

A
FOUNDATION
AND
Plain Instruction

OF THE
Saving Doctrine of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

BRIEFLY COMPILED FROM THE WORD OF GOD.

TOGETHER WITH OTHER INSTRUCTIVE TREATISES,

BY

MENNO SIMON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH INTO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,
which is Jesus Christ." 1. Cor. 3: 11.

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TO THE READER.

PIOUS, BELOVED READER, Since I perceive that our work, called, "THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE," which I published a few years ago, has been, through the grace of God, to whom be eternal praise and thanks, productive of much good to some; and God's holy word which was obscured for such a long time, has been again a little explained, through our limited talents, and as many well disposed children, requested and entreated me, diligently to revise and correct such parts as were obscured through the negligence of the printer, and which deprived the reader of the sense, I was prevailed on, and did so. In some places I made additions; explained the obscure parts, corrected those that were defective, and omitted redundancies; the style and language I improved, in order to be better suited to aid the kind reader, and to make known and acceptable to many, the despised truth.

Not my reader, that I changed the original doctrines and contents; by no means! I have not changed, but as appears to me, improved its form, and given it more force and distinctness. Those who fear God may judge. The former, as well as this, is God's word; and all that the first teaches, this teaches also. May the Almighty, Merciful Father grant that through his grace our little work, so lightly esteemed, may produce much fruit in many thousands, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

P R E F A C E.

NOTE.—*The following Preface shows to whom this book is addressed, and was written at the time when the errors of Munster yet prevailed.*

To those in authority and all others, of whatever condition, class or calling they be, Menno Simon wishes the illumination of the Spirit, and the pure knowledge of the kingdom of God, from our heavenly Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, who has loved us and washed us from our sins with his blood. To him be praise, honor, glory, and thanksgiving forever, Amen.

Dear Sirs, Friends and Brethren, since we learn from the scriptures, and from experience find, that the prediction of the prophets, Christ and of the apostles, concerning the terrible oppression, misery, want, persecution, danger, anxiety, and false doctrine, in these latter times is being accomplished to its full measure, Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; 1 Tim. 4; 2 Tim. 3; 2 Pet. 2; Jude 1, and this so powerfully, that unless the merciful Father graciously shortens these days no flesh will be saved.

Therefore, we poor miserable men entreat and admonish every one, and that through the mercy of the Lord, for once candidly to read our doctrine and faith, lay it well to heart and understand it correctly, that you might know what kind of doctrine we inculcate, what kind of faith we maintain, what kind of life we lead, and how we are disposed, on account of which we have to hear and suffer so much, endure imprisonment, exile, be robbed, derided, defamed and slain as poor, innocent sheep. In order that you may sincerely lament and weep over your former bloody deeds, before God, and with greater circumspection guard and preserve yourselves from such things, and henceforth be found a more pious, sincere, yea, a more God-fearing magistracy, Ex. 18: 23; Dent. 1: 17; not afflictors and destroyers, but fathers and guardians of all miserable and

wretched; not exterminators, but defenders of righteousness; not persecutors but followers of Christ and his word. Therefore, anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that you may see and understand which is the right way, the truth and the life; the way which is so strait and narrow and found of so few; the truth which is known to none, except those who are taught of the Spirit of the Lord, illuminated and drawn by the Father; the life which is to know God the Father as the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he sent; that you may see him whom you fiercely pierced, and that you may with holy Paul, with your whole hearts, humble yourselves before the Lord with much fasting and weeping; clothe yourselves in sack-cloth; rend your hearts and not your garments, that you may find grace in his sight. For he is long-suffering, gracious and merciful, and pardons the iniquity of all who sincerely repent and seek his grace. Be no longer like Jeroboam, Ahab and Manasseh, but like David, Hezekiah and Josiah; that you need not on account of the office entrusted to you stand confounded in the great and dreadful day of the Lord, in that day which shall burn as an oven; and all who have dealt unrighteously and used violence upon the earth, shall be burnt up as dry straw and stubble, Mal. 4.

Therefore, we most humbly entreat you, for the sake of the merits of Christ, that you

would thoroughly ponder and reflect upon our faith, doctrine and undertaking; and not esteem us to be worse than you do thieves and murderers, whom you do not condemn without having certain knowledge of their case. Our doings are not thievish, nor have we to do with perishable possessions, but with God and his word, our bodies and souls, eternal life or eternal death. Therefore do not look upon the usages and customs of the fathers, nor upon the worldly wise and the learned, for it is deeply hidden from their eyes. They were always those who, from the beginning, thrust from them the wisdom of God through their own wisdom and have trampled it under foot; for the wisdom of God, which we teach, is that wisdom which none may understand, except those who are desirous of living and walking according to the will of God; it is that wisdom, which is not to be brought from afar nor taught in colleges. It must come from above and be learned through the Holy Ghost; as Paul says, Rom. 10: 6—9. "Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (That is, to bring Christ down from above). Or, who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But, what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Therefore, look to God's word, to the testimony and example of the holy prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles. Let these be your doctors and teachers, and not the ambitions, mercenary preachers of this world; then you will soon perceive, whether we are within or without the truth. May the almighty and eternal God give you such hearts and minds. To him be honor, praise and gratitude, dominion, power and majesty for ever, Amen.

Seeing then, beloved, that satan can transform himself into an angel of light, 2 Cor. 11, and thus sow tares among the Lord's wheat, such as the sword, polygamy, secular kingdom, and kings and other like errors on account of which the innocent have to suffer much; hence we are prompted to pub-

lish this our faith and doctrine; and we desire for Jesus' sake that we might obtain so much grace, that they would not treat and judge us except according to the word of God, as is reasonable and just. But should we not obtain so much grace, we have to commend it to the Lord, who is the only helper of every one in need. We will, nevertheless, through the grace of God, abide in the word of the Lord; and comfort ourselves with the scriptures, which say, "Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy one of Israel, thy Saviour," Isa. 43: 1, 3. Again: "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the moth shall eat them up like a garment and the worm shall eat them like wool." "I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou that shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man which shall be made as grass?" Isa. 51: 7, 8 and 12. Christ also says: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven," Matt. 10: 28, 32, 33. "With the heart," saith Paul, "man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," Rom. 10: 10.

Since then the scriptures urge us so much, both to believe and to confess, and so kindly comfort us against the raging and raving of men, therefore, we also desire to abide by the same until death. And hereby testify before you in Christ Jesus, that we neither have, nor know any other foundation, faith or doctrine, than that which may be plainly read, heard, and understood in the following, from the word of God, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

THE DAY OF GRACE.

In the first place we teach, what Jesus, the teacher from heaven, the Oracle and Word of the Most High God himself taught, John 3: 2, that now is the time of grace, a time to awaken from the sleep of our abominable sins, Rom. 13: 11, and obtain an upright, converted, renewed, contrite and penitent heart, and sincerely lament before God, our past profligate and dissolute course of life, and in the fear of God, to crucify and mortify our depraved, sinful flesh, temper and nature, and arise with Christ into a new, righteous, and penitent life and conduct, Eph. 4: 22; Gal. 5: 24. Even as Christ says, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the Gospel," Mark. 1: 15.

The time is fulfilled, that is, the promised day of grace approaches; the time for the appearing of the promised seed; the time of redemption, the time of that offering by which all things were to be reconciled in heaven and upon earth, Gen. 3: 15; Col. 1: 19; the time for the consummation of all the literal and figurative transactions into a new, spiritual life and an abiding truth; the time for which the fathers, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, David, Daniel, &c., with all the patriarchs and prophets hoped, and which they desired with many tears, and through faith saw from afar, and drew comfort and hope therefrom, Heb. 11: 23; yea, it was to them such a great and pleasing consolation, that good old Simeon desired to live no longer, when he beheld the time and saw the Redeemer. He said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people," Luke 2: 29—31.

The time is fulfilled, the predictions of the prophets and promises of the fathers appear in their full power; the sworn oath is accomplished; Israel has received its King David,

its Prince and Chief who has arisen as a mighty one to prepare his way, Ps. 2: 7; Is. 9: 5; Jer. 30: 9; his going forth is from the heavens; the Anointed, who was the desire of all nations, has come, girded about his loins with the sword of the Spirit and valiant for battle, Mic. 5; Hag. 2; Is. 24.

He has declared the gospel of the kingdom, the word of his Father; he taught and left unto his followers, an example of pure love, and an unblemished life, Matt. 4: 17; Jn. 7: 14, 15; conquered the mighty, destroyed the power of the devil, bore our sins, abolished death, reconciled the Father, acquired for all the chosen children of God, grace, favor, mercy, eternal life, dominion and peace, Heb. 2; 1. Pet. 2; 1. Cor. 15, and has been ordained by his Eternal and Almighty Father as an omnipotent King over the holy Mount Zion, as the head of the Church, a Provider and Dispenser of heavenly blessings; yea, an Almighty Ruler over all in heaven and on earth, Is. 2; Eph. 2; and this is what Christ here declares, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand," Mark. 1: 15.

Out of compassion and a sincere heart, I exhort you with the apostle Paul, that you take heed to this day of grace, and be obedient to the word of God, which says, "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," and with Paul let us "give no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults (understand this in relation to things which befall us), in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the

Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor, and dishonor; by evil report, and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things," 2 Cor. 6: 2—10. Oh, my beloved Sirs, Friends and Brethren, my mouth is open unto you, and my heart is enlarged towards you; for your sakes I am much grieved that you are so careless, and do not observe the people by whom these plain and intelligible scriptures were written; that you so entirely despise the word of the Lord, and suffer this precious time of grace, which God gives us all for improvement, to pass away so shamefully, and regard nothing more than to live with the whole heart, according to the impure and wicked lusts of your flesh, bowing the knees before dumb idols. Alas! it is time to awake! Remember that the angel has sworn, Rev. 10: 6, by the eternal and living God, who created heaven and earth, that after this time, there shall be time no longer. From the scriptures we cannot otherwise conclude, but that this is the last watch of the year, the last proclamation of the holy gospel, the last invitation to the marriage of the Lamb, which is to be celebrated, promulgated and sanctified before the great and terrible day of the Lord. Hereby we may learn and determine that the summer will pass away and the winter approach. Those, who, like the foolish virgins, neglect to prepare their lamps, will come too late, knock in vain and be excluded, Matt. 25: 11. Therefore comfort not one another with idle comfort and vain hope, as some do who think that the word should be taught and observed whilst they reject the cross. I mean those who know the word of the Lord, but do not live according to it. Oh, no! it is the word of the cross and will, in my opinion, remain so to the last, for it must be sustained with much suffering, and sealed with blood. The Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world, Rev. 13: 8; yea, he did not only suffer in his body, but also through the cross and

death entered into that glory, which he, for a time, had left for our sakes, Luke 24: Jn. 11: 25. If Christ then had to suffer such torture, anguish, misery and pain, how shall his servants, children and members expect peace and freedom from suffering while in the flesh? "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Matt. 10: 25. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus," says Paul, "shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. 3: 12.

Christ also says, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake," Matt. 10: 22.

Therefore banish the pernicious thought, that you may hope for another time, from your hearts, and be not deceived by your vain hopes, for I have known some who waited for a more convenient season, but did not live to realize their hopes. Had the apostles and fathers thus waited, the gospel of the kingdom would not at this day have been preached, and the word of the Lord would have remained unknown.

Alas! were you christians and the people of God as you boast yourselves to be, you should be able to say with Paul, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom. 8: 35. For then the flesh, the devil, sin, hell and death would all be subdued; there would then be no desire to remain long in this depraved, wicked, sanguinary world; neither would ye then boast of anything save the cross of Christ, Gal. 6: 16, and like Paul, with the whole heart desire to be delivered from this body and dwell with Christ, Phil. 1: 23.

I sincerely desire that you may awake, and not hope nor wait for a more acceptable time. If however the merciful Father will give us liberty and peace, we will gladly receive them with all thankfulness, from his gracious hands; but if he will not, his great name shall, notwithstanding, be praised forever.

We have all enjoyed the acceptable time of grace, for now is the day of salvation, Is. 49: 8. Let us therefore not be like ungrateful, disobedient, blood-thirsty Jerusalem, who with such perverted minds rejected the divine peace, the heavenly grace and merciful calling; but let us awake, with sober hearts, and give ear to the inviting

voice, and in this accepted time arise from the deep slumber of our abominable and offensive sins, for the Lord is at hand. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light, let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but

put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," Rom. 13: 12—14. Let every one be vigilant, and improve the time which God has graciously given for repentance. *Ecce nunc tempus acceptum, ecce nunc dies salutis.* "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. 6: 2.

SINCERE AND TRUE REPENTANCE.

In the second place we exhort you in the language of Christ, "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel," Mark. 1: 15. Oh, thou faithful word of grace! Oh, thou faithful word of divine love! thou art read in books, sung in hymns, preached with the mouth, with life and death and proclaimed in many countries, but in thy power they desire thee not;* yea more, all those who rightly teach and receive thee, are made a prey for the whole world. Alas, beloved Sirs, it will avail us nothing to be called christians, and boast of the Lord's blood, death, merits, grace and Gospel, as long as we are not converted from this wicked, impious and shameful life. It is in vain that we are called christians; that Christ died; that we were born in the day of grace, and baptized with water, if we do not walk according to his law, counsel, admonition, will and command and are not obedient to his word.

Therefore awake, and behold the doings of the world. On every hand you see nothing but sensuality, wine-bibbing, infernal pride, lying, fraud, avarice, hatred, strife, adultery, fornication, war, murder, hypocrisy, open blasphemy, idolatry, and false worship, Hos. 4: 11; Mic. 6: 14; Gal. 5: 19—21; in short, nothing but a powerful persecution of all that God teaches, commands and enjoins. Who can relate the terrible and alarming condition of the world at the present time? yet they (the wicked) want to

call themselves the holy christian church. Oh, no! they who do such things, saith Paul, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, 1. Cor. 6: 9, 10; Gal. 5: 19; Eph. 5: 5. Oh, ye men awake and see for yourselves, for thus saith the word of the Lord, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye be born from above ye shall not see the kingdom of God, Jn. 3: 3. Also, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," Jn. 3: 5, and again, "Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 18: 3. What does it profit to speak much of Christ and his word, if we do not believe him, and obey his commandments? Again, I say, awake and banish the accursed unbelief with all unrighteousness from your hearts, and live a pious, penitent life, according to the scriptures; for Christ says, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke 13: 5. Here do not understand such repentance as is taught and practiced by an erring world, which consists only in an outward appearance and human righteousness, such as hypocritical fastings, pilgrimages, praying and reading Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, hearing frequent masses, auricular confessions, and the like hypocrisies which Christ and his apostles did in no wise teach and command. Hence it cannot be a propitiatory sacrifice, but rather will be a provocation, and tend to excite the divine displeasure. Such doctrines are unavailing

* There are multitudes in the world who profess to believe in the word of God, but by their works deny the power thereof.

and fruitless commands of men, the accursed and enchanted wine of the Babylonian whoredom, which those who have dwelt upon the earth, through the just anger of God, have drunk for so many ages, Rev. 17: 2. But we speak of a repentance possessed of power and works, as John the Baptist teaches, saying, "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father," Matt. 3: 8. "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree, therefore, which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire," Luke 3: 9.

Behold, dear reader, the repentance we teach, is to die unto sin, and all ungodly works, and live no longer according to the lusts of the flesh, even as David did, 2 Sam. 13: 12; 18: 1. When he was reproved by the prophet on account of his adultery, and for numbering the people, he wept bitterly, called upon God, forsook the evil, and committed these sinful abominations no more. Peter sinned very grievously but once, and no more. Matthew, after being called by the Saviour, did not again return to his ways of life. Zaccheus and the sinful woman did not again return to their impure works of darkness. Zaccheus made restitution to those whom he had defrauded, and gave half of his goods to the poor and distressed. The woman wept very bitterly, and washed the feet of the Lord with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; she anointed them with precious ointment, and sat humbly at his feet, to listen to his blessed words.

These are the precious fruits of that repentance, which is acceptable to the Lord; therefore, it was said to David, that the Lord had put away his sins from him; to Peter it was proclaimed, that the Lord had arisen from the dead; Matthew was called to be an apostle; Zaccheus was told that he had become a son of Abraham, and Mary, that she had "chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her," Luke 10: 42. To the adulterous woman, Christ said, "Go, and sin no more," Jn. 8: 11.

Such a repentance we teach, and no other, namely, that no one can glory in the grace of God, the forgiveness of sins, the merits

of Christ, and count himself pious, unless he has truly repented. It is not enough that we say, we are Abraham's children, that is, that we are called christians and esteemed as such, but we must do the works of Abraham, that is, we must walk as all true children of God are commanded by his word, as John writes, "If we say, we have fellowship with him (God) and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sins," 1 Jn. 1: 6, 7.

I ask all my readers, if they ever have read in the scriptures, that an impenitent, obdurate man, who fears not God nor his word, who is earthly minded, sensual, devilish, and lives according to his lusts, can be called a child of God and a joint heir of Christ?* I believe you will be constrained to answer, no. But he that with all his heart, ceases from evil and learns to do well, to him the grace of the Lord is proclaimed throughout the whole scriptures, as the prophet says, "Wash ye, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," Isa. 1: 16—18. Again, "If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him," Ezek. 18: 21, 22. And further, read and search the whole scriptures, the true instructions and testimonies of the holy prophets, evangelists and apostles, and you will find it clearly set forth, how this godly repentance is to be earnestly received and practiced, and that without it no one can receive grace, enter into the kingdom of heaven, or ever hope for it.**

* The impenitent are without grace.

** These remarks apply to those who have ears to hear and hearts to understand, and not to infants that are incapable of understanding.

In short, as far as in us lies, we teach repentance from the word of the Lord, in order that we may subdue those carnal lusts which war against the soul, 1 Peter 2: 11, crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5: 24, refrain from conformity to this world, Rom. 12: 2, cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, Rom. 13: 12; that we "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," 1. Jn. 2: 15; "put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him," Col. 3: 9, 10; yea, cast off the old Adam with his whole nature and deceitful lusts, such as pride, avarice, unchastity, hatred, envyings, gluttony, drinking, idolatry, and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, whose fruits are faith, love, hope, righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost, Eph. 4: 22; Rom. 14: 17; Gal. 5: 16; be patient in suffering, merciful, compassionate, chaste, sincerely hating and rebuking all sin, and entertaining a sincere love and zeal for God and his word.* I repeat it, that this repentance, which we teach, must be sincere, fruitful and acceptable to the Lord, according to the instructions of his word. He that receives this repentance in sincerity, and abides therein unto the end, may rejoice and thank God, for the end thereof is eternal life. But he that rejects it and does not desire it, let him take warning that the end thereof is eternal death.

Beloved Sirs, Friends and Brethren, do for once truly and sincerely lay it to heart, what it is, and what the consequences will be, willfully to transgress the commands of the Lord and haughtily sin against the word of God. Adam and Eve did but once eat of the fruit of which the Lord had forbidden them, therefore, for Adam's sake the earth was cursed. In the sweat of his face he was doomed to eat his bread all the days of his life. Eve and her daughters must bring forth in pain, and be in subjection to their husbands. They were driven from Paradise, and with all their race, doomed to return to dust, from whence they were taken. Here also there was no forgiveness

nor consolation of grace to be obtained. But the Eternal Word, God's Eternal Son must needs come from high heaven, assume human nature, suffer hunger, temptation, misery; the cross and death, as the scriptures teach.* Oh, beloved Sirs, if this single transgression was so great before God, what will become of those who so proudly, all their days, despise the holy word, covenant, will and commandment of the Lord, who do not confess their sins and transgressions, though they are full of iniquity from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet. Cain was cursed and became a vagabond upon the earth as long as he lived, because he so enviously slew his innocent brother Abel. Alas! what will become of those, who, at the present day without compassion or justice, persecute, plunder and murder the pious Abelites, who with fervent hearts seek Christ and eternal life?

The ancient world was drowned in the waters of the flood, because the sons of God looked upon the daughters of men, that they were fair, and took to themselves wives of all which they chose, and also because they would not be reproved of the Spirit of God, for every imagination and thought of their hearts were evil continually. Reflect upon the lusts with which the marriages of the world at the present time are contracted, yea, like dumb beasts; how the Holy Ghost is reviled, slandered and grieved, and how they all walk in their perverted ways which lead to hell, yea, to eternal damnation and death.

Sodom and Gomorrah, with the surrounding cities, on account of their pride, wantonness, cruelty, and abominable crimes, were burned up with the fire of the furious wrath of God, and cast into the abyss of hell. Alas, alas, what will befall those miserable men in the great and terrible day when the Lord will appear in his glory, whose pride, excess, debauchery, pomp, tyranny, blood-thirstiness, adultery, fornication, and papal abominations, no heart can conceive, no tongue express, no pen describe! Rom. 1: 24.

Koran, Dathan and Abiram, though they were of the seed of Abraham, and some of

*Such are the fruits of true repentance.

* Thus Christ came into the world to redeem mankind.

them were born of Levi, yet because they revolted against Moses and Aaron, and sought to enter into the sacerdotal office, without being called, they and all their company, were swallowed up by the earth alive, Num. 16: 32. Consider what will ultimately happen to our Korites, whom God never acknowledged, much less were sent by him, and whose office, calling and service are not from God and his word, but as the scriptures teach, from the bottomless pit, the dragon and the beast, Rev. 9: 1; 13: 4; 20: 1—3, who mislead so many poor, miserable souls with their seducing doctrines, Babylonian sorceries and hypocritical lives, and not only despise, but also rail, persecute, crucify and kill Christ, the righteous Moses and Aaron. If Moses, the faithful servant of God, could not enter the promised land because he once doubted the word of the Lord, how much less shall this unbelieving, perverted and obdurate generation enter the eternal land of promise and glory, that not only disbelieve and despise the word of the Lord, the acceptable gospel of Jesus Christ, but also bitterly hate and persecute it, trample the blood of Christ under foot, stop their ears against the truth, and refuse to be taught by any means, either with the truth, the unblamable lives of the saints, or the innocent blood of the witnesses of Jesus, which has been shed, and in many countries flowed like water.

O, ye miserable men, who are so entirely depraved and miserable before God, take heed to the word of the Lord, cleanse your bloody hands, and your impure and unbelieving hearts, and no longer despise the grace of God with your vain boastings, and say not Abraham is your father, Jn. 8: 39; that you are the children of God; that Christ died for you, or that you will also confide in his mercy. "Trust ye not in lying words,"

says Jeremiah, the prophet; say not, here is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, for it avails nothing, that Christ died, and that we are called by his name, if we do not possess a sincere, regenerating, vigorous faith in Jesus Christ, pure, unfeigned love, willing obedience, and a pious and irreproachable life. God's mercy, we read, is to his saints, and he hath care for his elect, but the hope of the wicked is vain, Wis. 3: 9; 5: 15. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry," Ps. 34: 15. "Ye are my friends," says Christ, "if ye do whatsoever I command you," John 15: 14. Therefore, we pray and exhort you again to reform; he is still the same unchangeable God, Mal. 3: 6. He is a strict, jealous and rigid punisher of all wickedness; yea, a righteous judge of all ungodliness and of every evil work. He visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate him, Ex. 20: 5. On the other hand, he is compassionate, kind, and merciful unto all that do righteously, and fear his name, to many thousands who love him and keep his commandments.

O reader, reader, beloved reader, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! The time is fulfilled, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. The kingdom of heaven is at hand; would you inherit and enter into it, you must repent, not only in appearance, as the hypocrites do, but as sincere penitents, with all your hearts, and all your powers, and bring forth good fruit. If not, you must be cut off and cast into the fire of his fierce wrath, John 15: 6; Luke 3: 9. *Imo nisi resipuerite, omnes similiter peritites*, i. e., "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Luke 13: 3.

F A I T H.

In the third place, we teach with Christ and say, "Believe the gospel," Mark. 1: 15. That gospel is the glad tidings and promulgation of the favor and grace of God toward us, and the forgiveness of our sins through

Christ Jesus. The believer, by faith, receives this gospel through the Holy Ghost, and does not look upon his former righteousness or unrighteousness, but hopes against hope, Rom. 4: 18, and with the

whole heart depends upon the grace, word and promises of the Lord; since he well knows that God is true, and that his promises are sure, Ps. 33: 4; Rom. 3: 4; 1 Cor. 1: 9; thereby the heart is renewed, converted, justified, made pious, peaceable and joyous, Rom. 14: 17; Gal. 5: 22; he is born a child of God, John 1: 13, approaches, with full confidence, the throne of grace, Heb. 4: 11, and thus becomes a joint heir of Christ and a possessor of everlasting life, Rom. 8: 14; 1 Tim. 1: 16. Such then awaken in time; they hear and believe the word of the Lord; they weep over their past unworthy lives and conduct; they desire help and advice for their sick souls. To such, Christ, who is a comforter for all troubled hearts, says, "Believe the gospel;" that is, fear not; rejoice and be comforted; I will not punish nor chastise you, but will heal you, comfort you, and give you life, Is. 41: 10. A bruised reed I will not break, and smoking flax I will not quench, Matt. 12: 20; "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick," Ezek. 34: 16; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, Matt. 9: 13; Mark. 2: 17; Lu. 5: 32; according to the good pleasure of my heavenly Father, I came into the world, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, I became a visible, tangible and dying man; in all points like unto you, yet without sin, Heb. 4: 15; I was born of Mary, the spotless virgin; I came down from heaven, proceeded from the mouth of the Most High; I am the first born of every creature, the first and the last; the beginning and the end, Rev. 22: 13; the Son of the Almighty God, Luke 1: 32, anointed with the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel to the poor, and to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to give sight to the blind, to open the prison to them that are bound, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, Is. 61: 1, 2; Luke 4: 18. Believe the gospel. I am the Lamb that was offered for you all. I take away the sins of the whole world. My Father has made me unto you "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. 1: 30; Rom. 6: 10. Whosoever believeth on me shall not be ashamed; yea,

all that believe that I am he, shall have eternal life, Rom. 10: 11; John 3: 16.

Behold, beloved Sirs, Friends, and Brethren, all who believe this are those of whom the scriptures say, "To them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," Jn. 1: 12, 13. These are they who are justified by faith, and have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, Rom. 5: 1, 2, and this, as Paul says, is all of grace and love, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, &c., Rom. 3: 23—25. There is none, that of himself, can rejoice in, or boast of this faith;* it is the gift of God, Eph. 2: 8. All who receive faith from God, receive a tree full of all manner of good and delicious fruit; happy are they who receive this gift of God, for it is more precious than gold, silver or precious stones; it is incomparable, he that obtains it, obtains Christ Jesus, forgiveness of sins, a new mind and eternal life, for the true faith, which is acceptable to God, cannot be dead; it must bring forth fruit, and thus manifest its nature; it works continually in love; walks willingly in righteousness; mortifies flesh and blood; crucifies the lusts and desires; rejoices in the cross of Christ; renews and regenerates, quickeneth, makes free and gives peace in Christ Jesus. Behold, such a faith, I say, is the gift of God, Eph. 2: 8, by which the righteous, according to the scriptures, are to live as did Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Rahab and all the saints. Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit after its kind, Matt. 7: 17; every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, although in its full foliage, must be accursed and consumed with fire, Matt. 3: 10. Thus also a fruitless, powerless faith, such as is possessed by the world, and does not work by love, be it ever so learned, wise, eloquent, plausible and

* Salvation is the gift of God.

miraculous, still, it is in the sight of God unclean, dead and accursed, 1 Cor. 13: 2.

Therefore, we exhort you, with Christ Jesus, "Believe the gospel;" that is, believe the joyful news, the message of divine grace through Jesus Christ; leave off sinning, manifest repentance for your past lives, submit to the word and will of the Lord; then you will become heirs and joint-heirs,

citizens and children of the new and heavenly Jerusalem, made free from your enemies, hell, sin, death and the devil, and walk according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh, Rom. 8: 6. *Quid credit filio dei habet vitam aeternam*, i. e., He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, John 3: 36.

A SUPPLICATION TO THE MAGISTRACY.

We poor, wretched men, deprived of all human assistance and consolation, who like innocent sheep without a shepherd, have become a prey to the roaring lions of the forest, and devouring beasts of the field; a spectacle and reproach to the whole world, have to suffer daily, under the oppressive sword of lords and princes; have to hear and endure, the inhuman revilings and abuse of the learned, the abominable lying and scoffing of the common people; we humbly entreat the imperial majesty, kings, lords, princes, authorities and officers, every one in his calling, dignity and honor, and all our beloved and gracious rulers, through the deep and bloody wounds of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, that you would but once lay aside all displeasure and evil opinions concerning us, and with sincere pity reflect upon the inhuman and severe trials, misery, necessities, crosses and martyrizations of your distressed and innocent servants; for the great God before whom we stand, who is the Searcher of all hearts, and before whose eyes all things are open and revealed; who knows that we seek nothing else upon this earth than that we, with a good conscience, may live according to his holy commandments, ordinances, word and will; but if there are some pernicious sects, as alas! in our day there have been, they will, no doubt, in due time become manifest.

Do therefore condescend so much as to peruse our writings diligently and meditate upon them with a God-fearing and impartial heart, so that you may know with certainty

why we are not deterred from our doctrine, faith and practice, by coercion, poverty, misery persecution and death; that you may thus more thoroughly examine the truth and be no longer guilty of innocent blood. Be pleased to show some natural candor, and human charity towards your poor servants. Think not in your hearts, that we poor, forsaken men, after the flesh, are wood or stone; but we are with you descended from one father, Adam, and from one mother, Eve, and are created by the same God, having a common entrance into this world, are clothed with the same nature, desiring rest and peace, concerned for wives and children as well as you, and naturally, as all other creatures on earth, fearful of death.

Therefore, humble yourselves in the name of Jesus, that your poor souls may be saved. Examine I say, our doctrine and instructions, and you will find through the grace of God, that they are the pure and unadulterated doctrines of Christ, the holy word, the word of eternal peace, the word of eternal truth, the word of divine grace, the word of our salvation, the unconquerable word, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, Matt. 16: 18; they are the two-edged sword that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord, Rev. 1: 16, the sword of the spirit by which all must be judged, that dwell upon the earth, Eph. 6: 17.

O, ye beloved sirs, put the sword into the sheath; for as true as the Lord liveth, you do not fight against flesh and blood, but against Him, whose eyes are a flame of fire,

who judgeth and maketh war in righteousness; who is crowned with many crowns, whose name no one knoweth but himself; who is clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; whose name is called the Word of God; who rules the nations with a rod of iron; who treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God; who hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**, Rev. 19: 11—16.

O, ye highly renowned lords and princes, it is against this Being that you are in this manner contending with your counsel and sword. Remember what the great prophet of the Lord, Zechariah, said concerning the children of God, who, in this world are ever subject to suffering, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye," Zech. 2: 8. It is a fearful abomination, and bitter enmity, thus miserably to murder, destroy and exterminate those, who with such warm hearts, seek the Lord and eternal life, and who would not molest any one upon the earth. "Precious in the sight of the Lord," David says, "is the death of his saints," Ps. 116: 15. It is Jesus of Nazareth whom ye persecute, Acts 9: 5, and not us; therefore awake, forbear, fear God and his word, for we shall all be called to appear before one Judge, before whom neither power, exaltation, comeliness, fine speech nor talents will avail. Judgment will there be passed in righteousness upon all flesh, impartially and without respect to persons; the oppressed will then receive justice, and the crucified Jesus with his elect, released from the power of death, and the hands of tyrants, will enter into his promised inheritance, kingdom and glory.

Seeing then that you deal so unjustly and tyrannically, according to the evil intentions of your hearts, without the sanction of scripture and mercy, with the helpless and God-fearing, how can you expect any grace and mercy in the day of the Lord? when we shall all have to stand before the impartial judgment seat, where every one will be rewarded according to his deeds, 2 Cor. 5: 10.

We desire not such favors as the evil-doers of this world; for we have not sinned in this our doctrine, faith and practice, although we have to suffer so much; but we, only

with the word of the Lord, as the scriptures direct us, resist the anti-christian doctrines, ordinances and life. We resist neither the emperor, the king, nor any authority to which they are called of God; but we are ready to obey till death, in all things which are not contrary to God and his word, and well know what the scriptures teach and enjoin concerning this matter, Rom. 13: 1—8. But we desire so much mercy, that under your gracious protection we may live, teach, labor, and serve the Lord, according to the dictates of our consciences, so that to you and many with you, the gospel of Christ may be rightly preached, and the gate of life opened. Alas! if the learned had the word of God, and we had it not, how gladly would we be taught by them. But since we have it, and they do not, therefore we pray, for Jesus' sake, do not urge us to leave Christ and join anti-christ; to go from truth to error; from life to certain death.

Oh, ye renowned lords and princes, who are appointed of God, to be heads and rulers, consider well and believe on the word of the Lord; for if you will not desist from unrighteousness, fear God and do right, it would be better for you if you had never been born. The innocent blood of Abel calls unto heaven, and will be strictly demanded at your hands at the last day. Again we say, awake, fear God's word; for God, the Lord himself, will rule in heaven, in his kingdom, that is, in the hearts of men. He will permit none to detract from his glory, or become exalted above him. Lucifer, the fair angel of God, desired to exalt himself to the Most High, and was cast out of heaven into the abyss of hell; and is retained in chains of darkness till the judgement of the last day, Isa. 14: 12—15; Rev. 12: 7—9; Pet. 2: 4.

