… nor his master Martin Luther, which, notwithstanding that the lusk hath oftentimes played out his lust, will not yet leave his lechery, but lie still with the nun, and defend for lawful matrimony their filthy life that is before God and all good men a very beastly bitchery… show themselves clearly to be any of the true penitents… but utterly to be such as, but if they repent better ere they die, shall else be none of God’s final elects, but very wretched reprobates accursed out of God’s company, and miserable members of the devil’s damned church in hell.

Yet saith Tyndale further, in the end of all this chapter, that

These words would I have Tyndale apply me well to his ghostly purpose… and, turning the example of his good child into some old shrew, and the playing at Spurn Point into some detestable deed, let Tyndale then tell us where, what voice, and by whom, his true member of his “elect church” shall hear that voice of remission. If he mean any word spoken in Scripture already—then is he soon sped, and shall not after his sinful crime committed fall at any great conflict in himself between hope and despair, his faith almost catching a fall for fear, and at last, with much work, rising again. All this gear is soon done if the voice of his Father granting remission set his heart at rest, and that voice be his word written in Scripture; for then he heard the word before he did the deed. And that word being such… if it were understood as Tyndale teacheth… that forthwith, at the bare repenting, without shrift or penance, all were forgiven, sin, pain, and all, both eternal and temporal, both in hell and purgatory and in this world too—that word were then, I say, already, before the deed, not a forgiveness only of the sin past, but a license, almost, also of

1 whereas: given that  3 himself: he himself  5 master: spiritual master  6 lusk: slacker / goof-off
6 lust: desire / lust // not yet: yet not  7 lie still: i.e., continues to lie // lawful: morally licit / bona fide
8 before: in the eyes of  10 but if: unless // ere: before  12 miserable: pathetic / permanently miserable
14 in the end of all: i.e., at the very end of  15 old: long-established  16 that… at: i.e., his playing of
16, 22 Spurn Point: Probably a game similar to hopscotch.  16–17 by…schoolward: i.e., on his way to school
17 all… cannot: i.e., no person or thing in the world can  18 pain: punishment // past: over // have: has
18–19 the voice of his father: his father say  20–21 ghostly purpose: theological argument  21 into: i.e., into that of
21 old: full-grown / inveterate  22 shrew: scoundrel // at: i.e., of  23 what voice: i.e., in what words spoken
25 he: i.e., that true member of Tyndale’s “elect church” // sped: taken care of  26 fall at: fall into; experience
29 gear: stuff // done: i.e., done away with  30 set: i.e., is enough to set  33 bare: mere
34 shrift: confession / absolution // all were: everything was // pain: i.e., the debt of punishment for it
36 were: would be  36–37 not… past: i.e., not just a forgiveness of past sin
37 but… of: i.e., but also a license, almost, for
all horrible deeds to be done. And if he mean to hear the voice of his Father afterward, not written before—he must hear it by the mouth of his ghostly father upon his humble shrift and confession, which Tyndale calleth the craft and invention of Satan.

And this is, lo, the conclusion of Tyndale in this his chapter of his false faith “ever assaulted”; which is, as ye see now, taken here with assault piecemeal, on every side wounded, despoiled, and bound…and, quick of feeling as any blain or botch but utterly dead of grace, sent down unto the devil.

Tyndale

_The Manner and Order of Our Election_

Even so goeth it with God’s elects. God chooseth them first, and they not God, as thou readest, John 15. And then he sendeth forth and calleth them, and showeth them his good will which he beareth unto them, and maketh them see both their own damnation in the law and also the mercy that is laid up for them in Christ’s blood, and thereto what he will have them do. And then when we see his mercy, we love him again, and choose him, and submit ourselves unto his laws, to walk in them. For when we err not in wit, reason, and judgment of things, we cannot err in will and choice of things. The choice of a man’s will doth naturally and of her own accord follow the judgment of a man’s reason, whether he judge right or wrong. So that in teaching only, resteth the pith of a man’s living.

More

This chapter dependeth upon the chapter before, in which he compared his true members of his “elect church” unto his good child, whom his father taught nurture and wisdom, and sent him to school, and he, like a micher and a truant, played at Buckle Pit by the way…and when the game was done, fell almost in despair of life for fear of hanging if his father caught him… and yet, soon after, well and wisely recomforted himself with the remembrance of his father’s old goodness… and so came home again like a good little boy, and heard his father’s voice of forgiveness… which set his heart at rest…and then he went to supper merrily…and then the maid

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1 if he mean to: i.e., if what he means is that this elect person will
2 by: via
3 ghostly: spiritual
4 craft: deceptive contrivance
5 conclusion: confutation
6 faith: i.e., faith being
7 wounded: punctured; shot holes in
8 bound: incapacitated
9 quick of: alive in terms of
10 grace: i.e., grace-wise
11 election: i.e., how our electedness comes about and works
12 even: just
13 they not: i.e., not they
14 sendeth forth: i.e., sends word
15 sheweth: makes known to
16 damnation in: condemnation under
17 thereto: in addition
18 again: in response / back
19 walk in: live by
20 understand: 23 follow: go along with
21 in: into
22 dependeth upon: is based on / is an outgrowth of
23 nurture: moral discipline
24 micher: hooky player
25 living: way of living
26 played at: i.e., played
27 recommened himself with: reassured himself with / took heart again at
28 old: long-established
29 voice: voicing; expressing
30 merrily: happily
put on his biggin and brought him to bed… and then he cared for no more, but was merry in the morning, and ready to go play the boy again as he did before. And now thereto Tyndale joineth this chapter… saying, “Even so goeth it with God’s elect.”

Yet, since he resembleth God’s elect unto the little boy… he should have put into the example of his little child that his little child sometimes, when he hath played the little young truant, for all his remembrance of his father’s goodness… is for fear of his father’s anger glad to go to some other friends of his father’s, and pray them to bring him home and help to excuse him and keep him from beating. And then he should have begun this chapter as he doth now, and say, “Even so goeth it with God’s elect.” For if the example of his good child may prove all the remnant for him… then may it prove this one piece as well for us: that the elect, after his offense, seeketh unto saints as his Father’s friends, and prayeth them to help to entreat for him; for so do many times such good children, ye wot well, as Tyndale putteth his example by.

But we will not now, for this time, trouble Tyndale much with that matter. I would that in this chapter all were well save it. For surely this chapter is very naught… and hath in it the secret seed of Tyndale’s chief poison, whereby he laboreth, after Luther, under color and pretext of God’s election to destroy the free will of man, and ascribe alllthing to destiny. Which thing is not in itself so false… but Tyndale proveth it as foolishly, as ye shall perceive anon.

But first consider how darkly the man walketh in his way still. For yet he handleth it of that fashion, that he would not we should see whether he mean by this word “elect” the man that is elect for the time, after the manner of any of those elections that I declared you before (in the beginning of my Fourth Book), or whether he mean of those elects that are of God, before the beginning of the world, foreseen to be such as by his gift and grace—and good will working therewith, in folk of age and wit thereto—should and would die in the state of grace and be saved, and therefore be called sometimes “final” elects, sometimes “eternal.”
Thus, which kind of elects himself meaneth, Tyndale leaveth undeclared... and will we shall guess at his mind upon his uncertain words, to the end that he might ever have some refuge into a starting hole... and when he were plainly confuted and reproved, cry out upon me then and say that I mistake him.

But I am content to take him, therefore, that way that may be the strongest for himself... and that way that his words gathered out of divers of his chapters, some before and some hereafter, show most likely that he should mean, when they be considered together. And that is, as meseemeth, that he meaneth of those elects that are called the “final” and “eternal” elects; albeit that the place of Scripture (in the fifteenth chapter of Saint John) which Tyndale allegeth here for his elects little maketh for his purpose concerning that final or eternal election... not only because the words of Christ spoken there to his apostles cannot conveniently serve for those which swerve from the true doctrine of Christ’s Catholic Church, that the apostles taught, into false heresies... but also for that our Savior in those words, when he said unto them, “You have not chosen me but I have chosen you, and appointed you, that you shall go forth and bring fruit, and your fruit shall abide,” he spoke there not of their final election to salvation, which election himself foresaw in his Godhood before the world was made, and which election therefore is called “eternal”; but he spoke there of that election only by which he chose and elected them to be his apostles and messengers, to be sent about the world to preach his Gospel... as plainly appeareth by those aforesaid words, “I have chosen you and appointed you, to go and bring in fruit”—and, finally, is the same election whereof he spoke when he said, “Have I not elected and Chosen you twelve, and lo, one of you is a devil?” And therefore, as I say, the man layeth the Scripture very far from his matter.

But now taking him as he would say if his wit would serve him—that is to wit, that by his word “elects” he meaneth the final and eternal elects—let us see and consider what high doctrine, and before unheard, Master Tyndale teacheth us of them.
He saith that *after* that God hath chosen them (and telleth not when—whether after their coming into the world, or before the world were made—so that he leaveth it by those words yet in doubt which election he moveth, whether unto salvation in the Church Triumphant in heaven, or only into the Church here militant in earth), “God,” he saith, “sendeth forth and calleth upon them, and showeth them his good will which he beareth unto them.”

Now, here falleth Tyndale in two faults. One is that these words of his cannot be verified upon all elects, since many die in their cradles, and many in their chrisms… but if he reckon all those for none elects, because they can understand no preaching. Another fault is that the thing which he seemeth here to approper unto the elects be common both to the elects and reprobates. For all this God doth to them too that are not his elects, but unto such also as will be, and therefore shall be, final reprobates.

For God of his goodness willing, as the Scripture saith, “all men to be saved,” sent his Son into this world to call upon the whole world. And he sent his apostles about the world as a Lord indifferent, without acception of persons, as said Saint Peter.

But then goeth Tyndale farther, and saith that God “maketh [his elects] see both their own damnation in the law and also the mercy that is laid up for them in Christ’s blood, and thereto what he will have them do.”

These words men would ween were but well and plainly meant. For they may seem to good, plain-meaning men to be well and plainly spoken, and as well and plainly meant. But yet, as ye shall shortly see, in these words that “God maketh his elects see . . . his mercy”—as plain words as they be, and as innocent and as simple as they seem—yet in them meaneth Tyndale covertly to come forth with his poison of falsely preaching the predestination of God, with destruction of the free will of man concerning any manner of devoir of themselves toward the belief and faith. For he meaneth here that God always *maketh* the elects to see these things, without any will of their own anything working with God toward the sight thereof; and that all the reprobates that shall be damned for lack of the belief… be reprobated and rejected and left unchosen, and kept from anything at all.

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1 *after that*: i.e., *after* it has happened that
2 *telleth not when*: i.e., doesn’t say *when* that has happened
3 *were*: i.e., was  // *yet*: still
4 *moveth*: i.e., is talking about
5 *in*: on  // *sendeth forth*: sends word
6 *showeth*: makes known to  // *falleth . . . faults*: i.e., Tyndale runs into two problems
7 *verified upon*: proved to be true in the cases of
8 *in their chrisms*: i.e., right after being baptized
9 *but if*: unless
10 *none elects*: i.e., non-elects
11 *another fault*: the other problem
12 *approper*: restrict
13 *will*: i.e., will to  // *willing*: having as his will / wanting
14 *call upon*: i.e., invite to salvation everyone in
15 *indifferent*: impartial; unbiased
16 *acception of persons*: favoritism
17 *damnation in*: condemnation under
18 *therto*: in addition
19 *ween*: suppose
20 *plain-meaning*: plain-spoken
21 *innocent*: innocuous; unobjectionable
22 *devoir of themselves*: i.e., exertion on the part of the elect
the sight and perceiving of the things to be believed, without any
demerit or evil desert of their own—only because God list not
to make them see.

And that Tyndale thus falsely meaneth by those fair, plain
words... ye shall farther perceive by other words of Tyndale’s own
writing afterward, in his answer to the first chapter of the
Third Book of my Dialogue. For whereas I there showed that the very
books of the Scripture itself cannot make men believe the Scripture,
nor very surely know which were the very, true Scripture of God,
and which were scriptures counterfeit,
saving that the Catholic Church teacheth us to know the Scripture... and the Spirit
of God, with man’s own towardness and good endeavor, worketh
in man the credulity and belief by which we both believe the
Church in teaching us which is the Scripture and also by which we
believe the things that are written in the Scripture: to this, because I
said there that when we hear the Scripture or read it, if we be not
rebellious but endeavor ourselves to believe, and captivate and subdue
our understanding to serve and follow faith, praying for God’s
gracious aid and help, God then worketh with us, and inwardly
doth incline our heart into the assent of the thing that we read...
and after a little spark of our faith once had, increaseth the
credence in our incredulity—Tyndale to this, in mockage of men’s
effort toward the belief, and in scorning that we would
captivate our understanding into the service of faith, answereth me
with a hideous exclamation... and crying out upon my fleshliness
and folly, foameth out his high spiritual sentence in this fashion...

Tyndale

Oh, how beetle-blind is fleshly reason! The will hath none operation
at all in the working of faith in my soul, no more than the child
hath in the begetting of his father. For, saith Paul, it is the gift
of God, and not of us. . . . My wit must show me a true cause or an
apparent cause why, ere my will have any working at all.

More

Now perceive you good Christian readers what an un-Christian
mind this evil-Christian man hath in those words that seem

1–2 any . . . own: i.e., their having done anything wrong, anything to deserve something bad
2 list not: did not choose 4 falsely: wrongly / duplicitously / vilely // those: i.e., those ostensibly
4 fair: nice / unobjectionable; innocuous // plain: readily understood / artless / guileless
7 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies // showed: pointed out
9, 10 which were: i.e., which writings are 9 very: real 13 towardness: cooperativeness
14 credulity and belief: i.e., openness to believing and the actual belief 15 in: i.e., in her
15 which is: i.e., which set of writings is 18 endeavor: exert // captivate: corral / subjugate
18 subdue: press into service / harness 20 inwardly: interiorly 21 assent: mental acceptance
23 credence in our incredulity: i.e., ratio of credence to lack thereof, in our state of mind // mockage: derision
24–25 that we would captivate: i.e., the idea of our corralling 26 hideous: fearsome / portentous
26 crying out upon: vehemently complaining of / denouncing // fleshliness: earthboundness; this-worldliness
27 folly: stupidity // foameth: spews // sentence: pronouncement 29 beetle-blind: myopic; nearsighted
29 fleshly: earthbound; this-worldly // none operation: i.e., no operative involvement
32 wit: intellect / understanding 32, 33 cause: reason 33 ere: before // have: i.e., can have
36 mind: intent // evil-Christian: hardly Christian // words: utterances
so fair and plain in this present chapter. For though he speak not out so plainly in this chapter as he doth after, in his answer to my Third Book, as ye have here heard—yet that he falsely meaneth in either place alike, ye may yet more plainly perceive by his words that in this chapter immediately follow—which are such as may be as well joined to his aforesaid words of his answer unto my Third Book as to the words unto which they be knit in this present chapter. In which when he hath said that “God maketh his elects see their damnation in the law, and also the mercy that is laid up for them in Christ’s blood, and thereto what he will have them do,” it followeth then, forthwith…

Tyndale

And then when we see his mercy, we love him again, and choose him, and submit ourselves unto his laws, to walk in them. For when we err not in wit, reason, and judgment . . . we cannot err in will and choice of things. The choice of man’s will doth naturally and of her own accord follow the judgment of a man’s reason, whether he judge right or wrong; so that in teaching only, resteth the pith of a man’s living.

More

Now trust I, good readers, that it is enough that we perceive and see what Tyndale intendeth in this chapter of the order of our election… and that, for all his great exclamation, we be not yet so beetle-blind but that we spy well enough which way this wily serpent walketh—and that he goeth about, under color of the praise and commendation of God’s predestination and ordinance, utterly concerning faith to put away the work of man’s free will… and yet, over that (though somewhat more covertly), of truth, concerning all other good works too.

And albeit that he seem here to give man’s will, in manner, like place in the act of our love toward God as he giveth God in the work of our belief and faith in us—yet when he is well perceived, he bringeth all to such inevitable necessity that both in the one and the other, and in all manner of good works, he taketh utterly away all manner of merit from the good men and elects…and giveth unto the evil people and reprobates an excuse for themselves,
and an occasion to lay the weight of their just damnation to the injustice of God’s eternal ordinance and most righteous predestination. And yet are all his reasons in this great matter so small that a man may not well wit whether they be more wicked or more witless.

Now, albeit that I shall purpose to treat of this matter more at long with Tyndale when I shall come to the confutation of his fond answers made unto the third and fourth books of my Dialogue—yet can I not presently forbear somewhat to show you of his abominable error in this point. And yet, in good faith, meseemeth no very great need; his follies, after his words of both the places brought forth and laid together, be now so plain and evident of themselves.

For who is so beetle-blind that seeth not clearly the dark, devilish heresy of this high, “spiritual” heretic, that saith it is a “beetle-blind,” “fleshly” reason to think that the good endeavor of the man’s part in willingly conforming himself toward the faith, Yea, the operation of the will of man is a great and captivating and subduing his reason and understanding into the obsequy and furtherance to faith! obedient service of belief, should be no manner help nor furtherance toward the getting of any Christian faith, but that “the will hath none operation at all in the working of faith in [man’s] soul, no more than the child hath in the begetting of his father”? For here ye see well that we speak of such as are of age and have the use of reason.

If man’s will had no more part toward the attaining of the belief than the child hath in the begetting of his own father… I see not wherefore our Savior should call upon the people and bid them do penance and “believe the Gospel,” as he doth in the first chapter of Saint Mark.

For though it be very true that without God’s help and God’s grace preventing and foregoing, no man can believe: yet if there were nothing in the man himself whereby he might receive it if he would, with grace which God of his goodness offereth, apply himself towardly to the receiving thereof, and whereby, on the other side, he might frowardly refuse it, or of sloth and negligence so slightly

1 an . . . to the: i.e., a pretext for putting the blame for their actually just damnation on the supposed
3 reasons in: arguments on
4 great matter: hugely important issue
5 small: thin; flimsy
6 wit: one can’t really tell
7 witless: senseless
8 fond: foolish
9 somewhat to show you: to show you something
10 error: i.e., erroneousness
10 in good faith: in all honesty
11 messemeth . . . need: i.e., there seems to me to be no very great need for this
12 laid: put / presented // now . . . evident: i.e., are so clear and obvious
14, 15 beetle-blind: nearsighted; myopic
16 fleshly: earthbound; this-worldly
18 obedient service of belief, should be no manner help nor furtherance toward the getting of any Christian faith
19 obsequy: humble compliance
21 manner: kind of
22 none operation: no operative involvement
24 speak: i.e., are speaking
25 such: i.e., such people
26 had . . . toward the: i.e., has . . . in his
28 call upon: address / issue a command to
33 preventing: coming first
35 negligience: careless indifference
36 side: i.e., hand
37 frowardly: perversely; uncooperatively
regard it that he were worthy to lose it—if there were, I say, no such thing in the man whereby he himself might somewhat do therein, with God—our Lord would not call upon men and exhort them to believe, and praise them that will believe, and rebuke them that will not believe, as he doth in many plain places of the Scripture.

But, now, against God and his holy scriptures it is a world to see what slender things Tyndale allegeth. First he saith that it is a beetle-blind, fleshly folly to reckon that the good endeavor of man should be anything worth toward the attaining of faith, because that faith is the gift of God. Is not here a high reason? Who denieth that faith is a gift of God? But what leteth that that a man may not by his towardness endeavor himself to receive the gift of God by God’s goodness freely offered unto him... or by his frowardness, sloth, or negligence lose and forgo the gift of God? Is it anything against the nature of gift, to be as willingly received and taken as it is offered and given? If a man would give Tyndale a cup of gold... would Tyndale call it no gift if himself did with good will put forth his hand to take it? Doth the willing behavior of the taker change the name and the nature of the gift, or anything diminish the free, liberal mind of the giver? In good faith, I must needs confess myself so beetle-blind that I can see no reason at all, neither fleshly nor ghostly, in this reason of Tyndale; nor, as I ween, Tyndale’s own sharp eagle eyes neither.

What good thing is there that is not the gift of God?—hope, charity, continence, piety, learning, wisdom... or anything in this world that aught is?—for, as saith Saint James, “Every good, perfect gift is from above, descending from the Father of lights.” And Saint Paul saith, “What hast thou that thou hast not received?” And of whom meant he allthing received, but of God’s gift? Now shall every man, then, in Tyndale’s high, “spiritual” judgment, be taken for fleshly and beetle-blind that will be so foolish to put any endeavor of his own to labor and work with God in the getting of hope or charity, pitiful affection or chastity, learning, justice, wisdom, or any other good thing. Because

1 were worthy: would deserve 2 might somewhat do: could do something 3 call upon: address / appeal to 5 plain: straightforward; unambiguous 6 a world: a wonder; amazing 7 slender: flimsy; unsubstantial 8, 21, 32 beetle-blind: myopic; nearsighted 8 fleshly: this-worldly; earthbound 9 because: by reason of the fact 10 high: top-flight / great 11 what leteth that: how does that preclude; how does that keep it from being true 12 a man may not: i.e., one can 12 towardness: cooperativeness 14 sloth: laziness / indolence 15, 18 willing(ly): volitional(ly) 16 would: were to 17–18 with good will: voluntarily / quite volitionally 19 name: identity / classification 20 diminish: detract from; take away from 21 reason: rationality; sense 22 fleshly: this-worldly 23 keen: i.e., capable 24 reason of Tyndale: reasoning of Tyndale’s 25 continence: (especially sexual) self-restraint 26 aught is: is (worth) anything 30 allthing: i.e., that everything is 31 high: lofty / superior 32 fleshly: earthbound; unspiritual 33 foolish: i.e., foolish as 34 pitiful affection: compassion
they be all gifts of God, a man must therefore sit even still and do nothing toward it, till God come and give him all thing, unawares. For if he may be aware before… then must he, by Tyndale, do not so much as be willing to receive it. For he that by his will receiveth it, and which should else, for his frowardness and contrary will, go without it: he doth, ye wot well, somewhat more in getting thereof than doth the son in the begetting of his own father… wherein the son’s will that is yet unbegotten can nothing make nor mar; whereas in the getting, attaining, and receiving of these virtues, the will of the man conformable and toward worketh with God and doth somewhat… not as a dead vessel, whereinto Tyndale putteth and poureth his beer… but as a quick instrument, as the hand of the man that wittingly and willingly receiveth a gift of another man’s liberal offer.

Now, if Tyndale would here labor to make us beetle-blind with his blunt subtleties, and tell us that we can do nothing till God prevent us with his grace, nor nothing but as his grace goeth on forth with us—these tales, when they be all told, be not worth a whistle. For ye may tell him again that we say not that man’s endeavor can any good do without God; but we say that when men endeavor themselves toward so good a thing… they may then make themselves sure that God hath prevented them with his grace—for else they could not so do—and that he is ready with his grace to walk forward with them. And since their endeavor toward God is good—therefore if they will still persevere and walk on still with God, he will walk on still with them. And their endeavor shall not be a void, foolish thing, as Tyndale calleth it… but a fruitful work toward the attaining of faith, though Tyndale would say nay thereto.