Beloved Sirs, receive it in love, and be not offended, for the truth must be made known. Your pride has arisen to heaven; look to Christ and his word, his example and his life: judge impartially, and you will find this to be true. The Almighty, eternal Father, through his eternal Wisdom, Christ Jesus, has instituted and commanded all things in his kingdom, that is, in his church, relating to doctrines, sacraments and life, according to his divine counsel, will and

wisdom. But you, through the counsel and instigation of the learned, by your inhuman, and cruel mandates, have changed, destroyed and corrupted these, as if the almighty and eternal word should yield to your command and authority; and as though the divine ordinances of the Son of God might be changed into a more suitable form, and to a better purpose through the wisdom of men. O presumption of all presumption! O folly of all follies! Why exalt thyself, O earth and dust! Acknowledge Christ Jesus, your chief Lord, who, of God, is made to you a Prince and Judge. "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's," saith David, "but the earth hath he given to the children of men," Ps. 115: 16. I have no doubt, that if any were to rise up against the emperor or king, and enter into his kingdom and government, he would not be borne with patiently, nor go unpunished; how much less then, will a poor, fleshly mortal go unpunished, who rises up against the Almighty Emperor, and King, Christ Jesus, to dethrone him from the seat of his divine majesty, and to rob him of his sceptre, and the crown of his glory, as though Christ Jesus, the eternal wisdom of God, was unreasonable and unfit for the heavenly government. Reflect what became of those haughty and proud hearts from the beginning, who desired to place their seats unto the throne of God.

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, as Peter teaches. Take as an example, the great and prosperous king Nebuchadnezzar, and observe how grievously God punished him, on account

of his pride; and how, after being punished, he turned to wisdom, feared the Almighty, highly praised his wonderful and glorious works, and his great and adorable name.

Beloved Sirs, awake, and mend your ways, for it does not become the creature to rise up against the Creator. Christ *alone* will be the head of his church, the Teacher in his school; and he *alone*, the King who will judge his kingdom; not with the doctrines and commands of men, nor with slaying and murdering, but with his Holy Spirit, power, grace and word.

Therefore, we pray you, O ye great ones of the earth, whom we, through the mercy of God, acknowledge in all temporal things, as our gracious lords, that you would receive the eternal, Almighty King, Christ Jesus, as the only Savior, Lord and sovereign of our poor souls, even as he was ordained by his Father; and that you would attend to the duties of your office and temporal government, to which you have been called; for we with all our hearts, desire to render unto "Caesar, the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's," Matt. 22: 21. Be pleased also to consider this, our doctrine and instruction, concerning baptism, the Lord's supper, and the shunning of Babylonian deeds; and compare them well with the word of the Lord. We hope, through the grace of God, that you will find, in truth, that we believe and teach nothing but that which the true oracle of the Lord has commanded us, and the holy apostles have taught and confirmed; to this end, may the great Lord grant you his grace, Amen.

CONCERNING BAPTISM.

Christ, after his resurrection, commanded his apostles, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, Amen." Matt. 28: 19, 20.

Here we have the Lord's command concerning baptism, when and how, after the ordinance of God, it shall be administered and received; namely, that the gospel must first be preached, and then those baptized who believe therein, as Christ says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth

not, shall be damned," Mark. 16: 15. Thus has the Lord commanded and ordered; therefore, let no other be taught, or practiced forever. The word of God abideth forever. Young children are without understanding and cannot be taught, therefore, baptism cannot be administered to them without perverting the ordinance of the Lord; misusing his exalted name, and doing violence to his holy word. In the New Testament there are no ordinances enjoined upon infants, for it treats, both in doctrines and sacraments, with those who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand, Matt. 13: 16. Even as Christ commanded, so the holy apostles also taught and practiced, as may be plainly perceived in many parts of the New Testament. Thus Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," Acts 2: 38. Again, Philip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," Acts 8: 37. Here, faith did not follow baptism, but baptism followed faith, Mark 16: 16.

Christ has thus commanded baptism, and received it himself, according to the following manner: When the time had come, and the hour had approached, in which he would fulfill the commission enjoined upon him, preach the word, and make known his Father's holy name, he came to John, to the Jordan, and desired to be baptized of him, that he might fulfill all righteousness. He prepared to meet temptation, misery, the cross and death, and as a willing, obedient child, resigned himself to the will of his Almighty Father; he himself saith, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that send me," Jn. 6: 38. He was baptized of John, attested to by the Holy Ghost, and acknowledged by the Father, as a beloved Son, Matt. 3: 17; 17: 5.

Behold, thus Christ commands, and was himself baptized; thus the apostles taught, and practiced. Who will rise up against the Lord, and say, it shall not be so? Who will teach and instruct wisdom? Who will accuse the apostles and evangelists with falsehood? It would be entirely unbecoming for a child to command and judge his

father, or a servant, his master, and it is much more unbecoming for the creature to exalt himself above his Creator. But now it is manifest that the whole world, with its unprofitable doctrines, and commandments of men; with its anti-christian customs, long standing usages, its tyrannical, murdering sword, judges over Christ and his word. The truths of Christ are esteemed lies; his wisdom, foolishness; his light, darkness, and his gospel, perverted and false. In short, Christ must be silent and suffer.

Now it may probably be said, that this was necessary in the beginning of the gospel, because at that time, there were no believers whose children might be baptized; but now, if the parents are believers, then are the children also to be baptized, even as Abraham, when he believed, circumcised his children, Gen. 17: 23. O no! this does not follow.

Although Abraham believed God, only one-half of his seed was circumcised, namely, the male children, and not the female, though he was the father of the female, as well as of the male children, of which, by the grace of God, more shall be said in the replication.

In the beginning the gospel was to be preached, and faith followed hearing, and baptism followed faith; this is incontrovertable, for so the Scriptures teach, Rom. 10: 17. But that the children of believers should be baptized because Abraham's children were circumcised, can in no wise be sustained by Scripture; but if it could be established, though it cannot, there would then be but few children baptized, for the number of true believers, it is to be lamented, is very small, as any one may see.

They are not all christians who are so called. But those only who have the Spirit of Christ, are true christians, though I know not where many are to be found. Yea, what more shall we say? All who with Abel bring an acceptable offering; those who are born with Isaac of the free woman, and with Jacob have the birthright, and have obtained the paternal blessing, must be slain by bloodthirsty Cain, mocked by Ishmael, and hated by Esau, even as we hear and see on all sides. May God effect a change for the better.

Behold, this is the word and will of the

Lord, that all who hear and believe the word of God, shall be baptized (as above stated), thereby to profess their faith, and declare that they will henceforth not live according to their own will, but according to the will of God. That for the testimony of Jesus they are prepared to forsake their homes, chattels, lands and lives, and to suffer hunger, affliction, oppression, persecution, the cross and death; yea, they desire to bury the flesh with its lusts, and arise with Christ to newness of life, even as Paul says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," Col. 2: 11, 12; Rom. 6: 3, 4.

Beloved Reader, take heed to the word of the Lord, for this also Paul teaches, who received not his gospel of men, but of the Lord himself; even as Christ died and was buried, so also ought we to die unto our sins, and be buried with Christ in baptism; we are not to do this after we have been baptized, but we must commence and do all this before hand. "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin," Rom. 6: 5—7; for even as Christ died, hath taken away sin, and liveth unto God, so every true christian dieth unto sin, and liveth unto God.

Think not that we teach, that christians are to die unto sin, in such a manner, as to become insensible to sin. Not by any means; but they die unto sin, so as to be no longer obedient to their impure lusts, as Paul says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof," Rom. 6: 12; also, John says, "Who-soever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin,* because he is born of God," 1 Jn. 3: 9; 5: 18.

* According to the Holland, "He has no desire to sin."

For as the death of our Lord would not have profited us, had he not risen from the power of death to the praise of his Father, neither will it avail us anything to bury our sins in baptism, if we do not arise with Christ Jesus from the power of sin, unto a new life, to the praise of the Lord. "For in that he (Christ) died, he died unto sin once," says Paul, "but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; likewise, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ." And, "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members, servants to righteousness and holiness." For being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness, and have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. 6: 10, 11, 18, 19, 22.

Here observe, intelligent reader; you who desire to know the truth, and seek the salvation of your soul, what the great and holy apostle Paul has taught you. If you believe his word, doctrine and testimony to be true, you will no doubt readily perceive, from these instructions, and from many other passages in the Scriptures, that baptism is no more applicable to infants, than circumcision was to the females of the Israelites; for we are no more commanded to baptize infants than Israel was to circumcise female children. It is also impossible for little children to die to sin, as long as they have not been made alive to it; neither can they rise to a new life, as long as they are not born of God through faith, and by the Spirit of God led into righteousness. Therefore beware, for the intent of baptism is to bury sin, and to rise with Christ into a new life, which can by no means, be the case with infants; therefore, consider well what the word of the Lord teaches you on this subject.

Again, Paul calls baptism "the washing of regeneration." O Lord, how lamentably thy Holy Word is abused. Is it not greatly to be lamented, that men are attempting, notwithstanding these plain passages, to maintain their idolatrous invention of infant baptism, and set forth that infants are regenerated thereby, as if regeneration was simply a pressing into the water? O no, re-

generation is not such a work of hypoerisy, but is an inward change, which converts a man by the power of God, through faith, from evil to good, from carnality to spirituality, from unrighteousness to righteousness, out of Adam into Christ, which can in no wise take place with infants. The regenerated live by the power of the new life; they crucify the flesh with its evil lusts; they put off the old Adam with his deeds; they avoid every appearance of evil; they are taught, governed and influenced by the Holy Ghost, Rom. 1: 17.

Behold this is true regeneration with its fruits, of which the Scriptures speak, and comes through faith in the word of God, without which no one, who has arrived to the years of understanding, can be saved; as Christ says, "Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," Jn. 3: 3. Yea, it is all in vain, if one were even baptized of Peter, or Paul, or Christ himself, if he were not baptized from above with the Holy Ghost and with fire, Matt. 3: 11, as Paul says, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature," Gal. 5: 6; 2 Cor. 5: 17. All who are thus born of God, changed and renewed in the inner man, and translated from Adam into Christ, are ready to obey the word of the Lord, and say with holy Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" They deny themselves with all their minds and hearts; they submit to the word and ordinances of the Lord, without dislike or opposition; they receive baptism according to the command of the Lord, Matt. 28: 19. They become and manifest themselves as fruitful branches of Christ, the true Vine, and joint heirs in the church of the Lord, John 15: 5. They receive forgiveness of their sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; they put on Christ; enter the ark of safety, and are secured from the dreadful flood of wrath, which, like a net, will come upon all them that dwell upon the earth. This, however, is not effected by the power of the water or the sign, but by the power of the divine word, received through faith; for where there is no faith, which through love worketh obedience (we again speak of those who have come to the years of understand-

ing), there is no promise. "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him," Jn. 3: 36.

The Lord commanded Moses that he should stretch forth his hand, and with the rod smite the sea, and the waters should be divided. Moses believed the word of the Lord; stretched forth his hand and smote the sea with his rod; the waters were divided and Israel was redeemed; not by the rod and the stroke, but by the power of the divine word received by Moses, through a sincere and living faith. Had Moses not believed the word of God, and through disobedience not smote the sea, undoubtedly affrighted and oppressed Israel would have fared ill. He also received a command in the wilderness to erect a brazen serpent, so that when Israel looked thereon, they might be healed of the bite of the serpents. Moses believed the word of the Lord, and erected a serpent; Israel looked upon it and was healed, not through the virtue of the image, but through the power of the divine word, received by them through faith. In the same manner salvation is ascribed to scriptural baptism, Mark. 16: 16; the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2: 38; the putting on of Christ, Gal. 3: 27, and incorporation into his church; not on account of the water, or the administered sign (else the kingdom of God would depend upon the elements and signs), but on account of the power and truth of the divine promise, which we receive by obedience through faith. For all those who teach reliance upon words, the elements and works, with Aaron, make a golden calf, and suffer a people without understanding to commit idolatry and abominations therewith, for in Christ, faith alone availeth, which worketh by love, the new creature, and the keeping of the commandments of God.

Beloved sirs, friends, and brethren, awake and delay not, render the Most High his due praise and honor, and give ear to his holy word, for those who maintain that the baptism of children that are incapable of understanding, is a washing of regeneration, do violence to the word of God; resist the Holy Ghost; make Christ a liar, and his holy apostles false witnesses; for Christ and his apostles teach that regeneration comes

through faith from God and his word, which word is not to be taught to those who are unable to hear or understand,* but to those who have the ability, both to hear and understand; this is incontrovertible.

The holy apostle Peter also explains the same and says, that "even baptism doth also now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God (or the covenant of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. 3: 21.

Here Peter teaches us how the inward baptism saves us, by which the inner man is washed, and not the outward baptism by which the flesh is washed; for only this inward baptism, as already stated, is of value in the sight of God, while outward baptism follows only as an evidence of obedience which is of faith; for could outward baptism save without the inner washing, the whole Scriptures which speak of the new man, would be spoken to no purpose. The kingdom of heaven would be bound to elementary water; the blood of Christ would be shed in vain, and no one that is baptized could be lost. No, no! outward baptism avails nothing so long as we are not inwardly renewed, regenerated, and baptized of God, with the heavenly fire and the Holy Ghost. But when we receive this baptism from above, we will be constrained through the Spirit and word of God, by a good conscience, which we thereby obtain, to believe sincerely in the merits of the death of the Lord, and in the power and benefits of his resurrection; and henceforth, because we are inwardly cleansed by faith, and the spiritual strength which we have received, we submissively covenant with the Lord, through the outward sign of baptism, which is enjoined on all the believers in Christ, even as the Lord has covenanted with us in his grace, through his word, that we will no longer live according to the evil, unclean lusts of the flesh, but walk according to the witness of a good conscience before him.

Though these words of Peter are very plain, the learned are not ashamed to force them into a very different signification, by

means of their plausible comments and their much boasted reason (probably that they may retain the favor of the world, and live in opulence without cross or affliction), and teach, that baptism is a sign of grace; which according to my limited understanding, can in no wise be established. Our sign of grace is Christ Jesus alone, through whom God's abundant love is freely dispensed and declared unto us. By signs he was gloriously prefigured to the ancient patriarchs, as by the coats of skin to Adam and Eve; by the rainbow to Noah, by circumcision to Abraham, by which sign they were assured of the divine covenant. But we are assured of God, of his divine grace, and his eternal peace, by this one sign only, which is Christ Jesus. The seal in our consciences is the Holy Ghost, but baptism is a sign of obedience, commanded of Christ, by which we testify, when we receive it; that we believe the word of the Lord, that we are sorry for, and repent of our former life and conduct; that we desire to rise with Christ unto a new life; and that we believe in the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. Not, my beloved, that we believe in the remission of sins through baptism; by no means; because by baptism we cannot obtain faith and repentance, neither do we receive the forgiveness of sins, nor peace, nor liberty of conscience, but we testify thereby that we have repented, received pardon and faith in Christ, as before said. With the fathers it was not thus, for they, through the signs, received assurance and comfort that the promise would be true and sure. We have this assurance in Christ Jesus alone, in whom all the figurative signs were completed; so that we have in this only true sign, Christ, that which the fathers had in many figurative signs. In short, had we forgiveness of sins and peace of conscience, through outward ceremonies and elements, then the REALITY would be superceded, and his merits made of no effect.

Behold, this is the only and true foundation of baptism maintained by the Scriptures, and none other. This we teach and practice though all the gates of hell rise against us; for we know it is the revealed word of the Lord, and his divine ordinance, from which we dare not take away, nor add

* This has reference to infants, that are incapable of understanding.

thereto, lest we be found disobedient and false before God (who alone is the Lord and God of our consciences), for, "every word of the Lord is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him," Prov. 30: 5.

Oh God, what are the learned and highly learned masters of this world doing, who are so earnestly engaged in derogating from God's word and wisdom, and ingeniously urging their own vain reason and wisdom; they will not prosper; God will not give his honor to another, for he is the Lord; that is his name, and beside him there is no other, Isa. 42: 8. Conquering, he will conquer them. He will turn wisdom to folly and their reason to disgrace, for he "knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain," 1 Cor. 3: 20.

Luther writes, that children should be baptized on account of their own faith, and adds, "If children had no faith, then their baptism would be blaspheming the sacrament," &c. It appears to me, to be a great error in this learned man, through whose writings at first the Lord effected much good, that he maintained that children, without knowledge and understanding, had faith, while the Scriptures teach so plainly, that they know not good from evil, that they cannot discern right from wrong, and he (Luther) says that faith is dormant and concealed in children even as in a believing person who is asleep, till they arrive at the years of understanding. If Luther writes this as his sincere opinion, he writes much in vain concerning faith and its power, but if he writes to please men, may God have mercy upon him, for I know of a truth it is only human reason and the invention of men; but it shall not make void the word and ordinance of the Lord. We do not read in Scripture that the Apostles baptized a single believer while asleep. They baptized those who were awake, and not the slumbering. Why then do they baptize their children before that sleeping faith awakes and is confessed by them?

Bucer does not thus support this doctrine, but he maintains infant baptism differently, namely, not that children have faith, but that they, by baptism may be added to the church of the Lord, and instructed in his word. He admits that infant baptism is not

expressly commanded, nevertheless he maintains that it is right. O Lord! how lamentably they do err, who court the favor and honor of men, and seek not the favor and honor of God. Since infant baptism is not expressly commanded of God, as he acknowledges, it cannot be acceptable to the Lord, *Et per consequence*, i. e., and by consequence, no promise can follow. Therefore, the reader should know, that true christians ought not to be governed in this matter, by the opinions and traditions of men, but by the word and the ordinances of God. For we have but one Lord and Master of our conscience, Christ Jesus, whose word, will, command and ordinance, it becomes us, as his willing disciples, to follow, even as the bride rejoices greatly to hear the bridegroom's voice, John 3: 29.

Since we have not a single command in the Scriptures that infants are to be baptized, or that the apostles did practice it; we modestly confess, with a good conscience, that infant baptism is but human invention; a selfish notion; a perversion of the ordinance of Christ; a manifest abomination, standing in the holy place, where it ought, properly, not to be, Matt. 24: 15.

Beloved sirs, how little the word of the Lord is regarded, which says, Ye shall not do after that which is right in your own eyes, but observe whatsoever I command you, Deut. 12: 8. Did not the Father testify from heaven and declare, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him?" Matt. 17: 5. Does not the whole Scripture direct us to Christ? Are we not baptized in his name that we should hear his voice, and be obedient to his word? Do you not boast to be the apostolic church? Why do you then depart from Christ and adhere to anti-christ; from the apostolic doctrine and practice to the doctrine and practice of the learned? Do observe how severely and frequently God punished men for the self-formed opinions which they maintained as works of holiness and divine worship.

Nadab and Abihu, because they offered strange fire before the Lord, were suddenly destroyed by fire, before the altar, through the wrath of God.

Saul had mercy on Agag, the king of the

Amalekites, and prompted by his good intentions, spared the best sheep and oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord, contrary to the word of the prophet. That seeming act of mercy and laudable zeal was punished as the sin of witchcraft and idolatry, because he acted according to his own judgment, and not according to the word of the prophet. He was reprov'd by the prophet, smitten with a pestilence, his kingdom taken from him, and given to a more faithful one, 1 Sam. 15: 23.

Manasseh, the king of the Jews, and others in Israel, made their children pass through fire. They built temples and altars in all the high places, also in cities and countries, with good intentions; for they were desirous thereby to honor the Almighty and eternal God, as may be plainly seen, 2 Kings 21: 3—6. This glorious and holy choice was so offensive before God, that Jeremiah refused to intercede for the people. Israel was desolated, Jerusalem and the temple burnt; and the people with the holy vessels were carried into a foreign land, 2 Kings 25: 9; 2 Chron. 36: 12. Therefore, saith God by the prophet, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you; not those of your own choice; that it may be well with you, Jer. 7: 23.

What advice then, my beloved friends, shall be given in relation to such wilful deceivers, who so presumptuously do violence to the expressed word of the Lord, and so shamefully belie the Almighty, the Most High God, and teach that it is the word of God; though such things he never proposed, much less commanded, and never will.

How awful it is thus to sin against God, and so lamentably to pervert his holy and precious word! Yea, they shall be severely punished of the Lord with heavy judgments, they shall not escape the ire of his fierce wrath, if they do not repent and reform; for God is an enemy to all liars. They have neither part nor lot in his kingdom: but their portion is eternal destruction, in the lake of fire, 2 Thes. 2: 8; Rev. 20: 10; 19: 20.

In the second place, it is evident, that infant baptism is an accursed, abominable and idolatrous institution; for all those

who are baptized in infancy, are called christians and are accounted partakers of the Lord's grace, merits, death and blood, and are called his people, although the whole course of their lives, is entirely heathenish, wild and dissolute; yea, they indulge in nothing but gluttony, drinking, gaming, whoring, cursing and swearing, as though the water in baptism could make and preserve them christians. O no! Paul declares, "He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his," Rom. 8: 9. Yea, the helpless, innocent children, though baptized with the blood of the Lord, and having the sure promise of the kingdom of God, if not baptized, with this baptism, must be buried without the grave yard as accursed. What infamy!—what blindness! We will say nothing of godfathers, of crossing, breathing upon, sprinkling with salt water, anointing, spitting upon, and their abominable exorcism, all of which is nothing else than open blasphemy, and not commanded of God. What abominable, detestable idolatry these things are.

In the third place, we are informed by historians, ancient, and modern, and also in the decrees, that baptism was changed both as to its mode and time of administering. In the beginning of the holy church, persons were baptized in common water on their first profession, upon their own faith, according to the Scriptures. Afterwards a change was made; they were examined seven times before being baptized; after that, they were baptized at two stated periods; namely, at Easter and Whitsuntide. Higinus, the tenth pope, instituted godfathers, in the year A. D. 146. Finally, Luther tells us, that in the year A. D. 407, Pope Innocent confirmed infant baptism by a decree, and it is to be feared that it will not be abrogated, but at the expense of much innocent blood of the saints and children of God; even as the prophets, in their days reprov'd the accursed abominations and idolatry of the kings, priests and people, not by admonition only, but also with their blood, as we read in both sacred and profane history.

If infant baptism was commanded of God, in his word, why did Innocent add his decree? How can baptism as practiced by the

world, be right, since it has been so frequently changed? We entreat you, for Jesus' sake, to reflect that Christ Jesus and not the learned, is King and Lord of his Church; and rules over it with his sceptre, Spirit and word, Matt. 11: 27. As it is said, He is made unto us Wisdom, and none can instruct him; he appeared, in order that he might testify to the truth. They that love the truth, hear his voice; believe his word, and not that of the learned; for his word is truth; but the word of the learned, in this respect, is seduction; for Christ commands that believers should be baptized; but in relation to infants, that are without understanding, he gave no command. But the learned say, he that has not his children baptized, and is himself baptized upon his faith, as Christ commanded, is a fanatic, ana-baptist and heretic.

We have here given you the principal reasons why we oppose infant baptism, not only in doctrine, but also to the sacrifice of our lives and possessions. For we well know, by the grace of God, that there is not one word in the Scriptures in its support. We tell you the truth and lie not. Is there one under the canopy of heaven who can show us, by divine truth, that Jesus Christ, the Son of Almighty God, the Eternal Wisdom and Truth, whom alone we acknowledge as the Lawgiver, and Teacher of the New Testament, has given a single command that children should be baptized; or that his holy apostles ever so taught, or practiced?

What need then to urge this upon us by tyranny and punishment? Only show it to us in the word of God, and the difficulty is removed. For God, who is omniscient, knows, that in our weakness, we humbly seek to walk according to the divine ordinances, word and will, for which we, poor miserable men, are shamefully reviled, banished, robbed and slain by every one in many countries, like innocent sheep; but the Lord be eternally praised! We are esteemed as unworthy of heaven or earth, even as Christ said, "They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake," Matt. 24: 9.

It is our determination, in this matter as in all other matters of conscience, in view of the wrath of Almighty God, that we will not be influenced by lords and princes, nor by doctors and teachers of schools, nor by the influence of the fathers, and long established customs, for in this matter, neither emperors, nor kings, nor doctors, nor licentiates, nor councils, nor proscriptions against the word of God, will avail. We dare not be bound to any person, power, wisdom or times, but we must be governed alone, by the expressed and positive commands of Christ, and the pure doctrines and practices of his holy apostles, as remarked above; for if we do so, we neither deceive any one in this matter, nor are we deceived. Alas! woe to him, woe to him, who departs from this foundation, or is compelled to do so, either through the infirmities of the flesh or tyranny, or by false doctrine; and will not testify of the word of his Lord until death, unto this wicked and sinful generation, both in word and deed, Matt. 10: 38; 16: 24.

Observe, all of you who persecute the word of the Lord and his people, this is our instruction, doctrine and belief concerning baptism, according to the instruction of the words of Christ, namely, we must first hear the word of God, believe it, and then upon our faith be baptized; we are not seditions or contentious; we do not approve of polygamy; neither do we seek nor wait for any kingdom upon earth.

O no! no! to God be eternal praise; we well know what the word of the Lord teaches us and testifies to, on this subject. The word of the Lord commands us that we, with a sincere heart, desire to die to sin, to bury our sins with Christ, and with him to rise to a new life, even as baptism is a figure thereof.

That we seek to walk humbly and uprightly in Christ Jesus, in the covenant of his grace, and his eternal peace, and with an approved conscience before God, even as the mouth of the Lord has commanded; as he has testified by his example, and as we are taught by the pure doctrines and practices of the apostles, 1 Pet. 3: 21.

COUNTER ARGUMENTS WITH THEIR REPLICATIONS.

Having briefly noticed the Lord's command, and the apostolic doctrine, practices and signification of baptism; that it is and will be the true baptism to the end of time, we will also, now, through the grace of God, as a duty, refer and reply to some scriptural passages of which the learned wrongfully make use, to make void the ordinance of the Lord, and place in its stead their own.

In the first place, they teach that we are all the children of wrath, and sinful; born of the sinful seed of Adam, and therefore, say they, children are to be baptized, in order to be purified and washed from original sin, &c.

To this we reply thus: With the word of the Lord, we believe and confess that we all come from, and are born of unclean seed; that we through the first Adam, who was of the earth, became wholly depraved, and children of death and of hell, Rom. 5: 12. Nevertheless, as we fell, and became sinners in Adam, we also believe and confess, that through Christ, the second and heavenly Adam, we were restored to grace and justified. For he appeared upon earth, that in and through him we might have life. Through him only we glory to have obtained grace, favor and the forgiveness of our sins with God our Father; and not through baptism, whether we are children or believers; for if redemption, and the washing away of original sin, were through baptism, and not by the blood of Christ alone, then would the sweet smelling sacrifice, which is of eternal worth, have been in vain, and without effect, or, there would be two remedies for our sins. Alas, no! the Scriptures speak but of one, which is Christ with his merits, death and blood, 1 Pet. 1: 19. Therefore, he who seeks the remission of his sins through baptism, rejects the blood of the Lord and makes water his idol. Therefore, let every one be careful lest he ascribe the honor and glory due to Christ, to the outward ceremonies and creature elements.

It is true, Peter says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of

Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." But this is not to be understood, that we receive the remission of our sins through baptism. O no! for if it be so, then Christ and his merits must fall. But we receive the remission of our sins, in baptism, as follows: The Lord commanded his gospel to be preached to every creature, so that all who believe and are baptized, may be saved. Where there is faith, which is called the gift of God, by Paul, there also are the power and the fruits of faith. Where there is an active, fruitful faith, there also is the promise; but where such a faith does not exist (we speak of adults), there also is no promise. For he that hears the word of the Lord, and believes it with the heart, manifests his fruit, and faithfully observes all things the Lord commanded him; for the Scriptures teach, the just shall live by faith, Heb. 10: 38. Then the remission of his sins is preached to him, as Peter teaches and instructs.

Had Noah and Lot not believed the word of the Lord, they would have fared ill. Had Abraham not believed, he would not have obtained such glorious promises; but they believed, and did right, and became heirs of righteousness, Heb. 11: 8.

Had Moses and Israel not believed the word of the Lord and been disobedient, how could they have been succored in the sea and in the wilderness? But they believed, and according to his promise, were protected by the mighty hand of the Lord. But those who provoked him, and believed not his gracious word, and the great miracles, fell in the wilderness, and entered not the promised land.

There was also reconciliation connected with the sacrifices of the Old Testament, not on account of the worth of the smoking offerings upon the altars; for it was not possible, says Paul, that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, Heb. 10: 4. Before it was offered, it was all the Lord's, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, were his, says David, Ps. 50: 10. But because the righteous believed the word of divine promise as true, and walked in obedience

to his command, so now also is the remission of sins preached through baptism; not on account of the water, or the ceremonies performed, for Christ, I repeat, is the only source of grace; but, because the righteous receive the promises of the Lord by faith, and obediently follow his word and will.

This direction does not extend to infants. For in all the Scriptures, there is not a single command given to baptize them. Therefore, it is not required of them as a sign of obedience. Since, then, infant baptism is performed without the command of God, it cannot be a ceremony of God, but a pernicious superstition of men, and evidently idolatry; therefore, the promise of God cannot rest upon such abominations. It seems to me, it is high time to awaken, and to give heed to the Scriptures. For Jesus' sake, sin is not imputed to infants that are innocent, and incapable of understanding. Life is promised, not through any one ceremony, but out of pure grace, through the blood of the Lord, as he himself says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God," Mark. 10: 14. But concerning baptism he did not command them any thing.

According to my opinion, it is a great error, which some entertain, that the children of the Jews were acceptable to Christ on account of circumcision; and that ours are acceptable to him on account of baptism. O blasphemy and infamy! In every instance, Christ, the only medium of divine grace must be set aside, and grace must be attributed to the lifeless rites and elements. Here I would ask all Pedo-baptists, how they are going to prove that these blessed children were all circumcised, and that there were not among them female children? If they were acceptable on account of their circumcision, as they pretend, then, why were not adults who were circumcised, acceptable?

Although they were circumcised, he commanded that adults should be baptized upon their faith; but concerning infants he gave no such command. He took them into his arms, laid his hands upon them and blessed them; promised them the kingdom,

and dismissed them; but did not baptize them.

Thus did the wisdom of God himself; but the world would be his teacher. Christ does not command that infants should be baptized, but believers; but the world commands that we should baptize children and not believers.* Yea more, if any one is baptized upon his faith, because the Lord has so commanded; and for conscience' sake has not his children baptized, because God does not command it, his name, alas! is reproached by all, and he is subjected to torture, misery and death; and this is not to be attributed so much to the rulers, as to those who are esteemed teachers and preachers, for what the rulers do, they generally do by the counsel and instigation of the learned. By their fruits, they show who is their father, for they do his works. It seems to me they always have been, and ever will be those, who, with their false doctrines, revengeful spirits, and hard hearts, shed the blood of the righteous, Rev. 17: 6; 18: 24. Alas! such persecution is so disgraceful, that it is almost a shame to mention it. For as clear as the sun shines on this world, and is seen by every one, so manifest is the inhuman, raving tyranny of the learned against the Lamb and his chosen. God grant that the eyes of these blind, perverted, blood-thirsty teachers, with all their tyranny, may be opened, that they may become satisfied and weary of their false doctrine and the shedding of innocent blood, Amen.

In the second place, they teach that the children of Israel under the Old Testament, were admitted into God's covenant and church through circumcision; but now, our children are admitted through baptism. To this, in accordance with Scripture, we reply, No. Whoever reads the Scriptures understandingly, will clearly perceive, that Abraham was in covenant with the Lord, many years before he was circumcised. And that the children were circumcised on the eighth

* Menno means to say that Christ commands, that those who have come to years of understanding, who have the ability to receive the truth and believe it, should be baptized, and not infants who can neither receive nor understand the truth, and therefore are incapable of believing.

day, although they had been in the covenant before. For it is evident, that we do not become the children of God through any outward rites, but through the paternal and gracious choice, through Christ Jesus. But an outward sign was required of Abraham as a seal of obedience and faith. And likewise of his seed, that they should circumcise the male children on the eighth day; no sooner nor later, and not the female children. Had the covenant depended upon the sign, and not upon the assurance of grace, what would have become of the female children, and the males that died uncircumcised before the eighth day?

Beloved reader, give heed to the word of God. Although the women and female children were not circumcised, they had the promise in common, in the promised seed, the holy land, the kingdom and glory. They were no less the seed of Abraham and subject to the covenant of God, and the things signified by the sign thereof, than the circumcised men and male children. From which it is evident, that the children of Israel were not in the Lord's covenant, on account of circumcision, as Pedo-baptists assert, but through the divine choice of grace.

And even as Abraham and the children of Israel, the female as well as the male children, were in the covenant not through the sign, but through the divine choice, so also are our children in the covenant of God, although not baptized. The word of Paul is incontrovertible. He (God) has chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, and has ordained us his children through Jesus Christ, Eph. 1: 4.

Again, Children are entitled to the kingdom of heaven, and are under the promise of the grace of God, through Christ; as has been said; and therefore we truly believe, that they are blessed, holy and pure, acceptable to God; are under the covenant, and in his church, but by no means, through any external sign; for there is not a word in all the Scriptures whereby to maintain, that children should be admitted into the covenant and the church by such a sign. Besides, it is very evident that they cannot be taught or admonished by word, or sacrament, as long as they are without the ability to hear and understand.

Therefore, are the signs not to be used for any other purpose than that for which they were instituted and commanded of the Lord. Since Christ has ordained and commanded to baptize believers; and has not said a word about infant baptism, we believe and teach that the baptism of believers is of God and his word, and infant baptism of the dragon and the beast.