I would also very fain wit of Tyndale… if himself were as firm and as fast in the true Christian faith as he is in his heresies… and then should happen to fall in company with either paynim, Turk, Saracen, or Jew, and would exhort them to the Christian faith… and that albeit they granted him the belief of one almighty God, yet for aught that he said unto them, he found them 1 of: from // even: quite 2 toward: with regard to // allthing: everything 3 may be aware before: i.e., does perchance have some idea 4 by: according to 5 which should else: who would otherwise // for: because of // frowardness: uncooperativeness 6 wot: know // in: i.e., in the // 8 the… is: i.e., the will of the son who is as 9 mar: i.e., break 10 man: i.e., man who is // conformable: disposed to be compliant; tractable // toward: cooperative 11 somewhat: something // as a dead: like an inanimate // 12 a quick: an animate // as the: like the 13 that: who // wittingly: consciously // willingly: volitionally 14 liberal: free / generous 15 labor: try // beetle-blind: myopic; nearsighted 16 blunt: pointless // subtleties: fine distinctions 17 prevent us with his grace: i.e., makes the first move, with his giving of the needed grace 18 tales… told: statements… made 19, 22 may: can 19 again: in response 21 endeavor: exert 22–23 make themselves sure: rest assured 23 prevented: preceded / acted in advance of 24, 27 still: continually; uninterrupted 28 void: futile; ineffective 29–30 say nay thereto: no to that; deny this 31 fain: i.e., much like to // wit of: inquire of / know from // himself: he himself 31–32 as firm and as fast: i.e., as firmly and fixedly 33 fall in company: come into association // paynim: pagan 34 Turk: Turkish Muslim // Saracen: Arab Muslim // would: were to 35 that albeit: i.e., it happened that although // of: in 36 for aught that: despite anything
far off from the belief... not only of the Sacrament of the Altar (from which himself is now as far off as any of them), but also far off from the belief of the Son and Holy Ghost, and, finally, from the taking of our scriptures for holy, or for writings worthy credence—what advice and counsel would Tyndale give them? Would he not advise and counsel them to pray unto God, and to call aid of him, that it might please him to help to lead them in the way of the right belief... and that he would with his grace help them to incline their hearts into the following of that thing that should be unto his pleasure and the salvation of their own souls?—which kind and prayer they might assent unto without any prejudice of their own faith. Would he not also counsel them to fast, and forbear women, to the intent their prayer might be the more clean and pure... and advise them also to give good alms for God’s sake, as did Cornelius when Saint Peter was sent unto him therefor? Would he not also counsel them to be not willful nor obstinate, but conformable and willing to hear and learn the truth, and upon the hearing thereof, gladly to print in their hearts those things that most make toward the moving and inclination of their minds toward the credence thereof? And would he not tell them that through such toward and willing demeanor on their part (in the doing whereof, themselves not lacking nor being slothful, God would not fail to prevent them with his grace, help, and favor, and be before them), God would lead them and go forth with them, and never leave them nor forsake them, till he would, with their own good endeavor walking and working with him, bring them first into the right belief and good hope and godly charity, with other many virtuous and good works proceeding thereupon... and finally, by that means, after this transitory life, into the perpetual bliss and eternal joys of heaven?

Whether would Tyndale advise them thus (which if he did, then should he teach them that man’s endeavor toward faith is not a thing to be mocked, as himself mocketh it now... but that man’s own will doth somewhat more toward it than doth the child to the begetting of his own father)... or else would Tyndale forbid them all such things in any wise, and tell them that their

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1. Sacrament of the Altar: i.e., Real Presence
2. himself: he himself
3. of: i.e., in
4. worthy: worthy of
5. call: request
6. kind: approach // might: could // assent unto: agree to
7. prejudice of: prejudice to / violating of
8. forbear: i.e., abstain from sexual relations with
9. intent: i.e., intent that
10. Conformable: persuasible / open-minded
11. Print: imprint
12. toward: cooperative
14. prevent them: act in advance of them; make the first move
15. before: in front of
16. walking: acting // working: operating
17. other many: many other
18. should he teach: i.e., he would be teaching
19. in any wise: i.e., under any circumstances; absolutely
own endeavor would rather hinder, and make them ascribe the faith that is the gift of God unto the merit and goodness of their own will, their own towardness, their own prayers, their own continence, almsdeed, and fasting, and all their other endeavor?

All which things if Tyndale take for naught or perilous… then is it likely that he would of consequence advise those disciples of his to be well ware of all such things, and do none of them in no wise, for the counsel to such things could come but of beetle-blind fleshly reason. And therefore Tyndale’s disciples, toward the getting of the faith, to the intent they should take thereof no part unto their own praise, but give the whole glory to God… should, I say, by his advice, use none endeavor at all, nor do nothing, nor say nothing, nor think nothing, but sit even still, sadly, and gape by day against the sun, by night against the moon, till either some blind beetle or some holy humblebee come fly in at their mouths and buzz into their breasts an unwholesome heap of fly-blown errors and moth-eaten heresies.

And thus, good Christian readers, the reason that Tyndale maketh us against the endeavor of man toward the attaining of faith… which endeavor he mocketh and calleth it a counsel of beetle-blind reason, because faith is the gift of God—I doubt not, I say, but that his reason is such that a man that were beetle-blind indeed, may perceive well enough that Tyndale, for lack of good endeavor, hath had of the gift of God little wit and less grace,
in making of that feeble and unlawful reason.

Tyndale’s other reason against the good endeavor of man’s will is this.

Tyndale

My wit must show me a true cause or an apparent cause why,
ere my will have any working at all.

More

Let Tyndale set his consequent and conclusion to this antecedent made of this reason, and say, “My wit must first show me some cause either true or somewhat seeming true, before that my

1 rather hinder: i.e., harm rather than help them  3 towardness: cooperativeness / good attitude
2 continence: (especially sexual) self-restraint // almsdeed: almsgiving  5 naught: worthless
6 of consequence: consequently  7 well ware of: very much on their guard against
7–8 do . . . wise: i.e., by no means do any of them  8 the counsel to: i.e., any counsel to do
8 but of: only from  8, 20 beetle-blind: myopic; nearsighted  9 fleshy: earthbound; worldly
12 use none endeavor: put forth no effort  12, 13 nothing: i.e., anything  13 even: quite
14 sadly: somberly // gape . . . night against: face open-mouthed by day the sun, by night
15 humblebee: bumblebee  16 at: i.e., through  18, 22, 25, 26, 34 reason: argument
22–23 were . . . may: i.e., was actually nearsighted could  24 wit: good sense  25 feeble: lame
25 unlawful: invalid  30, 34 wit: intellect / understanding  30, 35 cause: reason
31 ere: before // have: i.e., can have  33 set: add  35 before that: before
will can anything do at all: ergo, none endeavor of myself in
conforming and applying of my will can anything do at all.”

And now, when his argument is all made up… ye shall find it as full
of reason as an egg full of mustard.

For what though my wit and reason must first set my will a-work?
Can yet my will, when it is once moved diversely between two
reasons, nothing do at all in removing an obstinate leaning to the
one side, or in working of a conformable inclination toward the
consent of the other?

If all the faith of such truths as are taught were in such
wise inspired into every man’s heart that is a faithful man,
as he by that inward inspiration had such a full, perfect, and clear
perceiving thereof in the inward sight of the understanding
as the bodily eye hath of the thing that it plainly seeth and looketh
upon… or as the sight of the soul hath in such evident and open
conclusions as it doth plainly and openly behold—such, I
mean, as are the general petitions in the First Book of Euclid’s
Geometry, as that every whole thing is more than its own half, or
such other like—then would I well agree with Tyndale that when
the thing were so shown unto my wit, I could not but agree
thereto with my will. But I say that albeit God is able in such wise
to inspire and infund the faith if that him list—yet I say that
ordinarily into his faithful folk, neither final reprobates nor
final elects (for faithful are at sundry times of both the sorts), he
giveth not the belief or faith on that fashion. For if he did—then
were it not faith nor belief, but very sight and knowledge. And
such kind of so certain and open revelation were unto the man
occasion of belief and credence necessarily, surely, and inevitable…
but therefore, as it seemeth, neither thankworthy nor rewardable.

Now doth God with his Christian folks ordinarily take that
way, in the giving them their belief and faith, that though
they do not merit with any foregoing good deeds, nor deserve the
gift of believing… yet may they with good endeavor and obedient
conformity deserve and merit in the believing.

And therefore, since God will for that cause bind us to the belief—
because he will that we merit and be rewarded for our belief
(the reason of which desert and merit on our part, standeth in

1 ergo: therefore  // none endeavor of myself: i.e., no endeavor on my part  4 full: i.e., is full
5 what though: i.e., so what that  5, 20 wit: intellect  6 diversely: in different directions
7 reasons: arguments  8 working: the bringing about  // conformable: cooperative
8–9 the consent of: assent to  10 faith of: i.e., belief in  11, 21 wise: a way
11 every . . . man: i.e., the heart of everyone who is a believer  12 as: i.e., that
13 thereof: i.e., of those truths  15 in: with regard to  // evident and open: i.e., clearly and obviously true
16 conclusions: propositions  // postulates; axioms  18 as: such as
20 were so shown: was so made known  21 albeit: though it is true that  22 infund: infuse
22 if that him list: if he wants to  23, 24 faithful: believing; right-faith-possessing
24 of both the sorts: i.e., people of both those groups  25 on that fashion: in that way
26 were it: would it be  // very: actual  27 open: manifest  // were: would be
29 thankful: deserving of credit  32, 34 deserve: earn  33 may: can  35 will: chooses to
35 cause: reason  // bind us to: make obligatory for us  36 will that we: wills that we / wants us to
36 merit: i.e., gain merit  37 reason: rational foundation  // desert: earning  // standeth: lies

40
the respect and regard that God hath to our obedience by which we willingly submit ourselves to the credence of God’s word, written or unwritten, telling us anything against our own reason telling us the contrary)—then if our belief lost its merit

How belief loseth its merit

(as that holy pope Saint Gregory saith it should) if reason plainly proved us the thing that we believe… so were the merit of our belief lost in like wise if the thing were in such wise given us as we more perfectly perceived it than we perceive any such as reason may most perfectly prove us.

And therefore I say that God doth not ordinarily give into men the faith in such manner… because he will not utterly take away the merit from man… forasmuch as he hath ordained him to

Man is ordained by the

joy by the means of some merit, some

Rom 8:18 conflict, passion, or pain upon his own part, though not sufficient and worthy (for as Saint Paul saith, all the passions and sufferances of this world “be not worthy the glory that is to come, that shall be revealed in us”), yet such, at the leastwise, as his high goodness accepteth and rewardeth for worthy through the force and strength of those merits that are indeed sufficient and worthy—the merits, I mean, of the bitter pain and Passion of his alone only-begotten and tenderly beloved Son. Then say I now that since the faith is not ordinarily with such open, inevitable, and invincible lightsomeness inspired into the soul that the man must of necessity and very fine force clearly perceive and agree it… but by God provided so sufficiently to be shown and taught as he that will be conformable and walk with God’s grace may find good cause enough to captivate his reason to the belief… and yet not so great and urgent causes but that he which will be ill-willed and froward may let grace go, and find himself cavillations proudly to rest upon his own reason against the word of God… either saying that his reason seeth it not sufficiently proved for God’s word (as Tyndale saith in all God’s words unwritten) or else that God’s word is not so meant as all Christ’s church understandeth them (as Tyndale saith touching the plain scriptures against the marriages made between friars and nuns)—the

1 respect: consideration  //  hath to: takes of
2 willingly: by our will / volitionally
4 lost: i.e., would lose
5 Gregory: i.e., Gregory I; Gregory the Great
6 should: would
7–8 were . . . lost in like wise: would . . . be likewise lost
8 such wise: such a way
9 such: i.e., such thing
10 may: can
11 give into: give to / put into
12 will not: does not want to
13 him to: i.e., that he attain eternal joy
14–15 Man . . . merit: i.e., Man’s predestination is predicated on some kind of meriting on his part.
15, 18 passion(s) suffering(s)
15 pain: laborious effort / trouble undertaken
16 sufficient: i.e., enough by itself
17 worthy: commensurate in value (to the joy)
18 sufferances: patient endurances
21 sufficient: i.e., enough by themselves
22 his alone: solely his
24 open: manifest  //  inevitable: unavoidable / inescapable
25 invincible: insuperable; unextinguishable
25 lightsomeness: luminosity
26 very fine: veritable sheer  // agree: accept
27 as he that: i.e., as that whoever
28 conformable: cooperative
29 captivate: subjugate
30 urgent: compelling  // which will: i.e., who chooses to
31 froward: perverse; contrary
32 rest upon: rely on / side with
33 for: i.e., to be
34 in: about
35 them: i.e., his words
36 touching: regarding
points of the faith are not, I say, in such wise shown, nor the
wit in them so thoroughly and so clearly instructed, but that
the thing which in the wit lacketh and remaineth imperfect
may by the will be perfected and made up... and, instead of sure
and certain sight, be from distrust or doubtful opinion brought
by God working with man’s will into sure faith and undoubted
belief. And this, I say, for the time of this present life... and in the
life to come, then turned into full sight and inevitable
contemplation.

And that this is the ordinary manner of the faith given by God
into the soul—with the pliable and comfortable will of man, and
not an inevitable sight of the truth inspired into the man
whether he will or not, in such manner wise that he cannot choose
but believe it—the scriptures be plain and evident.

Heb 11:1
Doth not Saint Paul unto the Hebrews, in the definition of faith, openly and
clearly declare that the faith is an argument or matter of things that
appear not? Now, if the resurrection of our own body were in this
world in such manner appearing unto us as it shall after the resurrection,
when we be in heaven... it were now no faith at all, but a sure
knowledge. And therefore saith Saint Paul also that we see now, as it
1 Cor 13:12
were, but in a glass, and perceive and
behold but, as it were, in a dark riddle...
but in the other world shall we see face to face.

To show also that God giveth not ordinarily the faith to folk
but with some manner of towardness and conformity of their own
Mt 23:37
good will... our Lord saith himself unto
the city that he so sore longed to convert,
“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft have I willed to gather thy
children together, as a hen gathereth together her chickens,
and thou wouldst not!”

No man here doubteth but that our Lord, if he would have used
some such ways as he could—it was in his power to inspire the
knowledge of himself into their hearts, and of all thing that he
would have them believe... and that in such wise that they should
not choose but believe, for they should not choose, but know it... and that
in such wise that they could not have thought the contrary. But

How man is brought to salvation
God had determined to bring man to
salvation not in such inevitable wise,
nor without some willing conversion

1 points: articles; tenets  1, 35, 37, 39 wise: a way  2 wit: intellect  3 the thing: i.e., something
3 wit: intellect / understanding  // lacketh: is wanting  // imperfect: not fully formed  4 may: can
5 perfected and made up: made fully formed and complete  5 distrust: skeptical regard  // doubtful: unsettled
8 inevitable: i.e., sure-to-follow  10 is... God: is God’s ordinary way of giving/putting faith
11 into: to/into
11 pliable: tractable  // comfortable: amenable  12 inevitable: unavoidable  13 will: i.e., wants it
13 manner wise: a kind of way  14 plain and evident: clear and conclusive  16 the definition: i.e., his defining
17 an... of: i.e., a contention or claim about  18 appear not: are not visible  19 appearing: apparent
19 shall: i.e., will be  20 were: would be  22 a glass: i.e., a (very imperfectly reflecting) looking glass
23 dark riddle: cryptic brain-teaser  26 towardsness: receptivity; cooperativeness  // conformity: compliance
28 sore: sorely  29 oft: often  // willed: wanted  30 chickens: chicks
31 and... not: but you wouldn’t have it  34 allthing: everything  35, 36 should: would
36 but believe: i.e., otherwise than to believe  39 such inevitable: so ineludible  40 willing: volitional
and turning of man toward him... though man cannot turn unto him without prevention, and concurrent help, of God’s especial grace. But since the goodness of God provideth that his grace is ever ready to him that will use it—therefore, though the will of man may nothing do without grace, yet without any speaking of grace we commonly let not to say “man may do this” and “man may do that,” as believe, and hope, and love, and live chaste, and do alms, and fast, and many such other things... not meaning, though we make no mention of grace, that man can therefore do them without grace. Like as we say that a man “may see to thread a needle,” and speak nothing of the light, and yet mean we not that he can thread it in the dark.

And therefore let not Tyndale look to bring us in darkness... and because man’s will can nothing do without grace, therefore tell us that man’s will can nothing do; nor tell us, neither, that man’s will hath no part in belief and faith... and make us ween it were so because the will cannot (as he saith) go before the wit—whereof experience proveth many times the contrary, and sometimes with Tyndale, too. But though a man cannot have any will at all in that thing whereof he hath utterly nothing known nor heard tell of, nor had imagination in his mind, nor anything thought upon—yet when the mind with divers reasons and arguments is once moved of a matter, the will, as it happeth of other occasions at the time to be well- or evil-affectionate, so may give itself into the consent and agreement of the one side or of the other; yea, and that, sometimes, on that side, for affection, upon which side he seeth least part of his wit and reason. And therefore it is not always true, that Tyndale saith in these words...

Tyndale

And then when we see his mercy, we love him again, and choose him, and submit ourselves to his laws, to walk in them.

More

Here seemeth he to give as much to the working of man’s will concerning charity as he before took from it concerning faith.

For here he saith that we “choose” God, and “submit ourselves” to his laws, whereas of truth, without his grace both preventing us and concurrent with us, we can in these things neither, do nothing at all.

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2 prevention: the prevenience; the coming-first
3 the goodness of God: i.e., God in his goodness
3–4 ever ready: always readily available
4, 6, etc. may: can
6 let not: don’t scruple
7 as: such as
do: give
10 a man: i.e., someone
10–11 speak... of: say... about
13 look: hope / try / in: into
darkness: i.e., intellectual and spiritual dimness of sight / wickedness
16 ween: think; believe
16 it were: i.e., this
17 as he saith: says he
17 go before: be engaged before / act ahead of
19–20, 37 in (that thing): with regard to (something)
20 utterly: absolutely
21 anything thought upon: at all thought of
22 divers reasons: various considerations
23 moved of: presented on
23 hapoth of other occasions: i.e., happens because of other things going on
24 evil-affectionate: ill-disposed
25 consent... other: i.e., assenting to, and going along with, the one side or the other
26 for: on account of
26 affection: natural preference; bias
26–27 upon... reason: i.e., with which he sees his intellect and reason least siding
27 that: what
30 again: in response / back
31 walk in: live by
36 of truth: actually; in point of fact
36–37 both... us: i.e., acting both ahead of and concurrently with us
37 nothing: i.e., anything
Now meaneth Tyndale further, for all this, that man’s will in these things yet doth nothing work at all but of necessity. For he saith that God *maketh* them to see his mercy by faith, without any manner working of their wills, as ye have heard. And then he saith that upon the sight thereof… they “love” God, and “choose” him, and “submit themselves” to his laws; but yet saith he that their wills do this of inevitable necessity. And then can no man, if Tyndale’s lie be true, neither in faith nor charity have any merit at all. For what can a man deserve in believing the thing that he thoroughly seeth, or in doing a thing when he can do none other? Now, that Tyndale so saith is open and plain by these words that he consequently saith…

**Tyndale**

For when we err not in wit, reason, and judgment… we cannot err in will and choice of things. For the choice of man’s will doth naturally and of her own accord follow the judgment of a man’s reason, whether he judge right or wrong; so that in teaching only, resteth the pith of a man’s living.

**More**

Here ye see that Tyndale in loving and choosing by which man loveth and chooseth God putteth a plain necessity—that man’s will can none other do, because he seeth the mercy of God by faith… which, as Tyndale said before, man seeth also of necessity; and so, consequently, no merit in neither nother.

But Tyndale saith untrue in both. For man neither of necessity seeth the one nor of necessity doth the other, but may do the contrary both in the one and the other… and therefore in doing both, meriteth in both, whatsoever Tyndale say.

But yet saith Tyndale untrue in these other two things also: that is to wit, both where he saith that when a man seeth the mercy of God, then he loveth and chooseth God, and submittheth himself to walk in God’s laws; and also where he saith, for the proof of that point, that when we err not in wit, we cannot err in will… but that the choice of the will doth ever follow the judgment of the reason. For first, what question is there but that many which right surely believe the mercy of God do not yet love God in such

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2 *nothing work*: do nothing / in no way operate  
3 *them to*: i.e., the elect  
3–4 *any . . . wills*: i.e., their wills operating in any way  
7 *inevitable*: unavoidable; inescapable  
8 *faith nor*: i.e., being a believer nor in having and exercising  
9 *what . . . deserve*: i.e., what merit . . . earn // *the thing*: i.e., in something  
11 *so saith*: is saying this  
11 *open and plain*: i.e., made clear and obvious  
12 *consequently*: immediately afterward  
14 *wit*: understanding  
16, 34 *follow*: go along with  
17–18 *resteth the pith*: in . . . lies the core element / on . . . depends essentially  
18 *living*: way of living  
20 *in*: i.e., in the  
21 *putteth*: posits // *a plain*: a literal / an absolute  
22 *can none other do*: cannot do otherwise  
24 *neither nother*: neither the one nor the other  
25 *Tyndale saith untrue in both*: i.e., both of these things said by Tyndale are untrue  
26 *may*: can  
27 *one*: i.e., one instance  
29 *yet . . . in*: i.e., Tyndale moreover speaks untruthfully  
32 *walk in*: live by  
33 *wit*: understanding / intellect  
35 *which*: who  
36 *right*: quite // *believe*: believe in  
36 *do not yet*: yet do not
How man should love God
unto salvation

wise as is requisite unto salvation—that is, in the preferring his pleasure before their own, and to forbear sin for the love of his law, and for the regard of his goodness to fulfill his commandments. But we find it many times far contrary:

“Mercy” is at some times turned into presumption.

that the overgreat regard of his mercy turneth trust into presumption, and maketh men the more bold in sin—so, forsooth, that neither love of God nor desire of heaven nor dread of hell is able to pull them back.

Now, as touching the other point, that when we err not in will and judgment, we cannot err in will and choice of things... but that the will always doth naturally accord and agree to follow the judgment of reason, whether it judge right or wrong: we shall defer the subtleties of that disputation till we come to the place in his answer unto my Third and Fourth Book of my Dialogue—where I purpose, God willing, to touch this matter more fully—and will at this time nothing else object against him than the plainest proof that can be; that is to wit, every man's own experience and express perceiving of the contrary. For many a wretch that doth an abominable deed seeth and perceiveth full well that he doth very naught, and that he should not do so... and his wit and his reason forbiddeth him; but, his will falling from the following of his reason to the fulfilling of his fleshly desire and beastly lust and devilish appetite, accomplisheth his detestable deed... not for any lack of wit and reason, but through fault of the froward will wittingly working for pleasure against reason.

Many a man that hath a great wit and a great reason too, and much learning joined unto them both, doth yet more foolishly and more unreasonably than doth some other whose wit and reason is very far under his, and as for learning, hath utterly none at all. And whereof cometh this, but in that the one with no learning and no great wit hath great good will to work with God's grace and do well... and the other with much wit and learning lacketh the will to work well, after his reason—and therefore letteth grace go by, and willfully followeth affection!

And if Tyndale in this believe not me, nor all the wide world

1 wise: a way  1, 2 unto: i.e., for  2 preferring... before: prioritizing of... over; putting of... ahead of 3 to: i.e., in the choosing to  8 so: i.e., so much so  9 forsooth: indeed  // dread: fear 11 as touching: as regards  13, 36 follow(eth): go(es) along with  15 defer: i.e., postpone discussion of 15 subtleties: fine points / sly implications  // disputation: argument 16 Dialogue: i.e., Dialogue concerning Heresies  17 touch this matter: critique this contention 18 object: bring forward  22 doth very naught: i.e., is doing very wrong / is acting very badly 22 so: i.e., that thing  // wit: understanding  23 from: away from  23–24 following of: going along with 23 forbiddeth him: i.e., forbid him to  26 wit: understanding / intelligence 26, 28, 31, 35 reason: reasoning ability  26 froward: perverse  27 wittingly: knowingly; consciously 28, 30, 33, 34 wit: (amount of) intelligence  29 doth yet: i.e., yet behaves  30 unreasonably: irrationally 31 under: less than  // utterly: absolutely  33 work: cooperate  34, 35 well: right(ly)  35 work: act 35 after: in accord with  36 willfully: volitionally / headstrongly  // affection: feeling / inclination 37 in: regarding; about
besides… he will, I trust, at the leastwise believe himself. Now, then, saith he (in more places of his book than one) that I see the truth well enough, and that I see well enough that I should not do as he saith I do—wittingly and willfully write against the truth. Wherein if he will now confess that he saith untrue… let him revoke his lie and call it back again, and then God forgive him and I do. And if he will abide still by that word that he said then… then must he go from this word quite that he saith now. For if I wot well I do not well, and yet, for all that, I do it—then is there one man, at the leastwise, whose will followeth not his wit. And then if I be such one, I shall not, I trust, live all alone… but shall, rather than fail, find Tyndale himself so good a fellow as to falsify his own words here and bear a poor man company.

And that his words here be very false indeed… doth yet farther appear by his conclusion that he concludeth thereon, if his conclusion do necessarily follow. For his conclusion is this: that in teaching only, standeth the pith of a man’s living. For if this be false, as indeed it is… then if it necessarily follow upon his other words, his other words must needs be as false as it; for upon a truth nothing can there follow but truth, as every man learned well knoweth.

But now knoweth every man very well that all the pith of a man’s living standeth not in only teaching. For many be full well taught how they should live—yea, and so well taught that they be able to teach it others full well—and yet live themselves full naught. We shall not need to seek long for example, since no man doubteth but that Judas Iscariot had so good a schoolmaster, and was with him so long, that if he had any wit he was meetly well taught how he should live. And that he was not all witless, though by default of good will he waxed in conclusion graceless… appeareth well in that so wise a master as our Savior was, sent him forth, among others, for one of his ushers, to teach in his own time. And yet, as well taught as he was, and as well as he taught others, too—yet was his own living not very good, while he was both a thief and a traitor both to God and man.

And yet, that we shall not need to seek so far as fifteen hundred years ago… I ween it will be no great difficulty to find folk enough even now, in our own time, that can preach and give good counsel to their neighbors against the vices in which they live.

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3 as: what 4 wittingly: knowingly // willfully: deliberately / obstinately 5 will now: now is willing to
5 saith untrue: speaks untruthfully 6 call it back again: take it back 7 will: wants to
7 word that he said: assertion that he made 8 go . . . saith: completely go back on this assertion he’s making
8 wot: know 8–9 I do not well: that what I’m doing is not right 9–10 is . . . wit: there’s at least one man
whose will does not go along with his intellect 10 such: i.e., such a 11 fail: i.e., lack it [company]
12 falsify: prove false to / show as false 14–15 doth . . . appear: is made even more obvious 17, 22 standeth: lies
17, 21 pith: core element 17, 22, 33 living: way of living 18 follow: i.e., follows 18, 19 upon: from
22, 24 full: quite 24 ir: i.e., it to // naught: badly; immorally 26, 30 (school)master: (school)teacher
28 default: deficiency 29 waxed in conclusion: became in the end // graceless: devoid of grace
29 appeareth well in: is well evidenced by the fact 30 wise: intelligent 31 ushers: assistant teachers
31 in his own time: i.e., while our Savior himself was still walking around teaching 33 while: given that
36 seek so far: go so far in our search 37 ween: think 38 even: right 39 vices: i.e., immoral ways
themselves. So that though to good living, good teaching be necessary... yet may every fool see that in good teaching standeth not all the pith of good living, as Tyndale saith it doth... since many men have been well taught and yet lived naught.

But this wise reason, among many like, learned Tyndale of his master Luther... which at Worms, in Almaine, at his being there before the Emperor, said that if the Gospel were well taught, there should need none other law. And this said he there, and this saith Tyndale here... because they and their fellows would fain take away all laws, and leave nothing but sermons. And then, after that their ungracious heresies might be freely preached for the gospel of God, and no law to let them; when, after many souls sent unto the devil by them, they should (as they have done in Almaine already) begin sedition and rebellion, and fall to rifling, robbing, murder, and manslaughter: whoso should then, without force of punishment, only teach and preach unto such unruly rebels... should, ye wot well, have a devout audience!

But Tyndale in this matter, when he hath told us this tale—that the pith of man’s living standeth altogether in teaching—he addeth thereunto by and by, and saith...

Tyndale
Howbeit, there be swine that receive no learning but to defile it; and there be dogs that rend all good learning with their teeth.

More
If there be such swine and such dogs—as indeed there be, as our Savior himself witnesseth in the Gospel—if this, I say, be truth, as it is, that Tyndale telleth us now... then is it false that Tyndale told us before; that is to wit, that all standeth in teaching. For those swine and those dogs will be naught for all the good teaching. And then to keep such from doing harm, we must not only teach and preach... but unto such as will be like swine, we must yoke them for breaking hedges, and ring them for rooting, and have bandogs to drive them out of the corn with biting, and lead out by the ears.

And if there be such dogs, as indeed there be, that rend all good learning with their teeth—then standeth not all the pith of...
good living in good teaching. For what availeth to teach them that will not learn, but rend all good learning with their teeth? And therefore to such dogs men may not only preach, but must with whips and bats beat them well, and keep them from tearing of good learning with their dogs’ teeth... yea, and from barking, both... and chastise them and make them couch-quail, till they lie still and hearken what is said unto them. And by such means be both swine kept from doing harm... and dogs fall sometimes so well to learning that they can stand up upon their hinder feet and hold their hands before them prettily, like a maid; yea, and learn to dance, too, after their master’s pipe; such an effectual thing

Punishment is punishment, where bare teaching will not suffice.

And who be now more properly such dogs than be these heretics that bark against the blessed sacraments and tear with their dogs’ teeth the Catholic, Christian faith and godly expositions of the old holy doctors-and-saints? And who be more properly such hogs than these heretics of our days, of such a filthy kind as never came before... which in such wise defile all holy, vowed chastity that the very, pure Scripture of God they tread upon with their foul, dirty feet, to draw it from all honest chastity into an unclean, shameful liberty of friars to wed nuns! And therefore unto these hogs and these dogs the pith of good living standeth not all in teaching. For no good thing will they learn without biting and beating.

Yet goeth Tyndale further and showeth more kinds of folk... to whom, for all his other words, all the pith of good living standeth not in teaching.

Tyndale

And there be pope-holy... which, following a righteousness of their own feigning, resist the righteousness of God in Christ.

More

These words, lo, good reader, expound very well, and very plainly declare, what teaching it is that Tyndale all this while so boasteth, wherein, he saith, all the pith of good living only standeth; that

1 what availeth: of what avail is it; what good does it do  2 will... but: are determined not to learn, but to  3 rend: lacerate; tear to pieces  4 bats: clubs  5, 16 dogs': i.e., dog  6 couch-quail: cower  7 hearken: pay heed to  8 fall: i.e., take  9 hinder: hind; rear  10 before: in front of  11 prettily: charmingly  12 maid: maiden  13 after: to  14 bare: mere  15 properly: really  16 expositions: commentaries  17 old... -saints: sainted theologians of old  18 which: who  19 wise: a way  20 very: actual  21–22 draw... an: i.e., subvert all its advocacy of upright, respectable chastity into an apparent one of an  23 unto: i.e., for  24, 27 standeth: lies  25 showeth: calls attention to  26 and there be: i.e., and then there are the... making up; fabricating  29 resist: contravene  30 declare: make known  31 feigning: making up; fabricating  32 wherein... only standeth: wherein alone... lies
Tyndale’s abominable teachings is, as he taketh it, the teaching of his abominable heresies in which he teacheth us that only faith sufficeth, and that neither good works have reward in heaven nor that any evil works shall have any punishment—either in this world or in purgatory, no, nor in hell neither—if the sinner be but a bare penitent and only believe and repent, and be well ware, in any wise, that he go to no shrift nor do no penance for his sin. For all those that do, they be those of whom he raileth here and calleth “pope-holy,” and saith they make themselves a “righteousness of their own feigning,” and “resist the righteousness of God in Christ,” because they resist Tyndale’s unrighteous heresies; which, under pretext of God’s only mercy, taketh away God’s righteousness… and not only that, but under the same pretext of praising and setting forth a more mercy, covertly and craftily depraveth and dispraiseth the very, true mercy itself that God of his goodness ordinarily useth toward us.

For Tyndale maketh as though it were no mercy at all, after a little penance in this world done by the party for many great, mortal sins… or after a temporary pain endured in purgatory, to set the merits of Christ’s Passion for the remnant, which would else be infinitely ten hundred thousand thousand times longer. This taketh Tyndale for no mercy, which is indeed the very mercy that our Lord ordinarily useth. But this order the beast blasphemeth… and, as well in this devilish work of his as in divers others, calleth it express tyranny.

Yet goeth he finally further to another kind of such folk, as teaching cannot for a while help and yet after doth; and of them thus he saith…

Tyndale
And there be that cannot attend to hearken unto the truth for rage of lusts… which, when lusts abate, come and obey well enough. And therefore a Christian man must be patient, and suffer long, to win his brother to Christ, that he which attendeth not today may… hear tomorrow. We see some at their very latter end, when cold fear of death hath quenched the heat of their appetites, learn and consent unto the truth… whereunto before, they could give none ear, for the wild rages of lusts that blinded their wits.
More

Lo, good readers—here ye may see what constancy is in this man. *Here* he saith (and saith true) that men will at some times not learn nor hearken to the truth, though it be never so well taught them. And yet in another chapter before, he showeth that the elects as soon as ever they be taught the truth assent forthwith and will never resist. So he that hath a false part to defend never wotteth where to hold him.

But at the leastwise, *this* that he now saith is true; and more, too. For not only when the rage is past, then men hearken… but also when the rage cometh again, then many fall naught again and into deadly sin… and that of such as after wax good again and finally shall be saved. And likewise some good-faithful folk, when false shrews come (and false *heretics*), do by false doctrine fall from the true faith again, though they had it before right lively. And yet of such, some turn again by grace from their deadly heresies into the life of faith… and some be so sore nuzzled in the false heresies, and in their obstinate frowardness take such a devilish delight, that finally they die therein—as did Bayfield, Bainham, and Tewkesbury. And yet in some, as Tyndale here telleth us, even in the “very latter end, when the cold fear of death hath quenched the heat of their appetites,” God worketh with them toward the consent of the truth whereunto before, they would give none ear—as he did indeed in that good and contrite penitent and open confessor both of his faith and his Catholic faith, M. Thomas Bilney. Which, being once good-faithful and virtuous, did after, by the false delight of Luther’s and Tyndale’s books, fall into their false heresies, and held on in them through the delectation and vainglory that he took in the praise of that secret sect and scattered “congregation”… till finally, at his death, God of his goodness opened his eyes… and he looked upon himself, and considered that all those vain praisers, he must go from them by fire… and saw that if he died in those heresies he should never meet with them more but in the fire of hell, where he should never from them—then turned he to the true faith again, and exhorted them all unto the same.
And thus, good readers, ye see that of his order of election Tyndale hath in this chapter hitherto said nothing to purpose; and now shall ye see that as little he saith to purpose in this that after followeth…

Tyndale

And though God’s elect cannot so fall that they rise not again, because that the mercy of God ever waiteth upon them to deliver them from evil… as the care of a kind father waiteth upon his son, to warn him and to keep him from occasions, and to call him back again if he be gone too far—yet they forget themselves oftentimes, and sink down into trances, and fall asleep in lusts for a season. But as soon as they be awaked they repent and come again without resistance.

More

Here maketh Tyndale as though he said a great thing. And when his words are well examined… he both meaneth very falsely and speaketh foolish-wilily. For where he saith that an elect cannot so fall but that he shall rise again, he meaneth that of necessity the elect must needs rise again, through the mercy of God that ever waiteth upon him; which is very false.

For albeit that of truth the elect shall arise again by means of God’s grace and mercy—yet might he, if he would, lie still in sin when God’s grace and mercy calleth upon him and biddeth him rise; as many reprobates do upon whom God’s grace and mercy waiteth, and calleth as fast as he calleth upon his elects, and is as ready to help them up again as the others, if they would rise, and that the malice or sloth of their own wills letted them not to take hold of God’s grace, and made them not lie still in sin like swine.

Now, that Tyndale thus meaneth appeareth plainly by the whole process of his work. Wherein as concerning salvation and damnation, he laboreth to make us ween that the will of man doth nothing willingly, but were utterly forced and inevitably necessitated by the eternal election of God unto glory and his eternal reprobation unto pain; which is as much as to say that the will of man is no will at all, any more than as he might say that the will of a tree were to grow and bring forth fruit and leaves, and that the

1 of his order of election: i.e., about how he thinks electedness works
2 hitherto: thus far
3 to purpose: (that is) on-target; that gets him anywhere
4 because: by reason of the fact
5 from occasions: i.e., away from occasions of sin
6 to purpose: (that is) on-target; that gets him anywhere
8 from occasions: i.e., away from occasions of sin
9 oftentimes: oftentimes
10 lusts: pleasures / passions
12 again: back
14 a great thing: i.e., something momentous / a spectacularly insightful thing
20 albeit . . . truth: although it is true that
21 might: could
22 would: wanted to
25 made them not: didn’t make them
26 that: i.e., if
27 sloth: indolence
28 letted them not to take: didn’t keep them from taking
29 appeareth plainly: is made quite obvious
30 process: line of argumentation / drift
31 laboreth: strives
32 inevitably: unavoidably; inexorably
33 by . . . and: i.e., by either . . . or
35 as he might: i.e., like if someone were to
will of an axe were to hew down the tree when a man smiteth the tree therewith.

And that he thus specially meaneth in this chapter of the order of our election appeareth as well in general, by the whole progress thereof, as by this also: that he assigneth that thing as the only difference between the elects and the reprobates—alleging that the elects can never so fall but that they shall rise, by the reason that mercy waiteth ever upon them. Whereby it well appeareth that Tyndale meaneth that no reprobate, that is to wit, none that finally shall be damned, hath God’s mercy while he liveth, waiting upon him to call upon him and stir him to rise out of his sin. For except he meant so—he should put elects and reprobates all in one case if he said that the mercy of God (which only thing, he saith, waiting upon the elect, raiseth him out of sin) waiteth upon the reprobate too... but if he should put some difference between them by reason of the different working of their free wills; which Tyndale will none of, in no wise.

Now, meaning falsely thus... he useth yet in his speech a foolish wiliness, as doth a coney that covereth her head and weeneth all were well, when all her loins be open.

For he saith that the elects cannot so fall but that they shall be so saved—because mercy waiteth upon them. And therein he saith truth. For if God had not foreseen that they would finally turn again to him, and with help of his grace deserve to be partakers of the merits of Christ’s Passion, and so, to be saved... he would not have elected them to salvation. But he meaneth that they shall necessarily be saved, so that they shall not mow other than repent and amend, as soon as God of his mercy calleth upon them to repent. And this though he thus mean, yet doth he resemble it... and saith not that because mercy waiteth ever upon them, therefore they must needs rise after their fall... but because mercy waiteth upon them, therefore they shall rise. But this point he layeth so openly in many places of his work that it is but a foolish wiliness of him to ween it well covered thus.

Wherefore he were as good to speak out plainly and tell us whether he mean that after a fall, mercy wait anymore upon any reprobate or not. If he say nay, he saith against the scriptures plain. For as

God calleth upon all kinds of people.

calleth upon all people, both elects and reprobates, to come to him... so doth he

1, 19 were: i.e., is 1 smiteth: whacks 3 specially: particularly // of: on 3–4 order of our election: i.e., way our electedness works 4, 8 (well) appeareth: is made (quite) evident 4 progress: progression; development 5 assigneth: specifies / pinpoints 6 alleging: claiming 7 the reason: i.e., reason of the fact 9 to wit: i.e., to say 9–10 none... be: no one who will end up being 10 while he liveth: i.e., at any time in his life 12 except he meant so: i.e., were that not what he meant 12 should put: would be putting // all in one: in entirely the same 13 case: position; situation 15 but if: unless // should: were to // put: posit 17 will: i.e., will have // in no wise: by no means 18 useth yet in his speech: also employs in his manner of speaking 19 coney: bunny rabbit 19, 34 ween(eth): think(s) 20 open: exposed 22–23 he saith truth: i.e., what he says is true 23–24 finally turn again: in the end turn back 27 mow: be able to do 35 were as good to: i.e., would do as well to / might as well just 36 mean: i.e., means
after both twain come and received, and gone away by
sin again, call ordinarily upon them both of his like mercy
still, as long as they live in this world here, and would if they
would assent thereto themselves and obey, be as glad to find them
again as ever he was to win them before—as the words of Holy
Rv 3:20  Writ be plain in the Apocalypse: “I
stand at the door and knock.”

And if Tyndale will avoid this… he must then say that all the
words of Holy Scripture by which God called upon the people to
repentance be spoken only to the elects. And then must he tell
every man how he may know himself for elect… lest he may
ween that they pertain not to him. And then shall he by the same
reason say that all the commandments be written unto the only
elects too; and then the reprobates cannot be reproved for the not
observing of them, if they were not written for them.

But surely, if Tyndale tell us that the mercy of God wait upon
the only elects, and only calleth upon them… he telleth us a vain,
foolish tale. And so he doth indeed; for so he meaneth indeed,
against the plain Scripture and all the old interpreters of the
same, and against all the old holy doctors of Christ’s church,
and against the Catholic faith of all Christian nations this fifteen
hundred years from the time of our Savior himself and his blessed
apostles even unto lousy Luther’s days.

And yet, notwithstanding that he seemeth to assign the cause of
the rising of his elects out of their sin to be by the mercy of
God “always waiting” upon them—yet handleth he the matter so that
a man may not well wit by these words of his whether he mean
that when his elect is “sunk down into his trances,” and “fallen asleep
in his lusts,” as he calleth it, “for a season”… whether he mean, I
say, that mercy calleth upon him in his trance, and shaketh him out
of his sleep, or else let him sleep still in his lusts, and the devil rock
the cradle, till the babe awake by himself. And surely he rather
seemeth to say that God not awaketh him out of his lust… but
letteth him sleep in his lust until his lust have left him. As
though God’s calling of men from gluttony were not to put them in
mind and call upon them busily, and inspire good thoughts of
temperance, while they be at their meat… but let them then

1 both twain come and received: i.e., both elect and reprobate have come and been accepted
1–2 gone . . . sin again: gone back away by sin 3 still: continually 4–5 find them again: i.e., have them back
6 Writ: Scripture  //  be plain: i.e., clearly show  //  Apocalypse: Book of Revelation 8 will: wants to
8 avoid: refuse 12 ween: think 13 reason: reasoning 13, 17 the only: only the 14 reproved: blamed
16 surely: assuredly; certainly 17 a vain: a meritorious; an idle 19, 20 old: early / former / long-established
20 holy doctors: theologians 23 even unto: right up to  //  lousy: sorry / loathsome
24 assign: determine / claim 25 by: i.e., that of 26 so: in such a way 27 may . . . wit: cannot really tell
27 by . . . whether he mean: i.e., whether by . . . he means 29, 31, etc. lust(s): pleasure(s) / passion(s)
29 mean: i.e., means 31 let him sleep still: i.e., lets him go on sleeping 34 have: has 35 from: away from
36 busily: assiduously / very actively 37 meat: dinner  //  let: i.e., to let
alone, as in a trance and asleep, till they be so weary of eating that
the grief and grinding in their bellies standing a-strut with
stuffing, call them up and awake them. And that is a good easy
way, too… for then be they the more easy to entreat to fast and
forbear… but not much longer than till they wax ahungered
again. And as it fareth in the trances and sleeps that folk fall in
by the belly—so fareth it likewise in the trances and sleeps that folk
fall in by those parts that are beneath the belly. For when the rage is
thereof (as Tyndale saith) overpassed, and that they have in their
trance and their sleep played out all their luskish lusts… then
they awake. And then, as soon as they be awake… they “repent,” as
Tyndale saith, and “come again” to chastity “without resistance.”
But evermore I would that Tyndale should remember that all this
tale which he telleth us here is for his purpose of elects a tale of
very little effect. For this tale of such sleeping and awaking of
elects is nothing proper to the elects… but a thing common both
to the elects and to the reprobates too. And these rages, and these
trances, and these sleeps in sinful fleshy lusts, into which folk
fall, and out of which they wake again and repent—the thing that
Tyndale telleth us here as a thing far set and sought, and searched
out of the very bottom of his deep divinity—that same thing, in a manner,
as for thus far forth, Doctor Ovid describeth us well and plainly in
his pleasant poetry entitled “The Remedy of Love.” Where he
declareth after Tyndale’s fashion, full clerkly, how some wanton
lovers, after their rages past and their lusts played out, lie then
waking, and have meditations of amendment, and of leaving of
their lecherous love, even lying by their lemans’ sides, and think
they will come there no more, and would with good will that they
had not come there then neither.

In this chapter which Tyndale entitleth “The Order of Election”—
I look always that he should, as reason is, tell us those things that
properly pertain unto the elects… and the things that, contrariwise,
appertain properly to the reprobates; by which manner of handling
of the matter, we might clearly perceive and understand what he
meaneth, and what order of God’s working, or of the working of
man’s own will, he putteth in the course and progress of the one
sort and the other toward their final end, the one of everlasting life, the other of eternal damnation.

And always while I look for this… Tyndale, besides that his conclusions be false heresies in the end, telleth us nothing, almost, by the way (except only, peradventure, the last repentance, before the death), but that they be common as well to the final reprobates as to the final elects; as this is also that in his chapter followeth, where he writeth in this wise…

Tyndale

God now and then withdraweth his hand, and leaveth them unto their own strength, to make them feel that there is no power to do good but of God only… lest they should be proud of that which is none of theirs.

More

Tyndale maketh these words for a ground of a great matter concerning the order of God used toward the elects. And upon this foundation he specially reareth his building of the “trances” and the “sleeps” and slidings of the elects into sins and errors… in which sins yet they sin not, and in which errors yet they err not, because of their “feeling faith.” From which though they fall yet they fall not, because they feel it still though they feel it not.

But what is there, good reader, in these words of his that he speaketh of the elects, that is not verified both in the elects and in the reprobates too? Now, if he say that he speaketh here specially of the elects because at some time God withdraweth his hand from them, and that from reprobates he withdraweth his hand of help and grace always—if he say thus, he saith untrue. For doth not God, as he of his goodness calleth them, and at their coming receiveth them… so when they fall away by false faith, or faint heart, or fleshly delectation, call upon them again as he doth upon his elects, without acception of persons or partial favor, indifferently…

till he, either (sometimes) for their immeasurable outrage or (commonly) for their final impenitence, finally rejecteth and refuseth them? Among which fatherly cure and care for them—as well as for his elects—before their final fall… he useth the same ways to win and save them that he useth to the other. Yea, and doth sometimes, peradventure, give more of his gracious aid and help in this world toward salvation in heaven unto some reprobate wretch that will
for all that be damned… than to some of his elects that will so work with his grace that he finally shall be saved. As I doubt not but some two souls have been saved, and now sit in heaven, with the one-half of the grace that Judas had, and cast off, and finally fell into hell.

And therefore this that Tyndale here telleth us of elects—that God sometimes withdraweth his hand and leaveth them to their own strength—he may as well tell us of the reprobates as of the elects.

Now, the cause why God withdraweth his hand and his help is not always the cause that Tyndale here allegeth—because he longeth always to make a glance against all the merit of man’s free will…—

Why God withdraweth his help but to avoid the pride of the mind, and the far less boldness presuming upon the surety of high, holy living or faith… which many men may fall in by taking themselves for God Almighty’s minions, though they give all the thank to himself and ascribe nothing to their own strength at all, nor ween they have no free will at all, neither. For the proud Pharisee that

Lk 18:9–14 despised the poor publican, though he were proud of his deeds, yet ascribed them not unto himself, nor said not, “All this have I done, good Lord, of mine own strength,” but he said, “I thank thee thereof, good Lord, that I am such… and that thou hast made me better, and given me the grace to live more holily, than this publican”… and said not, “I thank thereof myself.” And therefore, as I say, God withdraweth his hand to show his elects and reprobates both, that they have rather cause to be meek and fear a fall than to be proud of their virtue, and make themselves sure of their standing, and think that they be so dear darlings to God, of whom all good cometh, that do themselves what they will, he will not let them fall. For this, I say, God doth it—and not, as Tyndale saith, only to show his only elects that they can do no good but only of him, lest they should be proud.

2 Cor 12:7–10 Lo, Saint Paul, though God withdrew not his hand and help from him, had yet such a plague of temptation put upon him that he waxed weary thereof, and very sore afeard. And wherefore was it laid in his
neck? Lest he should have thought his virtue to come of himself?
Nay, lest he might through the great revelations that he had had
fall into pride and presumption.