All the rites ordained of God, both of the Old and New Testament, are ordained to exercise our faith and to show our obedience. Therefore we should not use and change them at our pleasure; but we must use them as the Lord himself has ordained and commanded, if we would escape being punished by the fierce wrath of God, as were Nadab and Abihu, Lev. 10: 2.

Since Christ has commanded that believers should be baptized, and not infants, and the holy apostles taught and practiced thus, in accordance with the instructions and commands of Christ, as may be seen in many places of the New Testament, all reasonable-minded men must admit, that infant baptism, although alas, practiced by nearly the whole world, and maintained by tyranny, is nothing less than a ceremony of anti-christ, open blasphemy, an enchanting sin, a molten calf; yea, abomination and idolatry.

We also well know how they apply circumcision as a figure of baptism, and adduce the saying of Paul in proof thereof, namely, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, &c., Col. 2: 11. He that will attempt to prove, by this passage that infant baptism is right, does violence to holy Paul, and falsely perverts his testimony. For he does not teach that external circumcision is a figure of baptism, but alludes to inward circumcision. For even as actual circumcision of the foreskin was performed with a knife of stone, so also must our inbred and carnal nature be cut off with that spiritual knife of stone, and circumcised with a circumcision made without hands. The stone is Christ. The knife is the word of God, 1 Cor. 10: 4; Heb. 4: 12. It is with this circumcision that believers, not children, are circumcised, as Paul evidently intends to teach by this scripture, "Ye are circumcised with the cir-

circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God," Col. 2: 11. It appears to me, that these words plainly show that Paul spoke not in relation to the baptism of infants; but in regard to the inner circumcision of the believers. Read also what we said above concerning Romans 6.

In the third place, they say that children are regenerated, put on Christ, and receive the Holy Ghost in baptism.

To this we reply: To be regenerated, to put on Christ, and to receive the Holy Ghost, is one and the same thing; and according to its power, inseparable. Have you the one, you have the other also. But that does not at all concern infants; for regeneration takes place through faith, through the word of God, and is a change of heart, or of the inward man, as above said. To put on Christ, is to be transplanted into Christ, and to be like-minded with him. To receive the Holy Ghost, is to be a partaker of his gifts and power, to be taught, assured and influenced by him, as the Scriptures teach. This cannot take place with infants; for they have no ears to hear the word of the Lord, and no understanding to comprehend it; for through the word and the hearing of the word all this is accomplished.

Here it may be asked, whether God is not powerful enough to work faith in children; because John the baptist, yet unborn, leaped for joy in his mother's womb.

We reply to this, that we are not speaking of the power of God; he made aged and barren Sarah fruitful, and caused Balaam's ass to speak. But it does not follow that all old, barren women will become fruitful, and that all asses are to speak. He does not at all times do all that he can, or has power to do; we speak only of the precept of the Scriptures, what they teach and command us concerning this matter.

Because infants do not understand, they cannot believe, and because they do not believe, they cannot be born again. Reason teaches us that they cannot understand the word of God. That they do not believe and are not regenerated, is evident from their

actions. Whether they are baptized or not, their inbred nature is prone to evil from their youth. They know no difference between Christ and satan; between good and evil; between life and death. Whereby then shall we know their faith, regeneration, or that they possess Christ and his Spirit? The regenerating word must first be heard and believed with a sincere heart, before regeneration, the putting on of Christ and the influences of the Holy Ghost follow.

Behold, thus we are taught by the word of the Lord. He that does, therefore, not desire the palatable bread of the divine word, upon which our souls have to live, may satisfy himself with the husks that the swine eat, Luke 15: 16; we cannot forbid him. I trust that the gracious Father will protect and preserve us forever, through his great mercy, from their anti-christian doctrines and Pharisaical leaven.

In the fourth place, they say that although infants are not so washed from original sin in baptism, that there are no remains of it, still, for the sake of baptism it shall not be imputed to them as sin.

To this we reply: Thus to teach and believe, is open blasphemy against Christ and his blood. I have proved more than once by the word of the Lord, that Christ is the only remedy for our sins, and that there is forever none other, Isa. 43: 25; Matt. 1: 21; Acts 4: 12. If men will not believe the word of God, there is no human help for them. But the way or manner in which believers receive the remission of sins, in baptism, is fully explained above, and he that reads it understandingly, will give the Lord Jesus the praise due him, and not ascribe the remission of his sins to rites and elements.

In the fifth place, they say that Christ has cleansed and sanctified his church with the washing of water by the word. Children, they say, belong to the church, therefore they must be cleansed with the washing of water by the word, Eph. 5: 26.

To this we reply: Paul does not speak of infants, but of those who hear and believe the word of the Lord, and thus by faith, are sanctified and cleansed in their hearts; for such are cleansed by the washing of water, as the mouth of the Lord has commanded.

Since infants have not this pure, sanctifying faith, nor the means thereto (that is, the understanding), and are not commanded in Scripture to be baptized; how can they then be cleansed with the washing of water by the word, having no faith in the word, and no washing of water by the word? Therefore, all pedo-baptists should know, that their infant baptism does neither cleanse nor sanctify, but that it is idolatry *in toto*, without promise, pernicious, and contrary to the word of the Lord.

We have before shown, that the remission of sins, or reconciliation was connected with, and consequent upon the Jewish offerings, if performed according to the instructions of Moses. But when not thus performed, they did not obtain reconciliation, but made themselves the more guilty, as Saul, Uzziah, Nadab, Abihu and others. In like manner is the church sanctified and cleansed, with the washing of water, by the word, if it is done in every respect according to the instruction of the word. But if it is not done so, we are not cleansed but much more commit sin.

And although infants have neither faith nor baptism, think not therefore that they are damned. Oh no! they are blessed; for they have the Lord's own promise of the kingdom of God; not through any elements, ceremonies and external rites, but only by grace, through Jesus Christ, Matt. 19: 13—15. And therefore, we do truly believe, that they are under grace, acceptable to God, pure, holy, heirs of God and eternal life, and on account of this promise, all sincere, christian believers, may assuredly rejoice and comfort themselves in the salvation of their children.

In the sixth place, they say that infants are to be baptized on account of the promise made them, as above stated; although Christ did not baptize the children brought to him, nor had them baptized; but they say that he had infant baptism taught and practiced after his death.

To this we reply: This is a false doctrine, and has not the word of God to sanction it; yea, it cannot be supported by a single word in the Scriptures. We rejoice with all our heart, that they have this promise; the Scriptures, however, do not teach that

they should, therefore, be baptized; and that they were not baptized before Christ's death, gives us greater assurance of this still, and that for this reason: We certainly know, that he taught no other word, no other doctrine, no other baptism, nor did he give another Spirit, or another promise, nor did he instruct others to teach differently after his death, than he did before that event. That he commanded his holy apostles, after his death and ascension, to teach and practice infant baptism, can never be proved by the word of the Lord.

Oh Human Nature! thou art not ashamed to charge lies upon Jesus Christ and his apostles, and to practice infant baptism under the semblance of the divine word, as if the Lord had taught it, although he never did. How much you are like those who say, "The Lord saith it; albeit, I have not spoken," Ezek. 13: 7; thus saith the Lord.

As often as the question is put to us, Why shall infants not be baptized, since they are in the church of God, and partakers of his grace, covenant and promise? We answer: Because the Lord neither taught nor commanded it.

In the seventh place they say, The Scriptures inform us that the apostles baptized whole families, from which we may readily conclude, that there were infants among them.

To this in the first place, we reply: Since they endeavor to maintain their position with uncertain conjectures, they acknowledge by their own arguments, that they have no scriptural authority for this doctrine.

In the second place, we answer: In things of such importance, we dare not build upon uncertain suppositions, but upon the sure word, which is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, Ps. 119: 105.

In the third place, we answer: Four families are mentioned in the Scriptures, as having been baptized; namely, That of Cornelius, of the Jailor, of Lydia and of Stephanas, Acts 10: 48; 16: 15, 33; 1 Cor. 1: 16, and the Scriptures plainly show that three of these were all believers; namely, the family of Cornelius, of the Jailor, and that of Stephanas. But touching the family of Lydia, although the Scriptures say nothing defi-

nately concerning it, the reader should know that it is not usual in Scripture, nor the common custom of the world, to call the family by the woman's name, as long as the husband is living. Since then, Luke mentions the family by the name of the woman, reason teaches us, that Lydia was at that time either a widow or a virgin. Of the probability as to whether there were infants in her house or not, we shall let the pious reader judge.

In the fourth place, we answer: The word *household*, or *houses*, does not include the minor children as mentioned in the Scripture; for Paul speaks of vain talkers who subvert whole houses. Now it is incontrovertible that an infant cannot be subverted by any false doctrine. Therefore, by the word *house* or *houses*, no others can be understood than *those* who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand.

In the last place, they appeal to Origen and Augustine, and say that these assert, that they have received infant baptism from the apostles.

To this we answer and inquire, Can Origen and Augustine prove this by the Scriptures? Have they done so? We desire to know; if not, then must we hear and believe Christ and his apostles, and not Augustine and Origen.

That this is not the case may readily be seen from Cyprian, because he neither enjoined nor condemned infant baptism, if those who for many years past have been preachers at Norlingen, have rightly informed me in their church records, and not deceived me in the meaning of the word *Liberum*.

Cyprian also was a Greek, as well as Origen, and lived twenty-five years after him. If then infant baptism was the doctrine of the apostles and practiced by them, as Origen and Augustine assert, it must first be proved by the Scriptures, and in that case Cyprian must have committed a great sin to leave the observance of the doctrines and practices of the apostles at liberty. For any thing that is apostolic, dare not be changed by any man. The word of Paul is

indisputable, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1: 8. Else we would be constrained to acknowledge, that the twelve apostles with their doctrine, were not the twelve foundations and twelve gates of the new Jerusalem, Rev. 21: 12.

If infant baptism is apostolic, why does Tertullian write and say, "They who are to be baptized, confess for a considerable time in the church, before the bishop, that they renounce the devil, his pomp and angels. After that they are," &c.

Revanus annotates on this passage and says: That it was the custom of old, that adults (grown persons) be baptized by the washing of regeneration.

That infant baptism was not apostolic may be distinctly seen from the insipid remarks of Athanasius, as Rufinus plainly shows; see *Eusebius*, 10 *Libro Ecc. His.*, Cap. 14.

Remember also how the early writers contended about infant baptism. Had it been apostolic, and found in the gospel, why should they have thus wrangled.

Read also Erasmus Rotterod, in *sua concion*, i. e., in his public orations, Sebastus Frank's Chronicle, Ulrich Zuingli, in his book of Articles, Martin Cellarius, *de immensis operi, Dei*, i. e., Concerning the immense works of God, and you will find, that infant baptism is not the doctrine and practice of the apostles.

Behold, beloved reader, I admonish and advise you, if you seek God with all your heart, and do not wish to be deceived; depend not upon men and their doctrine, no matter however old, holy and excellent they may be esteemed; for the divines, both ancient and modern are opposed to each other; but put your trust, alone in Christ and his word, in the sure instruction and practice of his holy apostles, and you will through the grace of God, be perfectly safe from all false doctrines and the power of the devil; and may walk with a free and pious mind before God.

AN ADMONITION ADDRESSED TO THE SCORNERS OF THE WORD CONCERNING BAPTISM.

We well know, beloved reader, that there are many unprofitable talkers, who teach from the letters of the Scriptures, that infants should not be baptized, but only christian believers; nevertheless they say: Why my beloved, what can water avail us? We have been once baptized in the name of God. Had we only the new life, it would suffice us. O dear Lord! thus is thy precious word every where esteemed of this vicious world as fables of Æsop; as if Omnipotent Majesty, the Eternal Wisdom and Truth had taught and commanded some things to no purpose. No, my good reader, no; his name is the Sovereign Lord; his word is his will; his command is eternal life. All things which he has taught and commanded us, he will undoubtedly have us to observe; if we do not, woe to us. Christ says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you," John 15: 14. "My counsel," says the prophet, "shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," Isa. 46: 10. Therefore, O Creature, do not longer fight against God. Give ear to him and obey his voice, for it is his divine counsel, word and will. Who are you, that you would contend with God? Christ's sheep hear his voice. True christians believe and obey. Are you a sincere christian, born of God? Then why do you dread baptism; which is among the least that God commanded you? It has always been a difficult and important command to love your enemy; to do good to those who hate you; to pray in spirit and in truth, for those who persecute you; to crucify your wicked and ungodly flesh, with its impure lusts and desires; to subdue your arrogant pride; your avariciousness; your offensive unchastity; your bloody hatred; your eating and drinking to excess; to renounce your accursed idolatry; to desist from your envious revilings; to curb your slanderous tongue; to govern your heart, and flesh; to love and fear with all your heart, your Lord and God, your Creator and Redeemer; and in all things to submit to his holy word, and

serve your neighbor in sincere and unfeigned love, with all your powers, with all your possessions, with your counsel, with your labor, yea, if required with your death and blood; with a sincere heart to suffer misery, disdain, and the oppressive cross of Christ for the Lord's word; and to confess Christ Jesus before lords and princes, in prison and bonds, by words and deeds, unto death.

We think that these, and the like commands, are more painful and difficult to perverse flesh, which is naturally so prone to follow its own way, than to have a hand full of water applied; and a sincere christian must at all times be ready to do all this; if not, he is not born of God; for the regenerated are of one mind with Christ Jesus.

All who, by the grace of God, have been translated from Adam into Christ, and become partakers of the divine nature, and are baptized of God, with the Spirit and fire of heavenly love, will not contend so deridingly with the Lord, and say: My beloved, what can water avail? But they say with trembling Paul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And with the penitents on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They will renounce their own wisdom, and willingly obey the word of the Lord, for they are influenced by his Spirit, and through faith, with willing, obedient hearts perform all things commanded them of the Lord.

But as long as their minds are not renewed, and they are not of the same mind with Christ; are not washed in the inner man with clean water, from the living fountain of God, they may well say, What can water avail us? For as long as they are earthly and sensually minded, the whole ocean would not cleanse them.

My faithful reader, think not that we put great stress upon the elements and rites. I tell you the truth in Christ, and lie not. If any one were to come to me, even the emperor, or the king, and would desire to be

baptized, still walking in the unclean, ungodly lusts of the flesh, and were he not unblamable, penitent and regenerated, I hope by the grace of God, I would rather die than to baptize such an impenitent and sensual man. <For where there is no renewing, regenerating faith, leading to obedience, there is no baptism.* Even as Philip said to the Eunuch, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." But nevertheless, you ought to know, should the subject for baptism come with a hypocritical heart, under semblance of faith, that his hypocrisy would not be imputed to the baptizer as a sin, but to the dissembler; for no man knows the heart of man, save the spirit of man which is in him, 1 Cor. 2: 11.>

It appears to me, that you may readily conclude from the language which we have used that we desire no other water, than that which the word of the Lord has commanded. For since we believe that Christ is the true Messiah, to whom the law and the prophets pointed, whom all the righteous fathers and patriarchs desired; that he came from heaven and testified to the truth, and that his command is eternal life, we must, therefore, hear his voice and obey his word; if not, we actually show that we do not believe, but that we reject his counsel and word, and are ungrateful towards him, for his love.

I know well, that many of you will say, We were once baptized in the name of God, and with that we are satisfied. To which we reply: If you fear God with all your heart, and acknowledge that his word and ordinances are just and good, you must decide that you are not baptized in the name of God, but contrary to it. It is true that the adorable, exalted name of God was pronounced over you, but not otherwise than it is pronounced over church-bells, churches, altars, consecrated water, tapers and palms. All anti-christian idolatry and abominations, alas, are performed under the semblance of the divine name; although they are not done by virtue *of*, but *against* his name, for they are done contrary to his word and will.

My dear reader, reflect well upon these

words and judge them by the word of God, and you will find that the baptism which you have received is without the command of God's word; that it originated through self-righteousness, and was invented by man, and therefore it must be accursed of God, who alone will reign and rule in his church. Would you rejoice in the promise and be partakers of the church of Christ, you must believe the word of the Lord, be obedient to, and follow his counsel, will and ordinances. But if you refuse, and follow your own, and not the Lord's counsel and will, you cannot comfort yourselves with any scriptural promise, for "he that believeth not," says Christ, "is condemned already."

Therefore, do no longer comfort yourselves with such vain comfort, and say, We have been once baptized; for at heart you are yet entirely unbelieving; yea, rebellious and unclean. Your whole life is earthly and carnal, your baptism anti-christian, and without the sanction of the word of God. Therefore, awaken, repent, believe in Christ, seek, fear and love God with all your heart, then the word of the Lord and his unction will teach you what is proper for you to do or not to do, in this matter. And say not, as some do, I will renounce the church and idolatry; I will serve my neighbor, &c.; but I do not wish to be baptized.

O you blind men! Do you think that the Lord is pleased with your staying away from the church, or with your alms, or any thing of the kind, if you reject his counsel and word? No! no!! He desires your obedience, but not sacrifice. He desires the whole heart, the entire man. With him, neither church nor alms will avail, neither words nor deeds, as long as you do not manifest a new heart and life. "For in Christ Jesus," says Paul, "neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love, a new creature, and the keeping of the commandments of God," Gal. 5: 6; 6: 15; 1 Cor. 7: 19.

And whosoever is renewed in Christ and born of God, he liveth no more, as Paul says, but Christ Jesus liveth in him. In all his ways he conforms to the word of the Lord, for that powerful, active faith constrains him to all obedience, and to every good work. But where this new life is not,

*There can be no scriptural baptism administered.

there fair words may indeed be, but in truth, there is only unbelief, disobedience, wantonness, presumption, and perverseness.

I hereby entreat and admonish you, beloved reader, not to be so obstinate against the Lord, and say, What can water avail us? But do reflect that Christ Jesus himself was baptized, Matt. 3: 13, although he was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, 1 Pet. 2: 22; yea, who was himself righteousness, the way, the truth, and the life. Tell us then, what could water avail Christ, who was all in all things? The disciples also at Ephesus were re-baptized of Paul, because they knew nothing of the Holy Ghost, although they had been baptized with the baptism of John. If Christ himself was baptized, who was without sin, and others were re-baptized of Paul, who had been baptized with the baptism of John, which was also from heaven, Why do you then despise the Lord's baptism, you who are poor, miserable sinners, who were baptized without knowledge and faith, with the baptism of the dragon and the beast?

Cyprian, the Martyr, with his entire council in Africa, resolved that those who were baptized of heretics, should be re-baptized with the christian baptism, and this for the reason, that they maintained that the baptism of heretics could not be the baptism of Christ. Reflect a little, kind reader, who they were that baptized you; by whom they

were sent; what kind of faith they had; what kind of lives they led; with what doctrine and practices you were baptized. If you will seriously reflect thereon, I hope by the grace of God, if you desire true peace and liberty of conscience, you will soon be aware that you never knew either the external or internal baptism, much less received it.

Behold, beloved reader, here you have the true foundation and scriptural instructions of the baptism of Christ, and an explanation of the baptism of anti-christ.

Pray the Lord, the Most High, for a sound and clear understanding, that you may sincerely know the right and blessed truth, believe, and in the fear of the Lord, faithfully observe it. Cease from all useless disputing and gainsaying; for whosoever will dispute and gainsay with the determination to remain in the broad way, will ruin his soul, never walk with a good and sure conscience before God, and always find occasion to dispute and wrangle.

Therefore, do examine, believe, and obey the word of God with a sincere and devout heart, and be not deceived by being led into the appearance of godliness, by fair speeches, and you will certainly obtain the sure doctrine of the saving truth, and the consoling promise of grace. The Lord Jesus Christ grant you his grace, Amen.

THE LORD'S HOLY SUPPER.

You know, beloved sirs, friends and brethren, that every where much is written, preached and said concerning the Lord's Supper. But with what knowledge, with what faith, love, peace, unity, and after what manner and ordinance they celebrate it, is plainly evident. It is true, the Lord commanded, in the New Testament, the breaking of bread, or the last Supper, but not in the manner in which you celebrate it. Your Lord's Supper is common to all, no matter who, or what they are; to the avaricious, proud, gay, drunkards, haters, idola-

tors, debauchees, adulterers, whoremongers, and rogues. It is also celebrated, as may be seen, with abominable pomp and splendor, with hypocrisy and idolatry; and besides, it is dispensed by such ministers who only seek worldly honor, ease and the satisfaction of the cravings of their flesh and bodies.

Since so many of you are so zealous about the Lord's Supper, but not according to the Scripture, as you shall hear; for your table may more properly be called the devil's table than the Lord's table, 1 Cor. 10: 21,

I desire for Jesus' sake, that you would in the true fear of God, reflect to whom, why and wherefore the Lord instituted, ordained and left, this his last Supper, to his church, so that it may prove to you a living and an affecting sign; that it might bring to your minds, and set forth the Lord's great and abundant kindness, true peace, the love and union of his church, the communion of his flesh and blood; and that you may die to unrighteousness, and every ungodly work; live to righteousness and godliness; renounce the devil's table; and that you may sit down at the Lord's holy table, in the church of Christ, with true faith, a pious, penitent and regenerated life, and with unfeigned, brotherly love.

Thus saith Paul, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." 1 Cor. 11: 23—25.

Here you have Paul's explanation of the words of the Holy Supper, instituted by Jesus Christ, Luke 22: 19, 20, concerning which words, the learned have disputed much; and alas, some of them, through their idolatrous misunderstanding (if we may call it such, and not pride), have disputed at the expense of much innocent blood; and what holy Paul says concerning them, is fulfilled, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," Rom. 1: 22. For they disputed most about the sign, which avails little, but the thing signified for which the sign was instituted, which avails much, they touch not. In my opinion, they also pay little attention as to what the qualification of the guests or communicants should be, in order to sit with Christ at his table, and to celebrate this Holy Sacrament.

There is not a single word commanded in the Scriptures, that should give cause for dispute concerning the visible and tangible sign, or what it signifies. The spiritual, judge

all things spiritually. For whatever that may be in substance, it can be handled, seen and tasted. But this we should most consider, that we in our weakness ought to follow, and as much as possible conform ourselves to the signification, that is, that which is set forth, represented and taught by this sign to all true christian believers.

On this account, we will not trouble the well meaning and pious reader, with jarring, fruitless disputing, concerning the outward sign, as the learned do; but we only desire, by the help and grace of the Lord, by the power of the divine word, to point out correctly, for whom, and why Christ Jesus left and ordained this Supper; so that we may not esteem the visible sign above the reality, and depart from the truth to images.

To come to a right, profitable and christian understanding of the Lord's Holy Supper, what it is, to whom, why, and wherefore it was enjoined, four things in particular should be observed and well considered.

In the first place, we must take heed that we do not, as some, who make the visible, perishable bread and wine, the Lord's real flesh and blood. To believe this, is contrary to nature, reason and Scripture; yea, it is open blasphemy of the Son of God, abomination and idolatry. But as Israel had to hold the passover annually, at the appointed time according to the command of Moses, to commemorate that the Almighty God, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob, did graciously preserve his people from the punishment and plagues, when he slew the first born of the Egyptians; and by his strong hand and outstretched arm, so gloriously and wonderfully led them out, and redeemed them from the iron furnace of Egypt and the dread tyranny and dominion of Pharaoh, according to the word of his promise, and hence the *paschal lamb* is called the *Lord's passah*, that is, *passover*; the sign for the reality; for the *lamb* was not the *passover* although so called, but it only typified the *passover*, as said. So in the Holy Supper, the *bread* is called the *body*, and the *wine* the *blood* of the Lord, Matt. 26: 26—28. I say the sign is put for the *reality*,* not that

* Reality, the thing signified or typified.

it actually is the real flesh and blood of Christ; for with that he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father, immortal, and unchangeable, in eternal majesty and glory; but it is an admonishing type and memorial that Jesus Christ the Son of God has redeemed us from the power of the devil, from the dominion of hell and eternal death, by offering up an immaculate sacrifice, his innocent flesh and blood, and has triumphantly led us into the kingdom of his grace, as he himself says, "This do in remembrance of me," Luke 22: 19.

In the second place, it is to be observed, that there is no greater evidence of love, than that one suffers death for another, as Christ says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," John 15: 13. Since this holy sign is only a memorial of the Lord's death, and since death is the greatest evidence of love, as said, we are therefore reminded, when we are at the Lord's table, to eat his bread and to drink his cup, that we not only earnestly show forth and remember his death, but also all the glorious fruits of divine love, manifested towards us, in Christ; namely, that God, in the beginning, made man after his image, incorruptible, placed him in Paradise, and made all creatures subject to him. When he was beguiled of the serpent, he was cheered and comforted with the promise of a coming Conqueror and Savior, Jesus Christ. God sent Moses and the prophets, who sedulously practiced the law, and pointed to the promised Christ and his kingdom. Christ Jesus, according to the promise of the Scriptures, finally appeared in this world, a true man, born of the Virgin Mary, and in much misery, affliction and labor, preached the saving and gracious word to the house of Israel; sought the lost sheep, and brought them to their true Shepherd; appeased and reconciled us before the Father, through his painful death and precious blood, Rom. 8: 3. As he himself says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3: 16.

Oh, wonderful, unsearchable and incomprehensible love of God! He did not send into this unfriendly world an angel, a pa-

triarch, or a prophet, but his eternal ALMIGHTY WORD, his ETERNAL WISDOM, the brightness of his glory, in the form of sinful flesh, and "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5: 21.

My good reader, do not understand this as if Christ had been a sinner; by no means. The Scriptures acquit him of all sin. He was the spotless lamb. He knew not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. But Paul calls him *sin*, according to the Hebrew manner of expression; that is, an offering for sin, as the prophet says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we were healed, Isa. 53: 5. He gave his life as an offering for sin.

Behold, worthy reader, all those who sincerely believe in this glorious love of God, this abundant, great blessing of grace in Christ Jesus, manifested toward us, are more and more renewed through such a faith; their hearts overflow with joy and peace; they break forth with joyful hearts, in all manner of thanksgiving; they praise and glorify God with all their hearts, because they, with a good conscience have received the Spirit; they believe and know that the Father loved us, so that he gave us poor, wretched sinners, his own and Eternal Son, with his merits, as a gift and an eternal ransom, as Paul says, The grace and love of God, our Savior, appeared not on account of the works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life," Tit. 3: 7.

Here it is proper to observe, how the Righteous died for the unrighteous, when we were yet sinners and enemies; how the spotless Lamb was prepared for us, in the fire of affliction, suffered upon the cross, and was offered an eternal propitiation for our sins; how the Creator of all things was bruised for our sakes, and he, who was above all the children of men, became the

most unworthy, and was counted with evil doers; how the Innocent bore the sins of the whole world, blotted out all our transgressions, and redeemed us with his crimson blood, as the Scriptures declare, "I restored that which I took not away," Ps. 69: 4. In short, how that Jesus Christ through his obedience, delivered Adam and all his seed from the consequences of disobedience, and by his painful death, again restored life.

The apostle Paul acknowledged this great and glorious work of divine love, broke forth and said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. 8: 35—39.

And this is what John says, Let us love him for he first loved us. Nature teaches us to love those who love us. And this is the first fruit of the Holy Sacrament, if rightly celebrated.

In the third place we have to observe, that by the Lord's Supper we are reminded of, and admonished to christian unity, love, and peace, after which all true christians should seek and strive. "For we being many," says Paul, "are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread," 1 Cor. 10: 17.

✓ Like as natural bread is made of many grains, broken by the mill, and kneaded together with water, and baked by the heat of the fire; so is the church of Christ made up of many true believers, broken in their hearts, with the hammer of the divine word, and are baptized with the water of the Holy Ghost, and with the fire of pure, unfeigned love, into one body, 1 Cor. 12: 13. And as the natural body is in harmony and peace with all its members, and as each member naturally discharges its duty to promote

the good of the whole body; thus it also becomes the true and living members of the body of Christ, to be in harmony, of one heart, one mind and one soul; not quarrelsome and unpeaceable, not spiteful and envious, not cruel and hateful, not malicious, not obstinate or rancorous, one toward another, like the ambitious, covetous, and the proud of this world; but in all things, one toward another, be long suffering, friendly, peaceable, ever ready in true christian love to serve his neighbor in all things possible; by exhortation; by reproof, by comforting, by assisting, by counseling, with deed and with possessions, yea, with bitter and hard labor, with body and life. Ready to forgive one another, as Christ forgives and serves us with his word, life and death, as Paul says, "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; and above all things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be thankful," Col. 3: 12—15.

And again; as in the natural body, the more honorable members, such as the eye, the ear, the mouth, &c., do not despise the less honorable members, on account of their inferiority; and as the inferior members do not envy the superior members, on account of their superiority, but as every member in its place, is peaceable, and contributes to the good of the whole body, be its functions high or low; so it is also in the church of the Lord. Paul says, Some he appointed apostles; some prophets; some evangelists; some pastors and teachers. Let every one be mindful that he boasts not of what he is, has, or possesses, for it is all the grace and gift of God. Let every one attend to his duty, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph. 4: 12, 13.

This is also set forth in the Holy Supper;

but how the world, calling themselves christians, live up to this, is shown by their fruits and actions.

In the fourth place, we have to observe, that the Holy Supper is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, as Paul says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 1 Cor. 10: 16.

Since then it is a communion, as said, we would fraternally exhort all of you, that you would earnestly examine yourselves, whether you have been made partakers of Christ? Whether you are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone? Whether you are in Christ, and Christ in you? For all who would worthily eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, must be changed in the inner man, and converted and renewed in their minds, through the power of the divine word and the operation of faith; become new creatures, born of God, and translated from Adam into Christ; be of a christian disposition, long suffering, peaceable, merciful, affectionate, truly humble, and obedient to the word of the Lord. The proud, ambitious, selfish and carnal heart must be circumcised; the evil eye must be plucked out; the ear that delights to hear evil, must be closed; the unprofitable, backbiting tongue must be bridled; the unclean, bloody hand must be cleansed; the impure, unchaste flesh must be restrained, &c.; they must lead a crusade against the world, the flesh and the devil; their loins must be girded about with truth; having on the breast-plate of righteousness; their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. They must be armed with the shield of faith; with the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. They must be led by the Spirit of God, that they may become sincere christians; and strive with all their powers, that they, in their weakness, may be like-minded with Christ Jesus, Rom. 8: 14.

When Christ instituted and celebrated the Holy Supper with his beloved disciples, he said, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. Then he took the bread, and brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you.

Likewise also the wine, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, &c.; this do in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25, as if he had said, Behold, dear children, so far has that love which I have had for you and the whole human family, and ever shall have for you, constrained me, that I left the glory of my Father, came into this world of affliction, and am as a poor, miserable servant, to serve you, for I beheld that you all belonged to satan, and there was none to redeem you; that you had all gone astray, like erring sheep, and there was none who cared for you; that you were a prey to devouring wolves, and there was none to ransom you; that you were wounded with death, and there was none that could heal you. Therefore, did I come from heaven, and became a poor, weak, and dying man, in all things like unto you, sin excepted. In my great love I zealously sought you, and I found you helpless, loathsome, and miserable, yea, half dead, the services of my love I have so cordially manifested toward you; your sores I bound up; your blood I wiped off; I poured wine and oil into your putrid wounds; set you free from the jaws of the bears and lions of the pit; I laid you upon my shoulders, and led you into the tabernacles of peace; your nakedness I covered; had compassion on you in your misery; I fulfilled the law for you; your sins I took away; I proclaimed to you the peace, the grace and favor of my Father; I made known to you his good will; I pointed out the way of truth; and I have powerfully testified to you, by my unheard-of signs and great miracles, that I am the true Messiah, the promised Prince and Savior.

Behold, beloved children, so long have I been with you, taught my Father's word, admonished, reproved and comforted in his name; but now my hour is at hand; this night I shall be betrayed. All that the prophet said of me has come to an end. But since I can serve you no longer with my doctrine and life, I will, at last, serve you with my painful sufferings, body, blood, cross, and death.

And this is the reason why I called you to this Supper, so that I might institute a memorial for you in the use of bread and wine, that you might occasionally come to-

gether after my death, and commemorate the gracious favors of my ardent love, so abundantly manifested towards you; and especially, that I loved you so dearly, that I offered my body; and shed my blood for you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. I have by my death obtained for you everlasting reconciliation, grace, mercy, favor and peace with my Father, as I told you, namely, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," Matt. 20: 28.

Beloved reader, take notice of the word of the Lord and this institution. For where this Holy Supper is celebrated with such faith, love, devotion, peace, harmony, and so much sincerity of heart, there Jesus Christ is present with his grace, Spirit, and promise, and with the merits of his sufferings, misery, flesh, blood, cross and death; as he himself says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. 18: 20. But where the pure knowledge of Christ, living faith, the new life, christian love, peace and harmony do not exist, there is not the Lord's Supper, but a despising and mocking of the blood and death of Christ, a consolation of the impenitent, a seducing hypocrisy, and open blasphemy and idolatry; as, alas! we know and see by the world.

Oh! delightful assembly and christian banquet, commanded and ordained of the Lord himself, where there are no carnal pleasures to gratify the flesh and appetites, but where are set forth, sought for, and desired by all true christian believers, the glorious and holy mysteries, by the visible signs of bread and wine.

Oh! delightful assembly and christian banquet, where there is no unseasonable, slanderous mockery, and where no trivial songs are sung; but where the pious christian life, peace, and harmony among all the brethren; besides the joyful word of divine grace, his gracious kindness, favor, love, service, tears, prayers, cross and death are set forth, and taught with cordial thanksgiving and devout joy.