And therefore this were not so very a likely manner: that God would,
as Tyndale putteth, withdraw his hand from a good elect, and
thereby send him into sin, lest he should ween that any virtue came
of himself without God; for no good man can lightly fall into that
thought; but, rather, lest (whereof he standeth in much more peril)
he might hap to think himself overgreat in God’s favor…

and thereby fall into pride for lack of fear mingled with his hope.

Nor also, that good elect from whom God so should withdraw his
hand, and suffer him to fall into sin, for the cause that Tyndale
here allegeth—lest he should reckon his virtue to come of himself—
were not likely after his repentance and rising again to take
that kind of fruit thereof, since he were not likely to reckon that God
withdrew his hand for that cause. For if he should so reckon, he
were likely to reckon that he before that fall was so holy that God
was afeard lest he would wax too proud thereof. But the better the
man was before… the more is he after his repentance likely to fear
that he was naught before, and worse after… and that his fall into that
sin came unto him, not by the reason that God withdrew his
hand from him for any fear of any such pride that was likely to rise
of his virtue (whereof he will reckon that he never had such store
to take occasion of any such pride thereof), but rather that God
withdrew the hand of his grace and help from him at that
time for some other, secret sin whereby he had before deserved
that he so should do; and that the second sin was not only
sin, but also pain for the first. (As “one sin deserves the

\textit{Rom 1:27}} \quad \text{doing of another,}” \quad \text{after the sentence of}

Saint Paul to the Romans that the

old philosophers for their willful idolatry against God were given
by God into the sin against the nature of man.) Or else that in the
committing of the same sin, he withdrew himself from God’s
hand, by the default of his own froward will, before that God
withdraw his hand from him. And thus were he likely to lay the
default in his will, and not in the lack of his power… whereof he
shall have no cause to doubt but God had always given him enough,
and always would give enough, to work with his grace in the vineyard
of virtue toward heaven, if himself did not first willingly forsake
it and fall therefrom. And then putting the fault of his fall in the
frowardness of his own will, and not in any lack of towardly
goodness and mercy at God’s hand, and consequently not in lack
of power, which can never lack till help of grace fail… and were
but a false excuse of sin, since grace never faileth nor falleth from
man till man first fail and fall from grace—he were, I say, likely not
to take that kind of fruit by occasion of his fall which Tyndale
speaketh of. And then—if the man were not likely to take that kind of
fruit thereof—it were not likely that God would do it for that cause…
which cause the man would not after conceive in his mind and
imagine that God did it therefor.

For surely, as touching the withdrawing of God’s hand
(whereupon Tyndale here edifieth up his process following in this
chapter), which his high goodness and unsearchable wisdom doth
divers times for more causes than men have the wit to spy—yet
do the it never but man withdraweth first his will. For as God
preventeth us in giving… so prevent we him in leaving. For since

God withdraweth not his hand
till man withdraw his will.

God seeth that we can no good thing do
without his grace—he will not bid us
do a thing for the not doing whereof
he will punish us… and then without our fault withdraw his
grace without which he wotteth well we can no more do it than see
without light. Since it was hard to find a woman so unreasonable
that would command her maid upon pain of beating go thread
her needle, and then pull away the candle or put it out, and bid
her upon her peril come off and thread it in the dark—let Tyndale
say what he will, we withdraw before God withdraw. For as God
Hos 13:9
saith in the Scripture, “Thy fall is of thyself”;
not of the withdrawing of his
hand, till we wax wanton or sow-drunk and will needs sink
down and fall.

But God sometimes seeth causes why he setteth to less strength of
his hand than else he would do. For if he would… he could set the
hand of his grace so strongly that he which falleth should not;

2 willingly: by his will; of his own volition  // forsake: reject  3 fault of: blame for  // in: i.e. on
4 frowardness: contrariness; uncooperativeness  // not in: i.e., not ascribing it to
4 towardly: timely / generously offered  5 in: i.e., to a  6 lack: be lacking  // help: i.e., the help
6, 7, 8 fail(eth): i.e., becomes wanting  6, 8 were: would be  7 false: bogus  // of: for
10 were not: would not be  11 were: i.e., is  11, 12, 17 cause(s): reason(s)  13 imagine: i.e., guess
13 therefor: i.e., for  14 surely: assuredly  // as touching: as regards  15 edifieth: builds
15 process: argument  16 unsearchable: unplumbable  17 divers: i.e., at various  // wit: mental acumen
17 spy: discern  19 prevent(eth): precede(s)  21 bid us: command us to  22 a thing: something
23 our fault: i.e., its being our fault; our having done anything wrong  24 wotteth: knows
25 since it were: seeing that it would be  // so unreasonable: i.e., who is so irrational
26 would: i.e., she would  // beating: i.e., a beating to  27 then: i.e., would then  // bid: order
28 upon her peril come off: i.e., upon threat of punishment to go ahead  29 God withdraw: i.e., God does
30 “Thy fall is of thyself”: “Perditio tua” (Vulgate); i.e., “Your fall is of your own doing.”
31 of the: i.e., that of the  32 wax wanton or sow-drunk: i.e., get bratty or filthy-drunk
32 will needs: i.e., become bound and determined to  34 causes… to: i.e., good reasons for him to apply
35 if he would: if he wanted to  // set: i.e., give  36 which: who  // should: would
and so would do, saving that his wise goodness well seeth wherefore it were not best. For, as himself saith in the Apocalypse, some man is neither hot nor cold, but, as it were, lukewarm… weening, therefore, since he findeth himself out of the cold of great, notable crimes, that he standeth therefore in state good enough, though he be not very fervent and hot in virtue. But God, as he there saith, seeth that it were better for him for a while that he were once frozen for cold, for then should he feel the fault… and from the very cold better wax very hot than from the lukewarm. And therefore saith the Spirit of God there unto him, “I had liefer thou were cold, that thou mightest be made hot”… as though he would say farther, “than so to stand, liking thyself well enough in a lukewarm, without growing into greater heat.”

And therefore, as I was about to say, in such a person as God feeleth him faint and little well willing to go forward… so God againward useth himself toward him, in holding him the more slackly; and then the other waxeth thereby the more faint, and God followeth him and doth as he doth, and holdeth him yet somewhat less, till with less on the one side and less on the other, the man falleth into the mire of sin altogether. And all this doth God for the best, using our evil to goodness as we use his goodness to evil. For when a wanton child feeleth once a fall, and hath allto rayed his gay coat and broken both his shins… then will he find his own fault and look better to his feet, and hold faster after on the man’s hand that led him.

And such slack holding on God’s part is the thing, of likelihood, that is called the “withdrawing” of God’s hand from good men, concerning falling into sin. For else, till they begin to withdraw and draw back, or else drag and stick still, or go not so gladly forward—albeit that he give not unto them so strong a hand of his grace as, if he did, that sloth of theirs should be mastered, and they borne up thereby, in manner, maugre their teeth, which is not his ordinary course to do—yet till themselfs either by sinful will or slothful mind in some wise do deserve it… he never leaveth good man without so much help of his grace as were
God never leaveth good man without his sufficient grace. sufficient for him both to stand and walk with if himself would; nor never doth, as I suppose, by the withdrawing of his hand from any elect or reprobate either, in the time in which they be good, suffer them, without their own fault first begun, to fall into such “horrible deeds” for any good that should after come thereof. For—since that without his helping hand they can none other but fall—to withdraw his hand without their fault were, in manner, not to suffer them sin, but even to send them in thereto. And the good nature of God neither will nor can do any manner evil to bring any good to pass, since he by the Scripture crieth out upon all those that would use that condition, and saith, “Woe to them that say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come thereof.’”

Thus much have I thought it good to declare you upon Tyndale’s tale of the “withdrawing of God’s hand” sometimes from his elects, properly preached here to little purpose, since it serveth as well reprobates as elects… and neither the cause very well assigned nor the sentence very well expressed. And, finally, put for two false intents: one, to glance at man’s free will… as though because all the good that man doth cometh of God, of whose goodness cometh man’s creation and all, and therefore no good can do but by him and with him… therefore man had himself, and his own will, nothing ado in his own good deeds, but that it were a perilous presumption to call any man’s good work in any wise his own; whereas the angel of God said unto Centurio, “Thy prayer and alms are come up in remembrance before God.”

And our Savior himself calleth the breaking of the glass, and bestowing of the ointment upon his holy head, the deed of Saint Mary Magdalene—though she could not, of truth, have done it without himself, and that all the deed, allthing reckoned, from the first to the last, came only of God himself. And Saint Paul saith, “What hast thou that thou hast not received? And then what gloriest thou, as though thou hadst not received it?” He saith not, “. . . as though it were thine

1 good: i.e., any good 2 his sufficient grace: the grace that is sufficient for him // himself would: he wanted to 4 the: i.e., a 5 suffer: allow // fault… begun: guiltiness having first begun / responsibility for this coming first 6 for: for the sake of 7 since that: seeing that 7–8 can… but: cannot do otherwise than; cannot help but 8 their fault: i.e., its being their fault; their having done anything wrong 8, 24 were: would be 8 manner: effect 9 suffer: let // even: directly // in thereto: i.e., into sin 9–10 the… neither: i.e., we know that God, who by his very nature is all good, neither 10 manner: kind of 12 crieth out upon: denounces 13 use that condition: adopt that mentality; take that tack 15 declare you upon: explain to you about 16 tale of: discourse on 17 properly: really 17–18 serveth . . . as: holds as good for reprobates as for 18 the cause: i.e., is God’s reason for doing this // assigned: identified 19 sentence: meaning/significance (of this “withdrawing”) 19 put: put in // false: dissembled; craftily disguised 20 glance at: make an oblique attack on 22 can: i.e., can man 23 and: i.e., as regards 23–24 nothing ado in: nothing to do with; no involvement in 26 wise: way 27 Centurio: [Latin for the Centurion [Cornelius]] // alms: i.e., almsgiving 30 glass: i.e., glass jar 32 she could not, of truth, have: i.e., it is true that she could not have // himself: him 33 all the: the entire // allthing: everything // reckoned: taken into the account 36 what: why
own.” For when I have received it, it is then mine, and so may I call it.

Another false intent wherefore Tyndale telleth us this tale of withdrawing of God’s hand sometimes from his elects is because he would have it stand with his heresy that he goeth so fast about—that is to wit, that the elects do not sin deadly in their deadly sins, because they do it not willingly, but of infirmity, for lack of power. In pursuing of which purpose he would make it seem that God withdraweth his hand from them without their fault, and then leaveth them no power to resist, and so no blame in them nor no sin… though he be content to call it sin, after that manner that the motion toward sin which remaineth of original sin is called sin. This is Tyndale’s intent in this matter by which he excuseth the sin of the elects by the “withdrawing of God’s hand from them”… not for any default of their own, or any sin that they have done, but to keep them only from the sin that they would else do at another time. And whereas God doth for this point both for elects and reprobates all after one—that is to wit, never withdraweth his grace from the one nor from the other till they begin themselves to withdraw their will from him—he dissembleth that point, and goeth forth in his matter that he buildeth upon that foundation, and saith…

Tyndale

God laid so sore a weight of persecution upon David’s back that passed his strength to bear. So that he crieth oft out in his psalms, saying that he had lived well, and followed the right way of God, in vain. For the more he kept himself from sin, the worse it went with him, as he thought; and the better with his enemy Saul, the worse he was. Yet God left him not there, but comforted him and showed him things which before he wist not of—how that the saints must be patient and abide God’s harvest, until the wickedness of ungodly sinners be full ripe, that God may reap it in due season. God also suffered occasions stronger than David to fall upon him, and to carry him clean out of the way. Was he not ready for a churlish answer to have slain Nabal, and

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3 another: the other  //  false: dissembled; craftily disguised  //  tale of: story of the  //  stand: make common cause
5 goeth so fast about: i.e., so assiduously tries to inculcate  //  deadly: mortal(ly)  //  willingly: volitionally
7 but of: but out of  //  purpose: aim  //  their fault: i.e., its being their fault; their having done anything wrong
10 no blame: i.e., there’s no blameworthiness  //  be content: is willing  //  after: in accord with
11 manner that: i.e., manner of speaking by which  //  motion: inclination
12 of: i.e., after Baptism as a residual effect of  //  matter: contention
13–14 excuseth . . . by: i.e., whitewashes . . . via; declares the elect not guilty of sin by reason of
15 default: failing  //  16, 17 done: commit(ted)  //  keep . . . the: only to keep them from committing a
16 both for: i.e., with both  //  19 all after one: the exact same thing  //  22 point: i.e., fact; truth
18 goeth forth in: proceeds with  //  23 matter: case  //  25 sore: terribly heavy
26 passed . . . bear: it surpassed his weight-bearing strength / he was not strong enough to be able to bear it
26 crieth oft out: often cries out  //  27 well: uprightly  //  31 showed: pointed out to
31–32 wist not of: i.e., had not been aware of  //  32 abide: wait for  //  33 full: fully  //  34 suffered: allowed
34 occasions: inducements / provocations  //  35 fall upon: assail  //  36 for: on account of  //  36 churlish: rude / surly
all the males of his house, so much as the child in the cradle?
Howbeit, God withheld him and kept him back from that
evil, through the wisdom of Abigail. How long slumbered he—
or rather, how hard in sleep was he—in the adultery of Bathsheba, and
in the murder of her husband, Uriah! But at both times, as soon
as he was rebuked and his fault told him—he repented immediately,
and turned again meekly. Now, in all that long time from
the adultery of Bathsheba until the prophet Nathan rebuked him,
he had not lost his faith, nor yet his love unto the laws of God, no
more than a man loseth his wits when he is asleep. He had forgotten
himself, only... and had not maliciously cast off the yoke of
God's commandments from off his neck. There is no man so
good but that there cometh a time upon him when he feeleth in
himself no more faith or love unto God than a sick man, oftentimes,
feeleth the taste of his meat which he eateth.

More

Lo, good readers, here ye see that by Tyndale's doctrine, David did
no deadly sin—but was ever out of fault and not blameworthy—
neither by impatience (drawing near to despair) in persecution
nor by the purpose of much manslaughter at an angry word, nor by
adultery conceived at the sight of another man's wife, nor by the
traitorous destruction of his friendly servant in recompense of
troth and amends of his misdeed. All this was no deadly sin in
him, because he was an elect!

But yet is Tyndale ashamed to confess and say boldly that to be
elect is enough, and that he may do what he list and sin at his
pleasure, and that God will give him leave to do it, and cause him to be
repentant when he hath done it, and forgive him for sinning when
he repenteth, and so forth, totiens quotiens a poena et culpa, so that he
believe it well and surely trust thereto, lest for faint hope, and fear,
he fall the less to sin. This tale is Tyndale, I say, somewhat
ashamed to tell us even well and plainly forth; and therefore he
deviseth another way, and would make us believe that they be so
preserved by the faith that they do never any deadly sin, but
their deeds be such as men may well see that they be not to be
blamed for them—be they never so beastly, but very babiysh and
venial... and such as God can do no less, of very right and reason,
than remit and forgive; and that for three great causes here specified by Tyndale.

First, for they never sin but upon great occasions far above their strength. Secondly, for after their “horrible deeds” done, they repent upon rebuking, without resistance. And thirdly (which most is of all), all the while that they be in doing, the poor babes wot ne’er what they do, but be all the while asleep, as he putteth here his example by David. And therefore let us consider David’s deeds with Tyndale’s words, and examine in them these three godly reasons.

1 Sm 25:2–42

First he saith that David’s sins arose upon great occasions above David’s strength… which great occasions God suffered to fall upon him and carry him away. For when he would have slain Nabal and all his sons even to the child in the cradle, he fell not into that mind without great occasion, ye wot well. For the rude fellow had, as Tyndale well rehearseth, given him a churlish answer! And what man were there so unreasonable that would not think that a king or a great man had cause enough to kill twenty peasants and villeins

2 Sm 11:1–27

for a churlish answer of one of them? Now, when he fell to adultery and thereby to manslaughter—had he not a great occasion to it and importable to bear? For he saw the woman as he looked out at his window! And therefore, whosoever have once the sight of a woman is excusable if he take her when he can catch her… and no man greatly to blame but either a blind man or he that taketh one in the dark whom he never saw in the light.

But we must here yet remember, lest we mistake Tyndale, that these great and strong occasions were not so very great and strong of themselves… but they were, as Tyndale saith, “stronger than David,” and able to carry “him” away. Which he saith to show us that they were of that strength in comparison of the person; not so much by the force and strength of their own nature as by the lightness, frailty, and feebleness of David—as a small burden is a great weight upon a child, and able to bear him down… and a little wind able enough to blow away a feather.

Then would ye ween that he accuseth David and the elects,
because they be so light and so frail to fall upon such occasions as be strong to them by reason of their own feebleness. Nay forsooth!

For here ye must remember that to provide them their excuse in this point was the cause for which, as I told you before, he laid for a foundation... that God at such times first withdraweth his hand of his help, and then must they needs be weak, feeble, and frail. And so their fall cometh of the occasions... and the occasions be mighty to them, by reason of their feebleness. And their feebleness cometh of the withdrawing of God’s hand. And he withdraweth it without any desert and default of them; only to keep them from the sin of taking their good works for their own. And so is there, in all the progress of their deed, no deadly sin in themselves... since the occasions that bring them to it be, without their own fault, stronger than they... and by reason of their faultless feebleness, carry them clean away.

And this is, as ye see, the first goodly cause for which Tyndale will make us ween that the abominable deeds of elects be no deadly sins: because of the great occasions. Against which, if the matter were worth the argument, we would press upon him sore with the sins of the reprobates... and bear him in hand that some of them have as great occasions of their sins, sometimes, as is a churlish answer to the king of a man... or the sight of a naked woman out at a window, for adultery. And we would then ask him such questions further, either of holding of God’s hand over them or withdrawing his hand of help from them, with other diverse dependents thereupon, which every learned man may soon find out himself, and almost unlearned too. Which when Tyndale should answer to... he should soon make every wise man see that in this chapter of the order of their election, he hath elected and chosen a very foolish order.

But forasmuch as the folly thereof is open and plain of itself... we shall let the further dispicions of this point pass, as against 1 Cor 10:13 which Saint Paul plainly speaketh, and saith unto us, “God is faithful, which suffereth you not to be tempted above that that ye may bear, but maketh with the temptation a way out also, that ye may well

1 light: lightweight 1, 7 frail: susceptible (to temptation) 1 to: i.e., as to 1, 7, etc. occasions: inducements / provocations 2, 8 to: in relation to 2 nay forsooth: no indeed 4 point: i.e., matter 4, 16 cause: reason 6, 25 hand of (his) help: i.e., helping hand 6 needs: necessarily 10 any... them: i.e., their having done anything to deserve this, or being at all at fault 12 all the: the whole 12 progress: progression; course 12, 18 deadly: mortal 13 in themselves: i.e., committed by them subjectively 14 without their own fault: through no fault of their own 15 faultless: inculpable 16 goodly: big / excellent 17 will make us ween: will have us believe 18, 21 great: powerful 20 sore: hard; strongly 20 hear... hand: assert to him 21 of their: to their 22 churlish: rude / surly // of a man: i.e., from some man 22 sight: i.e., seeing 23 at: i.e., of 24 either... God’s: i.e., about God’s either keeping his 26 dependents thereupon: consequential, corollary questions 26, 35, 36 may: can 27 soon: easily 27 find out: figure out // almost: indeed; for that matter 28 answer: i.e., give answer 28 every wise man: anyone with any sense 29 of the: on the 29, 30 order: modus operandi 31 folly: foolishness; ridiculousness // open and plain: clear and obvious 32 let... pass: i.e., omit further discussion of this thesis // as: i.e., its being something 33–34 and saith: i.e., saying 34 which: who 35 suffereth you not: does not allow you // above: beyond 35 that that: that which; what 36 maketh with: i.e., provides you conjointly with allowing
wield it.” By which words this point of occasions above our power is clean carried away… and it is clearly determined that God suffereth no such temptation to come unto us but such as we may, both reprobates and elects, be able to withstand if we will,

Man with the grace of God may through the assistance of God’s gracious hand… which he never withdraweth but in the fault of our own will, and never denieth to put it forth unto us if we call therefor and will take hold upon it. And therefore since, as I say, the reproof of this first point is plain… I will now pass it over and see what substance is in the second.

The second thing is that as soon as they be rebuked and their faults told them, they repent immediately and turn again meekly. For this he said two or three times in two or three chapters… and now he confirmeth it with his example of David, which did so, as he saith, “at both times.”

But yet is this but barely laid forth for the order of the elects. For of truth, thus do some reprobates, too, among repent, not only when they be rebuked, but also before, too… and be forgiven at their repentance and penance as well as be the elects, as long as they do so repent, till they be damned because they die at last impenitent.

And also, this is not proved to be always true: that every elect repenteth at the first rebuke, and meekly returneth without resistance, though David so did twice. There is, I trust, many a man in heaven that was rebuked thrice of some one fault, and defended it full stiffly before he repented, and yet amended after full well. And for example we need no further than the blessed apostles… and specially Saint Thomas of India, which left not his diffidence and distrust neither at the first speaking nor the second, nor till he put his finger in God Almighty’s side. But Tyndale excuseth all that by being “amazed”—as he doth all the elects’ “horrible deeds” by being in “trances” and “sleeps,” as he doth David here. For that is the third point and the most special excuse of all elects from all deadly sin: in that they be asleep all the while they do it. For thus saith he of David, as ye have heard…

Jn 20:24–29

How long slumbered he—or rather, how hard in sleep was he—in the adultery of Bathsheba, and in the murder of her husband, Uriah!

1 wield: manage; deal with 1. 10 point: thesis 1 occasions: inducements / provocations // above: beyond 2 power: i.e., power to resist // clean carried away: completely disposed of 3 suffereth: allows 3, 5 may: can 4 will: want to / will to 7 in: by 8 denieth: refuses // call therefor: ask (him) for it 9 upon: of 9 reproof: disproof 10 plain: clear to see // pass it over: pass over that / leave it alone 11 is: i.e., there is 12 thing: i.e., claim 12–13 their faults told them: i.e., told what things they are guilty of 13 again: back 15, 29 which: who 16 as he saith: says he 17 barely… elects: i.e., poorly put forward as a distinctive way the elect behave 18 of truth: in point of fact // thus: so // among: at times 21 die at last: end up dying 26 of: for // fault: wrongdoing 27 full stiffly: quite tenaciously / very obstinately 28 no: i.e., look no 29, 35 special(ly): (in) particular 29 of India: Saint Thomas is traditionally believed to have evangelized India. 30 left not his diffidence: did not let go of his skepticism 31 speaking: i.e., time he was rebuked for this skepticism 32 by: i.e., as a 33 amazed: stupified // by being: i.e., as an acting while being 35 excuse of: defense for 35 from all: i.e., against every accusation of 36 deadly: mortal // in that: i.e., that 36 excuse of: defense for 37 hard in sleep: fast asleep 38–39 the adultery: i.e., his defiling by adultery 39 the murder: i.e., his murdering
More

David was here in a very long slumber and a very deep dead sleep indeed, if he did all those devilish deeds in his sleep! Tyndale of likelihood lay near him and heard him all the while snore and rout. And if he so say that he did... then is his tale as fully proved as is any part of all his heresies. And except he say it of his own certain knowledge, he shall else never make me believe that David did spy her, and sent for her, and talk with her, and get her with child, and sent for her husband, and devise the murder, and write the letter, and sent the man to his death, and all these deeds in diverse days... and all this while still asleep.

But Tyndale will have him asleep needs, for the defense of his own foolish heresy whereby he teacheth us that the elect is by faith born of God, and therefore doth never sin willingly, nor consent to sin, nor cast off the yoke of the law, nor the love to the law of God. And therefore he saith...

Tyndale

Now, in all that long time from the adultery of Bathsheba until the prophet Nathan rebuked him, he had not lost his faith nor his love unto the laws of God, no more than a man loseth his wits while he is asleep.