Oh! delightful assembly and christian banquet, to which the impenitent and proud

despisers, according to Scripture, are not invited; such as whore-mongers, rogues, adulterers, debauchees, the giddy, robbers, liars, defrauders, tyrants, shedders of blood, idolators, slanderers, &c., for such are not the people of the Lord; but those, who are born of God, the true christians, who have buried their sins, and walk with Christ in a new and godly life; those who crucify their flesh; who are led by the Holy Spirit; who sincerely believe in God; who seek, fear, and love him, and in their weakness, willingly serve and obey him; such are members of his body; flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.

Oh! delightful assembly and christian banquet, where neither gluttonous eating and drinking is practiced, nor the impious vanity of piping and drumming is heard; but where the hungry consciences are filled with the heavenly bread of the divine word, and with the wine of the Holy Ghost; and where the peaceful, joyful souls are singing melodies before the Lord.

Awaken, O you, who sit in darkness and walk in the region and shadow of death. Awaken, I say, and observe that the supper, which you have held to the present, is not the supper of Christ, but of anti-christ; not the table of the Lord, but the table of the devil. For it is generally dispensed only by open deceivers, and worshippers of idols; and received by a people who are as yet entirely obstinate and carnally minded, disbelieving and rebellious against the word of God. And moreover, they believe it to be the real body and blood of the Lord, and celebrate it with such unbecoming, heathenish pomp and splendor. O! abomination and idolatry!!

Beloved reader, I bear witness to the truth in Christ and lie not, that the Holy Supper of Christ is not to be dispensed by a deceiver, nor to be received by an impenitent and obstinate sinner. It does not require such a gorgeous and splendid array, as that in which the world is wont to celebrate it; neither golden vessels, nor hypocritical semblance of confessions, absolution, bowing, and smiting upon the breast, &c., but it must be celebrated with a broken heart, true penitence, a humble mind, with unfeigned, ardent love, with peace and joy in the Holy

Ghost. Again I say, awaken, and reflect upon what I write. God's work is not imitating a dead letter; it is not trifling; nor is it the sounding of many bells and organs, and of singing; but it is a heavenly power, a living, moving of the Holy Ghost, which warms the heart and mind of the believers; pervades, comforts, anoints, encourages, awakens and enlivens them; makes them joyful and happy in God. For this is the true nature and power of the Lord's word, if it be rightly preached, and of his Holy Sacraments, if rightly used.

It is, therefore, high time, to take heed to the word of the Lord; for all who are earthly and carnally minded, are not born of God and his word; are obstinately averse to the Lord's word; love not their neighbors, nor are ready to help them; and are not in the communion of God, therefore they cannot be members of his body, or guests at his table. For Paul says, To be carnally minded, is death. Christ says, Those who are not born from above, cannot see the kingdom of God. Samuel says, Disobedience is as iniquity and idolatry. John says, He that loveth not his brother (neighbor), abideth in death. Again, He that loveth not, knows not God, for God is love. In short, without love, all preaching, all faith, baptizing, celebrating the Lord's Supper, prophesying and suffering are vain.

We do, therefore, admonish all those desiring to celebrate this Supper, that they would rightly learn to know what the true Supper is, what it signifies, how and wherefore it is to be used, and who are to be partakers of it. And then also to examine themselves well, as Paul teaches, before they eat of this bread and drink of this cup; that they do not comfort themselves with the visible sign, and err in regard to the reality represented by the signs; for they who know not Christ and his righteousness, believe not him and his word, and walk not according thereto; but according to the superstitious doctrines and commands of men, and partake of the Lord's table, eat and drink damnation to themselves.

All who have received the word of the Lord through faith, acknowledged it to be true, and have again transgressed it, and have not continued to walk in the acknowl-

edged truth, but are walking again in the broad way, have returned to the love of the world, and are rejecting Christ and his word, and depending upon the seducing doctrines, the interpretations and false promises of the learned; such have no part at the Lord's table, for they are without God, as John says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9.

All who walk in the pride of their hearts, despise their neighbor on account of poverty, distress and affliction, and know not that they themselves are poor mortals, seed of Adam, food for worms, and a wilting flower; yea, dust and earth, whether they are emperor, king, rich, or learned, and all who thus sit at the Lord's table with a proud heart, eat and drink damnation themselves.

All who boast of the Lord's Spirit, name, covenant, word, knowledge, merits, grace, blood and death, yet reject his holy counsel, doctrine, command, ordinance and his unblamable example, despise and grieve his Holy Spirit, hate, defraud and speak falsely against their neighbor, and sit at the Lord's table, eat and drink damnation to themselves.

All who love houses, lands, possessions, friends, children, the world, favor, ease of the body, honor and this life, more than they do Christ and his word, and attend the Lord's table, eat and drink damnation to themselves. Christ says, He that loveth any thing more than me, is not worthy of me, and cannot be my disciple, Matt. 10: 37; Luke 14: 26.

And this is the sum of the whole matter, that all those who would sit at the Lord's table, with the disciples and guests of Christ, whether rich or poor, high or low, must be sound in the faith, and unblamable in conduct and life. None are excepted; neither emperor nor king, prince nor earl, knight or nobleman. Yea, as long as they err in doctrine and faith, and are in their lives carnal and blamable, they are by no means to be permitted, with the pious to partake of the communion of the Holy Supper; for they are not in Christ, and therefore must remain without, till they are truly converted to Christ; walk in the ways of the Lord, are

of one spirit and one faith with Christ and his church. For the Lord's Supper is a communion of the flesh and blood of Christ, which is not to be given to the ungodly and obdurate, but to the sincere, penitent, christian believers, as a pledge of reconciliation.

If any one has a good appearance before men, and is inwardly proud, avaricious, carnal and without the Spirit of God, he is not judged of the church, but of the Lord himself, the Searcher and Trier of men's hearts and reins, as the Scripture says. We do, therefore, admonish all those who would go to the Lord's table; to examine themselves before they partake of it; for all who eat unworthily of this bread, and drink of this wine, eat and drink damnation to themselves, 1 Cor. 11: 29.

Thus, beloved sirs, friends and brethren, does the Holy Supper instruct and admonish us: First, The bread, as the body of Christ, which he offered for us, and the cup, the blood of Christ which he shed in great love, for the remission of our sins.

In the second place, we are admonished to union, love, and peace, which must be among all true christians, according to the spirit, doctrine and example of Christ; for Paul says, "We being many are one bread, and one body," &c.

In the third place, we are admonished to a pious and unblamable life, to true regeneration, which is of God; to all right-

eousness, thanksgiving, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For it is a communion of the blood and body of Christ, of which no one is a partaker, nor can be, unless he becomes a humble, peaceable, pious christian, dead unto sin, and born of God according to his word; one who is in Christ, and Christ in him; flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, is a true partaker of the body and blood of Christ; as Paul says, "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," Heb. 3: 14.

Behold, beloved readers, here you have the true instructions concerning the Lord's Holy Supper, with its significations, fruit, power, nature, and the guests, as the mouth of the Lord has ordained, and the holy apostles have left and taught us; and with what knowledge, faith, love, unity, peace, piety, and according to what usage and ordinance it should be celebrated in the church of God.

Herewith compare the supper of the world, and you will learn to know which is the true one; what an abomination anti-christ has made of it, what enchantments he practiced with it, and how we poor sinners, with all our forefathers, have, as idolatrous Israel of old, for hundreds of years, offered incense unto the brazen serpent, and danced before the golden calf. O! my faithful reader, fear God, with sincerity examine the Scriptures, and believe the truth.

THE CORRUPTION OF THE HOLY SUPPER.

The Scriptures teach that we have no other offerings for sin than the body of the Lord, as before said. But since the enemies of Christ have possessed the cathedral for so many years, they have, as the Scriptures teach, altered the laws of the Most High, and instead thereof, instituted their abomination of desolation, and corrupted the Holy Supper with their councils, violence and false doctrine, till, alas! it retains but the shadow, and the mere name, and this they did to destroy and corrupt the true, eternal offering of Christ, which alone avails with

God, and changed it into a daily offering for sin, as we may plainly read in the canons of the mass; which undoubtedly is an abomination of abominations; for thereby, Jesus Christ, the all-sufficient and eternal offering, is entirely renounced and made of no effect, as the Propitiator and Mediator of the New Testament. He is thrust from the throne of his Majesty; his merits, cross, blood, and death are rejected; yea, all the types and shadows of Moses, all the predictions of the prophets; the promise of angels, and the whole New Testament, are thereby

denied; though all harmoniously point to the one and eternal offering of Christ; and instead of it, they have ordained an unholy, blind, seductive and carnal idolatry, with a piece of bread! Beloved reader, here put no other construction upon these words; for what I write is the truth.

They have brought it so far with this ungodly seduction, that they have arrogated to themselves all power in heaven, upon earth, and in hell; they therefore break the bread into *three* pieces. With the *first*, they reconcile God; with the *second*, they intercede for the world; and with the *third*, as they pretend, they pray for the souls in purgatory.

Through this accursed infamy they rose so high in honor, that they are above all the potentates of earth, whom they made their own servants. By their hypocritical service and enchanting idolatry, they have hoarded money, goods, gold, silver, land, rents, cloisters, cities, principalities and the dominions of this world; because every one loved this splendid service as a holy and divine work; honored and feared their exalted and pompous names as the messengers of God.

By this ingenious and subtle magic, the Roman anti-christ has gained such respect and authority, that even the imperial majesty, the highest sovereignty on earth, whom we are commanded of God to respect and fear, had to humble himself and kiss his feet; yea, what is still worse, Frederick Barbarossa, a great and renowned emperor, could not be reconciled with Pope Alexander III., until he humbled himself at Venice, before the church, and suffered the Pope to tread upon him with his feet!

Behold, thus *anti-christ* has enchanted the whole world with his offering. The gracious Father be eternally praised, that he has, through his paternal grace delivered us, his poor children, from this enchanting offering, and given us to know the only and eternal offering of his Son, Jesus Christ, who, according to the order of Melchizedek, is ordained an eternal High Priest over the house of God; who, in the days of his flesh, offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save from death, and was heard, because he honored God. This one, I say, of-

fered an acceptable offering, a sweet smelling sacrifice, of eternal worth, whereby he appeases the Father's wrath, reconciles the human race, opened heaven, closed hell; made peace between heaven and earth; and sits now, and henceforth, at the right hand of his Father, till his enemies be made his foot-stool; yea, with this one offering, he has perfected forever all those who are sanctified. This cannot be gainsayed, whether by emperor or king, doctor or teacher, angel or devil. His word stands firm and immovable. He has with one offering, I say with *one* offering, perfected for ever those who are sanctified.

O my beloved reader! I mean all those who are yet without the Spirit of Christ and his word, Take heed what the word of the Lord teaches you, and observe the true doctrine of Christ, the true teachers, the true sacraments, the true church, and the true christian life, which is of God, so that you may once learn to know what kind of pastors feed you; what kind of baptism and supper you practice; by what kind of offering you are reconciled; what kind of lives you lead, and of whose body you are members.

O how long, says Solomon, will you simple ones love simplicity? And you scorners delight in scorning? How long will you remain under the heavy bondage of sin? How long will you remain in the communion of the devil, and suffer yourselves to be dragged down to the abyss of hell by the cords of unbelief? Awake, and ransom your poor souls! Come out from among them. Flee from all false doctrine; avoid every appearance of evil; believe in Christ Jesus; repent and lead an unblamable life; follow Christ with a sincere heart; enter into the house and covenant of his everlasting peace, into the communion of his flesh and blood. Take upon you his easy yoke, and light burden, and you will find rest for your souls; you may then of a truth say, that you are christians; that you have obtained the remission of your sins, by the grace of God, through the merits of Christ; and that you are joint heirs of the eternal kingdom. May God grant unto you all his grace and mercy, Amen.

In the second place, they made the bread,

in the Holy Supper, into the real flesh, and the wine into the real blood of Christ, and understood the words of Christ literally: Take, eat, this is my body, &c., and did not observe that Christ, John 6, does fully instruct us, how we are to eat his flesh and drink his blood; and says, that it would profit nothing really to eat his flesh, and to drink his blood, for this could not be done, because he was about ascending to heaven where he was before; we are therefore not literally to understand this eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; but spiritually, as he himself says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." All those who thus understand this from the Scriptures, are by many, reproached as accursed heretics and profaners of the sacrament, and must suffer for it by water, fire and the sword.

O dear Lord! is this not an ungodly error, and great blindness, to teach and to believe, that a piece of bread, and a drink of wine should be changed into the real and essential flesh and blood of the Son of God, whereby we may be delivered from hell, the devil, sin and death, and are made children of grace? O, horrible heresy!

O miserable, blind people, believe the words of Christ, when he says, that it profiteth nothing to eat his visible and real flesh; and that his words are spirit and life, John 6: 63; believe that he ascended up to heaven and sitteth at the right hand of his Father; therefore he cannot be eaten nor confined in the body by any one, nor can he be consumed by age, fire, or worms, as may be plainly seen, is the case with the visible bread and wine.

But where the Lord's church, the beloved disciples of Christ, have met in Christ's name to partake of the Holy Supper in true faith, love and obedience, there the outward perishable man eats and drinks perishable bread and wine; and the inner, the imperishable spiritual man eats (in a spiritual sense) the imperishable body and blood of Christ, which can not be eaten nor consumed, as above said. Like is profited by like; this is incontrovertible. The visible man is nourished upon visible food, and the invisible man is fed upon invisible bread, as we may plainly learn from the word of the Lord.

Therefore, all who are in Christ and with believing, penitent hearts, rely upon the pure offering of the body and blood of Christ, and know that it is the only ablution and reconciliation for their sins, the only and eternal medium of grace; eat the true flesh and drink the true blood of Christ, not with their mouths, but *spiritually*, by faith, as said before.

The reader may readily observe from these words, that the bread is no flesh, and that the wine is no blood; for were they flesh and blood, as the idolators pretend and teach the poor people, one of two consequences must follow; either the perishable bread and wine are changed into the imperishable and heavenly Son of God; or the Son of God must be changed into bread and wine. This is incontrovertible.

O dear Lord! they are more ignorant than the heathens ever were; true, the heathens worshipped and honored the sun, moon and stars, which have their influence upon things below. They worshipped the ox, the dragon, serpents, fire, and other creatures; some of which had living breath within them. They also worshipped images of wood, stone, gold and silver, made by skilful workmen, who cast, carved and decorated them in the likeness of man. But those who are called by the name of Christ, pray to, worship, and adore a piece of bread, and a mouthful of wine, as the real flesh and blood of Christ, who came from heaven for our salvation; became man, and was made an offering upon the cross for our sins. O intolerable abomination and infamy! that the praise of God, the glory of Jesus Christ is converted and changed into such a feeble idol, which can neither avenge, speak, hear, see, stand nor walk; which worms eat and time consumes; and must be locked up, preserved, assisted, and carried about by the hands of men, like the idols at Babylon, of which Baruch writes.

O my faithful reader, learn rightly to know Christ Jesus. He is not like the fabulous Proteus,* *now* like the everlasting Almighty Son of the eternal, Omnipotent God, and *then* a perishable creature, bread and

*Proteus could according to poetical fables, change himself into different shapes.

wine. Oh no! he is unchangeable through all eternity. Neither can he be confined in any house, church nor chamber, in silver or golden vessels; for, according to his eternal, divine Being, heaven is his throne and the earth his footstool, and after his holy humanity, he ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of his Father. He is the eternal and Almighty Power, Brightness, Word, Truth, Wisdom, and image of God. He has all power in heaven above and on earth below, all things are under him; at his name every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to him, that he is the Lord, to the honor and glory of his Father, and he will not appear again in the flesh, but he will come in the clouds of heaven, to judge the goats and sheep.

Therefore I say again, He cannot be eaten, nor can he be digested in the body of man. Augustine plainly acknowledges this; when he says, "Why do you make ready to eat? only believe, and you have eaten him."

Beloved reader, we well know, that Augustine did not write this of the natural eating of the Holy Supper; but of the spiritual eating, which is by faith; and with that view, we adduced it, so that the god-fearing reader might see the difference between outward and inward eating, and not mistake the one for the other; for the external use of the sign is nothing but a false appearance and hypocrisy, if the thing which is invisibly represented, is not connected with it. That this is the case with infant baptism and the world's supper, may be readily proved from the Scriptures; but where the mystery is connected with the sign, for which purpose it is ordained, there is the baptism of Christ, and his Supper, as the Scriptures teach. But this is hidden from the world. They acknowledge that the Scriptures teach a Supper, but what it actually is, what it prefigures, and who are to partake of it, they know not, so completely has the Babylonian whore deceived and bewitched them in this matter.

The Holy Supper, as taught by Christ and his apostles, reproves all idolatry; foreign mediums of reconciliation; hatred, discord, and unrighteousness; for it directs alone to the one offering of Christ which was made by his flesh and blood, once for all, as re-

lated; it represents christian peace, harmony, brotherly love, and a pious, unblamable life, as already said; therefore they desire not this Supper, and have forsaken the Lord's word and ordinances, and have turned away from the Creator to the creature, and from the true Reality, to the perishable signs; yea, they call the disgraceful and sinful mass, the sacrifice of the Lord; and the bread and wine his real flesh and blood; for this is the custom and manner of the ungodly, because they know not the true God, the God of heaven and earth, and believe not his holy and inestimable word; but hate the true service and are opposed thereto. In God's stead they have a visible and tangible creature; and maintain a service of their own choice. So did Israel with the golden calf; with Baal and Moloch; and Antioch with his Maosim (god of forces); the Babylonians with their Bel; the Egyptians with their Isis, &c. From this source, originates all disgraceful idolatry, which is practiced with this abomination, such as carrying about the bread, exalting it, praying thereto, offering of incense, and on every occasion seeking to pay it Divine honor and Divine service; to maintain which there is not a tittle nor a letter, nor an inference, in all the Scriptures. Yea, alas! many esteem it so highly, that they say this is the one who reconciled us upon the cross. Even as Israel said to the calf, "These be thy gods. O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," *Exod. 32: 4.*

Beside this, the use of the cup is withheld from the people in the Roman church. If it were the Lord's Supper, as they pretend, they would, in every respect, use it according to the ordinance of the Lord. But this custom shows that it is not the Supper of Christ, but a deluding seduction of anti-christ.

Therefore, be wise and sober, you who name yourselves after the name of Christ. Spew out the wine of Babylonian whoredom which you have drank. You have danced and burned incense long enough to the golden calf. Give the Almighty the praise and honor due him; lest it happen to you as it did to faithless, disobedient, and idolatrous Israel. Although the Lord God graciously redeemed them from the power and

tyranny of Pharaoh, yet they had to suffer punishment on account of their unfaithfulness and obstinacy, and were destroyed in the wilderness. And so it is also in vain that we are redeemed by the blood of the Lord from the dominion and power of the devil, if we do not repent, but remain idolatrous, and believe not in Jesus, and in our weakness are not obedient nor live according to his word.

In the third place they teach, that this bread is dispensed for the remission of sins. My faithful reader, take notice of what I write. Where Jesus Christ, his word and Spirit are not known and acknowledged, there is nothing but unbelief, idolatry, error, and an uncertain, wavering conscience, as may be seen.

They all seek some remedy for their sins, but the true remedy, Christ, they do not acknowledge; hence they have contrived so many remedies, that we can neither describe nor relate all of them; such as absolution, holy water, fastings, confessions, masses, pilgrimages, infant baptism, bread and wine, &c.

I know not to whom to compare this generation, other than to a sick and wounded person, who has entrusted himself under the care of an unskilful physician, who can give him no suitable medicines, and apply no healing plasters; he spends his money in vain; he suffers pain and affliction, and is getting worse instead of better. A skilful, experienced physician is recommended to him, who, prompted by pure love and mercy would visit him without money and without price, bind up his wounds, and gladly cure him; but the sick man will not receive such a good and well-disposed physician. Who then could feel for such a man, because he would rather perish than get well?

So it is with this perverse generation. They feel and are sensible, at times, that they are failing and sick, but they seek medicine and counsel of those who sicken them still more with their poison; and are not healed of their wounds and cured of their diseases. They refuse the skilful, the heavenly Chirurgeon and Physician, Jesus Christ, recommended by all the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and by angels; yea, appointed by the Father himself, him they will

not have who would willingly visit all so deadly wounded; he offers his services without money and without price; he has a well scented, healing salve, good to heal our wounds, it is his powerful word to instruct; and his crimson blood, to reconcile, as was said. But they desire him not; they turn him away with violence, false doctrine, reproach, lying, treason, rebellion, persecution, and murder; as has been fully shown. O dear Lord! What counsel shall be given to this disobedient, perverse, and blind people?

My worthy reader, we testify the truth in Christ; beware, believe, obey, hope and seek, where and what you will; we are assured that you will find in the word of God, no other remedy for your sins, than the one we have pointed out to you, which is Jesus Christ; else the Scriptures must be false.

Thus says Isaiah, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins," Isa. 43: 25.

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. 53: 6.

The angel said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins," Matt. 1: 21.

"This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins," Matt. 26: 27.

"Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John 1: 29

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. 5: 21.

"Who, his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree," 1 Pet. 2: 24.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John 1: 7.

"He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. 1: 5.

My good readers, look well to yourselves, and be not deceived; if there were any other remedy for sin than the one pointed out, as related, we might then with propriety say, that these and other passages, have not rightly directed us, and holy Paul also erred not a little, when he says, "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave

himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6.

All those, then, who seek other remedies for their sins, however glorious and holy they may appear, than the only remedy provided by God, deny the Lord's death, which he died for us, and his innocent blood which he shed for us; and they are those of whom the Lord complains and says, through his prophet Jeremiah, My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the Fountain of living waters, and have hewn them out cisterns, that can hold no water, Jer. 2: 13.

All false doctrine goes to deny the true throne of grace, Jesus Christ, who alone is our righteousness, acceptable to God; and all false doctrine goes to the erection of strange Baals to be worshipped instead of Christ, as said before.

Behold, beloved sirs, friends and brethren, here you have the salutary truth and the only ground of the Lord's Supper plainly and briefly set before you, what it is, for whom it is ordained, and what it teaches, and represents to us with its mysteries and significations.

You have also a view of the anti-christian supper, with its dreadful abominations, whereby the Lord's Supper is destroyed, and the kingdom of anti-christ is fortified, and is placed in the stead of God's throne, whereby, alas! so many hundreds of thousands of poor souls were and are yet daily deceived; on account of which so many pious hearts are so slanderously spoken of and reproached by the learned, and so dreadfully murdered and slain in some

cities, because they renounced this abominable idolatry.

Place these two beside each other; weigh them well by the spirit, word and ordinances of the Lord, and you will find, if you do at all believe that the word of God is true, to what abomination and frightful idolatry the world has come, and that we have, according to our feeble abilities, plainly explained to you the immovable foundation of truth out of the word of God.

Praise the Most High, all of you who fear the Lord, that he has manifested his unbounded love and grace toward us poor sinners, in this dreadful time of unbelief; that he let shine out of darkness, the clear light of the holy gospel, and the true knowledge of his son Jesus Christ, which was concealed for several centuries in this dark Egypt, under the thick clouds of the anti-christian abominations, 2 Cor. 4: 6. Therefore, let us be vigilant thereto, and diligently walk therein, so that thick darkness may not again cover us, as the prophet says, Jer. 13: 16.

O my dear reader, rightly learn to know Jesus Christ, who has ordained this Holy Supper and the breaking of bread for his disciples and all christians. Believe the glorious and unspeakable gifts of his grace. Fear, love, honor, and serve him; walk in godly union, love and peace with your neighbor, even as this Supper, with its representation, testifies and admonishes; die to your wicked flesh, crucify its unclean lusts; in all things lead a life according to the spirit, word, and example of the Lord, so shall your Supper redound to his praise, and your souls shall have life everlasting.

SHUNNING BABYLON.

We further teach and admonish from the word of God, that all true children of God, who are regenerated from the incorruptible living seed of the divine word, who have separated themselves, according to the Scriptures, from the idolatrous generation, and yielded to the yoke and cross of Christ,

and who are able to judge between true and false doctrines, between Christ and anti-christ, must shun, according to Scripture, all seducing and idolatrous preachers with their doctrines, sacraments and worship. They must avoid all, of every doctrine, faith, sect, creed and name, who are not

found in the pure doctrine of Christ, and in the scriptural usage of his sacraments, because they have neither calling, doctrine, nor life, according to the word of God, but are sent by anti-christ, and ordained in his employment and service. And

Because they not only fail to observe and acknowledge the pure doctrine of Christ, and the established usages of the apostolic church, in relation to the holy sacraments, but because they also have changed them into vain confusion, abominable and open idolatry, as has been stated.

Because they have deceitfully mingled the light froth of man's doctrine, with the fair, precious gold of the divine word; and the pure wine, with the unclean waters of their foolish wisdom.

Because they so shamefully censure, abuse, assail, and would willingly root out and burn the city of God, the city of righteousness and eternal peace; the lovely Jerusalem with its sacred temple, the house of prayer, and rule therein with their spiritual money-changers, Pharisaic commands, and enchanting traffic.

Because like Belshazzar, they, in their Babylonian idolatries and drunkenness, so miserably misuse and degrade the precious vessels and utensils of the Lord, the precious souls whom he has consecrated with his crimson blood, and by whom the *true* service of the Lord should be performed, Rev. 1: 5; Dan. 5: 3.

Because like Herod, they mock Christ, the eternal Wisdom of God, as a fool ar-

rayed in a fool's garment; and his holy apostles, the witnesses of his eternal truth, they regard as useless talkers and liars, and thrust them out with scorn.

In short, they preach and lay before the poor people, lies for truth; darkness for light; death for life, and anti-christ for Christ.

Therefore it is unfit that the bride of Christ, who stands prepared to hear only the bridegroom's voice, the dear children of God who have their feet washed and their garments cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, John 3: 29; who are established upon the immoveable foundations of the apostles and prophets, upon the precious corner stone, Christ Jesus, should again hear the strange voice and doctrines of anti-christ, again defile their garments, and in faith, doctrines, worship, and life accord with anti-christ. They who do so, if they repent not, are condemned by the Scriptures and adjudged to death.

This we teach according to our limited talents, with all earnestness, as much as in us is, not out of contempt, as the Lord knows, nor yet out of obstinacy, caprice, or party stubbornness, as the world ascribes to us. Oh no! God preserve all his own from party spirit. But we so preach out of the true fear of the Lord and the great distress and burden of our consciences. God's pressing word, and love for your poor souls, urge us, as may, through the grace of God, be seen with more clearness hereafter.

SENDING PREACHERS.

According to the Scriptures, the calling and sending of true preachers were performed in two ways; some were called by God alone, without any human instrumentality, as was the case with the prophets and apostles. Others were called through the medium of the pious, as may be seen from Acts 1: 23—26; 1 Tim. 3: 7. We hope no one will be so ignorant, who is otherwise of a candid and rational mind, but that he will know

that the whole Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, were written for our instruction, admonition and correction; and that they are the true sceptre and rule by which the Lord's kingdom, house, church and congregation must be governed and adjusted, 2 Cor. 3: 16. Every thing contrary to Scripture, whether it be in doctrines, faith, sacraments, worship or conduct, should be measured by this infallible rule, and de-

molished by this just and divine sceptre, without any respect to persons, and brought to nothing. Therefore would we, your willing servants and associates, of like mortal nature with you, each one in the office and station to which he is called, humbly admonish you, in all love, that you would reflect on the salvation of your immortal souls, and would rightly examine the *sending* or *calling*, the doctrine and conduct of the bishops, pastors and preachers of your churches. Examine them by the aid of the spirit of the Lord, and by the doctrines and customs of the apostles, because you have persecuted and destroyed so many pious, godly christians, by the idols' houses of the ungodly, which are supported by the bloody havoc-cries of the learned. Yea, we doubt not, but that if you follow our advice with a sincere heart, you will soon perceive, that we, miserable men, do nothing more in this matter, than the word of God teaches and enjoins; and that your preachers are not the servants of Christ, but hirelings, hypocrites, deceivers and mockers, concerning whom the Scriptures warn us, on every side, and represent them under many evil names, John 10: 12; Matt. 3: 4.

Candid reader! let this be to you a true and unwavering rule, that all who rightly preach Christ and his word, and thereby bring forth obedient children to the Lord, must have been called through one of the aforementioned means. They must have been brought into the vineyard of the Lord, through the true and unfeigned love of God and man, through the power of the Holy Ghost. They must improve the talent of grace which they have received from God, they must rebuke sin, and teach faith and righteousness, without any respect of person, they must set forth the word and praise of the Lord; they must faithfully perform the work and service of the Lord and bring the gathered sheaves into his barn and the acquired wealth into his treasury. Such a shepherd was the faithful Moses; for when the Lord informed him that Israel had made a molten calf, he hastened from the mountain, and when he heard the tumult and saw the multitude playing, and dancing, a provoked zeal burned in his heart, so that he cast down and brake the stone tables

which the Lord had written with his own finger. He cared neither for life nor death, but rushed forth among the idolatrous people, and rebuked them by his word and by the sword, because they gave to a molten creature the honor of Almighty God, who with such love gloriously effected their deliverance from Egypt, Exod. 32: 7.

When Zacharias, the son of Barachias, a man full of the Holy Ghost, saw the false worship of the people, he hazarded his life, and stood forth for the honor of the Lord. He rebuked his brethren, erring Israel, and said, "Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper?" 2 Chron. 24: 20.

Also the worthy prophet Jeremiah was burdened with much suffering and cares. He was much troubled on account of his faithful services, and had determined in his heart to prophesy no more in the name of the Lord; but when he saw that the people were ungodly and neither acted nor spoke aright, he said, "God's word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay," Jer. 20: 9.

Again, also holy Paul says, "Wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me," 1 Cor. 9: 16.

Behold, my good reader, all who by such a power are touched in their hearts, who are moved by the Holy Ghost, who are pressed by love to God and man, and urged by the Lord himself, or by his spotless christian church; or are called to the service of the Lord by an unblamable, truly believing, christian church, to rightly teach in the house of God; that is, the church of Jesus Christ, with sound doctrine, and by a pious and unblamable conduct, admonish, rebuke, reprove and comfort them in paternal love; to set forth and administer the Lord's holy baptism and Supper, in a right manner; to repel diligently, with God's word, all deluding and false teachers; and to exclude all evil members from the communion of the godly, &c. To such, the word of Christ is, As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; without such a sending, no one can ever rightly preach the gospel, as Paul says,

“How shall they preach except they be sent?”

Yes, it was with this sending and calling that all the prophets, apostles and servants of God came forth. They assumed not the honor to themselves, as do the preachers of this world: but like Aaron, they were called by God, or, as has been said, by the spotless church. They were brought by the spirit of God, with pious hearts, into his service; they had always esteemed themselves unfit to serve the people of God, or stand forth in such a high and responsible station.

When Moses was called of the Lord, that he might lead out the people, he refused from his heart, he excused himself and declined, because he was of a slow tongue; he desired not the office to which the Lord had chosen him, yea, he resisted so long that the Lord was angry, *Exod. 4: 10—15*.

Isaiah was confounded because he was to preach the word of the Lord. He lamented that he was of unclean lips till the angel purged them with a coal from off the holy altar, *Isa. 6: 6*.

Jeremiah was called and prepared from his birth of God, to be a prophet; he said, Ah Lord God! I am not fit to preach, for I am but a child, *Jer. 1: 6*.

Peter was asked by the Lord three times, if he loved him, before he gave him charge of his sheep, *John 21: 15*.

Paul was called from heaven, and appointed by the Lord himself in the service of the Gospel; for the Lord chose him as suitable for the ministry, *Acts 9: 3*.

Matthias was chosen through the zealous prayers of the church, and the lots of the apostles, to be an apostle in the place of Judas, *Acts 1: 26*.

All who are not sent of God, nor by an unblamable christian church, conformably to the regulations of Christ and the apostles are not called, as above said. Such are not called by the Holy Ghost; by the pure, unfeigned love of God and their brethren; and with a correct knowledge and zeal for the divine word; but they enter upon it with a temporal, sensual life, seeking man's favor, praise, money and profit. They will never gather fruit in the vineyard of the Lord, though they may be learned in language,

eloquent and esteemed as great and excellent men. But all that they attempt is lost labor. They will rise too early, or go out too late, their calling is powerless, their service is vain, their labor without fruit, yea, it is nothing but sowing by the way, and beating against the wind; for no one can serve in this high and holy office, conformably to God's will, except those whom the Lord of the vineyard has made worthy and fit, by the spirit of his grace.

Since then, this sending is the true sending and calling, which is taught in the Scriptures, as has been observed, we faithfully counsel the reader, that in the pure fear of God, he would mark what kind of people their teachers are: of whom, in what way, and to what they are called. For it is manifest that some of them are useless, haughty, lustful men; some are avaricious, usurers, liars, deceivers, others again are drunkards, gamblers, licentious, open seducers, idolaters, &c., concerning whom it stands written, If they repent not, they shall not inherit the kingdom of God, *1 Cor. 6: 9, 10*. Some also, are idle profligates, young and haughty, wholly unlearned in the Scriptures; and were anointed and shaven by anti-christ, when they obtain a little knowledge of the Latin tongue, like as if the qualifications for the ministry and for the care of our souls, were not to be founded upon godliness and the gifts of grace, but upon language; Oh no, my reader, no, their foundation must be sought for more deeply.

Besides this, those so chosen, desire nothing but a sensual, corrupt, carnal life, dishonest, filthy lucre and benefices, which heretofore anti-christ and his servants have collected together and multiplied by means of sorcery, theft and robbery.*

They are only called by carnal love, favor and faction; one has a son, another a brother, a third a favored friend, a fourth is made willing by money and gifts.

They are also with a similar spirit installed and established in their office; to wit, with eating, drinking, gormandizing and luxury; with pompous greeting, choir letters, appellations, presentations, investitures, and such like anti-christian titles.

* That is what the priests seek.

But by whom are they thus called? By the church? No. Christ's church knows no such callings, customs, practices and teachers, but they are called by the assemblies of the impenitent, the haughty, avaricious, fornicators, gamblers, drunkards and idolaters, who neither know God nor his word, but who abuse, persecute and hate all christian truth, and walk after the lusts of the flesh.*

Again, to what are they called? That they may preach the pure word of God? That they may go before the poor people, with doctrines and conduct consistent with the commands of Scripture? O no; but that they may teach the doctrines and commandments of men; that they may withstand the holy truth, and betray the pious and godly, who refrain from the broadway, into the hands of the blood-thirsty; and in this manner assiduously serve and support the dominion of hell.

My beloved reader, why shall I complain so much; it is yet much worse than I can write. One blind man calls another; one idolater another; one ungodly man, another. It is, as the prophet said, deceivers, liars, drunkards, and gluttons are good prophets for this people, Mich. 2: 11.

O sensual preachers! You who with Korah, Dathan and Abiram ran uncalled, particularly you who know that your calling and conduct are not of the word and Spirit of God, judge your hearts by the word of the Lord, fear his rigid punishment and severe sentence, and reflect how the aforementioned persons, for the same reason, were fearfully destroyed by the Lord before all Israel, Num. 16: 32.

It suits perverted fleshly ease to live in voluptuousness here upon earth, with fattened bodies, with gloves on the hands, with ostentatious show, to be greeted by men as doctor, lord and master. But when the messenger of death shall knock at the door of your souls and say, "give an account," you will no longer remain as stewards and hirelings; then you must appear before the throne of the eternal Majesty, and the poor miserable souls which you have led out of the true way of Christ, with your lying mouths, your unbelieving, blind hearts, sen-

sual, corrupt bodies, false and deceiving doctrine, idolatries, sorceries, and ungodly wanton lives. O where will you conceal yourselves from the wrath of God? Then shall you cry, O ye mountains fall upon us, and ye hills cover us, Rev. 6: 16. O then you will know what kind of calling you had; what kind of life you led, that you served no other God than your belly, the devil, and your selfish evil flesh, that you came uncalled, that you have sought nothing but the milk, wool and flesh of the sheep, and that one blind man has led another, till both have fallen into the abyss of the eternal wrath of Almighty God, and the torments of hell.

O precious souls awake and fear God, for the hour draws near that your momentary laugh will be changed into an everlasting weeping; these short lived joys to eternal pain, and this easy, carnal life to death and endless wo. Jude says, "Wo unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." Again, to them "is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever," Jude 1: 11, 13.

Behold, beloved sirs, friends and brethren, we openly declare that the sending and calling of your preachers are neither of God nor his word, but are from anti-christ, the dragon and the beast; that they are not called to preach the word of the Lord, by the Spirit of God, and the church, but they are called and urged by their lusts with the priests of Jeroboam, to worship the golden calf, 2 Chron. 13: 8, 9. They enter not in by the right door, therefore, the Scriptures testify that they are thieves and robbers, John 10: 8.

Since then, we have been saved out of the mouths of the lions and bears of the pit, and out of the snares of concealed thieves and robbers, through the great Shepherd of the sheep, the High Priest of our souls, Christ Jesus, and are now upon the chosen and fruitful mountain of Israel, and the green luxuriant pastures of the holy word (the Lord be eternally thanked), our hungering consciences have been fed with the food of eternal life, it must ever be a condemnable folly to forsake such a true shep-

* Observe by whom the priests are chosen.

herd, and such precious pastures, and again enter upon the barren and waste deserts, under the false shepherd who does nothing else but rob and deprive God of his glory, and ruin and murder our poor miserable souls, John 10: 10.

This I have said particularly in relation

to the *Popish priests*. What the calling and sending of the Lutherans and Zuinglians is, by what spirit they are moved, what they seek, and what fruits of repentance they show by their doctrines and sacraments, we willingly leave all the godly to judge.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE PREACHERS.

As I have presented to the reader, the first part in relation to the sending and calling of a true preacher, according to the word of God, I will now, through the grace of God, present in like manner the second part, relating to the doctrine; for there is but little difference between their calling and their doctrine, as the calling is, even so, most commonly, is the doctrine.

Where the spirit of God urges or moves to preach, there will the word be incorruptibly taught in the power of God; and upright children of the spirit will thereby be born. But where flesh and blood calls, there will a carnal doctrine be taught and carnal disciples will be made, for that like produces like is incontrovertible. I deem it unnecessary here to prove this with much scripture, for their actions bear testimony.

The Scriptures plainly show how a preacher rightly called by the word of God is to rightly teach that word without perverting glosses, without any mingling of leaven; as Peter says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," 1 Peter 4: 11. They are the children of the Holy Ghost who speak the word of the Spirit, as Christ said, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you," Matt. 10: 20. "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God," John 3: 34. To preach the word salutarily and unblamably, is one of the highest and greatest commands enjoined by Christ. He said, "Go ye in all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark 16: 15.

✓ The Gospel, the word of God, preached unmingled, in the power of the spirit, is the

only right, true seed from which are born the truly believing and obedient children of God. If the church of Christ brings forth children from the doctrine of man, and not from God's word, she is not faithful unto Christ, and her children are not of his seed.

Therefore may nothing else be preached in Christ's kingdom and house, the church, except her King and husband's own commands and words, according to which she and all her servants must conform.

This command and word (I say), Christ commanded all true messengers and preachers to observe, as he spoke; *Preach the gospel*. He does not say, preach the doctrines and commands of man; preach councils and customs; preach glossy ordinances and opinions of the learned, but he says, "Preach the gospel," and "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28: 20.

My faithful reader, observe that all the true servants of God, both of the Old and New Testaments, taught nothing but God's word, as may be seen and read in many places in the Scriptures.

Moses was found faithful of God in all his house. He regulated and taught nothing which God had not before commanded him, Num. 12: 7; Heb. 3: 2.

Isaiah, and all of the other prophets, testified in many places what kind of doctrine they taught, and from whom they had received it; and said, Thus saith the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt; thus spake the Lord of Hosts, Again the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. Paul dare not speak of any thing which

Christ had not wrought through him, Rom. 15: 18. Yea, Christ himself did not teach *his* word, but the word of his father, he said, My doctrine is not mine, but is of him who sent me, "All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you," John 7: 16; 15: 15. Since then the true messengers of God, taught nothing but the word of the Lord, which is the only doctrine from which our souls can obtain eternal life, as the Lord said, Deut. 8: 3. So it is easily here to mark and judge what kind of teachers they are who direct the poor uncultivated people to legends, histories, fables, holydays, images, holy water, tapers, palms, confessions, pilgrimages, masses, matins and vespers; who teach of purgatory, vigils, times, bulls, offerings, and satisfaction for souls and sins, who also make a piece of bread and a drink of wine, to be the essential body and blood of Christ; who teach and say that when they have but spoken these words, *Hoc est corpus meum* (*this is my body*), the Lord, willing or not willing, must descend unto their idolatrous hands, even though the Heavens should rend assunder, and the earth crumble down, O blasphemy!

O dear Lord! my heart trembles in my body, that I must relate and mention such terrible abominations. But because the simple plain people, who do not guard themselves against such seducers; who, conscientiously, are bound hand and foot, and are blindly rushed into eternal death, and the abyss of hell, by these useless men, therefore I cannot remain silent, but must disclose this, through undissembled love to God and your souls. Who knows but God may give grace that you may be prevailed upon to hear, your eyes opened to see, and your hearts to understand, that you may be freed from the snares of the devil, whereby you are taken.

Yes, my dear reader, they have made lords, princes, and the world drunk by their cup, Rev. 17: 2, and have completely bewitched them, so that all who turn from their shame, and would not pervert the honor of their Savior, by a piece of bread, all who shun false teachers, and desire the salutary administration of the Lord's Supper, as above said, will be upbraided by all

men, as profaners of the holy Sacrament, and they must suffer and be banished, as degraded and accursed heretics.

O blind leader! you, who during your life have not rightly understood one sentence of the word of the Lord, nor have received one ray from his spirit, but have trodden the kingdom of God with your feet, and have thrust it from you with your horns, Ezek. 34: 21. How truly are you associates of those of whom it stands written, that they say, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves," Isa. 28: 15; again, "Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness," Isa. 5: 20. "Wo unto you, for ye shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men," said Christ, Matt. 23: 13, and make the poor souls err from the way. Yet again, Wo unto you!

However, I am not much astonished that such persons teach such shameful doctrine, since they have neither known Christ nor his word, but they hold and teach all things as they were taught from youth up, out of the old usages, and the papistical laws. But that which grieves me most, is, that those also who now are aware in part of the hidden whoredom of the Babylonian woman, and have put from them some of her abominations, yet cling to human sophistry, so that they can neither be moved nor taught, with the powerful word of God, with the unblamable lives, the candid professions, or the innocent blood of so many godly saints. Nevertheless, some of you, have, at times, to yield to the truth with stopped mouths and subdued hearts, but still ye cease not to upbraid, defame, and belie, with envious tongues and slanderous lips, the bright, clear truth of Christ, and the pious children of God, before your carnal, blind churches which are of like calling with yourselves. This also your writers do as may be seen and heard every where. Besides, I fear that they are not less guilty than the papists in moving the lords, princes and ruling powers, by commissions, complaints, revilings, outeries, and writ-

ings, to persecute the Lamb of God, and his chosen, Rev. 17: 6; and to cause an uproar, when their deceiving leaven, particularly the calf worship of their infant baptism, and their unfounded supper, is rejected. Let each one behold for himself and learn to know them rightly. I know of a truth that they are without the Spirit, the sending, or the word of Christ; for I am sensible how malicious they generally are toward those who are rightly led, who fear the Lord with all their heart and who would gladly become christians. In their doctrines and deeds they seek, not less than the papists, friendship of man, honor, pomp, bounties, fine houses, and an easy licentious life.

O my beloved reader, these are not the teachers who lead many to righteousness, and who shall shine, as the light of heaven and as the stars, now and in eternity, Dan. 12: 13. For I know not where a single congregation shall be found which they have led with their doctrines and conduct to repenting lives, and to the worship of God. Their great clamor is against the pope and his cardinals, bishops, priests and monks. Moreover, all those who gladly seek the best for their poor souls, must be upbraided by them, as profaners of the sacraments, anabaptists, fanatics, and heretics, who through the word of God, reprove their deceiving doctrines, idolatrous sacraments, and idle lives.

Yea, when they can find but one (though cut off), who was before united with the people of God, but who has now fallen into some vice, they judge and sentence *all* the godly by this *one*: Behold! say they, what manner of people they are. They seek nothing so much as to find cause of censure; therefore, they look upon Judas, but not upon Peter, Andrew and John; they do not regard what manner of people they are themselves, nor what kind of disciples they have.

Besides, it is nothing but the grace, favor, mercy, and the love of God, that they teach and preach to their covetous, proud, gorgeous, impure, drunken, and impenitent church, not observing that such as they are, cannot inherit the kingdom of God, as the whole Scriptures testify; they also strenght-

en the hands of the wicked, so that no one repents of his wickedness, as the prophet lamented.

O ye useless unprofitable teachers, who are believed to bear the vessels of the Lord, these my words are to you! Why do you declaim so much of faith and love, whose fruit you so greatly hate and dislike? If you have the fear and unfeigned love of God, let them appear and be made manifest through your words. Say, beloved preachers! Where is your christian humility, your godly, christian zeal, pleasure, peace and joy in Christ Jesus?

Where is your mercy which you shew? where are the naked whom you have clothed, the hungry whom you have fed, and the needy whom you have entertained? Matt. 25: 41—43. Where are the lost whom you have again sought, the wounded whom you have bound up, and the sick whom you have healed? Ezek. 34: 4. Where is your unblamable, pious life which is from God? That which you preach, perform and do, is for the most part idle hypocrisy.

Some of you approve in some degree, of a pious, christian life, preach also much of Christ, of his merits, spirit and grace, and are yourselves, manifestly those who lead a gross, carnal life, who crucify Christ anew, grieve his spirit, and despise his grace, as may be seen.

O preachers, preachers! how aptly has the Holy Ghost likened you to dry wells and empty clouds from which no water can be obtained, and to unfruitful trees from which no fruit can be taken, 2 Pet. 2: 17; Jude 1: 12. I know not to what you may be more suitably compared, than to a woman who lives in all manner of shame and wantonness, and yet talks much about modesty, decency and virtue: Should not her words be regarded as mockery? Might it not be said, why do you talk of modesty and chastity, since you are full of all manner of immodesty and shame?

We are well aware that you have demolished some of the little idols of Babylon, such as the Roman ablution, the invocation of departed saints, vile purification, abstaining from meats, and the like self-righteousness, idolatry, and other superstitions, but, alas, the horrible blasphemy and abom-

inations are still retained; such as accursed unbelief, obstinacy, earthly-mindedness, unscriptural infant baptism, the idolatrous supper, and the impenitent, old life which is of the flesh.

Therefore, we testify with the truth and declare that you are not ambassadors of God nor teachers of Christ. For it is plain that you reject the word and ordinances of the Lord, and run of yourselves, Jer. 8: 6, and have pastured yourselves under the name and appearance of the evangelical shepherds of the Lord, and have led to destruction so many hundreds of thousands of souls, through your wanton doctrine, idolatrous sacraments, and carnal lives.

But the teachers who are sent of God, and who have been rightly called, teach the word of God in purity, abide in its holy ordinances, and live (after their weakness) unblamably, for they are born of God, and are taught and moved by his Holy Spirit, they seek neither gold, nor possessions, neither an easy life nor earthly applause, they wait upon their enjoined duties with all earnestness, they fear God from the heart, seek their neighbor with fidelity; they are armed with the weapons of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, Rom. 6: 7. They deal without respect to persons. The powerful, sharp sword of the divine word, cuts out of their mouth; it is a shining lantern in their hands; they are taught in righteousness, are full of all spiritual wisdom; they divide the good from the evil; the holy from the unholy, and the clean from the unclean. In short, they shine in doctrine and conduct, even as from the beginning till the present time, it has been written and remarked of all true prophets, apostles and servants of God.

O dear Lord, how lovely are those pastors and teachers who seek nothing else but the extension of the kingdom of God; who rightly preach the word of repentance and grace, that they may win many souls; and for this end, they expose their reputation, houses, property, persons and lives.

These are they, who, with Christ, the chief shepherd, gather together and feed his lambs; but the others are those who scatter and destroy them. They are prophets, but not of God; they preach, but not out of the

Lord's mouth. They strengthen the hands of the ungodly. They destroy the souls who should have eternal life, and encourage those who must forever die; and this they do for handfuls of barley and pieces of bread. They preach to the people peace when there is no peace. Therefore, shall they stand in shame, who follow such abominations, although they yet are not ashamed and yet forbear to blush, Ezek. 13: 16.

Behold, dear reader, since they so shamefully deprive Christ of his honor and gain, and scatter his sheep, and, with the sword of their deceiving doctrines, destroy the poor souls who are so greatly loved by the Lord, for whom he so earnestly seeks, and whom he so dearly purchased. Since they so enviously war against the word and ordinances of the Lord, we say and teach with Christ, "Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind." Guard yourselves against such false prophets; for though they come in the appearance of sheep, they are nevertheless, inwardly ravening wolves. They are the strangers whose voice Christ's sheep know not. They are those of whom Paul warns us and says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple," Rom. 16: 17, 18.

Again, John says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds," 2 John 1: 9, 10, 11.

The word of God, abundantly exhorts us that we should leave such and beware of them; shun their voice and retreat from them, and not take them into our houses, as has been said. If we are Christ's sheep and the children of the Holy Spirit; so must we even hear Christ's voice, and follow after and obey the monitions of the Holy Ghost. Reflect how sincerely holy Paul admonished the Philippians, that they should guard against strife, evil doers, and the concision.

He taught the true servants of God that they should shun those, who failed no further (as it appears) than that they out of zeal, without knowledge, held fast to the circumcision which they had received from their fathers, and would not admit that it should be abolished through Christ, for this he sharply re-

proves them. How much more earnestly it becomes us to beware of them, who deceive the whole world, who upbraid and persecute the godly, and crucify all truth, against all false teachers and blasphemers of God, who urge, institute and practice all manner of idolatrous and abominable doctrine.

THE CONDUCT OF PREACHERS.

As you have just heard the ground of the calling and doctrines of the preachers, we will proceed, and through the grace of God point out by the Scriptures how the *true* apostles, bishops, teachers and pastors, in the church of Christ, should conduct themselves in their deportment and lives; it is not enough that a man appears to speak much of the word of the Lord, but what he says must also be maintained by a devout and unblamable conduct, as the Scriptures teach.

Thus says Paul, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away," 1 Cor. 9: 27. If it becomes the hearers and disciples to lead an unblamable life, how much more does it become teachers, because they rule the hearers and are their overseers; as Paul says, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," Heb. 13: 7.

He also admonishes Timothy thereto, and says, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity," 1 Tim. 4: 12. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine, shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, &c., Tit. 2: 7. For it is undoubtedly proper, if any one teaches and reproves others, that he first himself be rightly taught and unblamable, as Paul teaches, "If a man desire the office of a bishop he desireth a good work. A bishop

then must be blameless, the husband of one wife vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil, he must be sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers; even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things," 1 Tim. 3: 1—11; Titus 1: 8, 9.

Behold dear reader, it is requisite that every preacher and teacher, who would rightly govern and rule in the church of God, be thus qualified; for if any one were to reprove and teach others, and is himself not blameless and is ignorant; he will justly have to hear; Why do you teach others and teach not yourself first! Thou teachest a man should not steal, and thou dost steal. Thou sayest a man should not commit adultery, and thou dost. Thou adhorrest idols, yet thou committest sacrilege. Thou boastest of the law of God; and dishonorest God by breaking the law, Rom. 2: 21—23.

All those thus called, who are in doctrine sound, and unblamable in life, may teach,

exhort, reprove, root up, and build in the name of the Lord; their labors will not be fruitless, as may be seen, in the case of Moses, Samuel, Elias, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter, Paul, John, and with all the true prophets, apostles and servants of God, who preached the word unblamably in the power of the Spirit.

Their doctrine cuts like a sharp edged sword, for it has power, it is fruitful, has spirit and energy, as the prophet says, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be, that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," Isa. 55: 10, 11.

Yea, all those who enter the vineyard of the Lord with such a sending or calling, and with such a spirit, doctrine and conduct, as said, are the shepherds of whom it is written, "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding," Jer. 3: 15.

They are the teachers who turn many to righteousness; and they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, as the stars forever, Dan. 12: 3.

They are the spiritual streams, and the rivers of the paradise of Christ, which issue from the fountains of the paradise of God, to irrigate and fertilize the whole country, Gen. 2: 10—14.

They are the spiritual posts and pillars in the court of the tabernacle of Moses with hangings of fine twined linen, Exod. 27: 9.

They are the three score valiant men, of the valiant of Israel, who are around Solomon's bed; they all hold swords: being expert in war; every man with his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night, Cant. 3: 7, 8.

They are the seven horns or trumpets, of the golden years, before whose sounds, teaching and preaching, the walls of Jericho fell, that is, all false doctrine, all powers and dominions raised up against the true Joshua, Jesus Christ, and his people, are brought low, Josh. 6: 10.

They are the beautiful messengers of peace, who preach the gospel of grace, favor, mercy, love, and peace, and bring glad tidings of good things, to us, poor, miserable, troubled sinners, Isaiah 52: 7; Rom. 10: 15.

They are seven mighty mountains, whereupon grow roses and lilies, whose sweet scent refreshes with joy all who fear the Lord, 2 Esd. 2: 19.

They are the splendid crown of twelve stars of the woman, pregnant and in travail, Rev. 12: 1, 2.

They are the walls of the new and heavenly Jerusalem, based upon the twelve foundations, that is upon the ground and doctrine of the twelve apostles, Rev. 21: 14.

See, worthy reader, with such and similar glorious images and parables, are all the pious pastors and teachers honored in the Scriptures, whom the Holy Ghost has ordained as bishops and overseers in his church, congregation and house.

These may say with holy Paul, Follow us as we are the followers of Christ. "for our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile, but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts; for neither at any time, used we flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness. Nor of men sought we glory," 2 Thess. 2: 3—6.

I repeat it, These are they who gather with Christ what has been scattered, bind up the wounded, and heal the sick, for they are influenced by the Spirit of the Lord and urged by unfeigned love. They are vigilant, and assiduous in the discharge of entrusted duties. They fight daily with the weapon of obedience. They tear down, break and destroy all that which is against the word of God, not by external power, with sword and spear, but by the preaching of the holy word, in power and spirit, with the word of the Lord. They till, sow, water and plant. They cut down what is ripe. They gather their grain and sheaves, and carry them into the Lord's barn, and their fruits will abide unto eternal life.

Since the Scriptures require such teachers,

as before-mentioned, it is then indispensable, that we weigh the conduct of your preachers in the balance, and determine their actions, by the plummet of the divine word, before your own eyes, that you may discover how much they are wanting in their conduct of the pattern of the true bishops, preachers and pastors, spoken of by Paul to Timothy and Titus, in all their lives and actions; and that they are the very reverse, who, without spirit, word, work or truth, but in semblance only, are so called of the world.

It is manifest, beloved reader, that they have changed the meek office of a true bishop, preacher and pastor, which is an office of christian service, and if rightly attended to, is an office full of labor, poverty, trouble, care, reproach, misery, tribulation, cross and affliction, into ungodly gorgeousness and princely glory, that they may be greatly respected and feared, of those whose names are not written in heaven, to this end they appear in splendid robes: are dressed in shining garbs, Rev. 13: 8; are called by pompous names, and use in their services crosses, ointments, caps, togas, unclean purifications, and have cloisters, chapels, bells, organs, music, masses, offerings, &c., of which there is not a word to be found in the Scriptures. Under these splendid trappings may plainly be seen the sly, croaching wolf, the earthly, sensual mind, the anti-christian seductions and bloody abominations; for they seek nothing but the favor of men, honor, splendor, vengery, idleness, self, gold, silver, gluttony, &c., and suffer themselves to be called spiritual doctors, teachers, lords, abbots, guardians, fathers and priors.

Alas! how vastly they do differ from the prophets and apostles in their office, services, examples, usages, lives, and in all they did; who entered the vineyard of the Lord without purse, without money, or much clothing; who were made a spectacle to the whole world; and for Christ's sake were killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter; as may be seen from the Scriptures.

But these have their chests and coffers full, they are waxed rich through the abundance of the Babylonian sorcery, and have

become princes on earth, Rev. 18: 15. In all things they are blamable, violating female chastity, which is carried on to such an unblushing degree, that it cannot be expressed; they are unchaste, unmerciful, malicious, scorers, unfriendly, unrighteous, liars, drunkards, and full of inordinate desires. Their tables are full of uncleanness, as Isaiah the prophet says. Their hearts are full of avarice, and they are malicious towards those who will not contribute to their support. They even prepare war against them, as Micah teaches; are full of adultery; sit with harlots in their houses; beget children illegitimately. They are unbelieving, refractory, proud, ambitious; obey not the word of the Lord; are bound with the cords of the devil, and there are many who have not known the truth, are a scandal and disgrace to the world. Their dreadful, abominable fruits make this manifest to all. They fight against Christ and his word; hate all the pious; speak reproachfully of all those who seek, love, and fear the Lord with all their hearts. In short, it is impossible to relate all their abominable crimes, lewdness, ungodly deeds, private and public vices, infamy and abominations.

O dear Lord! how much more have they become the reverse of the upright and true bishops, overseers and pastors, although this proud generation boast that they can bring Christ down from heaven, reconcile God, forgive sins, and that they are the true pillars, heads and eyes of the church.

Although I have written this especially of the Roman priests, the reader should know, that I cannot acquit those in any wise, who boast of the word; for with the exception of adultery and fornication, and a few of the abuses of the bread, which are not found with them, they seek and desire, in the common walks of life, unreasonable gain; they idolize baptism and the Holy Supper, and oppress, backbite and slander the pious, about the same as the others do.

Therefore, I fear all who preach for money, and flatter the world, are the spiritual sorcerers of Egypt, 2 Tim. 3: 8, priests of the groves, servants of Baal, and prophets of Jezebel, destroyers of the Lord's vineyard, Jer. 12: 10, defilers of the land, Jer. 23: 11,

blind watchmen and dumb dogs, spoilers of the good pastures, they trouble the clear waters, are devourers of souls, Ezek. 22: 27, false prophets and ravening wolves, devourers of widows' houses, thieves and murderers, enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things, Phil. 3: 18, 19, false teachers, founders of sects, cursed children, wandering stars, withered trees, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; foaming out their own shame, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever, Jude 13: anti-Christ, locusts that rose from the bottomless pit, came to hurt those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads, Rev. 9: 4. In short, if they will not repent, they are already condemned according to the Scriptures, Tit. 3: 11; Rev. 21: 8.

Not that I would judge any one, my good reader, I well know that it is written, Judge not, that ye be not judged; condemn not and ye shall not be condemned; but they are judged of him, who says, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," John 12: 48.

Who do such and the like things, says Paul, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But if any one shall do the works whereof Paul speaks, he will not be judged of me, nor by any other man, but by the word of the Lord. Therefore we entreat you to measure the conduct of your preachers with the Scriptures, and you will find, by whom they are judged.

O miserable preachers, whose blindness we may well lament; how much better would it be for you never to have been born. For if you have finished your short, perishable, voluptuous and idle life; and have not repented, as above stated, your portion will be God's eternal wrath, punishment and judgment in the torments, the pains and burnings of hell; woe and death shall be your end, as the Scriptures threaten, Phil. 3: 19.

The reason is, because you reject Christ, and despise his word, which is everlasting food for the soul, upon which we must eternally subsist. You despise his word because it reproves your vain and frivolous conduct, showing that you are indeed sen-

sual; of the world, and of the devil, as is evident; and that you so miserably deceive poor souls; and so cruelly hate, belie, reproach and betray all those who sincerely seek the salvation of their souls; take their property, deprive them of honor, and life, who in great love admonish, by the word of God, your deceiving teachers, and reprove their ungodly deeds with all discretion, Dent. 8: 3; Matt. 4: 4.

O Balaam, Balaam, how long will you so unmercifully kick and cuff the poor ass which has to suffer all the opprobrium, scorn, and disgrace, for the sake of his master's testimony? And never kindly listen how he answers you in a human voice, and reproves your great folly and error? That he is driven by an angel with a naked sword, namely, by the Spirit and word of the Lord, that he can longer carry (endure) you in your ungodly deeds.

Well now! seed of Cain, Korah and Balaam, prepare for defence; lie, cheat, censure, blaspheme, hate, root up, disgrace, and murder as much as in you lies; allege all the councils, authors, and learned teachers who have been for centuries; appeal to all the lords and princes, emperors, kings and the mighty of the earth. Use all the power, art and cunning that you can command, it will avail you nothing; the Lamb will conquer and gain the victory, the people of God will triumph, notwithstanding weapons, but in patience with the Spirit and Word of God. Jerusalem and the temple must be built up, although the Azotus and Sanballat may attempt to hinder it, not with inanimate stones, which are now tread upon in every street with your unclean feet, Neh. 4: 6; although all the gates of hell may resist, Babel must be destroyed and laid waste. The ten kings *will* and *must* perform their services. You will gnaw your tongues for pain, bitterly cry and weep on account of the torments of Babel, and say, Alas! alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought; for her sins rose up to heaven, and the Lord remembered her wickedness, Rev. 18: 16.

The gospel *will* and *must* be heard; lies

must be exposed, and your blind folly made known to all men; although I and my brethren may be called off by death before this takes place, yet it will undoubtedly happen at the appointed time, which the Holy Ghost so plainly foretold and taught through the worthy disciple, John.

O stiffnecked, and evil generation, how long will you resist the Holy Ghost? How long will you revile the truth, and prefer lies? How long will your hands drip with the blood of the innocent? Reform your wicked lives, fear God with all your hearts, renounce all your glossy, sensual and carnal doctrine, come forward with us, treat us according to the word of God, that the gospel may be rightly preached, and maintained by a pious and blameless life. O, if you would do this, no innocent blood would be shed, and the truth would be made known.

But we are afraid it will be as the prophet said, "The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand," Dan. 12: 10. For it is the custom of all the sects, who are out of Christ and his word, to defend their foundations, faith and actions with the sword. The Romans, the Arians, the Circumcellions, the Lutherans, the Zuinglians, and the Munsterites, are our witnesses; but Christ's people suffer and forbear.

Is it not a grievous error, that these poor people want to be called Christians, and are guilty of such abominable things, such as exterminating, robbing, apprehending, burning, torturing, murdering, &c., under pretences, as if the kingdom of Christ, the glory of the Lord, the word and truth of God, were to be defended and maintained with such horrible disgrace?

Alas, no! you miserable men, no. All who are moved by the spirit of Christ know of no sword but the word of the Lord; their weapons are powerful, fervent prayer, a long-suffering and patient heart, strong, immoveable faith, a living hope, and an unblamable life, whereby the gospel of the kingdom, the word of peace, is to be promulgated, and to be defended against the gates of hell.

Beloved reader, if you have the fear of God, then learn rightly to know your bishops, prophets, pastors and teachers, and

remember what is written, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," 2 Cor. 6: 17, 18; and again, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," Rev. 18: 4. Consider that the mouth of the Lord said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves: ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Matt. 7: 15, 16. They are the salt which has lost its savor, and is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men, as the Lord says, Matt. 5: 13.

In short, they are those of whom Paul warned and said, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away," 2 Tim. 3: 1—5.

Again, thus you see that your preachers are such persons as described, and that the Scriptures abundantly admonish and command that we shall forsake them, fear them, avoid and flee from them, &c. And this is the reason why we openly teach *not* to hear their seducing doctrines, *not* to use their sacraments, and to have nothing to do with their false worship.

Rather say, What godliness can Israel bring from Assyria, Egypt, or from Babylon?

How can the true service be found with the priests of Baal? How can you be taught in divine things to righteousness, by those who are ignorant thereof themselves?

How can you learn Christ from anti-christ; and the word of God from false prophets?

How can you be blessed by the cursed, and be rightly led by the blind?

How will you draw water from dry fountains, and gather fruit from withered trees? 2 Pet. 2: 17.

How can you be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils?

How can you drink both of the Lord's cup and the devil's cup, and be in the communion of Christ and of anti-christ? 2 Cor. 10: 21.

You cannot serve two masters who are opposed to each other; you must love the one and hate the other, or else you will hold to the one and despise the other. You must be for Christ or against him, you will gather with him, or destroy in opposition to him, Matt. 6: 24.

Since we, by the grace of God, so plainly see how your preachers are sent, see their doctrine and lives, how they go without being called, falsify the word of God, lead a wanton, sensual life, deceive the poor people; and being so abundantly admonished by the Scriptures, that we should forsake, avoid, and shun such preachers, because they are so diametrically opposed to Christ and his word, and we desire to be obedient to the voice of our shepherd in this matter as it becomes all the pious of Christ, for the kingdom is promised to the obedient, as the Scriptures say, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into

the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father," Matt. 7: 21.

And we also, agreeably to the contents of God's word, have departed from their doctrine, sacraments and service, and this we testify both by word and deed, with possessions and blood, before lords and princes, in cities and in the country, before you, and the world as an admonition, doctrine and instruction, so that you all, both teachers and hearers, might awaken, to reflect on the truth, repent and come out from the kingdom and fellowship of anti-christ, and enter the kingdom and communion of Christ; and thus extricate your poor souls from the snares of unbelief, that you may be rescued, preserved and eternally saved.

For we will sooner endure, in our mortal bodies, misery, poverty, tribulation, hunger, thirst, heat, cold, bonds and death, and adhere to the word of the Lord, than lead secure easy lives with the world, and for the sake of a short and temporal life, ruin our souls.

We think with holy Peter, that we should rather obey God than man; and with virtuous Susanna, it is better to fall into the hands of man, than into the hands of God. All who fear the Lord may read and judge.

COUNTER ARGUMENTS

OF

BABYLON AND ITS BUILDERS, WITH THEIR REPLICATIONS.

Beloved reader, although we have clearly shown you the difference between true and false preachers, and why we should not hear them, we hope that the god-fearing, who acknowledge the word of the Lord to be true, might fully comprehend this GROUND AND TRUTH; still we find some among those preachers, who partly know that their cause cannot stand the test of the Scripture.

Nevertheless, not being born of God, nor fearing him but seeking unlawful gain, the

world and ease, they have garbled a variety of scriptural passages, by which they persuade the simple, those who dread the cross of Christ, that it is lawful to hear their doctrine and attend upon their church services, and this they do in order to live at ease and enjoy good times.

In the first place, they say that Christ said, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but

do not ye after their works," Matt. 23: 3. From which they conclude, that, as the Scribes and Pharisees were sitting in the seat of Moses, and mingling leaven with the unleavened lump, of which Christ warned his disciples, saying, all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, they also now sit in Christ's seat, although they are in their doctrine and lives not upright and free from guilt; that therefore we are to hear them, so far as they preach the word of God, but not to do after their works.

To which we reply: First we ask them whether they and the Pharisees are one or not? If they answer yes, they must then be their own judges, and decide that they are of those who crucified Christ, stoned Stephen, beat the apostles, persecuted the saints, and they are of those who are threatened with eternal woe; they may well then be afraid and fear the Lord and his judgments. If they answer no, then they can prove nothing with this passage.