More

Lo, because he was all this while asleep... therefore in all this while he lost neither faith nor love to the Law, no more than a man loseth his wits when he is asleep. Is not here a wise tale, trow ye? Except that Tyndale had either lost his wits or else were himself asleep while he wrote this... he could never for shame tell us this tale. What calleth he losing of faith or love? Nothing but such departing thereof as he never cometh to it again? If that be so... then Tyndale setteth our Savior Christ to school, and teacheth him to speak. For he saith, in the Gospel, that a man lost one of his hundred sheep, and left the remnant and sought the lost sheep, and found it.

And that the woman had lost her money, though by ransacking up her house and seeking, she found it at last again. Now, Tyndale is not so mad, I suppose, as to say that if a man let fall his ring

3–4 of likelihood: apparently 5 rout: snort // tale: account / assertion 6 except: unless 7–11: See 2 Samuel 11:2–25. 8 spy: catch sight of 9 devise: plot 9 sent for her (husband): have her (husband) sent for 10 in diverse: on different 11 still: uninterruptedly 12 needs: i.e., because he has to 13 willingly: volitionally 15 the love to: i.e., his love for the adultery: i.e., his defiling by adultery 16 unto: i.e., for 17 wise tale: sensible statement / brilliant assertion 18 the adultery: i.e., his defiling by adultery 19 thereof: therefrom // he: i.e., the person 23 lo: see 25 lo: see 26 except: i.e., were it not 27 while: when 28 tale: story 29 to it again: back to it 30 setteth our Savior Christ to school: i.e., attempts to school Christ our Savior / presumes to correct Christ our Savior 30–31 teacheth him to: i.e., teach him how to 32 remnant: rest 34 up: i.e., thoroughly 36 let fall: i.e., accidentally dropped
in the main sea, though he find it five weeks after, in a fish’s maw—that therefore he never lost it because he findeth it again. The common people say among that “nothing can be found till it be lost”—saving that of a thief they say in sport, “He can find a thing ere it be lost”; and so they praise him in his cunning, that he can do such a mastery as no true man can.

Now, if a thing may be lost indeed for a season, though it be after found again… how proveth Tyndale here that David, in all this long while between the first sight of Bathsheba and the rebuke of Nathan, never lost neither faith nor love?

He proveth it us in this wise by example: A man that lieth asleep loseth not his wits… and therefore, in like wise, David, lying in lechery, lost neither faith to God nor love to his law. Is not this well likened? Yes, by my sheath!… less like than Paul’s steeple to a dagger sheath, till he prove us thoroughly that David was that while in a very sleep indeed!

For God hath naturally provided sleep for man’s rest from labor, and for his refreshing again to labor. And the withdrawing of the use of our wits is there not forbidden by God’s ordinance, except we sleep when we should not. And so is neither adultery nor such manner of manslaughter… but things of God forbidden and of their nature abominable. And in the sleep, also, there is only a suspending of the use of the wits, and no contrary, willful doing against the wit… as there was a willful working of David against the faithful love of God’s law, in his “horrible deeds.”

For as for his faith, as far forth as concerneth only the nature of faith—that is to wit, of belief—I will well agree with Tyndale that he lost it not in all the while. And in Tyndale’s “faith” for one point—in that he juggleteth faith into hope—I will agree also that David had all that while enough thereof still, and peradventure a little too

Gal 5:6 much, too. But surely as for the lively faith that worketh, as Saint Paul saith, by love—that kind of faith had he lost for that while in which he willingly wrought evil… except Tyndale say that all his lechery and his manslaughter too was wrought by love, because all that ever he did was done for the love that he bore to Bathsheba. And if Tyndale
tell me so—then driveth he me to the hard wall. For then can I go no farther in that point, but as far as concerneth his “faith” I must needs give it over.

Howbeit, yet as touching his love unto the law of God… very fain would I hear how Tyndale can defend it that he lost not that love in no point of all that long while in which he willingly wrought against it, first his foul adultery, and after, mischievous manslaughter too. “This shall I” (saith Tyndale) “defend you well enough. For ye touched yourself right now the very point at which I would myself have you… when ye said that in the natural sleep the wit is only suspended, and the will therewith in like wise, so that a man doth not wittingly nor willingly any contrary act against the wit, as ye said that David did in his deeds. But now say I that David did none of these things wittingly nor willingly, but upon those occasions his wits were ravished away… and both his wit and his will suspended as it is in the natural sleep, so that he had forgotten himself, and for the while neither had wit nor will. For if his wit had shown him his fault… his will must needs have followed. But his wit was all that while, though not lost, yet carried away clean with the rage of the lust. And when the wit is away, the will is gone therewith. For it can nothing do but as the wit showeth it, as I have said before. And then was the wit asleep and the will followed the fumes that fell into the fantasy, and so no consenting to sin… but as the man was in manner all asleep, so were all his deeds in manner but a dream.”

Here is Tyndale’s proof, picked out unto the best that I can perceive of his words. But, now, this reason of his neither defendeth David against the loss of love, and yet utterly loseth him, by Tyndale’s doctrine, the most especial faith. For Tyndale, as ye shall hereafter read, calleth the faith of the elects a feeling faith. Now, if David were in a sleep all that while, and had thereby forgotten his faith and himself too… then though his faith had all the while the life, yet at the least it lost for the while the feeling. For so doth the man, ye wot well, in the sleep. But let this pass this once, as for this time… and see how he proveth that David was fallen to such a dead sleep that he had in all that while neither wit nor will… and therefore consented not

1 so: that // the hard wall: an impregnable impasse 2 his: i.e., David’s 3 give it over: concede it 4 howbeit: however // as touching: i.e., as for // unto: i.e., for 4–5 very… I: I would very much like to 5 it: i.e., that assertion 6 point: respect // of: i.e., in 6, 12, 14 willingly: volitionally 7 wrought: carried out // mischievous: criminal 8 manslaughter: indirect homicide 9 ye… now: i.e., you yourself hit upon just now 11, 13, etc. wit: intellect 11 wise: manner 12 so that: i.e., with the result that; and so 12, 14 wittingly: consciously 12 contrary: antagonistic / untoward 15 occasions: inducements / provocations // wit: mental faculties // ravished: forcibly swept 18 his fault: i.e., where he was going wrong 20 clean: completely // with: i.e., by 20 rage of the lust: heat of passion 22 as… showeth it: i.e., what… tells it to 23 fumes: noxious drifts 23 fell: i.e., came 24 fantasy: imagination 24–25, 25 in manner: in effect 26–27 picked… words: i.e., extracted and put together from his words so as to convey the best meaning I can see them as possibly having 27 reason: argument 27–28 neither… yet: i.e., not only does not defend David against the claim that he lost the virtue of charity, but also 31 were: was 32 though: even if 33 life: i.e., life it had before 34 wot: know 36 to: into
unto sin against the law of God. Proof layeth he none in this world, but only *saith* it was so. Now might he lie, by possibility, though his tale were likely. But yet am I content if his tale be likely—let him be believed. But, now, if his tale be very far unlikely, reason were he brought one witness with him at the least.

Now, then, when David first began to spy her, let that be chance, and occasion of one rising in his sleep… but when he liked her and longed for her, and stood still and looked on her, and kindled his heat himself, and set himself sore afire—was he all that while asleep? When he thought he would have her, when he sent his messenger for her, when he stood and talked with her, when he broke the matter to her, when he won her assent to the sin, when he fulfilled his foul fleshly lust, when he sent for her husband to color and cloak their offense, when he contrived to keep her for himself and kill her good husband his own faithful servant, when he devised and wrote the traitorous deadly letter, and delivered that innocent man his own death in his hand, to deliver over to him that should set him where he should be slain—did David in all this while, among all these evil thoughts, all these ungracious words, all these abominable deeds, never fall from the love of the law of God… but was all this while asleep, and never consented to sin, nor did none of all these things willingly? “No,” saith Tyndale. I say no more but it is likely yes. And therefore let Tyndale tell us whereby he proveth the contrary. “I prove it,” saith he, “by that he was an elected person that finally should be saved… and therefore, because of that feeling faith with which he was born of God, he could not consent unto sin.” Very well. Then if a reprobate had done the like upon the like occasion or greater… he had sinned deadly, for lack of “feeling faith,” only because he was not elected. And if he repented alike upon less occasion, yet he should not be forgiven, for lack of the “feeling faith” which was never given him, but ever kept from him, only because he was not elected.

If I ask Tyndale here how he knoweth, or why he believeth, that David was elected to salvation… what will he answer? He will not say, I am sure, because “the church” so teacheth him, lest I should ask him again which church. For then were he forced to grant

1 *layeth*: presents 2 *might he lie*: he could be lying // *by possibility*: i.e., this would be possible 3 *though*: even if 3, 4 *his tale*: i.e., what he is saying // *unlikely*: (im)plausible 4 *far*: i.e., highly 5 *were he brought*: i.e., would dictate that he bring 6 *spy*: lay eyes on 8 *liked*: took delight in 8 *longed for*: i.e., intensely wanted // *stood still and looked on*: i.e., kept standing there looking at 9 *kindled his heat*: stoked his passion // *sore*: extremely 10 *thought*: decided 12 *broke the matter*: broached the subject 13 *fulfilled*: acted on...lust // *fulfilled*: desire 14 *color*: camouflage // *cloak*: cover up // *compassed*: plotted 15 *contrived*: schemed 16 *traitorous*: back-stabbing 17 *deadly*: death-causing; fatal 18 *set*: position 19 *among*: in the midst of 20 *ungracious*: ungodly; wicked 21 *fall*: fall away 23 *willingly*: volitionally 23–24 *but it is likely*: i.e., than that probably the truth is yes 25 *that the fact that*: elected i.e., elect 26 *that finally should*: who in the end would 29, 31 *occasion*: inducement 29 *had*: would have 29 *deadly*: mortally 30 *only because*: i.e., due only to the fact that 30, 33 *elected*: i.e., chosen to be one of the elect 31 *should*: would 37 *again*: in response 37 *were he*: he would be
that he believeth the teaching of this common-known Catholic church of ours, since that his own unknown church can teach him nothing to be the better believed upon the credence of that church, not being known for the church. Now shall he not find, as far as I remember, any plain, evident scripture proving his final salvation. Then if Tyndale answer that he findeth in Scripture of his faith and his repentances, and nothing of his final damnation, and therefore he believeth of these likelihoods that he was elect to the final salvation, and shall come to heaven at the Day of Doom (for Tyndale’s sect believeth not that he shall come thither before), I will not here press upon him with the examples of such as he hath seen here live well, and believe well, after his own opinion, both while he believed well himself and since he believed wrong, of whose salvation yet he maketh not himself so sure as of the salvation of David; but holding myself for this time satisfied that he believe it so well upon good likelihoods, that he should not believe a man that would without good proof tell him the contrary… I shall no more but pray him to be so reasonable and so indifferent again toward us, as to give us leave in like wise to believe upon good likelihoods that David consented to sin, and not to believe him that without good proof would with his bare word make us ween the contrary, and boldly bear us in hand that while he wrought so much wickedness he was all the while asleep.

In which point, as I have before proved in another chapter by like matter, if he were so asleep, his very first falling into such a sleep was his own willful negligence… while he, beginning to be moved unto lewdness at the first sight of Bathsheba, stood still and fed his devilish delight in beholding her, and thereby willingly suffered the death of sin to enter into his heart by the glass windows of his eyes. Whereupon all that ever he did after, pursuing thereupon, all had he been in such rage that he neither wist what he did nor where he were, should have been imputed unto him… as he that sinfully drinketh himself drunk deadly sinneth, and shall die also, if he kill a man in that drunkenness.

Nor it excuseth not David nor no man else, that Tyndale saith, “There is no man so good but that there cometh a time upon him in which
he feeleth in himself no more faith or love unto God than a sick man, oftentimes, feeleth the taste of his meat.” Whether this happeneth unto the best men or not, God wot I cannot tell; I wot not what affections they feel… for I am none of them; nor, I fear me, Tyndale neither, as wise and expert as he maketh himself of their feeling. Would God we were both of the best, so the best were never the worse, nor waxen as evil as we, and we made their matches in that manner wise. But this dare I surely say: that whensoever the best is in such case… it excuseth not David from deadly sin. For then is the best very naught.

And finally, for conclusion of David’s deeds, whereas Tyndale saith he could not sin deadly because he was an elect… for which cause God kept him, through the “feeling faith,” from consenting to the “service” of sin, and from the “malicious casting off of the yoke of God’s commandments from his neck”—it appeareth very well that off his neck was it once, whether himself cast it off or Bathsheba took it off because he should not come yoked to bed. For well we wot it held him not within the hedge of God’s commandments but that he thrust his head through and broke a couple of them, and ran unyoked a good while. And it will, I ween, well appear also that he cast off the yoke himself; and then will all the doubt stand upon this only word “maliciously.” Which word how Tyndale taketh, that can I not tell… but except he take it for no malice because it was all for love. Else, if he agree that the contempt and despising of God’s law may be called malice, and a malicious casting off of the yoke of God’s law both from love and dread, as I ween it is expounded in God Almighty’s vocabulary: then dread I nothing but that it will well appear… against Tyndale, all the whole matter… both that David agreed and consented to sin and willfully cast off God’s yoke, and maliciously, too. This will well appear, I say, by plain and evident Scripture.

For after those horrible sins so committed by David, his deadly deeds so displeased God (as it is written in the twelfth chapter of the Second Book of Kings) that he sent Nathan the prophet unto him, which by the commandment of God, after that he had put unto him the parable.

1–2 oftimes… meat: See notes for 530/14–15. 3, 18 wot: know(s) 3 tell: i.e., tell you; say
3 affections: sentiments / sensations 4 none: not one // I fear me: I’m afraid // Tyndale: i.e., is Tyndale
4 wise: well-informed 5 of: i.e., out to be about // their feeling: how they feel / what they experience
5 would God: I wish to God 6 of: i.e., among // so: provided that // worse: less good (than they now are)
6 waxen: become 7 evil: bad // matches: equals // manner wise: kind of way
8 surely: assuredly / with certainty 9, 9 best: i.e., best man 9 case: a condition; a state 9 excuseth: exculpates
9 from: i.e., of 9, 12 deadly: mortal(ly) 10 naught: wicked 11 for… of: i.e., to finish our discussion of
12 service: serving 14, 26 casting: throwing 16 appeareth very well: is very clear to see; is very obvious
16 once: for a time // himself: he himself 17, 21, 30 cast: threw 17 off… should: i.e., off him so that he would
18 not: i.e., not so well 21 ween: think 21, 28 well appear: be clearly seen 22 doubt: uncertainty
22 stand upon: be about // this only: just this one 23 but except: except only if 24 agree: grant
25 contempt: ignoring as of no account; brushing aside // despising: disregarding / flouting 27, 28 dread: fear
27 ween: believe 28 vocabulary: dictionary // nothing: not at all 29 against: contra
29 all the whole matter: i.e., that whole entire thing he says 30 willfully: volitionally
31 well appear: be made quite evident // plain and evident: clear and conclusive
32 deadly: death-dealing / spiritually lethal 35 Kings: i.e., Samuel // which: who 36 commandment: command
539/36—540/2 that he had put unto… made: i.e., putting to… having
of the rich man that took away the poor man’s sheep, and thereby
made him give sentence, unawares, against himself… he said further
unto David, as in the person of Almighty God, in this manner wise as
followeth…

“Why hast thou, then, set my word at naught, and done evil in
my sight? Thou hast killed with sword Uriah the Hittite, and his
wife hast thou taken to thy wife, and him hast thou slain with the
sword of the sons of Ammon. And therefore the sword shall never
be taken away from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and
taken to thy wife the wife of Uriah the Hittite. And therefore thus
saith our Lord: Behold, I shall raise up evil against thee, even out
of thine own house… and I shall take away from thee thy wives
before thy face, and give them unto one that is highest unto thee, and he shall
lie with them in the sight of this sun. For thou hast committed this
deed privily… but I will accomplish this my word in the
sight of all Israel and this sun.”

Lo, good readers, here see ye very clearly that whereas Tyndale saith
that David in all those horrible deeds did yet no deadly sin,
because, he saith, he consented not to sin, nor did none of these
deeds willingly, nor cast not off the yoke of love toward the law of
God… God here saith that David did in those horrible deeds despise
both his law and himself too. And how did he then keep still his
love to the law of God, in the while in which he despised both
the law of God and God himself also? Or how saith Tyndale that
David consented not to the sin, when God himself, that best
knew his thought, laid his sins so sore to his charge that he
appointed an endless plague for the punishment thereof?—till by his
repentance and his humble confession, God, as he forgave the deadliness
of the sin, and translated it from mortal into venial, so
changed the punishment from endless into ending.

For—whereas the prophet had before his repentance and confession
said unto him by the bidding of God, “The plague shall abide in thy house forever, world without end”—forthwith after
his repentance and his confession made, he said unto him, “Our
Lord hath translated thy sin that was, from deadly to venial”;

that is to wit, the punishment from eternal to temporal. And
therefore the prophet said that yet the child that he begot upon her in that adultery should die, as it did after indeed. And yet was not David out of hope with other penance (which he had liefer sustain) to purge and redeem that punishment too... and therefore fasted and prayed to save the child, until the time that it was dead indeed.

And thus, good Christian readers, ye may clearly see that all Tyndale’s proper process of King David concerning the order of his election—that he was thereby preserved forever from all deadly sin—is clearly come to naught... and all his words reproved by the very plain words of Scripture. And yet by the same Scripture, for advantage, is there another of Tyndale’s heresies destroyed... by which he teacheth that after repentance, all is forthwith forgiven unto the elect—both sin and pain and all—so far forth that for the sin past, the party shall never after be punished nor suffer any pain, neither in this world, purgatory, nor anywhere else. The plain reproof whereof appeareth evidently—the deadly sin translated, and the temporal punishment reserved—by this open place of Scripture. By which is reproved Tyndale’s other heresy that we now go about... in which he teacheth us that David did none of his horrible deeds willingly, nor consented to sin, nor maliciously cast off the yoke of love toward the law of God, and therefore sinned not deadly. Wherein, as ye see, against Tyndale telling us this... very God himself telleth us the contrary... and that David sinned so deadly that he sinfully despised both God’s law and God himself therewith.

And now that Tyndale hath of King David told us his wise process of not sinning, such as ye see it proved... he proceedeth forth from David, and telleth us as wise a tale of Christ’s blessed apostles. Of whom thus he saith...

Tyndale

And in like manner the apostles of Christ at his Passion were astonished and amazed... and in such a storm of temptations, for the sudden change from so great glory into so vile and shameful death, that they had forgotten all the miracles and all the words which he had told them before—how that he should be betrayed, and delivered...
on the same manner unto death. Moreover, they never understood that saying of his death, because their hearts were always heavy and overladen with earthly thoughts. For though they saw him raise up others... yet who should raise him up when he were dead, they could not comprehend. Read what thou, reader, canst... and thou shalt find no temptation like unto that from the creation of the world, or so great as it by the hundredth part. So that the wonderful sudden change, and the terrible sight of his Passion, and of his most cruel and most vile death, and the loss of whom they so greatly loved that their hearts would fain have died with him, and the fear of their own death, and the impossibility that a man should rise again of his own power... so occupied their minds, and so astonished them and amazed them, that they could receive no comfort, either of the Scripture or of the miracles which they had seen Christ do, nor of the monitions and warning wherewith he had warned them before, neither of the women that brought them tidings that he was risen. The sword of temptations, with fear, sorrow, mourning, and weeping, had so deeply pierced their hearts, and the cruel sight had so encumbered their minds... that they could not believe until Christ himself came, death put off and overcome. Yea, and when they first saw him, they were astonished for wondering and joy together, that thoughts arose in their hearts—"Alas! Is this he, or doth some spirit mock us?" He was fain to let them feel him, and to eat with them, to strengthen their faiths.

More

Here have ye heard, good, devout Christian people, a piece of Tyndale’s devout, godly collation in which the man is not so far fallen into devotion but he is much further fallen from his wit... whereby he neither perceiveth the point that he should prove and, over that, seeth not that his sermon saith more against his matter than we that impugn his purpose!

For his purpose is to prove us that none elect can at any time sin deadly. And now forgetteh he that point, and telleth us that the apostles never lost their faith. Which if it were granted him—yet won he not his purpose. For they might keep still the faith in their heart, and yet sin deadly by the denying thereof with their mouth. For as holy Saint Paul saith, "In heart believe we for our justification..."

Rom 10:10
and with the mouth we confess it for our salvation.” Showing, by those words, that neither are we righteous by saying with our mouth that we do believe, but if we believe in our heart, nor shall be saved by the belief of our heart but if no fear can let us to confess it with our mouth. Whereto consent the words of our Savior

Mt 10:33 himself, where he saith, “Whoso deny me before men, I shall deny him too before my Father which is in heaven.” And thus, for the first point, Tyndale in his holy sermon is so deep in devotion that he forgetteth whereabout he goeth.

Now, for the second point, whereas I said no more but that they lost the sufficient faith—that is to say, the life of their faith—he goeth about, as I told you, to prove us that the apostles (such as were elect) never lost their faith at all, nor at any time fell therefrom. And this point handleth he so properly that ever he telleth us that they lost it not, and ever he proveth us that they lost it. And by the selfsame words by which he saith that they keep it always, still—by the selfsame, I say, always, still, he proveth that they kept it not still in deed, but were very far fallen therefrom.

For first, read me all those words of his again… and as gaily as they be couched, with “astonied” and “amazed,” and “stormy” temptations, “terrible” sights, with their hearts “pierced,” and their minds “encumbered,” with “sight” of his death and “fear” of their own, that ere they could believe his resurrection, he was “fain” to eat and drink with them and to “let them feel him”… is not all this tale excuses of their faith fallen from them, and no proof of the keeping? What was that in them but the lack and loss of the faith, that Tyndale telleth us—that they thought it impossible that he should rise again, because they thought he could never “of his own power”… and could not think or devise who should raise him else?

Now, where he saith that all this happed them through temptation—that will we well agree. But yet is that no more to say but like as David did adultery through temptation, and killed his good friend through temptation… and as Eve ate the forbidden fruit through temptation, and Adam ate it also through temptation… and Judas betrayed Christ also through temptation—so the apostles fell from their faith, and lost it, and all through

2 by: i.e., by reason of our  3, 4 but if: unless  3 shall: i.e., shall we
4 let us to confess: keep us from confessing  5 whereto consent: wherewith are in accord
6 whoso: whoever  6, 7 deny: disown(s)  8 which: who  9 devotion: piety
10 whereabout he goeth: what he’s trying to do / what his aim is  13 goeth about: attempts
13, 16 us: i.e., to us  14, 37 fell: i.e., fell away  15 properly: well; competently
18, 19 still: constantly  19 in deed: in reality  // fallen: i.e., fallen away
20 me: i.e., for me // words: assertions // gaily: showily
21 astonied: stunned; benumbed with astonishment // amazed: thrown into confusion / stupefied
23 encumbered: weighed down / overwhelmed // his: i.e., Jesus’s // ere: before
24 believe: believe in // fain: constrained  25 all this tale: this whole speech // of: for
26 faith fallen: i.e., faith’s having fallen away  28, 30 should: would  29 never: i.e., never do so
30 devise: imagine  31 happeed: happened to // agree: grant
33 but like as: than that just as // did: committed
temptation. Let Tyndale excuse every sin that cometh of temptation... and whose sin shall he leave unexcused, except peradventure the devil’s?

But the sin of men standeth in this: that they break the commandment of God in that they do not, as he biddeth them, strive and resist the temptation. Which till they cease to do, if they trust in God and call help of his grace... there can no temptation be so great that it can overcome them; as witnesseth our Lord by the mouth of Saint Paul—“God is faithful, which suffereth you not to be tempted above that ye may bear... but giveth with the temptation a way out, that ye may well wield it.”

But let Tyndale say for excuse of their sin what him list... which though the occasions and circumstances may diminish or aggrieve, and so may theirs be less grievous than the sins of some others... and the sin of some one of themselves also less than another of his own fellows—yet shall Tyndale never make it good but that when he saith they “could not believe”... if he say true, the lack of their belief was a grievous sin.