Secondly, we reply: If they adduce this passage, *quasi argumentum assimili*, i. e. as it were an argument of similitude, and remark that to sit in Moses' seat, is to rightly preach and attend to Moses' law with its ceremonies. This did the Scribes and Pharisees, they left the law and ceremonies entire and altered nothing therein, although they practiced some superstition with it, as may be seen from Matt. 15: 3. For had they altered the law and ceremony, they would not have been sitting in Moses' seat.

But even as the Scribes and Pharisees did sit in Moses' seat, these will then also have to show that they sit in Christ's seat, that is, they must prove that they preach Christ's gospel, baptism, supper, separation: preach and practice all things correctly, or the *argumentum assimili* cannot stand. If this is the case, we may then ask counsel of the Scriptures; why they suffer the traditions of men to be added thereto? But we well know that the Scriptures are silent on this subject.

Thirdly, we reply: So long as the Scribes and Pharisees were sitting in Moses' seat, and practiced the ceremonies and taught the law which pointed to Christ, as before

related; so long did Christ direct his disciples and the people, at that time, to them; for the law was not fully accomplished; the perfect sacrifice, which was to abolish all typical sacrifices, was not yet offered; the veil of the temple was not yet rent, the figures and shadows were not yet changed into the new and abiding reality. After it had all been accomplished according to the Scriptures, and all things made new in Christ, he did not then send out the Scribes and Pharisees with Moses' law, but his disciples with his own doctrine; and said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark 16: 15, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 28: 20.

Since then all things are new in and through Christ; and as the people of Moses were directed to his preachers, by Christ before his death, to those who sat in Moses' seat and rightly taught the law, and ceremonies; in like manner, in the new Testament, are we, after the death of Christ, directed to those preachers who sit in Christ's seat, teaching his words unblamably, and using his sacraments as the Scriptures teach.

But the Scriptures abundantly warn us of those who adulterate Christ's doctrine, misuse his sacraments, seduce the people, lead dissolute and wanton lives; such we are to shun, avoid and abandon, not to admit them into our houses, for they sit in anti-christ's, and not in Christ's seat, as said, Matt. 7: 15.

Secondly, they adduce what Paul says. "Quench not the spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast that which is good, abstain from all appearance of evil." 1 Thess. 5: 19—22.

I answer: Paul himself explains, according to our opinion, of what spirit and prophecy he thus spake. For if it were the opinion of the apostle that we should repair to houses where this open seduction and idolatry are carried on, and there prove their spirit and doctrines, Paul would then have contradicted himself, when he says, that we shall separate, shun and flee from them: for we know of a certainty that they do corrupt the word and sacraments of the Lord, and seek nothing but a good living, and are without the spirit and doctrine of Christ.

O no; Paul did not write this of such preachers as the Scribes and Pharisees were, neither of the idolatrous priests of Egypt and Babylon (understand well what I mean): but he said this touching the prophets, pastors and teachers in the Church of Christ, that we are not to quench their spirit, but prove their doctrine, and hold fast to that which is good. And if they taught any thing not in accordance with the Scriptures and the true faith, to avoid it. If any man prophesy, let him prophesy according to the proportion of faith, Rom. 12: 6, and this is to what John exhorts his disciples, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God," 1 John 4: 1. And this passage, Abstain from all appearance of evil, may be understood as not properly referring to what is just mentioned.

My good reader, we have proved your preachers so well, both as to their spirit and doctrine, that we may with a clear conscience say, that they are not of God and his word, but of the bottomless pit, of the dragon and of the beast. Say, dear reader, how shall we acknowledge those as teachers who so wantonly fight against the word of God? What communion has light with darkness? What concord has Christ with Belial? 1 Cor. 6: 14. The greater part of their teaching and action is delusion and hypocrisy. My reader, do not pervert these words, for what I write is the truth, and I can prove it to the whole world, from their doctrines, lives and sacraments.

Thirdly, they ask, Why will we not hear them; for the wise men of the East gave heed to what Herod said?

Answer: To adduce this passage seems to me to be so puerile, that it is by no means worthy of reply. For Herod did nothing else than by the instruction of the scribes, point out to the wise men the town in which the king of the Jews should be born, and he did it with a blood-thirsty heart, as the following act shows; he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also," Matt. 2: 8.

Herod was afraid when he heard that the Jews had a king born, lest he might lose his kingdom and glory; he therefore spoke, out

of pure hypocrisy and slyness, with the wise men, for he was desirous of the child's death, to prevent its becoming a king. But when he saw that he failed in his hypocrisy, he became very much enraged, and showed his fierce, tyrannical, ungodly disposition; he sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, that by the slaying of all the innocent children he might also destroy the born king, as may be seen from Matt. 2: 16.

O my good reader, how justly they do appeal to this hypocritical, lying, ambitious and tyrannical Herod; for the greater part of them are of the same spirit and disposition. They are so much pained that Christ is born again through his word. They practice hypocrisy like Herod; they lie, and say that they are sincere; but they fear their unlawful gain, their rich and lazy life, lest Christ should rule, as Herod feared, lest he should lose his kingdom. And they are ready to destroy the pious, as Herod was determined upon the blood of Christ, as you have heard.

Since then they are manifestly hypocritical liars, and earthly-minded, and also intent upon blood, as may be seen in some places; therefore we will also take for an example in this matter the wise, who, being admonished by a heavenly inspiration, did not return to Herod, and, through the grace of God faithfully observe the Lord's inspiration, counsel, doctrine and admonition, and turn to those who point out Christ in full power and practice, and teach in the truth, according to the spirit.

Fourthly, some of them say, Although the devil should preach the word of God, why should we not hear him?

In the first place I reply to these vain, slanderous calumniators, that it would be well for them to learn rightly to distinguish between the spirit and disposition of the devil, and the spirit and nature of Christ, before they would utter such unseasonable, blasphemous words before the poor people.

The devil was a liar from the beginning, and will undoubtedly always be. Since then he is a liar, and lying his nature, disposition and work, as the Lord says, how can he then sincerely and rightly teach and

preach the word of God, which is truth, and is diametrically opposed to his lying disposition and nature, and though he did teach the truth correctly, and give Christ his praise, still he does so with a false heart; for he is a devil and the truth is not in him.

He confessed Christ, rightly and according to the contents of his word, when he said, Thou art Christ, the holy one of God; thou art Christ, the Son of God. However, Christ did not desire his confession, but reproved him and said, Hold your peace, and come out of him, for his confession was made with a diabolical heart, as said.

Secondly, I say, If any one would hear the voice of the devil, he need not go far; alas! he can hear him every where. All who speak lies, speak of the devil. In the beginning he spoke through the serpent; in Israel through the false prophets, and now through his preachers, in order to deceive the people of the world, and divert them from the truth, that they never can be saved.

Since then, that from the beginning he has been, and still is a lying spirit, an adversary of God, a falsifier of the Scriptures, and a murderer of souls, and will eternally be such, who can neither teach nor endure any thing good, because he is by nature unclean, a liar, and a deceiver, always the enemy of every thing that is good, we will therefore stop our ears, through God's grace, and not hear such blasphemous speaking; turn our backs upon the devil, with all his lying preachers, as the Scriptures teach; and we will sincerely believe the Scriptures, which direct us to Christ to hear him. Christ directs us to his disciples, and they direct us to such teachers who are blameless in doctrine and life, as related. May the merciful and gracious Lord eternally preserve all the pious hearts against this Herodian generation, and against the devil's preachers, Amen.

Fifthly, some also say that we may hear them, if we suffer ourselves not to be deceived by them.

I answer: The reader should observe how the people of God ever were, from the days of Abraham, separated from the world; and especially since the days of Moses, they have had their own particular preachers, teachers, ceremonies, ordinances and ser-

vices, as may be abundantly read and seen in all the books of Moses.

Secondly, that Israel was commanded by God, that if a false prophet were to rise up among them, and though he were to do wonders and signs, he should die, Dent. 13: 4.

Thirdly, Israel was not allowed to teach or to receive any doctrine or worship from any strange nations circumjacent to them, but to keep closely to the law and testimonies.

Fourthly, where there arose some ungodly kings, such as Jeroboam, Ahab, Manasseh and many others, who loved their own righteousness and idolatry more than the word and right worship of the Lord; and when the false prophets multiplied, who turned the people from the Lord and his law, then also did the Lord raise up true prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c., to reprove the disobedient, idolatrous kings and false prophets, and to warn the people faithfully of them, and said, "Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord," Jer. 23: 16. These prophets all gloriously pointed to Christ, to his kingdom and reign.

Fifthly, that Christ, as well as Moses, ordained and appointed in his kingdom, community, or church, prophets, preachers, teachers, ceremonies and ordinances, which are to be observed by all true christians for ever.

Sixthly, the holy apostles teach, advise, and admonish us, that we are to separate ourselves from those, in doctrine and in worship, be they baptized or not, who agree not with the spirit, doctrine, regulations and examples of Christ.

Seventhly, that the whole world with their spirit, doctrine, sacrament, worship and conduct, are far from Christ's spirit, word, sacrament, worship and example; and, alas! are nothing but a new Sodom, Egypt and Babel, Rev. 11: 8.

Eighthly, that all those who acknowledge God's word, and are partakers of his Spirit, are called on to let their lights shine out of darkness and give light to the world, that they reprove all ungodliness by word, deed,

life and death, confess the Lord's holy name, word and will, and confirm it by a pious and unblamable life, according to the Scriptures.

Ninthly, that "whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me (Christ), it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Matt. 18: 6.

Tenthly, that we reflect well, why or for what reason we are not to hear such preachers. If we do hear them, and desire to be taught of them, then we seek the truth among lies, and life among the dead. But if we will not be taught of them, but use our liberty, as they call it, we must confess that such hearing is no hearing, but trifling and hypocrisy, by which we despise the spirit, doctrine, ordinances, counsel, admonition, community and church of Christ; and strengthen the seducing abominations, idolatry, and kingdom of anti-christ, and conform to the world in all appearance of evil, act the hypocrite, grieve and vex many a pious child of God, cause strife among the pious, and esteem lightly the innocent blood which is shed in many places on this account.

Behold, my readers, all who fear the Lord, and rightly examine and judge *these ten articles*, here briefly stated, by the Spirit and word of the Lord, will not halt here, but they will faithfully take heed to the counsel and admonition of the Holy Ghost; reprove the world both by works and doctrine; avoid every appearance of evil, and walk unblamably in the house of the Lord.

But touching the false worship, the light-minded comfort one another, and say, children may be baptized; for the child is clean; the water is clean; to wash and to bathe is also clean, &c. We may also receive the supper of the Lord at the hands of these preachers, although it is in idolatrous houses; christians have no idols any more, they only use bread and wine as such, which is pure to the pure; Paul says, To the pure all things are pure. They appeal to the case of Naaman, the Captain of the king of Assyria; and to the house of Rimmon, and say, We care not for the idolatry of the priests,

but we worship Him who made heaven and earth.

I answer: Can a single passage be adduced from the Scriptures, that uncleanness, sin, falsifying the ordinances of God, idolatry, disobedience to the word, and hypocrisy are all pure to the pure, that is, to the true believers; then we might consider a little on it. But we know certainly, that not a single passage can be advanced.

O my reader, if the men of God had thus understood the Scriptures, as these poor people do, the three valiant young men would have by no means suffered themselves to be cast into the fiery furnace. The upright Eleazer, the God-fearing pious mother with her seven sons, the holy prophets, apostles and pious witnesses of God, would have saved their lives, would have escaped the cruel tortures and pains, and said, To the pure all things are pure, we will cheerfully comply.

O no! my good reader, no: the clean are not to touch the unclean. Touch not the unclean thing, says the Spirit of God through Isaiah and Paul, that is, what the Scriptures forbid. He that washed himself, after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing? Is it not folly for any man to wash his clothes, and afterwards tread them into the mire again? The Scriptures plainly teach, that "the just shall live by faith," and that a "good tree brings forth good fruit." We certainly know that an humble, lowly-minded soul will never magnificently array itself in gold, pearls or other costly apparel; that those who fear the Lord, will be honest, chaste, sober; they will not talk, drink, sing and dance with dishonorable women: for the knowledge, fear and love of God and his word forbid them: and should one do so, we would know that his light is darkness, and his conduct not agreeable to the Scriptures. And so it is unbecoming to those who boast of the word, and would reprove seduction, the idolatry and abominations of preachers by the Scriptures, and yet associate with them in their doctrine, sacraments, false service, for words without actions profit nothing. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Eph. 5: 11.

It is true, that to the pure all things are pure, which are not contrary to the Spirit and word of God. For none are called pure in the Scriptures, except those who conform to the Spirit and word of the Lord. All who agree with the word, to them all lawful, pure things, are pure, such as eating, drinking, clothing, houses, manors, land, gold, silver, wives, children, goods, food, to wake, to sleep, to speak, to be silent, and all things which God has given us as necessities; because they are pure, they will also use all lawful, pure things purely; namely, in the fear of God, with thanksgiving and moderation, to the praise of God and to the service of their fellow man; to which end, these things were given of God, for the use of men.

All things prohibited of God, such as hypocrisy, unfruitful works, conformity to the world, living in affluence and splendor, and living in idolatry, are by all means, impure to the pure, to the faithful, obedient children of God; and the pure can never use things impurely through all eternity, according to the will of God; for the Spirit of God and his word forbid them.

Adam was allowed of God to eat of all the vegetables and fruits of the earth, for his subsistence, except of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; for if he should eat thereof, he must die. All the fruits and creatures allowed of God, were pure to pure Adam, but one tree was impure to him through the command of God; he ate thereof, and he, with all his seed, fell under the power of death.

And even as all things are pure to the pure, and are for the good of the pious, so also to the impure all things are impure, and to the evil all things are evil; because they are impure, they use all the creatures of God impurely. They eat and drink to excess; they dress gorgeously; and indulge in lewdness; they raise their children to idleness; they avariciously hoard gold, silver, houses and lands, and there is nothing they use purely according to the will of God; for they are impure, sensual, disobedient to the word, and are earthly-minded, as the Scriptures say.

Further; it is also an abominable calumny and slanderous seduction, what some pretend and say: outward idolatry cannot de-

file and make impure, if not sanctioned by the heart.

My good reader, if that were true all the passages would have been spoken to no purpose, which say; neither be ye idolators as were some of them; have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; avoid all appearance of evil, &c., then would also the offence of the cross have been ended. No, no, it becomes a true christian to be wholly pious, to glorify God, both in body and spirit.

Aaron, a high priest called of God, a type of the Lord Jesus, when he was constrained of the people to make gods for them which should go before them, he was overcome through the weakness of the flesh, that he yielded to the idolaters, and made them a golden calf. Aaron did not worship it in his heart; for he well knew it was not the God who led them through the red sea, but that it was a creature made of gold. Nevertheless this guilt was charged to Aaron, for Moses said, "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" Ex. 32: 21; yea, the Lord would have destroyed him had not Moses interceded for him, Deut. 9: 20.

We would, that all founders of sects and erring spirits, whose rejection of the cross, ease, carnal minds and hypocrisy, is cloaked under the semblance of the word of God, would reflect well upon the history of Aaron; I trust they would no longer conceal their nudity and disgrace with fig-leaves; but would clothe themselves with the true coat of skins, with Jesus Christ, made of God; for they comfort and encourage the poor, rude people in their idolatry and faith, by their ungodly dealings, which they call liberty, grieve the pious unto death, discourage and offend the poor, wavering souls of whom it is written, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him, that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," Matt. 18: 6.

What christian liberty is, and how it is to be used according to the will of God, is fully explained in Rom. 14.

Say, beloved, how can we include in christian liberty, that which is so openly com-

mitted against so many passages in the Scriptures against brotherly love, and contrary to all the examples of so many saints, as said?

O, were they pure in heart, who introduce such subtle arguments, and would they but love Christ supremely over every thing, how soon they would then know that that which they maintain is contrary to the spirit and word of God. But I fear they are those concerning whom it is written, "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness," Prov. 30: 12.

Touching Naaman, we have to notice attentively the following passages.

First, that Naaman was neither a Jew, nor a proselyte, but a foreigner, who was not included in the doctrine, ceremonies, ordinances and righteousness of Israel, although he would no longer serve idols, and would serve and offer to God, he had not yet received the sign, viz., circumcision.

Secondly, that he was the servant of his master, upon whom the king depended; and therefore had to attend to the service of his master when the king worshiped in the house of Rimmon, and would worship none other than the true God who had cleansed him.

Thirdly, that we cannot conclude with certainty from the answer of the prophet, how far he did, or did not comply.

Fourthly, that the house of Rimmon, and the service thereof, and our temple with its services, are not the same; for in the house of Rimmon the name of God, the laws, the ordinances and ceremonies, were not abused, for they were not known there. But what abuses, disgrace, scoffings, abomination and blasphemy, are carried on in our temples under the name of Christ, all rational men may determine by the Scriptures.

But if any one says, Why do you concern yourselves about the doings of the priests? Worship God as Naaman did, this sounds to us thus, "Behold your pious father will be often slanderously mocked, insulted, reviled and much abused; let such things not move you, or confound you, but be unconcerned and contented. Submit quietly, but in your heart honor your father, &c." Say, beloved, what rational and upright child

could bear to see his father thus assaulted, and yet keep his silence?

Since then, we see with unclouded eyes, how miserably they treat our eternal Father, who loved us so greatly, in their houses of abomination; and how they behave towards his son, Jesus Christ, who bought us with such a precious price. Again: How they quench his Holy Spirit, hate his will, his word, and abuse his sacraments, reject his ordinances and commands, revile and reproach his children, deceive poor souls, and rob Christ of his glory; and with all this, they desire us to unite with such open enemies of God; to act the hypocrite with them, to listen to their ungodly seductions and abominations; if we should, we would be very ungrateful children, and without love. This is incontrovertibly true.

No; such is not the way of pious christians; but as Christ defends his church, is not ashamed of her, and enlightens her by his Holy Spirit and word, comforts her in all her distresses, strengthens her in sufferings and endows her with power and wisdom, before lords and princes, wise and learned, and before the whole world, that all have to be silent and ashamed in presence of a poor, humble christian; and in the day of judgment acknowledge her before his Father, and will bestow upon her the eternal kingdom; and so do the spirit and love of Christ also demand of us, that we confess before men his divine honor, word, will, ordinances and commands, and besides, we are to testify it by our works, possessions, blood, life and death, and not clandestinely frequent such houses of abomination, where his great and adorable name is so miserably dishonored and slandered; and where we hear not the truth, nor learn any piety. For it is nothing but hypocrisy which they teach; although they disguise it with the word of the Lord, as may be evidently observed by their works.

All, teachers and hearers, run, says the prophet, like a frantic heifer, they all hate reproof and instruction, and live imprudently according to their own lusts. They desire not God's word, therefore, I fear the scourge is ready, and the avenging sword of the Lord is drawn; that soon one ungodly man will eat another, so that many of them

will be destroyed, for these foolish people will be punished.

Fifthly, we have to observe, that in the New Testament we are only directed to the Spirit, word, counsel, admonition and usages of Christ; what he allows us we may do, but what he forbids we dare not do; it becomes all true Christians to conform thereto, and not according to such doubtful histories and obscure passages, from which we can draw no sure ground, and which teach the very reverse of what the Lord's apostles publicly taught.

Here I would faithfully admonish the sincere reader, that he would not suffer himself to be deceived with such words: but at all times to keep and abide in the unchangeable and sure ground, which the faithful witnesses of Christ, the holy apostles have left us, which they taught us plainly in their writings; for the deceivers seek but to confound the wavering, and to be free from the cross of Christ.

But, say they, We esteem it to be better to do so sometimes, in order that we may administer to our wives and children, and serve the poor, than that we should wholly abandon the preachers, and thereby make all our possessions a prey.

To which we reply, in the first place: The first command teaches, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Where the name of the Lord is profaned, and where his word is violated, there it behooves you in all love, to reprove such things with an unblamable life, by the word of God, and to defend the praise of God, as much as in you is; reflect upon what the Lord says, Whosoever loves father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, possessions and life more than me, cannot be my disciple, Luke 14: 26.

Secondly, that all who believe that God made heaven and earth, and sustained Israel forty days with bread from heaven, and water from the rock, sent Elias his necessary food by a raven; who gives the birds in the air, the fishes in the water, and the reptiles upon earth, their food; they will not doubt the goodness, power and promise of their Lord Jesus Christ, who says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added

unto you," Matt. 6: 33, for if the countenance of his grace is in this matter over those who reject him, how much more over those who fear him and keep his commandments.

Thirdly, that the Almighty, bountiful God, God Almighty, who is all-sufficient to support the poor and needy without any idolatry, hypocrisy and service of the devil; because he has no delight in such offerings and gifts of unrighteousness; as the prophet says, Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. 1 Sam. 15: 22, 23.

All, therefore, who say that they do this on account of their wives and children, and for the sake of the poor, ought to know that they love their wives and children more than God, and lessen the arm and power of God, and lie unto the Lord: they should know that they only cover and adorn their indolence, their dislike of the cross, their unbelief, earthly-mindedness and hypocrisy under such pretense. Let every one take heed to himself and fear God, who has eyes like flaming fire, which penetrate heaven and earth, and cannot be blinded by fair words.

Again, they further pretend that Paul purified himself according to the custom of the Jews, and Timothy was circumcised. This is quite different, for these were things which God had commanded, although they ended in Christ. The reason why Paul consented thereto was, that he might preach the word with more freedom to the Jews, as he says, "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law," 1 Cor. 9: 20.

And since these works did not originate with anti-christ, but from God, with which Paul would not offend the weak Jews; as explained; how can we then show by them, that we are at liberty to hear false preaching, receive the baptism and enjoy the supper of anti-christ; and to take part with the world in open idolatry and blasphemy? Although this may not be done with the heart, it is at least so in appearance. Or we must consider the works of the law, which were of God, to be as unclean and ungodly as the works and abominations of darkness, which

are of the devil; and esteem the renunciation of the cross of Christ as highly as the zeal with which Paul undertook to teach the Jews the Gospel of Christ.

O my faithful reader, if you would not lose your poor soul, do not then dishonor Christ, rightly seek his praise, obey his Spirit, doctrine, counsel, admonition and example, and you will never be made ashamed; you will soon discover that the purification of Paul, and circumcision of Timothy, are different from the doings, abominations, idolatry and blasphemy of anti-christ, which have been practiced from time to time, in the name of Christ, even to the present day. May the gracious, merciful God grant that you may all come to the knowledge, and walk in his truth, Amen.

Lastly, they say, That we are yet prisoners in Babel, and that we may therefore do in semblance the works of Babel; and assert the sayings of Baruch, "Ye shall see in Babylon gods of silver, and of gold, and of wood, borne upon shoulders, which cause the nations to fear: beware, therefore, that ye in no wise be like to strangers, neither be ye afraid of them, when ye see the multitude before them and behind them, worshipping them; but say in your hearts, O Lord, we must worship thee," Bar. 6: 4, 5.

Answer: Here we have first to observe, what is shown by the Babylonian captivity; when the Israelites did not serve God aright in their own country, they were scattered according to the prediction of Moses, by the righteous and gracious judgment of God, among the heathen nations, and were led captive under the dominion of Babylon. So it is with those who boast themselves as being the spiritual Israel; because they became unfaithful to the Lord, and rejected his word, and turned their ears to preachers of lies, the Babylonian king, anti-christ, has taken advantage of them and deprived them of the true doctrine, ceremonies and services, and led them captive under his dominion, and has bound them miserably with the cords of error and idolatrous abominations.

But all those who are again enlightened by the Spirit and word of the Lord, born of God, and die unto the old man, sin; forsake all human misleadings, and rightly use the holy sacraments of the Lord, his ordinances

and divine services, they are freed from spiritual Babylon, that is, from sin, hell, death, devil, from the doctrines and commands of men, from all idolatry and abominations, as Paul says, There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death, Rom. 8: 1, 2.

All, then, who say that they are yet captives of Babylon, testify that they have not been set at liberty by the Cyrus (Jesus Christ), from their sins, and have not come from Chaldea to Jerusalem, Isa. 24: 28; Ezra 1: 1—4.

Secondly, that Israel is not commanded here to conform themselves to the gentiles; but when they saw them carry their idols, even as we may see on the days of papistical processions and abominations, although we are not in their temple, then they should worship God only, and give him the honor; for if God had commanded them to conform in all things to the Babylonian idolatry, and only serve the Lord with their heart secretly, then Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego acted foolishly in refusing to worship the great golden idol, on account of which they hazarded their lives. O no! the miraculous work, shown of God to them, testifies that they acted rightly. All, then, I say, who teach that true believers are not released from Babylon, do thereby deny the merits, death and blood of Christ, deny faith with its power, and the Holy Ghost with his liberty, and despise wholly the innocent blood of the free witnesses of the free children of God, which is shed so abundantly.

Let every one see well to what he believes and teaches; for I fear that both the shedder of blood, and the despiser are alike guilty. My good reader, examine the Scriptures well, and you will find, that to the free children of God here upon earth, there is no liberty promised as to the flesh, for Christ says, "Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake," Matt. 24: 9. Again, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me," Matt. 16: 24. Again, "Whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service," John 16: 2. "All that will live godly in

Christ Jesus," says Paul, "must suffer persecution," 2 Tim. 3: 12. And "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God," Acts 14: 22. For the liberty of the spirit is to be maintained with much misery, tribulation, persecutions, bonds, fear and death. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord; it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord," Matt. 10: 24.

Behold, beloved sirs, friends and brethren, here you have the leading parts, and chief articles of a CHRISTIAN GROUND AND FOUNDATION, with a plain instruction and exposition of the anti-christian abominations and Babylonian acts, whereby the true apostolic foundation, for a long time, was corrupted and razed to the ground; and we have contrasted light with darkness, truth with falsehood, that the whole truth by our seeking, doctrine and belief, undertaking and weak attempts, may be made manifest.

And I hope by the grace of God, that you will readily receive it, if you are at all honestly disposed, read it with a sincere heart, fear God, and acknowledge Christ as the true head: and see that we are grounded upon the only eternal corner stone, that we walk in the right way, although in weakness and to have the plain truth, and that there is no other ground or way, and truth to be found in the Scriptures, that can stand before God, other than this, which we have

pointed out, and which we on every occasion maintain and defend in so much tribulation.

I have served you all with this small gift, as I received it from my God. I gladly would that I could serve you longer with great and abundant grace, to the praise of the Lord. Therefore, have I renounced praise, honor, ease, and forsaken all, and willingly submitted to the pressing cross of my Lord Jesus Christ, which oftentimes weighs very heavily on my weak flesh. I seek neither gold nor silver (the Lord knows this), but am ready, with faithful Moses, to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: and I esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for I know what the Scriptures have promised us, and this is my only joy and desire of my heart, that I may extend the borders of the kingdom of God, publish the truth, reprove sin, teach righteousness, feed the hungry with the word of the Lord, lead the stray sheep into the right path, and win many souls to the Lord through his Spirit, power and grace, and so act in my weakness, as he taught me who purchased me, a miserable sinner, with his crimson blood, and gave me this mind, by the gospel of his grace, namely, Jesus Christ, to him be praise and glory, and the eternal kingdom, Amen.

A CHRISTIAN

AND

AFFECTIONATE EXHORTATION TO ALL IN AUTHORITY.

Also to the learned, to the common people, to sects and to the bride of Christ, that it not a little scorched by the heat of the sun every where.

We have shown you in the preface, faithful reader, why or wherefore we published these our writings, to wit: on account of the

abominable deceptions, and the manifold dangers at this time, for there are to be found so many schisms, communities,

churches and sects, who are all called after the name of the Lord; such as *Romans* or *papists*, *Lutherans*, *Zuinglians*, erring sects, and the christians who are upbraided as anabaptists. Even as in former times among the Jews, were the Chasidim, Zadikin, Essenes, Sadducees, Pharisees, &c., which sacred and profane history mention. Each boasts to be the Church of Christ, and to have the word of the Lord, although the greater part of them not only live inconsistently with the Spirit, word and example of Christ, but they very enviously upbraid and slander, and are inimically opposed to it; and it is just as it was in the beginning, that the pious every where have to suffer much from the impious; as Abel had to suffer of Cain; Isaac of Ishmael; Jacob of Esau, &c., although created by the same God, by nature have one common origin, boast all of one Christ; and in the day of judgment, find the same judge. Anti-christ rules through hypocrisy and lies, with power and sword; but Christ reigns patiently with his word and spirit. He uses no other sword nor sabre. O man! man! Look upon the irrational savage creatures, and learn wisdom. Roaring lions, frightful bears, and all devouring wolves agree among themselves with their respective species; but you, poor, helpless worms; you, who are created after God's own image, and are called rational beings, born without tusks, claws and horns, born with an unsound, feeble nature, senseless, speechless and powerless, yea, neither able to walk nor stand, and have to depend entirely upon maternal aid, which teaches you that you are to be peaceable and not contentious; but when you attain your understanding and manhood, you are so very unsettled, tyrannical, revengeful, blood-thirsty and unmerciful, so much so that it cannot be fully conceived, related or described. Your open works bear testimony to this, notwithstanding you boast yourselves to be christians. O no! my faithful reader, no! Christ teaches, "Peace I leave you, my peace I give unto you," John 14: 27. Paul says, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful," Col. 3: 15. Again, "The Son of man is not come to de-

stroy men's lives, but to save them," Luke 9: 56.

Since there are so many of you who treat the children of God so inhumanly, as we see, we have compiled summarily our *acts*, *principles*, *faith and doctrine*, from the word of God, and have published them; so that every slanderous evil speaker and bloody persecutor, may therefrom learn what our undertaking properly is, what we seek and do, and upon what ground the city of God must be built, and which of all the aforementioned congregations or churches is the right and true church of Christ. Even as there was but one Adam and one Eve; one Noah and one ark, one Isaac and one Rebecca, so there is but one church of Christ, which is the body, the city, the temple, the house and bride of Christ, having but one gospel, one faith, one baptism, one supper, and one service; walking in the same way and leading a pious, unblamable life, as the Scriptures teach.

All who have not the pure, uncorrupted word of God, the true, living faith, with the Lord's holy baptism and Supper, in power and Spirit, and walk the broad road of the flesh, are not the community and church of Christ. Here neither name nor boasting avails; we must be in Christ, and Christ in us; we must be moved by his Spirit, and in every respect abide in his holy word, otherwise we have no God.

The children of Israel were not saved, although they were of the seed of Abraham, because they walked not in the way of Abraham. Much less we, though we are called after the name of Christ, if we seek not his promise with all our souls, and not sincerely hear and follow, and be obedient to his holy will.

Since it is well known to all the pious, that we and our forefathers, for many centuries, were under the heavy burden, and in the service of Egypt, deceived by the false prophets, never heard the book of the law, the holy city and temple lay waste, and were under the tyranny and dominion of Babylon, as heard above. The merciful Father had compassion on the pressing misery and tribulation of his people, and raised up to us the true Moses, Zerubbabel, Christ Jesus, through his word and Spirit; now then, it

becomes you, O you highly renowned lords and princes, since you and we boast of the same Christ, gospel, redemption and kingdom, that you no longer obstruct by your mandates and powers, the journeying of the people of God to the eternal promised land; but you should favor them more, and prosper their journey by your gracious permission; that you may hear and read with the venerable and pious Josiah, with a broken, meek heart, in the true fear of God, the lost book of the law of Christ, which has been lost for a long time. Rend your hearts and not your garments: for you are not only led off from the true path, but you are so much bewitched by the man of sin, that you persecute the innocent, pious hearts, who in no wise injure you or any one upon earth.

That you would, with king Cyrus, release the poor captive children from the land of Chaldea, who cry and weep at the rivers of Babylon, that they may again possess the spiritual land of Canaan, and build up the spiritual Jerusalem, the altar and the temple in their ancient city, and establish the spiritual priesthood, and practice the spiritual offering and divine service according to the instructions of the word of God, that they may no longer hear and observe the Babylonian laws, namely, the teachings of men and their commandments; but the law of Israel, God's word and righteousness. Some of you, though alas few! are so far taught, through the grace and word of God, that I trust, you know, that neither usages nor councils, neither learning nor sword, nor mandate, can bend or break the word of the Most High, the word of truth, the word of the heavenly witness, the gospel of the kingdom, for other foundation cannot be laid to all eternity, than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 3: 11.

Therefore, wisdom cries, "Turn you at my reproof; behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you," Prov. 1: 23.

Love righteousness ye rulers of the land.

"Be wise, now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth, serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling," Ps. 2: 10, for the king that honors wisdom shall rule forever.

Do, therefore, with a meek heart, and in

the fear of God, examine these our faithful instructions, and judge by the Spirit and word of Christ, as much as in you is; compare them with the doctrine and lives of the apostles, with the piety, love, customs, actions, misery, cross and sufferings of the primitive church: I hope, by the grace of God, you may plainly comprehend that our doctrine is the infallible doctrine and ground of the Scriptures. Read this OUR FOUNDATION, together with other books, appended to this, viz: *the book concerning faith and its power; concerning regeneration or the new creature; of the cross, sufferings and persecution of the saints; of excommunication, ban or exclusion, and other tracts, published from time to time*, and you will then find, by the grace of God, that this doctrine is the pure gospel, which the Lord taught by his own mouth, and which his holy apostles preached through the whole world, and by the power of the Spirit testified thereto with life and death. Ours is no new doctrine, as the preachers without truth, pretend and persuade you; but it is the old doctrine, which was preached and practiced in the church, for more than fifteen hundred years, whereby the church was, is, and shall be borne, till the end.