For whereas Tyndale would seem to say well for the apostles in that he saith they would “fain have died with” our Savior, saving for “the fear of their own death”: Christ had before forbidden them such fear of temporal death upon the pain of eternal death, when he said unto them, “Fear ye not them that kill the body... which, when they have killed the body, have nothing that they can do more. But I shall show you whom you shall fear. Fear you him which, when he hath killed the body, hath the power to cast the soul into the fire of hell.” And in another place he told them according to the same, “Whoso will save his soul in this world, shall lose it; and whoso shall lose his soul in this world, keepeth it still for the everlasting life.” And finally—to show them that all these words most properly pertained to the putting away of that fear of death by which folk for fear of death would forbear and refuse to die for him and his faith—he said the words which I before remembered:

1. cometh of: i.e., comes about via
2. peradventure: perhaps
3. standeth: inheres
4. biddeth them: enjoins them to
5. strive: do battle
6. call: i.e., invoke the
7. great: powerful; strong
8. of
9. 10
10. above that: beyond what
11. may: can
12. such: i.e., provides you conjointly with allowing
13. call: deal with
14. what: whatever
15. sin
16. occasions: provocations to it
17. others: other people
18. than: i.e., than that of
19. fellows: confreres; fellow apostles
20. make it good but: succeed in proving it otherwise than
21. fain: gladly
22. saving: were it not
23. say: speak
24. what: i.e., what he says is
25. say: speak
26. according to: in accord with
27. show: tell
28. accordingly:
29. according to:
30. to: i.e., keep
31. loss: i.e., lose the dwelling of
32. save: i.e., keep
33. show: make it known to
34. properly: literally / particularly
35. by: on account of
36. remembered: called to mind
Mt 10:33 "Whoso deny me before men, I shall deny him also before my Father which is in heaven."

And therefore Tyndale in vain goeth about to excuse the sin of Christ's apostles which they rather will have known, and the great mercy of God therewith… and therefore they write it themselves, and the rebukes therewith that our Savior gave them therefor… to the end that we should both beware of falling in the like and yet, if it in our own default misfortune us to fall, not despair therefore, but repent and arise with God's help, as they did… and then shall he forgive us as he forgave them. And this would rather Christ's blessed apostles—that Tyndale should tell us truth—than under pretext of their excuse teach us false heresies… and make us ween that upon temptation to forsake our Savior for fear of temporal death… were no deadly sin. Whereof our Savior himself, as ye see, teacheth us plain the contrary… and will not admit for us, I fear me, the excuse of Tyndale for the apostles, if we come and say, "By my faith, good Lord, I was afraid and so forgot all that ever thou taughtest me."

Howbeit, that they sin not in losing of their faith, I let no man to believe Tyndale, whensoever he prove himself more credible than Christ. But here ye see that as I told you—that they lost their faith in deed—Tyndale proveth us, after his manner, in his before-rehearsed words wherein he saith nay.

And yet is the man of so good remembrance, and so good heed taketh whereabout he goeth, that forthwith, in his next words after, he saith very plainly, more and more, that they could not believe the Resurrection… and excuseth them thus: that for all that, they hated him not in their heart. Lo, thus he saith…

Tyndale

Howbeit, there was none of them that was fallen in his heart from Christ.

More

Who can more plainly say that they were fallen from the faith, and lacked the belief, than Tyndale saith here? For though he saith that none of them was in his heart fallen from Christ… yet he

1 whoso: whoever // deny: disown(s) 2 which: who 4 goeth about: attempts 5 rather will have known: i.e., instead want known as such 7 therefore: for it 8 in: into 8–9 if. . . us: i.e., if through our own fault that does unfortunately happen to us 9 therefore: because of it 12 truth: i.e., the truth 12–13 pretext of their excuse: the pretense of exonerating them 13 false: untrue / [a polite-language equivalent of] damn // ween: think 14 forsake: renounce 14–15 were no deadly sin: would not be a mortal sin 16 plain the contrary: the exact opposite 16 admit: accept as valid // I fear me: I'm afraid 17 of Tyndale: i.e., Tyndale makes 18 afeard: afraid 19, 30 howbeit: however 19 sin not in: i.e., do not sin in their 19–20 let no man to believe: do not object to anyone's believing 21 as: i.e., what 22 lost their faith in deed: did in fact lose their faith // us: i.e., to us // after his manner: as is typical of him 23 before-rehearsed: above-quoted 24 yet is the man: also the man is 25 whereabout he goeth: of where he is going 27 the: i.e., in the 30, 33, 35 from: away from
The substantial article of Christ's faith saith they “could not believe” the substantial article of the faith of Christ: that is to wit, the belief of his resurrection… without the belief whereof all the remnant would not then serve them to salvation.

And that they believed not that article, Tyndale here saith expressly. For he saith that though they ran to the sepulchre, and would fain have believed that he was risen… yet they could not believe it; the wound of their temptation was so great that they could not believe it at the preaching of a woman, without any other miracle. Then ask I no more but this tale of Tyndale. For if they could not believe, then did they not believe; and so lacked they then the belief. For as for that they came thereto again, and that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and the women, came afterward to strength and boldness, and that his two disciples toward Emmaus burned in their breasts to hear speak of him—all this maketh to Tyndale’s purpose in this point not the value of a point’s end. For we speak of his apostles, in the time in which himself saith here they believed not nor could believe it. At that time say I that since they then believed not, as they did not if they could not, they then had for that while the lack of the faith.

And also, to what purpose telleth Tyndale us that they could not believe at the bare preaching of the woman? As though they were nothing to blame for that, because they were but women… when the apostles themselves knew these women for such as they were worthy more credence, some one of them, than some many men!

And for to excuse the apostles in the lack of belief because the messengers were but women—Tyndale doth therein no more but lay lack and oversight in our Savior, that in a thing that he would have believed, sent out such women on his message. But Tyndale wotteth well, if he believe the Gospel, that no more they did when they saw the miracle of himself coming in before them—the doors being shut—and speaking unto them… but were so far from the belief of his resurrection, at the first, that they had went that he had been some spirit, till he not only preached to them but also reasoned with them thereupon.

1 substantial: cornerstone 2 faith of Christ: Christian faith 4 remnant: rest 4–5 serve . . . salvation: i.e., do anything toward their getting to heaven 8 fain have believed: have loved to believe 9 wound of their temptation: i.e., injury caused them by all that temptation they underwent 10, 24 preaching of: proclaiming of it by 10 any: some 11 ask . . . Tyndale: i.e., need I (for my refuting of him) nothing more than this assertion of Tyndale’s for that: for the fact that 17 toward: making their way to him: when hearing him spoken of 18 maketh . . . in: has for the supporting of Tyndale’s argument on 19 point’s end: i.e., period; dot 24 believe: i.e., believe in the Resurrection 24 bare: mere // the woman: i.e., a woman 25 nothing: not at all 26 as . . . worthy: i.e., as were deserving of 27 some one: any one 28 to . . . in the . . . because: i.e., for him to try to . . . for their . . . on the grounds that 29–31 doth . . . believed: i.e., accomplishes therein nothing more than to impute a shortcoming and an oversight to our Savior, who concerning something that he wanted believed he message: mission 32 wotteth: knows 33 they did: i.e., did the apostles believe that Jesus had risen 34 before: i.e., right in front of 36 the belief of: believing in 36–37 had . . . spirit: thought he was some ghost 37 preached: i.e., proclaimed it
Jn 24:24–29

Nor yet Saint Thomas, which, as Tyndale saith, could not believe till he saw Christ, neither did believe the woman nor all his own fellows, nor our Savior himself upon the sight neither, till he felt him fully and put his finger in his side. And this he did of stubborn standing in his misbelief… in that after his belief lacking, he went not about to seek the truth, and endeavor himself to believe them that told him the truth… but, as it seemeth by the Gospel, obstinately stood in his distrust, and said till he did… that he thought, of likelihood, he never should—that is to wit, till he felt him and put his finger into his wounds—he would never believe it.

And I say plainly: Whosoever, being informed of any article of the faith which God bindeth us to believe, believeth it not—the cause why he believeth not is not because he cannot, but because he will not. For if he would do the thing which Tyndale taketh for folly—that is to wit, not resist, but endeavor himself to submit his reason unto faith, with asking help of God for the furtherance of his imperfection—he thus doing his part, God would, I say, not fail on his part again, but would effectually work with him, to perfect in him the faith in which he preventeth him by grace… which prevention was when he gave him the grace and occasion to be first told of the matter.

But ever cometh Tyndale by degrees… and ever he seeth himself likely to be driven from step to step. And therefore where he said that the elect cannot sin deadly… first he allegeth for the cause thereof that he sinneth never but “upon great occasions.” And seeing that a man may thereto say, “What then?” he goeth to another step, and saith that he never “consenteth” to sin. And then seeing that step will not be defended… he goeth to another, and saith he consenteth not to sin to “serve” it. And perceiving that he cannot stand sure there… he steppeth down to the next, and saith that he “casteth not off from his neck the yoke of love toward the law of God.” And yet perceiving that that step will not hold him neither… he cometh at last unto another step, and...
saith he casteth it not off “maliciously”—trusting, because we cannot look into the man’s breast to see whether he bore any malice therein, we should never be able to convict him of that word, when he put once thereto “maliciously.” And yet from that step have I driven him… and therein have I beguiled his hope, as ye before have heard, in the sins of King David, by the words of God spoken by the mouth of Nathan the prophet.

Now, as he played there… so playeth he by the apostles here. For first he saith they lost never the faith, because they were “amazed,” and then “astonied,” and then afeard, and then because they could not perceive the thing for possible. And yet at last he cometh so near to the granting that they lacked it… that by plain words at length he saith the same thing himself… affirming that they believed not, nor could not believe. And yet would he now make us ween that though they believed not, yet had they no lack of the faith… because in the lack of their belief they had no malice. And that thing he proveth thus…

Tyndale
There was none of them that ever railed on him, and came so far forth to say, “He was a deceiver, and wrought with the devil’s craft all this while, and see whereunto he is come in the end! We defy him, … false wretch that he was, and his false doctrine also!” And thereunto must they have come at the last, when fear, sorrow, and wondering had been past, if they had not been prevented and helped in the mean season.

More
Lo, good Christian readers, here hath Tyndale taught us that whoso believe not the resurrection of Christ… yet all the while he raileth not upon him, and calleth him “wretch,” and defieth him, he is safe enough. For all that while though he believe not, yet lacketh he not his belief. And then if he be an elect… he shall be prevented of God, and helped before, ere ever he fall into such blasphemy. But and if he be a reprobate… then when he cometh once into the case that the apostles were in, as Tyndale saith, he shall, for lack of such prevention and help, fall into such railing and blasphemy; and then is he remediless,
he saith. And therefore saith he (both here and in divers places) that the seed of God preventeth always and keepeth and preserveth the elects from falling into that case.

Here is a goodly tale, be ye sure. But, now, whereby shall Tyndale of this doctrine make us sure?

The Gospel, to begin with for one piece, maketh us sure of the contrary.

For therein we find that the traitor Judas, which was, I ween, as far from the belief of the Resurrection as ever was Saint Thomas of India… came never, yet, unto such railing and blaspheming of Christ… as Tyndale saith that the apostles, because they believed not, had they not been by grace prevented must needs have come unto.

For when he went about to make his bargain, and betray him and sell him… we find not that he called him “false wretch,” nor no such villainous word. And after, we find that when he repented and brought again the money, he was far from railing upon him, and said, “I have offended God in betraying the righteous blood.” And surely, though he had, at the selling, railed as much upon him toward his Passion as Tyndale in his books now raileth and jesteth upon him in the Blessed Sacrament after his resurrection… yet dare I be bold upon his mercy to say that if that old Judas in his repentance had, with the looking upon his own sin, looked also upon the great mercy of God—and also that if Tyndale now, this new Judas, will repent his railing against Christ’s Blessed Body, the Sacrament of the Altar, and ask our Lord mercy therefor—both the one should have had, and the other shall have, remission and forgiveness of that deadly sin with change of hell into purgatory… into which the one in vain now fain would, and the other except he amend hereafter shall as much in vain wish to, come.

Now Tyndale will peradventure stick upon some subtle conjecture of his own and stiffly bear us in hand that though it be not written in the Gospel, yet did Judas, when he sold Christ, speak of him some blasphemous words, and had opprobrious language against him—and that the blasphemy thereof was the very cause

1 divers: several (other)  
2 case: plight  
3 goodly tale: good-sounding story  
4 be ye sure: to be sure  
5 piece: i.e., part of the answer  
6 which: who  
7 suppose  
8 the belief of: i.e., believing in  
9 of India: See note for 533/29.  
10 unto: i.e., to do  
11 railing (upon): bad-mouthing; vilifying  
12 about: from place to place  
13 bargain: deal  
14 false: deceitful / phony / despicable  
15 vil-aimous name: scurrilous  
16 again: back  
17 though: even if  
18 railed… toward: i.e., as much vilified him shortly before  
19 raileth… upon: vilifies and ridicules  
20 be bold upon: i.e., have the confidence in  
21 rai-eth… upon: vilifies and ridicules  
22 have the confidence in  
23 old: former  
24 upon: at  
25 ask: ask of  
26 should have had: would have gotten  
27 therefor: for that  
28 shall have: will get  
29 fain: gladly  
30 except: unless  
31 amend: i.e., mends his ways  
32 peradventure: perhaps  
33 stick: persist; hold out  
34 upon: on the basis of  
35 subtle: artfully contrived  
36 stifly: obdurately; adamantly  
37 who:  
38 in hand: assert to us  
39 speak… words: say about him some blasphemous things  
40 against: i.e., in speaking of  
41 very: real reason
why that he could never after, by any repentance, be forgiven his
sin and received again to grace.

If Tyndale thus tell us, and we will for this once forget to put him in mind of his own
rule, that we need not believe him further than he findeth in plain
and evident Scripture. But we will tell him then that there is
as great likelihood, and some deal more, too, that Saint Paul when

Acts 7:54–60; 9:1–2, 15 after the resurrection of Christ, and the
stoning of Saint Stephen, persecuted and

punished so cruelly the Christian people… did rail and blaspheme
the name of Christ, and his doctrine, and miracles, and all that
he taught and did. And yet, for all this, was he received after to
grace and forgiveness… and was after elected; yea, and for the foresight
of his repentance, change, and penance, was a “chosen vessel”

before God before the world was made; and had once the right
belief, of likelihood, as much as he was bound to… before the Gospel
preached, and then stood in state of grace; and yet was suffered
through his own fault to fall therefrom, by refusing the Gospel of
Christ, and after fell in hating and persecuting of his name and
doctrine… and not, as it seemeth, without blaspheming of his name,
his living, his death, his doctrine, and his resurrection, and all that
ever he did; and yet by repentance and penance received to
faith and to forgiveness again. And therefore needeth not Tyndale
despair but that, as evil as he is, he may yet repent and be
forgiven if he will.

But by this one example, of Saint Paul, are in the meanwhile
utterly destroyed not only Tyndale’s words last above-rehearsed…
but over that, all this his whole chapter of the order of our election…
whereof the whole purpose is, in effect, that God keepeth them ever from
all deadly sin.

And thus, good readers, ye see how well he defendeth the apostles’
faith, which he saith they never lost at no time… and yet confesseth
himself that at one time they neither believed nor could
believe. And yet while they believed not, they lost not their belief,
because they railed not; and because that after they came again

1 why that: why // by: i.e., by way of any amount of
2 received again to: i.e., brought back into the state of
3 thus tell us: tells us this // ween: think / hope // way: route // wind out: extricate himself
4 forget . . . mind: i.e., drop our practice of reminding him
5 further than he: i.e., about anything beyond what he
6–6 plain and evident: clear and conclusive
7 persecuted: i.e., he persecuted
8 rail: revile / bad-mouth
9 for: despite
10 received . . . forgiveness: i.e., afterward admitted to the state of grace and forgiveness
11 after elected: i.e., after all that nevertheless one of the elect // for the foresight: i.e., by reason of God’s foreseeing
12 change: turnaround; conversion
13 before: in the eyes of
14 he was bound to: i.e., it was incumbent on him to have
15 preached: was proclaimed // stood in: i.e., was in the
16 suffered: allowed
17 refusing: i.e., refusing to accept / refusing to believe in
18 after: later // in: into
19 living: way of living // doctrine: teachings
20 by: by way of // received: i.e., he was admitted
21 despair but that: give up hope that // evil: bad
22 25 will: is willing to / wants to
23 destroyed: brought to naught // above-rehearsed: above-quoted
24 all . . . election: i.e., this whole entire chapter of his on the way our electedness works
25 purpose: gist; import
26 them: i.e., the elect
27 deadly: mortal
28 defendeth: speaks for
29 confesseth: professes
30 yet while: i.e., that even when
31 railed not: did no reviling
32 because . . . again: because afterward they came back
to belief, therefore they lacked it not at any time before they came

to it again.

Is not here, good readers, a wise and well-told tale? It is enough for

me that howsoever Tyndale excuse their mistrust and unbelief…

Mk 16:14–17 I see themselves write that our Savior himself

Jn 20:29 accused it, and rebuked them sore of

their incredulity and hard heart, for that they had not believed

them, that they had seen him rise. And now that Tyndale hath

so wisely defended them all… he cometh particularly to Saint Peter,

and saith…

Tyndale

Yea, and Peter, as soon as he had denied Christ… came to himself

immediately, and went out and wept bitterly for sorrow. And thus

we see that Peter’s faith failed not, though it were oppressed for a time.

More

Tyndale ever laboreth to lead us a mile from the matter. For well ye

wot the Church teacheth not, nor no man was there ever anywhere

so mad to say, that the chosen and elects do die in deadly sin;

but that they sometimes do deadly sins—that is to wit, such

sins as if they died in them without repentance of them, they

should be damned for them.

Against this doctrine of the Catholic Church… taketh Tyndale

in hand to prove us—as well by divers other titles of this book,

and by his Exposition upon the First Epistle of Saint John, as by

all the process of this his present chapter, of the order of their

election—that the elects never do no deadly sins. That is, ye wot

well, as much to say as that they do no such sins… which, done in

such manner as they do them, be of their nature deadly; that is to

say, such as if the person that doth them die before he repent them,

he should be damned for them.

Now, good Christian readers, the point considered that is in debate

between us… ye perceive very well that either must Tyndale take

and understand “deadly sin” for some other thing and in some

other manner than all other men do, and otherwise than it is taken

2 to it again: back to it 3, 9 wise(ly): brilliant(ly) 3 tale: story 4 mistrust: skepticism
6 accused it: found fault with it / blamed them for it // sore of: strongly for 7 hard heart: i.e., hardness of heart
7 for . . . not: for their not having 8 them: i.e., those women and/or fellow apostles
8 rise: risen / assume a standing position 12 came to himself: recovered his mental faculties
14 failed not: was not lost; did not die // though it were: even if it was  // oppressed: overpowered / suppressed
16 laboreth: strives // from the matter: away from the point at issue 17, 26 wot: know (that)
18 so mad to: so insane as to 18, 19, etc. deadly: mortal 19, 26, 27, 28, 29 do(th): i.e., commit(s)
19 to wit: i.e., to say 21, 30 should: would 23 us: i.e., to us // divers: several // titles: i.e., sections
24 exposition: commentary 25 all the: the whole // process: progression / line of reasoning
25 this his present chapter: this present chapter of his
25–26 of the order of their election: i.e., on the modus operandi of their election / on how their electedness works
27 done: committed 29 die before he repent: i.e., were to die without having repented of 31 debate: contention
and understood by the Catholic Church of Christ, against which he disputeth; which manner of his disputation—if he otherwise took it than his adversaries do—were on his part too shamefull and foolish, as every man well seeth that any learning hath… for then disputed he but upon the word and not upon the matter, which he will not, I ween, for very shame be so mad to do; or else, if he take, I say, this word “deadly sin” as indeed he must needs do, then do you, good readers, I doubt not, very well and clearly see that Tyndale’s tale of Saint Peter’s repentance and sorrow after his denying of Christ, nothing proveth Tyndale’s purpose… which is and must be that Saint Peter before his repentance sinned not deadly, at the time when he forswore Christ.

For Tyndale, if he will prove that he did therein no deadly sin at the time—it is not enough for him to tell us that he repented after, and was by repentance restored to the state of salvation; but he must prove us that his forswearing of our Savior yet should not have letted him from salvation although he had forthwith upon that deed deceased, without repentance, or any remembrance after, of that sin.

This should he prove us, ye wot well; and this, ye see well, he dissembleth. And to prove that Saint Peter sinned not deadly before… he telleth us that he repented after. Which is the very thing whereby it is declared in Holy Scripture that his sin was grievous. For what was the thing he so repented… but the sin of his denying? And therefore the more sorrowfully that he repented it, the more bitterly that he bewept and bewailed it, the more pain that he took for it… the more himself showeth us the sore offense and heinous deadliness thereof.

And now cometh Tyndale on the other side, and by the selfsame sorrow would make men ween it was no deadly sin… by which it specially doth appear the contrary.

And then, thus handling the matter, he is not ashamed to tell us in conclusion that we now see, by this wise reason, that Saint Peter’s faith “failed not.” Whereof he hath, as ye see, proved us nothing… but hath himself told us by plain, express words the contrary, when he told us that the apostles could not, for all the women’s
words, believe that Christ was risen… nor well, in a good while after, at the sight of our Savior himself.

Howbeit, all this, he saith, was no failing of Peter’s faith, but an “oppressing for the while”… as though I or any man else had any time said that Peter’s faith failed for ever.

I say that it failed for the while, not for ever. And yet said I no further in my Dialogue thereof but that his lively faith failed for the while, because it wrought not by love; but if his belief stood still… it was a bare belief, barren of the fruit of charity… with which it wrought not in the heart, when it brought not forth the confession of Christ by the mouth.

But marry, Tyndale hath said yet more—and hath taken away from him boldly both quick faith and dead faith, and all as for the while.

In which point when Tyndale hath all done… he can never while he liveth avoid it but that in saying that there was a time in which the apostles could not believe that Christ was arisen again, he is agreed with us as for the matter. For in those words he confesseth that in that time their faith was fallen from them. But he striveth still with us upon the word, and will in no wise have that fall called failing, but “amazing” and “astonying” upon “great occasions” and with the great burden “oppressing.”

Well, then, since we be meetly well agreed together, Tyndale and I, in the matter… we will for this once no longer debate about a word, and still dispute all day whether falling may be called failing; but I am content to give it over, and let Tyndale have his will and abide thereby still… that though Saint Peter did fall, and his faith too, yet shall not Tyndale be bound to call that falling “falling”… but “amazing,” if he list, or “astonying,” upon “great occasions” and by sore burden “oppressing.”

And in like wise am I content that if upon great occasion of a long, weary way with a deep mire and a great block in the bottom, Tyndale’s horse happen under him first to snapper and stumble, and after that faint and fall down in the mire and tumble, and his master and he there lie together and jumble till some good fellow help them up and bring them to an inn, where they tarry, together, till the horse be with meat and rest better grown in heart—let Tyndale for me, when he rideth again, call his fall no falling nor no falling, neither. But yet shall he never let other men to call it as it is.

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4, 22, 30 oppressing: (being) overpowered/suppressed 7 lively: living; active 8 wrought not: was not activated / was not put into operation 10 but: i.e., that // stood still: continued to exist / stayed intact 12 marrying: indeed 13 him: i.e., Peter // quick: live; operative // dead: lifeless 16 while: as long as // avoid it but: get around the fact 18, 24 matter: point at issue 20 striveth: quarrels 20 upon: about // in no wise: by no means 21, 29 amazing . . . astonying: i.e., being stupefied . . . benumbed 23 feely: fairly 24 in: regarding // debate: argue 25 still dispute: keep debating 26 content: willing 26 will: i.e., way 27 abide thereby still: keep standing firm by this 28 bound: obliged 29 list: likes 30 sore: terrible 31 in . . . content: likewise it is fine with me 32 weary way: i.e., tiring travel on a pathway 32, 34 mire: (area of) slimy mud 32 great: big 33 snapper: trip 34 faint: lose heart 35 jumble: flounder wildly 36 tarry: stay 37 meat: food // better grown in heart: gotten better in spirit 38 for me: for all I care 39 let . . . is: i.e., keep other people from calling it what it is
Now, Tyndale yet, after his foul fall, dissembling his overthrow as though no man saw it... royally triumpheth and boassth in this matter, that he hath in his chapter of the order of election so well and wisely acquitted himself so like a pretty man. For joy and glory whereof, he finisheth his chapter with a pleasant proper taunt, wherein he tauneth me...

Tyndale

[Therefore] we need to seek no glosses for the text that Christ said to Peter how that his faith should not fail. “Yes,” saith Master More, “it failed in himself, but was reserved in our Lady.” But let us see the text and their gloss together. Christ saith (Luke 22), “Simon, Simon, Satan seeketh you to sift you, as men sift wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith shall not fail. Wherefore when thou art come unto thyself again, strengthen thy brethren.” Now put this wise gloss thereto, and see how they agree together: “Simon, Satan seeketh to sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that my mother’s faith shall not fail. Wherefore when thou art come to thyself again, according as my prayer hath obtained for thee that my mother’s faith shall not fail, strengthen thy brethren.” How say ye? Is not this a proper text and well framed together? Do ye not think that there is as much wit in the head of mad Collins as in the brains of such expositors?

More

Tyndale here, good reader, feeling his matter very faint and feeble, and that by reason, Scripture, or other good authority he neither can impugn his adversary nor defend himself... would very fain walk away thus, without any piece of his purpose proved, and make men ween all were won with his merry scoff. Howbeit, if Tyndale had here rehearsed you my very words of my Dialogue, as I am in such cases wont to rehearse his... it would (and that he saw well!) have made his quick, merry scoff wax very dull and more than half dead... as ye shall well perceive, I trust, when I come to that place in the replying to his several answers made unto the chapters of my said work. Whereunto I shall reserve the substance of mine answer to this wise cavillation of his against mine exposition, and better men’s too than
mine, of those words of our Savior spoken unto Saint Peter, “I
\[LK 22:31–32\] have prayed for thee, that thy faith shall
not fail.”

But whereas he can in no wise bear the common opinion of good
Christian people that the faith abode at any time only in our
Lady… and therefore mocketh, and maketh a gay game, that Saint
Peter’s faith should be preserved in our Lady, and that her faith
should be his faith: I ween it will be no very great, subtle thing
to perceive that the faith which Saint Peter confessed may both
be his own, in that he confessed it, and yet our Lady’s too, in that she
believed it… and the thing also believed is all one both in him and
in her… saving that it is hers in that she believeth it, and his in that
he believeth it. And yet if he lost the belief thereof, it may be called
still “his,” understanding by that speaking that he first confessed
it. And therefore, in good faith, I cannot well see wherefore we
may not say “Saint Peter’s faith was in our Lady” as well as we may
say “Wycliffe’s heresies are in Tyndale.”

And therefore, whereas for the salting and seasoning of his unsavory
scoff, he changeth and misrehearseth my words, and the very
words of Christ’s Gospel, too… and hath a pleasure to play between
our Lady and Saint Peter, and to toss the faith like a tennis ball
from the one to the other, with fond words of his own foolish
framing, nothing near to the matter when the place in my Dialogue
shall be, as it shall once be, by God’s grace, surely seen and examined—

I trust to make you then see that all his proper sporting wherein he
playeth his pageant between Saint Peter and our Lady may, for any
wit it hath, serve him for a pastime if he sat sadly by frantic
Collins and picked rushes in Bedlam. And happy were Tyndale
if he were as well recovered of his frenzies as I trust in God Collins
is, at this day, of his.

But yet reserving, as I say, the farther answer to mine other place,
to which this matter much more appertaineth—yet since Tyndale
saith here himself that the cause why no such gloss needeth to
those words of our Savior is because that Saint Peter’s faith
never failed in his own person… he confesseth thereby that if it
ever at any time failed in his person, then at the leastwise some
gloss there needeth. And then dare I be bold to say that if there any

1 of our: by our  3 fail: die / be lost  4 in no wise: by no means // bear: share / tolerate
5 abode: remained // at any: i.e., at one / for some  6 a gay game: an object of high-spirited ridicule
6–7, 7–8 that . . . faith should be: (the idea) of . . . faith’s having been  8 ween: think // great: extraordinary
8 subtle: abstruse  9, 10, 14 confessed: professed  9, 16 may (not): can(not)  10 yet: also
11 and the thing also: i.e., and also inasmuch as the thing // all one: entirely the same  13 yet: even
13 may: i.e., could rightly  14 speaking: i.e., manner of speaking // first: at first
15 in good faith: in all honesty // wherefore: why  16 well: rightly  19 misrehearseth: misquotes
20 hath a pleasure: i.e., takes a notion / decides for his own pleasure  22 fond words: silly statements
23 framing: contriving // nothing near to the matter: i.e., nowhere close to being on target // place: passage
24 once: at some time // surely: accurately  25 proper sporting: ad hominem sporting / fine game-playing
26 playeth his pageant between: i.e., pulls his fast one between; uses as his pawns // may: could
27 wit it hath: sense it makes // sadly: somberly; humorlessly // frantic: crazy
28 happy were Tyndale: fortunate would Tyndale be  29, 30 of: from  29 frenzies: mental derangements
31 as I say: See 554/29—555/3.  33 cause: reason  33, 37 needeth (to): i.e., is needed (for)
34 because that: i.e., because  35, 36 failed: died; was lost  35 confesseth: admits
37 be bold: venture  555/37—556/1 there any need: i.e., some gloss is needed
38
need... the gloss, then, that he mocketh, let him rehearse it right, is such as he will not this five years find a better.

But leaving that gloss, as I say, till I come to my Dialogue—yet to see in the meanwhile whether any gloss needed or none, since Tyndale agreeeth that there needed if the faith at any time failed in Saint Peter... I shall not let for his pleasure once again to search whether the faith at any time failed in Saint Peter or no.

And to the intent that we may deal well and plainly together... let him and me first agree together what the thing is whereupon we dispute. For he useth often, when he is convicted, to say that he took this word or that word otherwise than we take him therein.

Let us therefore first, because we speak of faith, hear him declare what himself calleth “faith.”

To this, after that he saw himself shamefully confuted concerning his heresy of “faith alone sufficient for salvation,” he saith that he calleth not a dead faith any “faith”... but he meaneth always by “faith” a very Christian faith, that hath the love therewith, by reason whereof it cannot but work well.

Now shall ye see how courteously that I shall handle Tyndale. For albeit ye see well that I might by many means and many plain authorities, as well of Saint James as Saint Paul, and the very Gospel too, convict him in that point, as I have often done already—yet shall I for his pleasure let all that pass for this time, and take “faith” as he saith he taketh it himself.

But then ask I Tyndale this time, whether that in the time in which Peter forsook and forswore Christ, he did believe with such a belief that then wrought well, with love. If he say yea... then since the work that he then wrought was the forsaking and forswearing of Christ, it must needs follow that he saith that the forsaking and forswearing of Christ was a good work. And then will it thereupon follow that since Saint Peter wept sorrowfully therefor, he was very sorry and sore repented him that he had well wrought with love, and done a good work. So that I see no remedy but that Tyndale must needs, be he never so loath, confess and grant us that Saint Peter in that time did not believe with love that wrought well.

Now thinketh me, then, that between Tyndale and me there lacketh

1 rehearse: quote 2 this: i.e., in the next 3 leaving... till: i.e., leaving discussion of... for till 4 any... none: some gloss or none is needed 5 there: i.e., one would be 6 5 failed: died; ceased to exist 6 let: forbear // search: investigate 7 deal... together: contend with one another very straightforwardly/directly 8 agree together: come to an agreement with one another as to... 9 we dispute: we’re arguing 10 useth: is wont 11 him: i.e., him as meaning it 12 speak: i.e., are speaking 13 declare: clarify 14 after that he saw: i.e., after and because of seeing 15 16 dead: lifeless; inoperative 17 very: i.e., really 18 but work well: fail to produce good works 19 that... handle: I shall treat 20 might: could // plain: clear / univocal 21 authorities: proof texts // of: from 22-23 convict him in: prove him wrong on 24-25 for... for: i.e., humor him and let all that pass, for 27 this: i.e., at this 28 forsook: parted ways with / repudiated / deserted // forswore: perjuriously disavowed 29, 37-38 wrought well: operated well / produced a good work 33 therefor: i.e., for having done it 34 sore repented him: strenuously repented / felt strong regret // wrought: acted 35 remedy: help for it; alternative 36 never so loath: i.e., no matter how averse to doing this 39 thinketh me: it seems to me // lacketh: is lacking
now but one thing… and that is, what we call “failing.” For the better perceiving whereof, I will ask Tyndale this…

If Saint Peter had held on still in that forsaking and that perjury, still all his life, and so finally died therein, and had yet, for all that, all the while believed in his heart all the articles of the true faith, and the contrary of all that he said, and not only railed nothing, all that while, against Christ, but also loved him, too, saving not so well but that he would rather forswear that ever he saw him than to suffer pain and sorrow for him… I ask, I say, of Tyndale, if Saint Peter had continued his life, and died, in this state, had not then at no time in his life his faith that Tyndale calleth faith—that is to say, his belief with well-working love—failed him? If he say no… then will it follow, upon Tyndale’s word, that there may be many faith-ful folk with a well-working love, eternally damned in hell… except it be false that our Savior

   *Lk 12:9* saith: “He that denieth me before the

   *Mk 8:35* world, I will deny him before the

   angels of God”; and “He that will save his life in this world shall lose it.”

The most part, I suppose, that of the Christian people shall be damned… the cause of their damnation shall be that whereas they believe right and love God also, so far forth as he will let them live as they list and make merry, and bind them to nothing that they have no lust to do… love him not yet so sufficiently as for the love that they bear him, they will rather forbear the pleasures of their life, and also rather die, than deadly to displease him by the doing of any such thing as he will rather that they shall die than do it.

Now see I, therefore, no remedy but that Tyndale must needs agree that if Saint Peter had in such state lived and died… his faith well working by love had failed him.

Then since it had, then, in some time at the leastwise, failed him… let us divide that time of that state of his from his first denying and forswearing unto the very minute of his dying, supposing to continue still, and die, too, in the same state… into five equal parts, if it please him; and then have we five times, all of one fashion; to which five times Tyndale, if it please him, may give names to, and call them *A, B, C, D, E*.
Now say I, then, since Tyndale must needs agree that in some of these five times Peter’s faith failed… I ask in which of them?

Whereunto, since they be all five of one fashion concerning his faith, he must needs grant that in all five it failed him.

Let us now, then, somewhat change our case, from that that might have been into that that was indeed. And after that Peter’s faith had failed in the three first times—that is to say, those that are named A, B, C parts of the whole time whereof A, B, C, D, E were all the parts—let us put that in the fourth part, which we called D; Peter repented by help of God’s grace, through the means of Christ’s aforesaid prayer; and that his loving belief so came to him again, in that time which we called D; and that he would ever after rather suffer ten times to die than once to forsake God again.

Now ask I Tyndale whether the not-failing of his faith now in the latter parts of his time—that is to wit, in D and E—doth now make it true that his faith faileth him not before, while it failed him indeed, in the three former times A, B, C, the three parts of his whole time A, B, C, D, E.

Now, what Tyndale must needs answer unto this, he can tell well enough, I warrant, when he looketh, in his card, upon those letters in his crossrow. For there he must needs see that though his faith faileth never after, while it failed not… yet before, while it failed, it failed, pardie! Whereof the proof is so plain upon his crossrow that he must needs see it!

Now, if Tyndale would wink at these letters like a wanton lad that no man could make him look up—yet shall I show you that he hath read them already, and spied full well that Peter sinned deadly… and, like a shrewd, wily lad, hath scraped it out of his book.

For ye wot well that in those words of our Savior unto Saint

Lk 22:32 Peter, he saith unto him: “And thou, after that thou shalt be converted, confirm thou and make strong thy brethren.” As though he might say, “I have prayed for thee that thy faith shall not finally fail. But though it fail for a time by forsaking of me, as I tell thee truly thou shalt thrice do ere the cock crow… yet shall it come into thee again, by the means of my prayer. And therefore when thou shalt be converted
again—that is to wit, after that thy lively faith fallen and failing
for the time, and thou thereby turned from me to my enemy through
forsaking me, for deadly sinful dread of bodily
death—after this, when thou shalt, I say, by my help and means of
my prayer, with applying of thine own will therewith, have
gotten grace and repented, and attained thy faith again, and be
thyself converted and turned from mine enemy unto me again…
then do thou confirm and strengthen thy brethren.”

Now see, for God’s sake, where Tyndale hath scraped out and
altered one word… in which one word standeth the making and
marring of all the whole matter.

For whereas our Savior said, “When thou art once converted,
then strengthen thou thy brethren”—Tyndale putteth out “converted”
and maketh our Savior say, “When thou art come to thyself again,
then strengthen thou thy brethren.”

And whereas he in his translation had put in this word
“converted”… yet because he said herebefore, in this chapter, that
the apostles were not by failing of their faith, nor by any deadly
sin, turned in any wise at any time from God… but were only
“amazed” and “astonied” and past all remembrance—therefore he now
hath put out here this word “converted,” which signifieth a
turning to God (and therein doth ever imply a turning away from
God before), and hath put in the stead thereof these words “come
again to thyself”… to make it agree with his other words, “amazed,”
“astonied,” and forgetting of themselves, which himself said of
them before.

Now this ye see, good readers, very well: that though we grant unto
Tyndale that a man may be turned to good, and turned to be bad, and
turned to virtue, and turned to vice, turned to God, and turned to the
devil, too… yet wheresoever in the Scripture that word “turned”
standeth so, alone, it is ever taken for turning unto God. And
especially the word “converted” (which is the word that he hath
changed), wheresoever in Scripture it so standeth, alone, is never

How this word “turned” is
taken in Scripture
but unto God. For in turning to himself,
he may turn from God unto the
devil… as Lucifer by turning to himself turned to the devil.

1 that is to wit: that is to say; in other words // that thy: i.e., this thing has happened of your
2 lively: living; operative // fallen and failing: i.e., falling away and being missing 2 the: i.e., a
3 forsaking: repudiating
4 means: i.e., the means
5 converted: reverted / restored
6 in . . . matter: i.e., on which one word the making or breaking of the whole entire claim depends
7, 12 converted: reverted / restored
9 scraped out: expunged
10–11 in . . . converted: i.e., once you are
12 putteth out: takes out / ejects
13 thou art once: i.e., once you are
14 maketh: i.e., has
15 translation: i.e., translation of the New Testament
16 amazing: overcome with confusion / stupefied
17 translated: i.e., translation of the New Testament
18 failing: i.e., a lapse // deadly: mortal
19 wise: way
20, 24 amazed: overcome with confusion / stupefied
21 put out: taken out / ejected
22 a . . . before: i.e., a previous being turned away from God
23 stead: place
24 come again to thyself: i.e., recovered your mental faculties
25 the: i.e., one
26 so: i.e., just like that
27 taken for: i.e., employed for a; used to convey a
28 may: can
29 but: i.e., but only a turning
And now ye see that Tyndale, to make the Gospel seem to agree with his heresy, changeth in his exposition the very chief effectual word whereupon the pith of all the matter hangeth. I will not therefore ask ye now the question that Tyndale doth: whether ye think not as much wit in the head of mad Collins as in the brains of such an expositor; but out of question, I ween all wise men think that the same devil (or his mate) that made Collins mad hath sucked out the brain of this expositor, and blown his empty scalp full of busy, frantic heresies.

For else would he never for shame speak of that foolish heresy, that none elect at any time doth deadly sin… which thing he seeth so plainly reproved by the Scripture… and, except a very few heretics, else by the agreement, I ween, of all the whole people of the world, both Christian and heathen too—as many as believe the soul to be immortal.

And yet is it a better sport to see how in the very point in which he weeneth himself to deal the most wilily, therein uttereth he his folly most foolishly.

For whereas all his purpose of this chapter of the order of our election is only to prove that none elect at any time sinneth deadly: even in the very last end thereof, where he weeneth least—where he weeneth himself to sit surest in the chair of his glorious triumph, and most merrily mocketh and scoffeth at his adversary—even there, in his false exposition of this text of Scripture, “And thou being once converted, confirm and strengthen thy brethren,” by his unwise wily change of this word “converted” into “come to himself”… he is fallen from himself and perceived not that that change hath made every man well perceive that himself, when he so changed that word, perceived very well that the word “converted,” that is, “to God turned again,” proved clearly that Saint Peter was once from God averted and sinfully turned away. And therefore hath he by that wily change, even in the very last end of his chapter, with his own witness against his own purpose, all his whole matter perverted, and quite overturned and overthrown his triumphant chariot… and with the very words of his merry mock, laid all his matter in the mire.
The Recapitulation of All Tyndale’s Process
concerning “the Church,” from the
Beginning Hitherto

For now shall you, good readers, understand that as concerning
his declaration what is “the church,” here his whole process endeth.
And willing that we should now ween that he had well declared
and proved us which is the very church, he now beginneth, after
this chapter, another, new matter: that is to wit, to prove that the
common-known Catholic church is not “the church.”

And therefore, since here is an end of his own part… it is necessary
that we briefly gather together and consider what thing he hath
proved us therein, or at the least (for proved hath he nothing) what
thing he hath told us therein, from the beginning
hitherto.

Remember first, good readers, that the occasion of his book is for
answer of my Dialogue—wherein I speak of the church by which

The doctrine of the universal we be, and must be, taught and informed.

church cannot err. And I show there that it is the common-known
Catholic church of all Christian

people, neither gone out nor put out; and that the doctrine of this
church is sure, and cannot err, in anything necessary to salvation.
Which thing I there sufficiently do prove.

Now cometh Tyndale to teach us that “the” church is another
church, which he will show you, and not the church that I told
you. And whether the church that he showeth you can err or not,
he will tell you. And therefore he maketh the title of this book “What
Is the Church, and Whether It May Err or Not”—wherein hearken well
now what he hath hitherto taught you.

First he told us, in the beginning, that this word “church”
hath divers significations… among which at last, he bethought
him upon twain. One, a general signification by which it is
taken “for all that embrace the name of Christ, though their
faiths be naught, or though they have no faith at all.”

Another, by which it specially signifieth only the elects… “in
whose hearts God hath written his law with his Holy Spirit, and
given them a feeling faith of the mercy that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

All his other significations I let pass, as things not properly pertaining to this present question of the Catholic Church…

except only that which he hath also defined false: that is to wit, the particular churches of every Christian country; which be not, as Tyndale there taketh them, all the people in the town or the country—Christian or heathen or open-professed heretics—but only such as are parts of the Catholic Church.

But in all his declarations of all the significations… he hath, as ye have seen in my first part of this work, neither rehearsed them all nor taken right almost any one of these that he hath rehearsed.

For letting, as I say, the remnant pass, as now not pertinent properly to this matter, and reproved in mine first part of this work—of these two last significations hath he done his part in neither nother; but hath, as I there showed, left out the chief significations of all, and whereupon all the matter most especially dependeth: that is to wit, the catholic church of Christ, of all true Christian people.

For as touching the first of his two last, if he will say that he meant that for the Catholic Church, then I say that he defined it false. For the general, catholic church is not the number of “all that embrace the name of Christ” whether they have faith true or false, any faith or none.

For heretics such as Luther is, and Zwingli, and Wycliffe, and himself—that first willfully leave and forsake the Catholic Church and the Catholic faith thereof, and be therefor after precided and cut off therefrom, and cast out thereof—neither be nor never have been accounted either in the Church or of the Church… though they still call themselves Christian men and embrace his name, casting off the truth of his faith and fighting against good works by sects dissolving the unity, and being separate from the society, of the Catholic Church.

Then as touching the second signification, of the only elects, which is the church whereof he jabbereth in all this work… and would have it only taken for the church of Christ militant here in

3–4 properly pertaining: strictly speaking pertinent; really relevant 4 of: regarding
5, 22 false: falsely; wrongly 7 taketh them: claims them to be
8 open-professed: i.e., openly heresy-professing; overt 9 such: i.e., such groups of people
10 declarations: explanations 11, 12 rehearsed: mentioned 12 taken right: characterized rightly
12 almost: for the most part // any: even 13 remnant: i.e., rest of those explanations
13–14 pertinent properly: really relevant 14 reproved: confuted; proved wrong
15 these two last significations: See 561/30—562/2.
15–16 his . . . nother: i.e., what he should have regarding neither the one nor the other 16 showed: pointed out
17 all the matter: the whole issue 18 dependeth: hinges 18, 22 catholic: universal
19 true: i.e., right-believing; orthodox 20, 34 as touching: as regards 21 that for: i.e., by that
26 willfully: of their own volition // leave and forsake the: i.e., part ways with, and dissociate themselves from, the
27 therefore: on that account // after: afterward // precided: excised / excommunicated
29 either: i.e., as being either 30–31 casting off: divesting themselves of / jettisoning
31–32 by sects: i.e., by forming factions 32 dissolving: vitiating 34 the only elects: only the elect
35 all this work: i.e., all of this book of his 36 it only: only it; it alone // in: on
earth: let us consider, orderly from the beginning to the end, what
he telleth us thereof, and to what wise end at last he bringeth all
his purpose.

After his defense of his translation (very fondly defended), to
prove us that “the church” is only the number of elects, “in whose
hearts God hath written his law . . . and given them a feeling faith
of the mercy that is in Christ Jesus our Lord,” he first moveth a
question of his own devising—“Whether the Word Were before
the Church, or the Church before the Word”—as though that question
had in such wise been put by us, and that we had affirmed
the Church to be before the Word.

There, with scoffs and mocks, he concludeth against us that the
Word was before the Church; whereof never no man said the
contrary.

But that the written word was before the Church—which was
the thing that himself had said and meant, and which ever was and
is his principal ground and foundation, whereof we had said, and
yet say, the contrary thereof—in all that chapter neither anything
proveth he nor anything so much as speaketh. And
so that chapter nothing at all to purpose.

Moreover, since he bringeth forth that chapter for the proof
that the only elects be “the church” (for thereabout goeth all his
matter); and well ye wot the word of God, both written and
unwritten, may be and is beloved both of the elects and of the not
elected: therefore is also that chapter nothing at all to purpose.

Finally, since he speaketh of the law written by the Spirit of God
in the heart . . . now, since that law so written there is rather the
word of God unwritten than his word written in the books of the
Scripture that we have . . . of which words only, Tyndale maketh all
his matter, and abhorreth every word that God would either speak
or write beside the Scripture that we have already: this chapter of
Tyndale’s not only nothing maketh for his purpose, but also rather
seemeth greatly to make against it.

Then goeth he forth with his other chapter wherein he laboreth
to prove that “the apostles left nothing unwritten that were necessary
to salvation” . . . meaning that we be bound to believe nothing
but only that they have written—and that (as Tyndale’s master
Martin Luther saith), evidently and plainly written. Wherein whoso
consider what I have answered him . . . shall, I trust, well perceive

1 orderly: in order  2 wise end: brilliant conclusion  2–3 all his purpose: his whole argument
4 translation: i.e., translation (in his translation of the New Testament) of ecclesia as “congregation” rather
“church”; see 165/22–172/27.  4 fondly: foolishly  5 us: to us  // elects: the elect  7–14: See 225/1–18.
7 moveth: proposes for consideration  8 were: existed  10 wise: a way  11 be before: preexist
13, 15 was before: preexisted  13 no man said: did anyone say  17 whereof: about which  18 yet: still
18, 19 anything: at all  19 speaketh: says  20 chapter: i.e., chapter is  20, 25 nothing: in no way
22, 24 (the only) elects: (only the) elect  22–23 thereabout . . . matter: i.e., that is the aim of all his
argumentation on this subject  23 wor: i.e., know that  24 may: can  29–30 all his matter: his whole case
30 abhorreth every: i.e., shuns like the plague every / has no use for any  31 beside: apart from; outside of
32 nothing . . . purpose: contributes nothing to his argument  // rather: instead; on the contrary
33 make: militate / work  34 laboreth: strives  35 were: i.e., is  35–36 necessary to: essential for
36–37 be . . . they: are not obliged to believe anything except only what they
38 evidently and plainly: i.e., clearly and conclusively  // wherein: whereon  // whoso: i.e., whoever will

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that it had been better for him to have left that matter untouched.
For both is his purpose on his part unproved and the contrary to him proved; besides that it is in many places proved that the sacraments which he reproveth be written in the Scripture indeed.