O you high-renowned lords and princes, turn to the truth of God, and receive reproof, and wisdom: for through wisdom, kings reign, and princes decree justice; observe how far your spirit, faith and lives differ from the Lord's Spirit, word and life.

Think you, dear sirs, that you are born to live merely in splendor and magnificence, and to lead a vain, sensual life? That you may freely continue in your licentious and pernicious lusts, and still be Christians? O no, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," Rom. 8: 9.

Solomon says, "As a roaring lion, and a raging bear: so is a wicked ruler over the poor people. The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor," Prov. 28: 15. The poet also well knew this, when he says, *Quicquid delirant reges, plectantur Achivi*, i. e., The mischief which kings do, the common people have to pay or atone for; but a wise king disperseth the ungodly.

Therefore, beloved sirs, see well to it; this is that to which you are called, namely: that you are to chastise and punish, in the true fear of God, with all equitable and just discretion, the open evil doers; such as thieves, murderers, sodomites, adulterers, debauchers, menslayers, the violent, fornicators, sorcerers, robbers, &c., that you give each his portion, execute judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, that you are to prevent, by proper means (understand without tyranny and bloodshed), open deceivers, who so miserably lead poor, helpless souls, by hundreds of thousands into destruction, whether they are priests, monks, preachers, baptized or unbaptized; so that they will no longer derogate from the almighty majesty of God, our only and eternal Savior, Christ Jesus, the Holy Ghost, together with the word of grace; nor introduce those ridiculous abuses and idolatry, under semblance of truth, as has been done to this time: and by this means, in all love and earnestness, enlarge, assist and protect, without violence, blood or sword, the kingdom of God, by your gracious permission, wise counsel, pious, unblamable life.

Behold, beloved lords, this is your calling and your incumbent duty: do not domineer so maliciously over the children of God and his word, as alas, many of you evidently do, and as it is customary.

Such rulers were Moses, Joshua, David, Hezekiah, Josaphat, Josiah, Zernbbabel, &c., they faithfully discharged their enjoined duties, conformed to the word of God, protected their subjects with solicitous concern, obeyed the commands of the Lord, abolished the false prophets and the priests of Baal, with their altars, groves and idolatry, and faithfully kept their people and country, to observe the ordinances of the Lord, his laws and divine service as commanded by Moses: they feared God, and had the book of the law to which they conformed, and by which they judged the people; and always remembered the Lord their God, who set them over his people as potentates and rulers.

They feared God with all their hearts, praised his name, and humbled themselves with all their strength, as David did, when he was girded with a linen ephod, and

danced before the ark of the Lord, yea that he was even despised of his wife Michal; but he said, I will play before the Lord, who chose me, and I will be yet more vile than this, in my own sight.

O you highly renowned, noble lords, believe Christ's word, fear the wrath of God, love righteousness, do justice to widows and orphans, judge rightly between man and man, fear no man's highness: despise no man's littleness, hate all avarice, chastise with discretion, suffer the word of God to be taught in liberty, prevent none to walk in the ways of truth; yield to his sceptre who called you to this high charge, and your throne shall be established for ever.

Now as the sceptre of Christ is an upright sceptre, and teaches, judges and corrects every one, without respect to person, I, a poor and unlearned being must lay aside my diffidence, and grow bold in love, whereby I would desire to save your poor souls, and with Samuel reprove Saul, with Abdia reprimand Jeroboam, with Elias chide Ahab, with Isaiah reprehend Hezekiah, with Nathan and Gad rebuke David for their misdeeds and transgressions, and thus proclaim my Lord's Spirit, word and will, who knows but there might be some one that will regard the fidelity and love of his poor minister; hear his well-meaning voice and christian exhortation, and depart from an ungodly and evil way; thus some of the aforementioned kings heard the reproving word of the mouths of the prophets with fear, and reformed, and meekly received the word.

And were it even so, that my faithful service and love, should be rewarded with death, as I have reason to suspect it may happen, because haughty and proud flesh is unwilling to be reprov'd, but uses at all times its evil nature, however, nothing worse can happen me, than did the pious Isaiah of Manasseh: Zechariah of Joaz; Urijah of Jehoiakim, Abimelech and other priests of Saul; John of Herod; Christ of Pilate and of the Scribes: and as it happened to all the apostles and pious witnesses of the whole world.

I do not esteem my life to be better and dearer than the beloved men of God did their lives. I can only be deprived of perishable and mortal flesh, which must once

die, and return to dust, though I should live to be as old as Methuselah; not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my heavenly father; if I lose my life for the sake of Christ and his testimony, and on account of my sincere love for my neighbor, I certainly know, that I will save it in life eternal, therefore, I cannot conceal the truth; but I must testify and reveal it without hypocrisy in the true fear of God, to my beloved lords.

Beloved, noble lords, learn rightly to know yourselves, whence you are, what you are, and what you will be. All of you, one as well as another, be he emperor or king, are from the same seed that we poor and unregarded are, and you came into this sorrowful world as we did, and you are no more than vapor, frail flesh, a withering flower, dust and ashes, as we all are. To-day you are kings and triumph in great and high honor, to-morrow you are laid low, and must be food for serpents and worms.

O Sirs, my beloved sirs, humble yourselves; righteous is he who will examine your case, and mighty is he, who will pass judgment upon you; his name is the RULING LORD; he is the Almighty, the holy, the terrible, the high adorable and omnipotent God, who created heaven and earth, and who has in the hands of his strength all majesty, power and dominion. Learn to know him; learn to fear him. Awaken, look out, the time is not far off, when you will hear, "*Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward,*" Luke 16: 2.

Therefore, do not hear those who seek fat prebends and a lazy life, they deceive you, they teach you according to the lust of your hearts; they flatter you for the sake of unlawful gain, they preach to you wanton deception according to their own opinion, and not out of the mouth of the Lord: they fatten their bodies, and have fine times, from the fatness of your poor souls (beloved sirs, understand rightly what I mean), although they boast much of the gospel; hear them, who are not like the wind-shaken reed, those, who with John and Elias, are not so much frightened by the wilderness of misery, who suffer daily for the truth's sake, love gold and wood alike, who esteem

all things alike, both praise and reproach, riches and poverty, life and death, who seek only the honor of Christ, and the salvation of their beloved brethren, and preach nothing but the pure, unmixed word of God, and seal it, with spirit, power and work, as it is commanded of Christ, and as it is proclaimed and taught through the whole world by his holy apostles.

I repeat it, hearken not, follow not, and believe not the multitude of the learned, who suffer themselves to be called doctors, lords and masters, for they are sensual and bloodthirsty, but seek and follow the faithful in Christ, who are called the curse and filth of the earth, among these you will find Christ's Spirit, truth, power, works and life. You will also, through the grace of God, find how far you and your spirit, faith, baptism, supper, conduct, church and actions are outside of Christ's Spirit, doctrine, commands, prohibition, ordinance and usage.

Say, O you kings and rulers of the land, Where is your faith and love, with their pious nature? Where is the fear of your God? Your lamp and light? Your humble heart, dead unto sin? And your unblamable, godly life, which is out of God? Is it not all world and carnality which you seek and follow? We generally find in your houses and courts nothing but extravagance, pomp and showy clothing, hardness and presumptuousness of heart, insatiable avarice, hatred, envy, backbiting, betraying, whoredom, debauchery, gambling gaming, eating, drinking, dancing, swearing, stabbing, housebreaking, &c. This is your chivalric custom and court conduct during the whole course of your lives; and you never once reflect on the misery, tribulation, humility, love and righteousness in which the Lord of lords, and King of kings, lived before you, what he taught the children of men, and what pattern or example he left them; the affliction and misery of the wretched reach not your ears; the sweat of the poor we find on your houses, and the innocent blood on your hands; you receive gifts and presents to pervert judgment, and you take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed. The prophets of Jezebel, and the priests of Baal, sensualists and flatterers, are much respected with you, they set

upon soft cushions, and live well. But those who with Micah, preach to you adversity and truth, must expect imprisonment, bonds, and death, and are deserving of all disgrace; yea, it has come so far (may God make it better) that where four or five, ten or twenty have met in the name of the Lord, to speak of the word of the Lord, and to do his work, in whose midst Christ is, who fear the Lord with all their heart, and lead an unblamable life before all the world, that if they be apprehended, and complaint brought against them, they must then be devoured by fire, or be destroyed by the sword, or sink into the depths of the waters.

But they who have met in the name of Baal, a meeting of all manner of mischief, who exceed Sodom and Gomorrah far in wickedness, where all manner of inhuman things are carried on between man and man; and between woman and woman; as it is in Spain, in Italy, and in the cloisters, in public brothel-houses, theatres, fencing-schools, and the accursed drunken taverns, where many live in open disgrace, and act so shamefully against God's word. Such live unmolested and at peace.

I do not mention the public assemblies of all manner of idolatry, where the most high, blessed and precious name of God is so miserably blasphemed, the blood of Christ despised, the Holy Ghost grieved, the truth disgraced, lies commended, and poor souls deceived. The blind, ignorant people are not only directed to the holy water, bread, wine and the mass, but also to the dumb idols, of wood and stone, as alas! it may be so extensively witnessed.

O my beloved lords, what are you doing? Where is the sword of righteousness which was given to you, of which you boast? You have to acknowledge that you leave it in the scabbard, and in its stead you have drawn the sword of unrighteousness. Yes, beloved sirs, things are so (God better it), that the prophets write and call with propriety, "Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards; they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them; therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel,

Ah! I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies," Isa. 1: 23, 24.

"Behold, the princes of Israel, every one is wise in thee to their power to shed blood. In thee have they set light by father and mother; in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger; in thee have they vexed the fatherless and the widow;" they are like the devouring wolves to shed blood and destroy souls for the sake of their avarice, "Behold, therefore," says the Lord, "I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee," Ezek. 22: 6, 7, 13.

"Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away; so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Therefore, thus saith the Lord: behold against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks; neither shall ye go haughtily; for this time is evil," Micah 2: 1—3.

"Hear, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; Is it not for you to know judgment who hate the good and love the evil? Who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and they break their bones and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them, he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings," Micah 3: 1—4.

"Woe to her that is filthy and polluted to the oppressing city! she obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God. Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones till the morrow; her prophets are light and treacherous persons; her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law, the just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity; every morning doth he bring his

judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame. I have cut off the nations; their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by," Zeph. 3: 1—6.

There are but few of you, I fear there is scarcely one, who seeks the Lord with all his heart, fears, loves, and serves him; therefore, will also the fury of God be poured out upon you like water, and the sword of his wrath will come upon you, as may be seen daily in many places; God better it.

The wise man says, "Power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest, who shall try your works and search out your counsels; because being ministers of his kingdom, ye have not judged aright, nor kept the law, nor walked after the counsel of God; horribly and speedily shall he come upon you; for a sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places. For mercy will soon pardon the meanest; but mighty men shall be mightily tormented. For he who is Lord over all shall fear no man's person, neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness; for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike. But a sore trial shall come upon the mighty," Wis. 6: 3—8.

Therefore, beloved lords, take heed that you rightly execute your responsible and dangerous office according to the will of God; for, alas! I fear that many of you, as yet, have paid but little attention to this matter, and hence it is that anti-christ rises up with his wickedness, and Christ is rejected with his righteousness; lay to heart what is written, "Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked," says the Lord, Exod. 23: 7.

Here I well know that we have to hear of Munster, dominions, polygamy, sword, theft, murder and of the like abominations and disgrace, which, you always assert, result from baptism; and under this pretext you reprove every thing the mouth of the Lord commanded, and what the holy apostles taught and practiced, and for this purpose you cite some seditious sects and factions, that the cry of the learned and your blood-shedding may be sanctioned.

No, my beloved sirs, it will not acquit you in the day of the righteousness of God. I tell you the truth in Christ; notice the rightly baptized disciples of Christ, who are baptized inwardly with Spirit and fire, and externally with water, who are baptized according to the word of God; know of no weapons other than patience, hope, quiet, and God's word. Paul says, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5. Our weapons are not weapons with which cities and countries are desolated; walls and gates broken down and human blood shed in torrents like water, but they are weapons with which the spiritual kingdom of the devil is destroyed, and the ungodly passions are annihilated, and the flinty hearts are broken, that have never been sprinkled with the heavenly dew of the holy word. We have and know no other weapons besides, the Lord knows, even if we should be torn into a thousand pieces, and as many false witnesses were to rise against us, as there are spears of grass in the fields, and grains of sand upon the sea shore.

Again, Christ is our fortress; patience our defence; the word of God our sword; and our victory is a candid, firm, unfeigned faith in Jesus Christ. We let those take spears and swords, who, alas, regard human blood and swine's blood alike. He that is wise let him judge what I mean.

We acknowledge, beloved sirs, that some of the false prophets were baptized externally in appearance, with us, with the same baptism; even as thieves, murderers, highway robbers, sorcerers and the like, were baptized with you; but they were not of us; for had they been of us, as John says, they would no doubt have continued with us.

Christ says, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect; behold, I have told you before," Matt. 24: 24.

This warning of Christ was not given to the ungodly, obdurate despisers, for they are already entangled in the snares of unrighteousness, but is given to the contrite of heart and to the willing souls, so that they may learn to know the Spirit, and not suffer themselves to be led into error; "For the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Peter 5: 8.

The craftiness and artifice of the devil, who assumes the appearance of an angel of light, are not known by some, therefore, so many have stumbled and erred, and were led into crooked paths by the deceivers; but this was not through baptism; for the elementary water can neither teach, nor pervert, but it was done through false prophets. of which, I say, we have been so faithfully warned by the mouth of the Lord.

Beloved sirs, fear God, judge rightly; the truth of God can never be changed into seduction and error, through the lies of the devil. O no! the word of our God shall stand forever.

Should the devout angels be unjustly judged, for the sake of Lucifer's arrogance and be punished with his punishment? Or should all the apostles be traitors, for Judas' sake? By no means. Every one shall bear his own burden. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The soul that sinneth *it* shall die," Ezek. 18: 20.

Should we reproach the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, because the father of lies has resuscitated, in the name of Christ, the practice of circumcision as essential to *salvation*? That the dead will not rise in the day of judgment? That Philetus and Hymenius asserted that the resurrection of the dead has already taken place? That some pretended that the great day of the Lord was at hand?

How could the apostle help it, that the Nicolaitans had their wives common, as Eusebius relates? That the Ebionites denied the deity of Christ, and taught that Christ began only to exist in Mary? And that the Corinthians maintained, that the world was created by angels; that Christ was no more than a mere man, and had not yet risen, but shall rise with us in future, and

that he would reign one thousand years in the flesh with his saints?

All these sects arose in the days of the apostles, nevertheless the gospel of Christ remained the true gospel, the doctrines of the apostles, the true doctrine.

The Scriptures teach that we are to flee from, and avoid such leaders of sects and heretics: and we hope to obey willingly the injunction all the days of our lives.

Therefore, my beloved sirs, pass an impartial and rational judgment in this matter, as before God, who will judge you in the great day; this we ask of you for Jesus' sake; for we seek nothing else upon earth (the Lord knows), than the true foundation of the truth, the praise of Christ, the obedience of his word, and that with a good conscience, as we testify to the whole world, with our writings, word, possessions, blood, life and death.

We also write the truth in Christ and lie not, that spiritually, we acknowledge no king, neither in heaven above nor upon earth beneath, than the only, eternal and true king, spiritual David, Christ Jesus, who is Lord of lords, and King of kings.

And if there is one who will declare himself king in the kingdom and dominion of Christ, as did John von Leyden, of Munster, he shall not go unpunished with Adonijah, 1 Kings 1, for the true Solomon, Christ Jesus himself, must possess the kingdom, and sit eternally upon the throne of David.

But, according to the flesh, we teach and exhort to be obedient to the emperor, king, lords and princes, yea, to all in authority, in all their transactions and civil regulations, so far as they are not contrary to the word of God, Rom. 13: 1—3.

We teach and confess that we know of no sword, nor commotion in the kingdom or church of Christ, other than the sharp sword of the Spirit, God's word, as is abundantly shown in our writings, which is sharper and more piercing than any two-edged sword, and it proceeds from the mouth of the Lord, whereby we make the father at variance against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, and daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law. But the

sword of worldly policy we leave with those to whom it is committed. Let every one be careful and not take the sword, lest he shall perish with the sword, Matt. 26: 52.

We acknowledge, teach, and approve of no other matrimony than that one, which Christ and his apostles publicly and plainly taught in the New Testament, namely, one man and one woman, Matt. 19: 4, and that they may not be divorced except in case of adultery, Matt. 5: 32, for the two are one flesh, but if the unbelieving depart, a sister or brother is not under bondage in that case, 1 Cor. 7: 15.

We acknowledge, teach and seek no other kingdom than that of Christ, which shall endure for ever, in which there is no pomp, splendor, gold, silver, meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; we confess with Christ, that our kingdom is not of this world: we brought nothing into this world, therefore, it is evident we can not take any thing out of it, as the Scriptures say, 1 Tim. 6: 7.

We know of no murdering, much less do we teach or permit it; for we truly believe that a murderer has neither lot nor part in the kingdom of God, Gal. 5: 21. O beloved sirs, how should we desire the blood of any man, since we have to die daily for man's sake? The Lord who created us knows that we seek nothing, but that we might instruct, and be a pattern to all the world, with our doctrine, life, blood and death, that they might reflect, awaken, repent and be saved, for this is the nature of pure love to pray for persecutors, to render good for evil, to love the enemy, to heap coals of fire upon the head; and let him avenge who judges rightly, Rom. 12: 20.

We know of no theft, much less do we teach or permit it, but we are ready before God and man, with all our hearts, to bestow our possessions, gold, and all that we have, however little it may be, and in addition thereto our sweat and labor, to meet the necessities of the poor, as the Spirit and word of the Lord, and true brotherly love teach us. We well know that theft is expressly forbidden in the Scriptures, Eph. 4: 28, and that it will be punished by death*

* In some countries theft was formerly punished by death.

according to the laws of the land, and if not repented of, with eternal death according to the word of God.

The Almighty merciful Lord, through his paternal grace, Spirit and power, will undoubtedly keep and preserve, inoffensive to the end of the world, all the pious, god-fearing, and faithful who acknowledge him, and are sincere, from all such terrible errors and ungodly abominations.

And should it be the case, that one remained among us who uses violence (which is quite unknown to me), and would do that which is from the devil, my beloved sirs, know you that such an one was not of us from the beginning, and will for ever not be of us, except he be thoroughly converted, repent sincerely, and become one with the Spirit, doctrine and example of Christ, as the Scriptures teach. May the gracious Lord grant that they may awaken, overcome their drowsiness, learn to know their works, see their nakedness, and be extricated from the snares of the devil, by which the poor, miserable people are so lamentably led captive at his will.

Therefore, beloved lords, beware that you be not, in judging faith, like the reckless and senseless, who persist without any knowledge of the matter, in their own opinion and wantonness, like irrational creatures, upbraid the good, and praise the evil, persecute and condemn what they understand not. Again, I say, be not like those blood-thirsty, raging and malicious men; but examine the Scriptures with trembling, with Solomon pray for wisdom, look to the Spirit, word, doings and example of Christ, and pass an impartial righteous sentence, according to the truth, as it is enjoined upon, and commanded unto all the princes and judges in the Scriptures, as is heard.

O beloved sirs, take heed. If our faith, doctrine, sacraments, transactions and doings are not of God, as we are every where slandered, then are we the most miserable of all men upon earth; if whilst we are to be every one's deceiver, heretic, anabaptist, knave, footstool and prey; have to endure the stocks, gallows, wheels, sword, water, fire, and all manner of misery; our poor souls must nevertheless be the property of

the devil, and brands of hell, although in our weakness we so cordially seek the Lord, and are so sincere, as may be seen. O no! my beloved sirs, no: the Spirit, doctrine and life of Christ will not deceive us; for his word is truth, and his commands eternal life. The promises of God stand sure and immovable; and they will not fail to the pious.

Therefore, we pray and admonish you, yea, we counsel and desire that you would contrast our seeking with your seeking; our spirit with your spirit; our doctrine with the doctrine of the learned; our conduct with your conduct; our poverty with your riches; our rejection and reproach with your seeking of honor; our affliction and tribulation with your voluptuousness and luxurious living; our patience with your tyranny; our hard bonds and reproachful death, with your ungracious fury and unmerciful fierceness. I speak of the guilty; if you should then find that your doctrine, faith, life, seeking and doings are more in accordance with the Spirit, word and life of the Lord, and are better than ours, then instruct us with a paternal spirit; we will willingly hear it, and be obedient, for we do desire to obey the truth unto death.

But if you can not reprove us by the Scriptures, and see that our doctrine is the best, it would then be heathenish, ungodly and tyrannical, to force us out of life into death, thrust us from heaven into hell, by the sword and violence; this you will have to acknowledge and confess. But I am afraid, so much discretion will not be manifested to us wretched children, that the matter be weighed in the balance of the holy word, and determined by the plummet of Christ. But the upbraiding, betraying and tumult of the priests and your unmerciful edicts must be our scriptures; and your rackers, hangmen, wrath, torturing, water, stocks, fire and sword, O God, of which we, grieved children, hear in many places, must be our instructors, which we at last must pay with our possessions and blood. Beloved lords, with christian discretion, love and friendship, reflect upon this how it agrees with the Spirit, doctrine and life of Christ? We well know that all bloody preachers who teach and advise such things, and all

the rulers who practice and uphold the same, are not the disciples of Christ; the hour in which you shall have to render accounts, when you depart this life, will teach you this truth. It can never be, says Cyprian, that such lion-like fury and lupine ferocity should dwell in the heart of a Christian. O how good it would be for some of you, yea, how good it would be if you had never been born; for there are so many of you who neither regard law nor gospel, heaven nor hell, God nor the devil; but the evil flesh will follow its propensity.

Think you, beloved sirs, that the Almighty God and Lord, who holds the heavens and the earth in the hollow of his hand, who kills and makes alive, the ruling Lord over all, who upholds all by the word of his power, who creates and destroys, the consuming fire, before whose presence the hills melted like wax, Ps. 97: 5, that he will yield and give away to sensual minds and earthly hearts? No! no, before him the great and small are alike; the rich and the poor; the strong and the weak; the learned and unlearned; the wise and the foolish, are all alike. He is no respecter of persons, all who fear him not, and conform not to his counsel, doctrine, Spirit and example, be he emperor, king, doctor, or licentiate, he must suffer eternal punishment and be under his judgment and wrath.

Beloved sirs, fear God, do right, learn wisdom and truth, cleanse your hands, which are wet and imbrued in innocent blood, and reflect how the righteous God will punish in due time, all unrighteousness, malice and violence; and how severely he ever did, and will avenge and require the innocent blood, torture and death of his saints, of those blood-thirsty tyrants.

The blood-thirsty Cain had to be an accursed vagabond and exile in the land all the days of his life, because he so miserably murdered his innocent brother Abel.

The unmerciful, arrogant murderer, Pharaoh, with his whole host, was destroyed in the Red sea, by the righteous judgment of God, on account of his tyranny and cruelty, which he exercised towards the children of Jacob, God's people.

Joash was slain by his own servants to

avenge the innocent blood of Zachariah, whom he slew between the temple and the altar, 2 Kings 12; 2 Chron. 24: 20—22.

Manasseh was led captive on account of his great abomination and idolatry which he practiced; and on account of the innocent blood with which he filled Jerusalem, 2 Chron. 33: 1—18.

Ahab was shot through with an arrow, and his blood was licked up by the dogs at the waters of Samaria, 1 Kings 22: 34—38, and his wife Jezebel was thrust out of the window, and was trodden under foot of horses, and her flesh was eaten of dogs, 2 Kings 9: 33, to punish her for her ungodly deed, and the blood of Naboth, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah, the Tishbite.

Sennacherib must leave Jerusalem with disgrace, on account of his slanderously pompous words, by which he blasphemed the Most High. The angel of the Lord slew, in one night, one hundred and eighty-five thousand men in his camp, and he was thrust through with the sword by his own children, in the temple of his idol, Nisroch, 2 Kings 19: 35, 37.

Nebuchadnezzar, on account of his pride, was rejected by the people, for the space of seven times, or years, his dwelling was with the irrational creatures, he ate grass like oxen, his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws, Dan. 4: 32, 33.

Belshazzar caroused with his mighty men, princes, wives and concubines; they were merry, drank out of the holy vessels which Nebuchadnezzar, his father, had plundered out of the temple at Jerusalem; and being in full glee and joy, praising their gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, and of stone, the impenitent and obdurate tyrant was punished of God without mercy, that he, the same night was deprived of his dominion, nation, body and life, Dan. 5: 23, 30.

Antiochus, the Great, a king and prince of all wickedness, a tyrant of tyrants was punished of God with such a plague, that worms crept from his bowels when yet alive, and pieces of flesh fell from his body, and the stench was so intolerable, that no one

could endure it, yea, he himself could not abide his own smell. The righteous wrath of God laid hold upon this ungodly miscreant, and he had thus, under unheard of pain and sufferings, to end his proud, blood-thirsty, unrighteous life, and depart from this world, 2 Macc. 9: 9—12.

Herod, arrayed in his royal attire, seated upon his throne, through the flattering applause of his people, on account of his eloquence and wisdom, exalted himself against God, in his heart, and in that very hour he was smitten by the angel of the Lord, was eaten of worms, and, according to the writings of Eusebius, departed this life in such a way that all the proud, haughty tyrants may look at themselves in the case of Herod, as in a mirror, and fear.

In short, as it happened to Pilate, Nero, Domitian, Maximinus, Diocletian, and generally to all malicious, blood-thirsty tyrants, and what kind of death they generally died, who rose up against Christ and his saints, may be read both in sacred and profane history.

What kind of death and with what conscience some of these blood-guilty of our day, departed this life, I will not write for certain reasons; I will nevertheless say this much, that neither emperor nor edicts, upon which they relied all the days of their lives, could neither quiet nor pacify them in the hour of their death, but oftentimes were troubled in their hearts, and with lamentations, painfully bewailed the innocent blood, which they shed in the emperor's name, and said, O we poor, miserable men, what will become of us?

O God, what counsel? Beloved sirs, what counsel shall be given you? How will your poor souls fare, in the day, "In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up?" 2 Peter 3: 10, when we must all appear before the judgment seat, and stand before the impartial judge? when every one shall be rewarded according to his works? he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep, "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry," Heb. 10: 37.

Therefore, desist from touching the apple of the Lord's eye; for he that touches his saints, touches the apple of his eye. Take pity on your own souls, which must suffer for it with eternal death, if you do not turn to God with all your heart, and no longer shed the blood of the innocent; for they daily call to him, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Rev. 6: 10, they call, I say, and their cries are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, avenging he will avenge, and the blood of his servants he will require at your hands.

Do not excuse yourselves, beloved sirs, and judges, that you are the servants of the emperor; this will not acquit you in the day of vengeance. It availed Pilate nothing that he crucified Christ in the name of the emperor. Serve the emperor in imperial matters, so far as Scripture permits, and serve God in divine matters, then you may claim his grace and call yourselves after his name.

Do not interfere with the right and kingdom of Christ; for he alone is the Ruler of the conscience, and beside him there is none other, let him be your emperor, and his holy word your edict, in this matter; and you will soon be satiated with raging and murder. You must heed God before the emperor, and obey God's word before the word of the emperor, if not, then you are the judges of whom it is written in Micah, They all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. "That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a brier; the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge; the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity," Micah 7: 2—4.

Therefore, fight no longer against the lamb and his chosen, it will be hard for you to kick against the pricks.

But you will, with all scoffers, say in your hearts, when is the promise of his coming? O beloved sirs, do pay attention, we have

known so many who have made as ostentatious a display as you, in silk and velvet, with gold and silver, and sat in exalted seats, and passed sentence upon innocent blood, but now they are no more; we inquire for their places, and they are not to be found.

The day will usher in as lightning, and the hour shall come upon them like a tempest; beware and reform. We see that the tree buds, that the summer is nigh at hand, and our Redeemer is hastening, who redeems all the troubled souls from their afflictions, and he will recompense all proud scoffers according to their demerits.

Yea, the day is coming, and is not far off, when "the righteous man shall stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labors; when they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for, and they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he, whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach; we fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honor; how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints! Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. We wearied ourselves in the way of wickedness and destruction; yea, we have gone through deserts, where there lay no way; but as for the way of the Lord, we have not known it. What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow, and as a post that hasteth by," Wis. 5: 1—9.

Then will the terrible, intolerable judgment pass upon all who know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be adored by all them that believe. Then the wicked will hear, "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. 25: 41.

Then shall your laughter be changed into weeping, your joy into sorrow, your sumptuous, temporal lives into everlasting death, your luxury into everlasting woe, your pride into dust and worms, your violence into suffering, your pomp into stench, and your cruel and unmerciful tyranny be retributed with unquenchable hell-fire.

My beloved sirs, with him nothing will be concealed or forgotten. He is the judge that searches the hearts and tries the reins, who penetrates the heights of heaven and the depth of the abyss, and the length of the earth, who will not only judge and punish evil works, and every idle word, but also every unclean, carnal thought.

O dear Lord! O Lord of lords! where then will be the emperor and his edicts, the false prophets, and their deceiving doctrine? Then they will howl and weep, and cry in anguish of soul, O ye mountains fall upon us, ye rocks hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Then, there you will see, that it was nought but lies and wind with which you comforted yourselves. as said, Rev. 6: 16.

Beloved lords, awaken! It is yet to-day; do not boast because you are of the royal family, and are called gracious lords, for it is but smoke, dust and pride; but boast and rejoice when you are born of God, when you become a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light," 1 Pet. 2: 9.

Boast not that you are mighty upon earth, and have great power, but boast rather that you rule your land in the true fear of God, with virtue, wisdom and righteousness, to the praise of the Lord.

Boast not that you can subdue lords, princes, cities and countries; but boast if you subdue your earthly mind and can overcome carnal temptations by the power of faith, and die to ungodliness, and triumph through Christ, and be taken in the kingdom of glory, with all the pious soldiers of God, and receive the promised crown at the hand of the Lord, for if you be

such kings, then you are not only kings according to the flesh, but also according to the Spirit; those who love the prince of all kings, who are cleansed of sin by his blood, who have made God and his father their kings and priests, those reign and conquer with all the children of God, the world, flesh, blood, sin, death, devil, false doctrine, and the infernal gates; they rejoice not because their names are enrolled in the register of the kings of this world: but they rejoice because their names are written in the book of life, in heaven.

O you high-renowned noble lords and princes, O that you would in all love and meekness receive this simple, plain, but true instruction of your poor servant, and not despise it, whereby I have so fully, and with a good heart, admonished all your worthy highnesses.

Look not upon my weakness nor to my little understanding, but look to the Spirit, word and example of Christ, which I have recommended and taught in sincerity of heart to you and to all men, according to my weak abilities.

Do sincerely repent, so that you stand before God; wail and weep with David; put on sackcloth and raiments of hair; scatter ashes upon your heads; humble yourselves with the king of Nineveh; confess your faults with Manasseh; die unto your ambitious flesh and pride; fear the Lord, your God, with all your powers; judge in all wisdom with fear and trembling; help the oppressed; grieve not the distressed; promote the just cause of the widows and orphans; protect the good; punish the evil in a christian manner; discharge the duties of your offices properly; seek the kingdom and country that will endure forever; and reflect that you, however highly esteemed, upon earth are only pilgrims and sojourners in a strange land.

Obeys, believe, fear, love, serve and follow your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for he it is before whom every knee shall bow; he is the eternal word, wisdom, truth and Son of God. Seek his honor and praise in all your thoughts, words and actions, and you shall reign in eternity.

APPEAL TO THE LEARNED.

Herewith I will leave all the lords and princes, with all the magistracy and rulers, and those sent by them, in the hands of the Lord, and address myself to you, O you learned, you, who think that you have the keys of heaven, and are the eyes and the light of the people; I will speak with you, as with those whose salvation I seek with all my heart, because I see with open eyes, that both you and your disciples run voluntarily into the eternal destruction of your souls, and nevertheless boast that you are the sent teachers, and your churches the churches of Christ, and would cordially and brotherly admonish you, one and all, Romans, Lutherans and Zuinglians, concerning the following articles.

That you would notice, in the first place, that your ministry and services are not of God and his word, but are from the bottomless pit, for it is evident that you blaspheme and persecute the word, ordinances and commands of Christ, and teach and enforce the word, ordinances and commands of anti-christ; that you profane the temple of God, build and honor temples of stone, break the living images in which the Spirit of God dwells; make and dress images of gold, silver and wood; that you hate a pious, blameless life; encourage and defend, by your dissolute examples, a disorderly, passionate life of the flesh. Say, my beloved, Where is there a single letter in the Scriptures concerning all your doings and worship, such as of masses, infant baptism, auricular confession, &c.? Is not, in truth, the greater part of what you do and transact, all deception, hypocrisy, blasphemy, abomination and idolatry? Whence do you derive your offices and services, and of whom are they? I would advise you, in true love, that you would reflect upon them according to the Scriptures, and in the true fear of God.

Secondly, consider what you are properly seeking through this your office and service. You and I, heretofore, stood in the same calling, office and service; I candidly confess

that in all my studies, from my youth, in preaching and singing, I sought only a vain, lazy, good living, praise and favor of men, yea, solely the gratification of my carnal desires, till the gracious and great Lord bestowed me upon the gift of his gracious Spirit, and opened the understanding of my heart, that I acknowledged with the preacher Solomon, that all my seeking, life and doings were vanity, and that the end thereof was certain death and hell.