Howbeit, he correcteth and amendeth, therefore, his doctrine of that chapter, in another chapter after. For whereas in the former chapter he teacheth that we be bound to believe nothing of necessity but only that that is written in the Scripture—yet lest we should be thereby, concerning our belief, over-straitly restrained of our evangelical liberty… he bethinketh himself better… and in his other chapter after, he teacheth us that we be not of necessity bound to believe all that neither… but, so that we believe the promises, we may be saved well enough, he saith, believing not other things written even in the very Gospel itself.

This is his doctrine in his chapter… where he teacheth us that “the church” may err and that yet it cannot err—saving that suddenly, unawares, he confesseth even there the contrary.

Then cometh he forth in his chapter with this question whether “the church” can err or not. And there he first saith that this common-known Catholic church both may err and doth err… and proveth it by his bare word. And then he sheweth what himself calleth the “elect church,” and saith that it is “the whole multitude of all repenting sinners that believe in Christ, and put all their trust and confidence in the mercy of God… feeling in their hearts that God for Christ’s sake loveth them and will be—or, rather, is—merciful unto them, and forgiveth their sins of which they repent, and all the motions unto sin of which they fear that they shall be drawn into sin again,” and this they believe and feel “without any respect of their own deserving,” and only for the respect of God’s troth and promise.

Then goeth he forth and boasteth highly this manner of “feeling” faith that is heresies instead of faith, as I have in mine answer proved; and therein he spendeth up that chapter.

But yet, though he thus describe the “elect church”—yet doth he not prove that this is the church which we must hear and obey. For God hath commanded us to complain to “the” church, and

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1 it . . . untouched: i.e., he would have been better off saying nothing on that subject 2 purpose: contention
4 reproveth: finds fault with / rejects 5 howbeit: however
7–8 be . . . necessity: i.e., are not obliged to take anything as something we have to believe
8 that that: what 9 over-straitly restrained: i.e., too tightly restricted in the exercise
10–11 bethinketh himself better: takes better thought 12 so that: provided that; so long as 13, 17, 21 may: can
17 suddenly: on the spur of the moment 18 confesseth even there: admits right there. (See 467/28—468/8.)
19 cometh he forth: he forges ahead // chapter: i.e., chapter on it 20 whether: i.e., of whether
21 common-known Catholic: common-knowledge Catholic / church commonly known as the Catholic
22 bare: mere // word: word for it; say-so // sheweth: sets forth 23 himself: he himself
26 God: i.e., God the Father 28 motions: impulses; inclinations // by 29 into sin again: back into sin
30 respect of their own deserving: i.e., eye to their own gaining of merit 31 for the respect: in consideration
31 troth: truthfulness / trustworthiness 32 goeth . . . boasteth: i.e., he proceeds to extol
35 describe: characterize 36 hear: listen to 37 complain: i.e., take our complaints
hear “the” church, and obey “the” church. And therefore, though we agreed everything that he saith in his chapter… he had yet, since his elects are unknown, proved thereby no piece of his principal purpose: that is to wit, which is “the” church.

Also, whereas his title of that chapter is “Whether the Church May Err”—Tyndale saying that the Catholic Church may err—whether the “elect” church which himself taketh for “the” church may err or not, he saith not in all that chapter any one word. And so is his chapter neither anything toward his principal purpose… nor yet, which is more shame for him, anything containeth in it belonging to the matter of the title!

Then cometh he forth with his other chapter, that a true member of Christ’s church “sinneth not, and is yet, for all that, a sinner.” Which chapter, besides that it is but a fond riddle with nothing but a heap of foolish heresies, as I have proved… yet is it also toward the matter—that is to wit, “which is ‘the’ church?”—nothing to the purpose at all… forasmuch as, though he saith that they can do no deadly sin, yet he confesseth that they may do such “horrible deeds” as must needs make them be taken for the children of the devil.

After cometh his other goodly riddle, that a Christian man “cannot err, and how he may yet err.” And therein he telleth us, as I have before shown you, that the elects cannot err in the promises of God… and as for all other errors, none can (he saith) be damnable to them, though the contrary of their error be written in the very Gospel.

By which doctrine of his ye may see that errors of doctrine in manner of living, Tyndale taketh for a small matter, because they be no promises of God. And therefore is Tyndale not greatly to be believed when he teacheth us that friars may wed nuns… because it is no promise of God, but a promise of the friar to the nun, and of the nun to the friar, each of them wedded and bedded with other, and both twain wedded and bedded with the devil.

Yet ye see well that this chapter if it were all as true as it is all false… proveth yet nothing which is “the” church. Whereas he should first have proved that the elects only be “the” church, and then, after, search whether they can err or not.
Then cometh he forth with his other chapter, that the faith which he hath before described is “ever fought with,” but in the elects it is in such wise inexpugnable that when they once have it, it can never at any time fail.

Now, this great conclusion whereof he maketh this chapter is such that, as ye see well, thereupon dependeth many great matters. Yet doth he not in all this chapter bring forth any manner thing for the proof—either reason, Scripture, or other authority—but only by his own bare word telleth us that it is so. Now, if he told us a thing well known or commonly believed, I should not blame him. But, now, to tell us such a thing so strange, and unto every man save himself so inopinable, and such as no man would ween were likely to be true, and bid us so boldly believe it, and, save his own bare worshipful word, tell us no cause why: it is either a point of a man more authorized than an apostle… or else less witted than a very fool.

Finally cometh he forth at last with his chapter which he calleth “The Manner and Order of Our Election.”

Therein he telleth us, concerning elects, and the order of their choosing, that God doth first choose them, and after calleth them, and teacheth them, and maketh them see their “damnation in the law” and mercy “laid up for them” in him, and “what he will have them do.” And then they “choose” God again and “submit” themselves “to his laws, to walk in them.” And that thing he saith the man doth of necessity, because his will can do none other… but his wit must needs see the things that God maketh him see, and his will must needs agree to follow so the thing that his wit seeth.

Then he telleth us that the mercy of God always waiteth upon the elect… by reason whereof he can never so fall but that he shall rise again. But yet he showeth us further that, for all this, the elect sinketh down sometimes, and falleth into “trances” and “sleeps” by which he “forgetteth himself” and then doth divers “horrible” and abominable deeds in his sleep. But yet in all his “horrible” deeds he doth no deadly sin, because he doth them all of “frailty” and “infirmity,” and none of them “of purpose” or “willingly.” For willingly can he not do them, because he lieth asleep; nor in all that while his faith never faileth at any time. And this he proveth us by the examples of King David.
and Saint Peter, and Saint Thomas of India, and the other apostles.
For there was, he saith, none of these that, in all that ever we read in the Scripture reproved in their deeds, as adultery, manslaughter, not-believing, forsaking or forswearing of God—that ever was any deadly sin, yet, or any failing of faith at any time while they did it.
And this he nothing proveth, but telleth, and looketh that for the worship of his bare word, we should believe it.
And here is all Tyndale’s whole tale, that he hath from the beginning hitherto told us, whereby we should learn of him which is the church, and whether the church may err or not. In all which whoso look it through, and mine answer therewith, shall well perceive that he hath not in all his whole process half a leaf together, nor almost half a line, without one great folly at the least, or else a lie and a half.

Consider now that of his “elects”—which is of his words much ado to perceive, they be so dark and so intricated of purpose, without any dependence or order—yet in the end, when all is gathered together and advised well, this is the whole sum: that God chooseth a certain whom-he-liketh. And when he chooseth them Tyndale telleth not—whether before the world made, or after themselves born. But unto them he sendeth forth, and calleth them, and them he giveth a “feeling” faith whereby they feel surely that they shall be saved, without any regard of good works; and then they choose him again, and agree to walk in his laws. But before their feeling faith had, they never once think upon him.

For as for any endeavor of themselves, at God’s good motion, toward the faith, they do no more, he saith, than doth the child toward the begetting of his own father. And his mercy waiteth ever upon them. And their faith doth never at any time fail them, nor they do never sin deadly, what horrible and abominable deeds soever they do.

And since these folk that are Tyndale’s elects have, or ween they have, such a feeling faith that thereby they feel, or else ween they feel, that they cannot be damned… but have here learned of Tyndale, now, that what horrible deeds soever they do, they can never do deadly sin… and be also very sure to repent, and then to be never

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1 of India: See note for 533/29. 3 reproved: (that is) criticized / condemned // ax: such as 3 manslaughter: homicide 4 forsaking or forswearing: i.e., repudiating of God, or perjurious disavowing of him 4, 36 deadly: mortal 5 did: i.e., were committing 6 nothing: not at all / in no way // telleth: i.e., just says 6 looketh: expects 7 worship: worthiness / prestigiousness // bare: mere // should: i.e., will 8–9 tale . . . hitherto told: i.e., speech . . . to this point given 9, 34 of: from 9 which: i.e., which church 10 may: can // which: i.e., of which speech 11 whoso . . . through: whoever looks it over 12 process: discourse 12 leaf: i.e., page // almost: hardly 13 folly: idiocy 15 his “elects”: i.e., what he says about the people he considers the elect to be 15–16 is . . . ado: is from his statements very difficult 16 be . . . purpose: are intentionally so unclear and convoluted 17 dependence: logical sequence 18 advised well: well pondered // the whole sum: all it adds up to 19 whom-he-liketh: i.e., whomever-he-wants-to / number of individuals to whom he gives his stamp of approval 20 made: i.e., was made 20–21 themselves born: i.e., they are born 21 sendeth forth: sends word 22 surely: with certainty / firmly 23 of: to 24 again: in turn / in response // walk in: live by 25 had: is gotten // upon: about 26 of themselves: i.e., made by them // motion: prompting / instigation 27 toward: i.e., toward their getting 29 fail: becoming lacking in 30 nor . . . deadly: nor do they ever sin mortally 32 Tyndale’s elects: i.e., by Tyndale’s definition the elect 32, 33 ween: think 35 never do: never commit
punished in hell, purgatory, nor in this life neither (for so far saith Tyndale now), but with a short repentance after long lying in sin, saying once “Christ, help!” for the manner sake (as it were after a sneezing), the friars may from the nuns’ beds sty even up straight to heaven: they may therefore be bold and hardy, and hardily so they be, to fall to what works they will. For since their faith is both full of false heresies and also can never fail them… they may make themselves sure, you see well, that they shall be no worse, pardie, not when they be at the very worst, than faithful harlots, faithful adulterers, faithful vow-breakers, faithful thieves, faithful murderers, faithful traitors to men, and faithful heretics to God!

And these be, as ye see now, Tyndale’s special elects… which only number, by his high spiritual doctrine, he would we should take for the church.

Now, good Christian readers, if we would grant unto Tyndale that all his lies were true that he hath made in all this whole process of his unto the end—yet were he far from the proving of his principal purpose, that is to tell us and teach us which is the church; toward the teaching whereof he hath nothing else done but only given us two definitions. Of which so declared as they be, neither nother is sufficient for his purpose—and yet the second much less than the first.

For whereas in the first he defineth it to be only the elects “in whose hearts God hath written his law with his Holy Spirit, and given them a feeling faith of the mercy that is in Christ Jesus our Lord,” afterward, in the second, he saith that it is “the whole multitude of all repenting sinners that believe in Christ, and put all their trust and confidence in the mercy of God… feeling in their hearts that God for Christ’s sake loveth them, and will be—or, rather, is—merciful unto them, and forgiveth them their sins of which they repent, and . . . all the motions unto sin of which they fear that they shall be drawn into sin again; and thus they believe and feel without any respect of their own deserving; yea, and for none other cause than that the merciful Truth of God the Father, which cannot lie, hath so promised and sworn.”

Two special great heresies

Now ye remember that Tyndale hath put you by the way two special great
heresies. One, that whosoever after baptism sinneth once of purpose and willingly, shall never have remission after. The other, that whoso have once his feeling faith, can never sin deadly after.

Let us now see in the end, besides that these heresies of his be already otherwise impugned and reproved—let us yet further see how his definition of “the church” and his heresies will jumble and agree together among themselves.

And first I ask Tyndale whether he that have “once after his baptism sinned of purpose and willingly”—and set “maliciously” thereto—may after, by God’s help, repent again that ever he so did…and believe therewith that he is bound to believe, and love God and his neighbors as God biddeth him to do. May he, after such a sin done, do this by God’s help, or not?

Tyndale will peradventure say he may not. Then I ask him how

Heb 6:4–8  he proveth that. Thereto peradventure he
Mt 12:31–32  will say that the words of Saint Paul

“It is impossible that they which have once been illumined,” etc., and the words of our Savior himself

spoken of the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, do prove it; which I will then deny. For those places, taking them as falsely as any heretic can construe them, say yet at the uttermost no more but that his sin shall never be forgiven him—and saith not that he shall never again repent; nor that he shall never well believe, nor that he shall never after love God nor his neighbor.

Whereunto if Tyndale will say that if he might come to very repentance and very belief and love, he needs must have his sins remitted and be saved; and since God saith he shall never be forgiven, and so never saved, he saith he shall never so repent and believe and love: to that I answer Tyndale two things. One, that God in all his threats reserveth his special prerogative of his mercy, by which his absolute power is never bound under any rule of his ordinary justice. Secondly I say that forasmuch as those words

be minatory and threats, they be all of truth none otherwise to be understood than “except he repent.” As God himself plainly expounded all his such words by the mouth of his own holy

Ez 33:14–16  prophet Ezekiel, saying, “Though I should say to a sinner, ‘Thou shalt die,’
and the same sinner repent him of his sin—and deal justly and
righteously, and deliver again the pledge, and make restitution
of the robbery that he hath committed, and walk in the commandments
of life, and do no unrighteous thing—he shall live
in life, and shall not die. Of all his sins none shall be laid to his
charge. He hath dealt justly, and righteously he shall live in life.”

Then, since God at the leastwise may remit his sin and save
him if he so repent; and in Scripture is there nothing spoken to
the contrary but that he may so repent: it may, therefore, I say,
without any repenting be both put and granted that he so shall
repent.

And therefore I put now that he so do repent… and then ask I
Tyndale whether he shall be saved or no. If he say yea, he
destroyeth his heresy; for then he granteth that he which after
baptism sinneth maliciously may for all that be saved. If he
say nay, then he destroyeth his definition; for then may there
be some repentant sinners, with all that ever in his definition
followeth, and yet they shall be none of the church of his elects.

And thus must either his heresy destroy his definition or his
definition must destroy his heresy. Of which twain yet it will
be more honesty for him to keep his definition still, whereupon all
his whole matter hangeth… and let his heresy go to the devil that
gave it to him… and then understand those places of Scripture whereupon
the devil taught him to ground it, that either the “blasphemy
against the Holy Ghost” is final impenitence, and the other no
restitution by the penance to the renovation of Baptism, or else
that the sore words of the both places, after a certain vehement
manner of speech used in Holy Scripture, sometimes signifieth only
great hardness and difficulty, and not as himself teacheth us, an utter
impossibility of remission. But now let us see how his definition
will stand with his second heresy.

You see well and perceive that in his second definition he
restraineth his “elect church” unto only “repentant sinners” that
believe as himself showeth you.

And then hath he confessed unto you that his chosen elects
plainly do sometimes abominable deeds… which deeds yet they

1 and the: if that 2 deliver again the pledge: i.e., give back (when he should) what has been given him as collateral
3 of; for // walk in: live by 5–6 laid to his charge: i.e., held against him 10 repenting: qualm; compunction
10 both put: i.e., as a real possibility both posited 12 put: postulate 14, 16 destroyeth: demolishes; does in
14 which: who 18 and… none: i.e., who yet are not members // his elects i.e., the Tyndale-defined elect
19, 20 destroy: do in; wreck 20 twain: i.e., two things 21 honesty for: respectable of / face-saving for
21–22 all his whole matter: his whole entire case 22 hangeth: hinges 23 places: texts; passages
24 that either: i.e., as meaning either, the one of them (Mt 12:31–32) that
25–26 the other no restitution: i.e., the other (Heb 6:4–8) that there is no restoration
26 penance: repentance / Sacrament of Penance
26 renovation of Baptism: i.e., newness of life endowed by the Sacrament of Baptism. (See 213/1—215/24.)
27 sore words of: strong language used in // the both places: i.e., both those passages // after: according to
27 vehement: emphatic; forceful 28 speech: speaking 29 hardness: arduousness // himself: i.e., Tyndale
30–31 how his definition will stand: how compatible his definition is; how well his definition will square
32 perceive: are aware 33 restraineth: restricts 34 himself showeth you: i.e., he himself tells you they do
35 confessed: admitted 36 which: i.e., of which
repent not always till the rage be past... and till, as Tyndale saith, that they have “played out their lusts”; yea, and sometimes, too, till the “cold fear of death” turn them to give an ear to good counsel.

Now see you then very well that they be, by Tyndale’s second definition, all this while expressly put out of “the church” till they repent again. And then consider further, how far against all reason.

Ye remember very well, I wot well, that he teacheth us plainly that none of his elects doth at any time sin deadly—though their deeds be never so horrible and abominable—because of their “feeling faith,” which can neither at any time fail nor suffer any of their horrible deeds to be deadly sin. And therefore are they consequently never out of the favor of God, not even in the time wherein they do their horrible and abominable deeds, and before the repenting of them, which may be, ye wot well, many times long between. In all which time they be, by Tyndale, out of all deadly sin—and therefore good folk and faithful, and God’s good children, still.

And therefore, since they be so, wherefore doth Tyndale—that is in some places so angry with the Catholic Church for the putting out of evil folk by excommunication—excommunicate good folk now, and put out of his “elect church” himself and faithful, and, finally, such as, though they be “fallen asleep” in lechery, theft, sacrilege, incest, and murder, stand yet highly still in God’s especial grace and favor?

Now, the faults that are common to both his definitions, and yet more open in the second than in the first... I shall not need to rehearse you. For both have I touched some of them before... and also many of them be to every good Christian man so open at his eye that he can need none other way to give him warning of them.

For whereas all his elects depend upon his “feeling faith” and his “repentance”: while himself showeth what false articles he teacheth his elects for their faith, every good-faithful man very well feeleth that the more that Tyndale’s elects feel his false faith, the less faith have they, and the more faithless be they.

And when he teacheth them to repent the right belief of Christ’s sacraments, and therein the right rule and order of repentance—every true repentant person well perceiveth that Tyndale’s “repentant” elects, abhorring from shrift, and rejecting the

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1 rage: fit of passion // past: over 2 that: such time as // lusts: desires 4, 16 by: according to 6 repent again: i.e., turn around and repent 8, 15 wot: know 9, 31, 33 his elects: i.e., his elect / the people who are by his definition the elect 9, 12, 17 deadly: mortal(ly) 10 never so: no matter how 11 fail: be lost 11–12 suffer... to be: i.e., allow it to happen that... is a 13 out of the favor of God: not in God’s good graces 16–17 out of all: utterly free of 18 still: uninterruptedly 19 since: given that // wherefore: why // that: who 20 places: i.e., places of his book(s) // the putting: its putting 22 faithful: i.e., other people who have what he claims to be the right and saving faith 26 faults: defects // both his definitions: See 568/15–35. 27 yet: even 27 open: obvious 28 rehearse: point out to // touched: touched upon 29 open at his eye: clear to see on his own 30 none... them: i.e., in no other way to be made aware of them 31 depend upon: i.e., are such on the basis of 31 and his: i.e., and his concept of 32 while himself showeth: when he himself makes known 33 good-faithful: right-believing 34 feeleth: realizes // feel: experience / entertain / hold 36 repent: i.e., repent of holding / renounce 36 of: i.e., concerning 37 rule and order: i.e., standard procedure and regimen 39 abhorring: shrinking with horror // shrift: confession
Sacrament of Penance, but if they mend and repent better will instead of purgatory, which they now mock and jest at, weep and repent in hell this foolish fruitless fashion of their impenitent "repentance."

But now suppose that all were very well, that Tyndale here hath said; yet how hath he with all that proved his purpose? He hath told us that the whole multitude of his-fashioned elects is "the church." But what one word hath he told us toward the proof? Neither reason nor one authority of any old holy saint, nor any one text of Scripture... but only one or twain such as nothing maketh for his matter, but utterly clear against him.

And therefore though we grant unto him that the whole multitude, not of his false-framed "elects," but of the very, final elects, be a church of Christ... as he doth and must grant unto us that the whole multitude of Christian people not gone out nor put out is a church of Christ (of which the church of very elects be, though the better part, yet a part and but a part, and peradventure the less part... and Tyndale's elects, either no part or but a part, and the very worst part): yet that the only elects, though they be a church, be the church (which is the thing that he should prove)—that hath he neither proved nor anything brought effectual toward the proof, no more than if he never had meant it nor thought it.

And therefore now hath he nothing proved which is the church... though we would yet, of our courtesy, further grant him that all his whole heresies were the very faith... and that the very elects were only those in whose hearts the devil hath written his law... or else (which were yet far worse) that the very elects were only those in whose holy hearts God had himself so written his will with his Holy Spirit that they should thereby feel that spiritual folk should please God with waxing fleshly, and friars with wedding nuns... and that if they would be saved, they should have therein no respect unto good works, but think that only "faith in the promise" and bare repentance, without shift or penance, shall sufficiently save them... so that they believe... how God may be pleased after the mind of Tyndale.
sure that all the seven sacraments serve of nothing, but be but bare signs and tokens, and utterly as graceless as themselves are wittless... and especially so that they believe that the Blessed Body nor Blood of Christ be not in the Sacrament of the Altar, nor that they do none other honor in no wise thereto but only believe and remember that there is nothing but a memorial of his Passion in a cup of wine and a gobbet of cakebread... and yet in doubt and question whether it be bread or starch. And then that, with this godly belief, they see surely to themselves that they serve no saints, but rail upon their relics, and despise their images, and therewith the crucifix too, and the Holy Cross itself also; and then, lest they might hap to lose a whole day in God's service, keep themselves well and warily from all holy days, and especially (for so these heretics in their books call it) from the foolish fast of Lent. And thus living, and therewith believing these aforesaid heresies so firmly that they think verily they feel their false faith with their very fingers' ends... be bold then, hardily, and believe verily that their feeling faith shall never fail them... but at all times so preserve them that they cannot only never be damned, but over that, can never do deadly sin, though they do never so many devilish deeds; but for all their falsehood, theft, adultery, vow-breaking, treason, murder, incest, and perjury, shall for their only feeling faith be good and faithful false, faithless wretches, and therefore God Almighty's own minions still.

And thus, good Christian readers, since ye now plainly perceive that Tyndale hath here, for his own part, nothing proved us that his false-framed "elects," nor yet that only the very, true elects, be the church of Christ in earth, nor hath nothing shown us which is; and therefore only, with all his long process, uttered and taught his errors and his heresies... and left the matter not unproved only, but untouched too, which he took upon himself and profess to prove, that is to wit, which is the church; but, as though he had well and plainly proved it which he hath not so much almost as spoken of, leaveth off his own part now and turneth him to impugn ours: I shall leave him, for his part, a while in the mire in which himself hath overthrown his matter... and shall
show you shortly how angrily he riseth up, and royally rayed in
dirt, because he cannot prove the church of Christ here in
earth to be a congregation unknown, layeth his miry hands upon
the known Catholic church of Christ, and fain would pull
that down too, and so leave no church at all.

Here endeth the Fourth Book.

1 rayed in: bespattered with
2 dirt: excrement  //  in: on
3 miry: besmirched / filthy
4 fain would: i.e., tries as hard as he can to