But that you continue so to seek is too palpable to be denied. For if there were no prebends and cloisters, but few preachers, priests and monks would be found. This I certainly know. So long as these exist, the world shall never be in want of deceivers and hypocrites.

Say, beloved, what else is your whole seeking and doing, than world, carnality, gluttony, and a voluptuous life? Who can scrutinize and fully describe your earthly mind and sensual life? Some of you make an ostentatious display in ermine, in silk and velvet, others live in full revelry, others are avaricious and hoard; some violate virgins and maids, others pollute the bed of their neighbor, others' chastity is like the chastity of Sodom; all your doctrine is deceiving, your sacraments are enchanting, your piety is principally ungodliness, and your divine service is an open abomination and idolatry; some of you neither fear God nor the devil; you blaspheme the name of God, his holy word you falsify, his children and servants you persecute, and, in reliance upon his grace, you do all manner of evil; if you can only lead a life free from care, and enjoy fine times, then all is well done. Say, beloved, is it not so? Worthy men, is it not so? This is your chief seeking and striving, among great and small, this you must acknowledge and confess; for the fruit is manifest to all the world, and it cannot be any longer concealed.

O men, men! beware! If any one could enter into life, on this broad way which you

teach, and in which you walk, and keep his soul in God, we might truly lament and say, that the prophets, apostles, and all the witnesses of God, and also Christ Jesus himself, did not act wisely, and that they have not dealt rightly towards us, that they passed their lives with so much anguish, suffering, tribulation and pain in this sorrowful vale of tears, and directed us, miserable, weak children into such a way.

O no, my beloved, no; truth will eternally be truth; if you are not converted to a better and christian mind; if you die not to your deception, and also to your vain, carnal life, repent, and become in your dispositions like innocent, little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, "For to be carnally minded," says Paul, "is death."

Teach, call, hope, boast in any way you choose, if you desire to be saved, you must walk in the ways of the Lord, hear his word, and be obedient thereto: for nothing avails in heaven and upon earth, whereby you can be saved, neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper, neither eloquence nor erudition, neither councils nor long standing usages, neither emperors nor edicts, neither Christ with his grace, merits, blood and death, if we are not born of God (understand it right, those who have ears to hear, and minds to understand), believe his word sincerely, walk in the light, and do right, as John says, "This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all; if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John 1: 5—7.

O transgressors, transgressors, examine your hearts, give heed to my words and learn wisdom, you who live in voluptuousness and sit at ease, who say in your hearts, It is we, besides us there is none other; what we command shall be heard, and what we speak must be valid upon earth; we cannot go astray in the Scriptures, and in counsel we cannot err, and we can teach nothing unlawful. Ah! alas! your boasted wisdom leads you astray, and the pride of your

hearts causes you to stumble; return, your path is slippery, and your way leads to the abyss of hell.

Beloved men, learn to know what God's own and eternal Son, Christ Jesus, sought upon earth, what he taught, and what example he left you: his seeking was his Father's praise, and the salvation of our poor souls; his doctrine was his father's word, and his precedence a sure way to the kingdom of God. "Who being in the form of God," says Paul, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," Phil. 2: 6, 7; and came poor and miserable into this sorrowful world; there was no room in the inn when he was born; he had not whereon to lay his head; nor in his death had he wherewith to quench his thirst, although it is he through whom the almighty, all-bountiful Father grants to all his created beings, residence, clothing, meat and drink, as Paul says, "For ye knew the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. 8: 9.

If you have any fear of God, and would not lead your own, and the souls of your poor people wilfully to death, then contrast your seeking with the seeking of Christ, your doctrine with the doctrine of Christ, your spirit with the Spirit of Christ, and your life with the life of Christ, then you may truly find whether you are in or out of Christ, who is your God, what Lord you serve, and of whose spirit and kingdom you are.

Thirdly, observe what fruits and usefulness your office and services bring forth; for what is your doctrine other than a useless, feeble sowing in the wind, which has neither spirit nor power; your sacraments are an encouragement to the impenitent, and your lives examples of wickedness. Where are the avaricious whom you have meliorated, the drunkards you have made temperate, the polluted you have made pure, the haughty whom you have humbled? How will you teach others, being yourselves untaught, and beget Christ an acceptable church, and are yourselves the servants of anti-christ, and the children of Belial? You

and your disciples, therefore, must ever confess, both high and low, men and women, that you are all dead bodies, and have not the Spirit of God; for with you we do not find contrite hearts, true knowledge of Christ, true love, an earnest desire after the kingdom of God, dying to earthly things, true humility, righteousness, friendliness, mercy, chastity, obedience, wisdom, truth and peace; but every where we find hateful, envious, obdurate, malicious hearts, an aversion and despising of the divine word, lust and love of this world, haughtiness, pride, pomp, lies, knavery, disgrace, adultery, whoredom, robbery, burning, slaying, cursing, swearing, and all manner of malice.

Behold, you withered trees, and careless shepherds, these are the fruits you bring forth, and the sheep you pasture, these are the churches and disciples you comfort with the blood of the Lord, preach to them grace and peace, and to whom you dispense baptism and the Lord's Supper. If I write not the truth, reprove me.

O beloved sirs, so entirely have you lost every christian virtue, and understanding, besides, the light, and the Scriptures; you hold captive in ungodliness under the power of hell, the poor, ignorant people, whole kingdoms, cities and countries; yea, the whole wide world, and that, O God! for such small hire, namely, for one hand full of barley and one piece of bread, as the prophet says, O, that my words might be a lie, and not the truth; sunshine is clear, but still clearer is the truth which I write.

And this is not enough for you, O you men, that you so miserably deceive the poor wretched souls; and besides this, you also rebuke, defame, belie, and betray all those who seek and fear God with all their hearts, rebuke all unrighteousness with doctrine and life, and so willingly walk in Christ. You deprive them of their possessions and lives that you may be greatly honored among the people, and be not evil spoken of in your doings, that you be not hindered in your unlawful gain; and that you may enjoy an easy and voluptuous life to the end of your days.

O how rightly you are depicted by the wisdom of God, which says, "Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! for ye

shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves (mark), neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in," Matt. 23: 13.

What I think, I write, and dissemble not. I fear, worthy sirs, that there are many of you so ungodly, and so far determined upon unlawful gain, indolent life, and the praise of men, that you would rather see all the god-fearing put to the stake, than lose a guilder of your rents, or to hear a harsh word from the magistracy, for the sake of the truth.

O you, with wanton looks, when will you be ashamed? You diamonds! when will you be softened, and you Moors, when will you become white? I think never more; for how can you do any thing good, because you have learned evil, and are used to it from your infancy?

Alas! my soul must grieve and painfully mourn for your sakes, that you have erred so lamentably, and besides this, you cover all your disgrace under the word and name of Christ, and do not observe, O you men, that you, together with all the false prophets, are promised in the Scriptures, and threatened by the Spirit of the Lord, every where with nothing but punishment, wrath, damnation and blackness of darkness, the flaming lake and eternal gnashing of teeth, weeping, wailing, fire, woe and death.

The hour is near at hand when we shall hear, "Give an account," &c. Alas, would it then be due to us, when the day is at hand, to walk a thousand years on burning coals and in red hot armor (flames), then we might even rejoice and be of good cheer; but now it is hidden from your eyes, through your haughtiness, avarice and momentary luxury.

Perhaps I would be smitten on the cheek by some of you, and with Micahiah, be compelled to hear from Zedekiah, "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?" 2 Chron. 18: 23. O my beloved, fear God and understand the truth. You direct the poor dissolute souls to the subtlety and philosophy of the learned, to the many councils, to customs and usages of long standing, to imperial edicts, to the doctrines and commandments of men, which are nothing but quicksands, which cannot

save the house from the tempest, but I do not so, but, with Moses, the prophets, apostles, angels, and the Father himself, I direct you to Christ Jesus, to whom all the emperors, kings, councils, usages and the learned, will have to yield; for his word is truth, and his commands are eternal life. To him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; all who reject him, reject the Father that sent him, Phil. 2: 10.

This I teach you; I direct you to his Spirit, word, life, command, prohibition, ordinances and usages, as to a sure and immovable foundation, laid in Zion, to a plain and safe way, prepared of God, who, according to his sure promises, will lead all the truly penitent and Christian believers into eternal life.

Beloved men, observe, there were four hundred false prophets in the days of Ahab, king of Israel, who unanimously prophesied prosperity and felicity, that he should advance, for God would give the enemies of the king into his hands; while there was but one Micaiah, who spoke the real truth and predicted adversity in the name of the Lord, 2 Chron. 18: 6, 7.

And there were also four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and four hundred prophets of the groves, all of whom did eat at Jezebel's table; there was only one Elijah, a man of God, and a prophet of the Lord, who was zealous for the law of his God, and defended his praise, 1 Kings 18.

Joash, with all the princes, priests and common people, were unanimous in their groves and their false worship, which they had chosen after the death of Jehoiada, the high priest, and there was but one Zechariah, who reproved the ungodly abominations, and threatened them with the wrath and punishment of his God, 2 Chron. 24.

Even as those renowned and worthy men of God, though they were few, reproved, with pure, divine ardor, in the power of the Spirit, and faithfully admonished by the law of God with their great and glorious talents, all the disobedient and idolatrous kings, princes, priests and the common people, without respect to persons; and on account thereof suffered disgrace, mis-

ery, tribulation, bonds and death, as we may abundantly read and see in the Scriptures and in history; I do also here, with my small talents, for similar views and reasons, openly testify to the truth, because I see, that you all hypocritically flatter lords and princes, and caress the world, and because there is, alas, nobody who opposes this ungodliness with the word of the Lord, nor reproves the wickedness of the world; I must, on this account, hear and bear much, as did the above mentioned although I mean it so well, and have such true grounds.

O worthy men, deliberate! reflect on the matter. Consider the end; contemplate the consequence. You console yourselves with the invention of men; but we put our trust in the word and truth of God; you seek the world, we seek heaven; you place your affections upon the present, we upon the future; you depend upon the emperor and temporal powers; we depend on Christ and his promises, till we all shall appear before him, who will come in the clouds of heaven, to requite all flesh; then you will see what you sought, what office you conducted, what fruits you brought forth, for what hire you served, whose word you preached, whose counsel you rejected, and whom, O men, you have so enviously pierced.

Hereby I will commend you to the Lord, you learned and preachers; and entreat for God's sake (to the good of all your souls), that you accept this my faithful warning with gratitude and love, written to you, with a sincere and Christian intention; read it with an understanding heart; reflect upon it, and examine it with fear and trembling. I certainly know that you will find nothing in it but kindness, love, zeal, and a sure foundation of the only and invincible truth.

And though some of you may think that I reprove too severely, you ought to know that I have not done so without the instruction, counsel and doctrine of the holy prophets, Christ and the apostles. I have given no name without the word of God. Let him that is innocent thank God and rejoice; he that is guilty, is not reproved by me, but by the Spirit and word of God.

O, ye whom I desire as friends, fear God and his judgment; reform your earthly car-

nal life: abandon all your deceptions, blindness, seducements and abominations, in which you have hitherto been involved; seek the right truth with all your powers; pray to God for wisdom; warn every one; deal and act unblamably; then you will not be of that number of shepherds called by such dreadful names in the Scriptures, and you will not be partakers of that displeasure, punishment and wrath, but you will inherit grace, mercy and life, as the prophet says, "But if the wicked will turn from his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him," Ezek. 18: 21, 22. The gracious and merciful Lord, grant you all his grace, knowledge, Spirit, wisdom, light and truth, that you may sincerely awaken, repent, and be eternally saved, Amen.

APPEAL TO THE COMMON PEOPLE.

Give ear, ye people; you who trust in lies, and boast that you are Christians; tear your bands asunder, and suffer yourselves to be led no longer as asses bound and under a heavy burden of sin, by these aforementioned drivers, for they deceive you: they preach to you according to their own opinion, and not out of the mouth of the Lord; they comfort you in your wicked ways; they call and cry only mercy and peace, though it is displeasure and judgment, as the prophet says. The priests and prophets teach a false worship, and comfort my people in their calamity, that they shall esteem it lightly, saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace;" they are the blind leaders, who lead you and themselves into the pit, and the blind watchmen who watch not over the city of God. Thieves and murderers, who slay your poor souls with the sword of their false doctrine, and steal from you the word and kingdom of the Lord; greedy shepherds who seek your wool, milk and flesh, and not your souls. In short, they are those who wholly desolate the kingdom of Christ, and promulgate in high honor the kingdom of anti-christ through the whole world, and who always comfort and defend you, poor children, in your dissolute abominations, your obdurate, blind life, so that, alas! there is none who is sincerely converted to the Lord, laments his sins, and says, What do I?

O, worthy children and brethren, my heart

in my body quakes and fears, when I reflect that such a numberless multitude of men are born in vain and to no purpose: who will have eternally to endure the wrath and judgment of the Lord, if they repent not, and shall never find grace.

Beloved children, take heed, for thus Christ Jesus teaches you, I tell you of a truth, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 18: 3. O, dear Lord, this is spoken by God's eternal truth, which cannot lie, and how ungodly you ignorant people live, and how far you are from the innocence of children, your fruits testify; for you despise God and his word; you hate all righteousness and truth, many of you live as the irrational creatures, others quarrel, curse, swear, are covetous, practice usury, lie, cheat, injure and defraud one another; fidelity and piety are seldom found among you, faithlessness, and knavery, alas, every where: eating to excess, gambling, gaming, drinking and carousing are pastimes amongst you: to pollute women and defile virgins is called courting and loving. To take the advantage of, and defraud one another, is called understanding and wisdom; you are valiant at beer and mighty at wine; unrighteousness and destruction are in all your ways, the poor and weak you oppress, and you revile the afflicted, the god-fearing and pious; you think and practice nothing but evil, you

are without understanding, says the prophet, as a frantic heifer. Pomp and splendor you call the fashion and custom of the country. The one lies in wait for the other's honor, property, and life, and seeks his destruction, as the prophet says, your faith is hypocrisy, your worship idolatry, your whole life is world and flesh, as may be seen, and then you say, he that walks in simplicity, walks right, as if ignorance, blindness, despising the truth, and godliness, were a pious, humble and plain life. Dear children, be ashamed of your offensive wantonness and accursed folly.

Do you suppose that Christ is a liar, and his word a fable? O no! his sentence stands immovable, and shall never be altered; if you live in pride, avarice, voluptuousness, unchastity and in carnal lusts, believe not Christ and his word, continue to be earthly-minded, and are not born of God, you must die eternally, or the Spirit of God is not true, but false.

Say, beloved, why extol the apostles and prophets, while you revile their doctrine as heresy, and their lives as madness? Why suffer yourselves to be called christians, while you hate and oppose Christ's word and example?

Say you, we are without understanding, untaught, and know not the Scriptures! I then again reply: The word is plain and needs no comment, namely, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself," Matt. 22: 37, 39. Again, You shall give bread to the hungry and entertain the needy, Isa. 58: 7.

If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; for, to be carnally minded is death; the avaricious, drunkards, and the proud, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; for he will judge adulterers and fornicators, Rom. 8; 1 Cor. 6, and many like passages. All who do not understand such passages, we must confess and acknowledge, are more like irrational creatures than men, more like blocks than christians.

O my children, my beloved children, do not deceive your own sons; seek wisdom and understanding, even as you do your daily food, that you may find great riches:

for the kingdom of heaven suffers violence. Strive, says Christ, to enter in at the strait gate; ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. The Almighty, great God is not satisfied with a bare name, but he desires a true, sincere faith, unfeigned, ardent love, a new, converted heart, true humility, mercy, chastity, patience, righteousness and peace; he desires the whole man, heart, professions and actions. He who delights in the word of the Lord, speaks the truth from the heart, crucifies his flesh, and will give his goods and blood for the word of the Lord, if it be required.

Behold, dear children, this is the way in which we will all have to walk, if we desire to be saved; therefore, awaken and learn wisdom. Hear the inviting voice of God, open unto him, and meet him, that he complain not of you, as he did formerly through his prophets, of obdurate and stiff-necked Judea and Jerusalem. "I have nourished," says he, "and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me; the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward," Isa. 1: 4.

Jeremiah says, "Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle; yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord," Jer. 8: 6, 7.

Remember, dear children, how greatly Jesus Christ took to heart the obstinacy and blindness of the Jews; when he said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," he wept and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes," Luke 19: 42.

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with

meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls," James 1: 21. Seek God with a full heart, repent sincerely, cleanse yourselves inwardly before the Lord, let go world, flesh, false doctrine, and every thing contrary to the honor, will, and word of God; hear, believe and follow Jesus Christ, the only, and true shepherd of your souls, who sought you in such great love, and purchased you with such a precious price, then you may, of a truth, boast that you are the people of God, and the church of Christ. To him, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, be praise and the eternal kingdom, Amen.

APPEAL TO CORRUPT SECTS.

Christ said, "False christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed, behold, I have foretold you all things," Mark 13: 22, 23. O, you backsliding, erring children! Mind, had you taken to heart this faithful warning of our Lord and Savior, Christ; had you acknowledged his Spirit, doctrine, and holy life as a perfect Spirit, doctrine and life, and acknowledged him as the true Prophet, promised in Scripture; and had you received him as the true and living Son of God; you would never have been led so far from his ways, nor would such frightful errors have taken place. But, O Lord! I fear that some of you are so far enchanted, that you will nevermore come to Christ, the true Shepherd: for you, through a perverted and obscure understanding of the Scriptures, defend, as just and right, the abominable works of ungodliness, which are not only contrary to the Spirit, word and will of Christ, but also contrary to reasonable modesty, nature, and reason.

Is it not a grievous error, that you suffer yourselves to be so sorely bewitched by such worthless persons, and so lamentably misled from one unclean sect to another: first to that of Munster, next to Battenberg, now Davidists; from Beelzebub to Lucifer, and from Belial to Behemoth? Ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the real truth. You suffer yourselves to be led about by every wind of doctrine. You choose out a way for yourselves, as do also the priests and monks: you hold not to the head, Christ, from

which all the body, fitly joined together, cometh unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

I fear that your sins will be punished; for you are earthly, and carnal minded, whereby you thrust from you the pure knowledge of Christ, and hate his cross; and against all admonition of Scriptures, against the undeceiving example of Christ and his saints, you conform yourselves in the splendor, pomp, eating, drinking, folly, hypocrisy, and false worship, of this proud, useless, vain and idolatrous world, which you should, by right, instruct and admonish by a pious, humble, sober, and godly walk.

O, you backsliding children! consider how grievously you disgrace the holy Moses, who teaches and speaks to you out of the mouth of God. He says, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him," Deut. 18: 18, 19. This is repeated by Peter and Stephen in Acts 3: 23; and 7: 37.

What do you do with all the great prophets of God, as David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who, in so many places, with such plain words, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, direct us to Christ and his word? They must either testify to lies, or your prophets must be deceivers and false teachers. This is incontrovertible.

Did not holy Paul say, "But though we,

or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1: 8. That your prophets, with their king, dominion, polygamy, sword, &c., do not agree with Paul and the doctrine and gospel of the apostles, you are all forced to acknowledge and admit, whence it forcibly follows, that they, with their doctrine and conduct, are cursed and anathematized.

Say, my beloved, what do you do with the revealed and infallible word and testimony of the Almighty Father, which he himself has testified of his Son, and said? "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," Matt. 17: 5. *Him shall you hear*; but since you reject his Spirit, word and example, you follow and hear those who, with their spirit, doctrine and conduct, are from the bottomless pit, yea, manifestly anti-christs and false prophets.

Know you not, that the Son of God has himself commanded us that we should observe all that he has enjoined, and that he will be with us until the end of the world?

Will you then say, that the doctrine of Christ and his apostles was imperfect, and that your teachers bring forth the perfect instruction? I answer, that to teach and believe this, is the most horrible blasphemy, the most mocking perversity, that can be uttered against the Most High; for you thereby declare that Christ is not the true Son of God, the perfect Teacher, and the true image of righteousness. You deny the whole Scripture, you reject the testimony of Moses and all the prophets, who pointed to the only and true Christ, as has been shown; you disparage the word of the Father, and reject Christ Jesus, with his Spirit, word, kingdom and spiritual government; you put your trust and hopes in lying, mortal flesh, and upon earthly, carnal things, which, as the Scriptures teach, must be dispersed like dust before the wind. Examine the Scriptures in the fear of the Lord, and reflect, if such is not a gross blasphemy against the Almighty.

Say, you deceived children, where is there a syllable in the whole doctrine of Christ and the apostles (according to which Spirit, doctrine, conduct and example all Scripture

must be understood), by which† you can prove and establish one of all your erring articles?

If you would appeal to the literal understanding and transactions of Moses and the prophets, then must you also become Jews, receive circumcision, literally possess the land of Canaan, again erect the Jewish kingdom, build the city and temple, and according to the law, offer sacrifices, attend to the worship of God, and declare that Christ, the promised Savior, has not yet come, who has changed the literal and figurative ceremonies into new, spiritual and abiding substances.

You miserable, erring sheep, observe, I have before remarked to the magistrates, that the kingdom of Christ is not of this visible, perishing world, but that it is an eternal, spiritual and abiding kingdom, where there are no eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. There no king reigns, but the true King of Zion, Christ Jesus. He is the King of righteousness, the King of peace, the King of kings, who has all power in heaven above, and on earth beneath; before whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. The true king David in Spirit, who, through his righteousness, merits and crimson blood, has ransomed the sheep from the mouths of the savage lions and bears of the pit, has slain the great and terrible Goliath, and obtained for the spiritual Israel of God, eternal welfare and peace. Neither the King nor his servants bear any sword but the sword of the Spirit, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the word of God, with which he brings forth, builds, extends and governs his kingdom, guards and defends it under the pressing cross, in all trials and temptations, from the gates of hell, onsets and powers, and not with iron or steel, as the rude, vindictive world does; for his kingdom and dominion is spirit, and not letter, as has been shown.

Again, under this kingdom, and under this King, no other wedlock must be tolerated, except between *one* man and *one* woman, as God had in the beginning established in the union of Adam and Eve; and Christ has further said, that these two are one flesh,

and that they shall not separate, save for the cause of fornication, Matt. 5: 32.

This is not a kingdom in which a display is made of gold, silver, pearls, silk, velvet and costly finery, as is done by the proud wicked world, and which also your leaders teach and give you liberty to do under this deception, viz., that it is harmless if you do not desire and serve them from your heart. Thus might satan approve his haughtiness, and make pure and good the desire of his eyes. In the kingdom of all humility (I say), the outward adorning of the body is not desired and sought with power, but the inward adorning of the spirit, with zeal, diligence, and a broken, contrite heart.

Here is known no lying, eating, drinking, or hypocrisy; here none conforms himself to a drunken, luxurious, idle and idolatrous world, nor lays from him the cross of Christ, as you do, but all are upright and godly in heart and deed. They speak the truth from the heart. They lead a circumspect, temperate life; shun all idolatry and false doctrine from within and without; abstain from all appearance of evil; perform the true worship of the heart; abide firmly in the word and ordinances of Christ; lead an unblamable life before the whole world, and testify of Jesus Christ with the mouth, works, possessions and blood, as the divine honor requires it.

Here that confession is unknown to which some of you pretend, here we confess only to the true God before whom we have sinned, and to our neighbor against whom we have trespassed.

Here modesty, rectitude, and honesty are taught and practiced, but not immodesty, disgrace and uncleanness. I think you understand well what I mean.

In short, here the Spirit, word, will, commands, prohibitions, ordinances, customs, and examples of Christ are taught. To which all Scriptures refer us, and not the opinions of false prophets, high sounding words, enchanting appearances, boasting, dreams, and lying miracles, against which, the Spirit of God, and the Scriptures everywhere warn and counsel us.

Dear children, reform yourselves. Every one who teaches you otherwise, than is testified by the word of the Lord, even though

he were one who could dry up the bottom of the sea, and hurl the stars down from heaven, let him be abandoned, and let his doctrine be regarded as deceiving and erroneous, for, to all eternity there may no other foundation be laid, than that which is laid, Christ Jesus. He is the corner stone and foundation in Zion, on whom all the building fitly framed together (according to his will, Spirit and word), groweth into a holy temple unto the Lord.

O ye backsliding children, hear the word of God and make haste, for your way is in darkness, and your path leads to death. Embrace the truth and learn wisdom, for your comforters have destroyed you and rendered uneven the way in which you must go. Munster and Amsterdam may well be to you an eternal warning and example. When a prophet, said Moses, speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is not the thing which the Lord hath spoken.

O dear Lord! How many innocent hearts have they ruined? How many poor souls have they deceived? What gross shame have they cast upon the word of the Lord? What great abominations have some of them committed under the appearance of good? How have they made the poor, blind magistrates, who are, alas, destitute of a correct understanding of the holy word, to be guilty of innocent blood?

I think it is time you should see and learn to know your lying faithless, and deceiving prophets. They are the foxes which destroy the vineyard of the Lord. These are the thieves and murderers of your souls; false prophets who deny the Lord that bought them; who have directed you, poor erring sheep, by their own lying visions, dreams, and thoughts of their hearts, and have led you against all the Scriptures upon a false and loose foundation.

How like unto those you have become, of whom Ensebins writes, that they walked according to the lusts of their hearts, as the prophets foretold; who denied Paul and the New Testament, and carried with them a book, which they boasted, fell from heaven as a present to them.

So it is with you, O ye entranced (bear with me, for it is the truth which I write).

The prophets you read according to the Jewish understanding. You say the doctrine of Christ and the apostles is at the present time fulfilled; and pretend that there is now another dispensation, &c., and observe not that you thereby deny the Son of God, and gainsay the whole Scriptures; you comfort yourselves with mere lies, as also did disobedient Israel in their time.

Oh dear Lord! How long shall these sore plagues endure? how long shall the name of the Lord through you be blasphemed, and his holy word through you be disgraced? Is it not a grievous error (man phrenzy), that Christ, the Son of the living God, who, brought forth in eternal righteousness, has reconciled heaven and earth by the blood of his cross, with his word of truth, and with the counsels of eternal life, is rejected from your hearts, which he so dearly bought, and which should, so properly be the dwelling place of Christ; and poor, sinful flesh, and mortal man descended from Adam, full of all unrighteousness, haughty speeches, lies and open deception is received by you and adopted in stead.

Oh, beloved children, what are you doing? Are you so thoroughly enchanted that you have lost all reason, intelligence, the Scriptures, and everything, so that you cannot see at all? then may God be merciful unto you. Good children, observe that a letter of the law of Moses could not be changed till the new Moses, Christ Jesus, came, who was promised through the law and the prophets. If then the letter of the law was so strong, effective and firm, and in its time unchangeable, although given only through a servant, and sealed by perishable blood, how much more powerful, effectual, firm, and unchangeable is the free law of the Spirit, which was given through the Son himself, and confirmed by the blood of the eternal covenant.

All who taught anything contrary to the word of Moses, were false prophets, for nothing was to be taken from, nor added thereto, but all appeals were to the law and the testimony, Deut. 4: 2. All the prophets of the present day are false who teach contrary to the Spirit, word, commands, prohibitions, ordinances and example of Christ, even though such should exhibit themselves in appearance, as holier than John, more zeal-

ous than Elias, and more miraculous than Moses.

They persuade you that the doctrine of the apostles is imperfect, but that *they* now teach that which is perfect. This is a deception above all deceptions, as above said, for thereby the creature is honored more than the Creator. Paul does not refer to any better doctrine or perfection other than that which is shown by the doctrine of the apostles, which will abide in everlasting clearness, according to the infallible promise of God, and which we shall receive in the resurrection of the righteous, when all doctrine shall receive an end. This is true, otherwise Paul is at variance with himself, and the true reality is not to be found in Christ.

Again, will you say, then, with the Jews and Scribes, that Elias will come before the great and terrible day, and thus wait for something new?

First, I answer with Christ's own words, that "all the prophets and the law prophesied until John, and if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come," Matt. 11: 13, 14.

Secondly, Even though Elias himself were to come, he dare not teach any thing against the foundation and doctrine of Christ and the apostles, but he must, if he would preach aright, teach and preach conformably to the same, for, by the Spirit, word, actions and example of Christ, all must be judged, and receive the last sentence, otherwise the whole Scriptures are false.

Therefore, one of two things must follow, either that we are not to look for an Elias any more, since John was the Elias who was to come; or if an Elias should come yet, he must propose and teach us nothing but the foundation and word of Christ, according to the Scriptures; for Christ is the man who sits upon David's throne, and shall reign forever in the kingdom, house, and congregation of Jacob.

I would then, herewith sincerely admonish you all to weigh and prove all spirit, doctrine, faith, and conduct, with the Spirit, doctrine and conduct of Christ, and that ye be temperate. All spirits which accord therewith, are from God, but those which are contrary, are from him, who from the begin-

ning has turned Adam and his race aside from God, and has led them by lies onward to death.

If you will not hear, but will ever turn your ears to lies, and believe the deceiving creature more than the infallible Creator; if you set your feet upon slippery places; if you neither fear nor regard Scripture admonitions, nor the power and punishments of God, but reject and set aside all as idle and useless, and suffer yourselves always to be comforted with falsehoods, visions, dreams, splendid delusions, false interpretations and continue, without the cross, on the broad way, then will the righteous Lord send to you mockers and deceivers, and by his righteous judgment suffer you to be led from one ungodly course to another, as may already be seen.

You shall be satiated with lies, vanity, folly and hypocrisy. You will reap the fruits of your wantonness, and at last, with all false prophets and lying wonder workers, you shall hear the words, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," Luke 13: 27.

Be ye then eternally warned and faith-

fully admonished of God. Beware, the day approaches, repent, reform. The word of God is true. Is there any one among you who fears God, let him reflect on what I here write; search the Scriptures and believe the truth, for God hates all liars. Eternal woe and gnashing of teeth will be the portion and reward of the hypocrite; "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9.

O ye miserable, enchanted children! turn again. If ye knew what it was to forsake the living fountain of Christ, and dig for yourselves dry wells which can neither yield nor hold water, Jer. 2, how soon would you turn your back on the false prophets and their hypocritical lives, surrender yourselves to the true Shepherd of your souls, Christ Jesus, and follow and obey his sure counsel, teaching, admonition, ordinance, and holy example (although in weakness); but alas, enchanting blindness has obscured your understanding. The beloved, merciful Lord grant you eyes to see and hearts to understand; this is our sincere wish, Amen.

TO THE BRIDE, KINGDOM, STATE,

AND

CHURCH OF THE LORD, GRACE AND PEACE.

Thus spake the Bridegroom, Christ Jesus, through Solomon to his bride, the church, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," Cant. 2: 10—13.

Chosen, true children, you, who with me, are called to the like grace, inheritance and kingdom, and are named after the Lord's

name, hear the voice of Christ; your king; hear the voice of your bridegroom, ah, thou bride of God, thou friend of the Lord, arise, and adorn thyself to honor thy king and bridegroom. Though thou art pure, purify thyself yet more; though thou art holy, hallow thyself yet more, and though thou art right, rectify thyself yet more; adorn thyself with the white silken robe of righteousness; hang about thy neck the golden chain of all piety; gird thyself with the fair girdle of brotherly love; put on the wedding ring of true faith; gird thyself with precious fair gold of the divine word. Adorn thyself

with the pearls of all modesty; wash thyself with the clear waters of grace, and anoint thyself with the oil of the Holy Ghost. Wash thy feet in the clear, limped river of Almighty God; let your whole body be pure and clear, for thy friend hates all wrinkles and spots; so will he have pleasure in thy beauty and will praise thee and say, "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointments, than all spices. Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb; honey and milk are under thy tongue," Cant. 4: 10, 11.

Rejoice, O thou bride of the Lord! for your beloved is fairer than all the children of men, "The chiefest among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and as black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves, by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his lips, like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely," Cant. 5: 10—16. Cry out and say, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty," Ps. 45: 10, 11.

Draw near, O thou queen, O thou well-prepared and fairest of all woman; bow thy neck with Esther, under his powerful sceptre; hear his word and fear his judgment; acknowledge his great love, for he has greatly humbled himself towards us. "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite, and as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born, thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all," Ezek. 16: 3, 4. Thou wast polluted in thy blood, behold so despised were your souls, as the prophet lamented. But he has pitied thee, promised thee life, nourished thee and clothed thy shame, purified thee from thy uncleanness,

wiped off thy blood, anointed thee with balsam, clothed thee with spiritual clothes; he has adorned thee with bracelets, ear-rings, and a beautiful crown, and has taken thee for his bride, and made an everlasting covenant with thee: he has fed thee with oil, honey and wheaten bread; he has led thee to the chamber of his love, and kissed thee with the mouth of his peace.

How lovely and gracious a bridegroom and king is he, who has chosen his miserable, impure, unesteemed, yea, unchaste servant, to such an exalted station, and has called her to be such a glorious queen, and has spared no labor, pains nor costs, till he has made her the fairest, purest, most worthy and precious among women.

Arise, make haste, adorn and dress yourselves, extol and praise him who has created you, and called you to such a high honor through the word of his grace.

The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land: there is nothing more which can harm or hinder, for hell, sin, the devil, death, the world, flesh, fire and sword, are already overcome by all the children of God, through Christ! All they know is Christ Jesus, their seeking is the pure apostolic doctrine and the pious, unblamable life, which is from God.

Praise be to the Most High, who has silenced the falsehoods, for the truth sounds in every street. Anti-christ sinks to shame, and Christ rises to higher honor, yea, the unfruitful, cold winter has disappeared, and the fruitful pleasant spring has come, the lovely fair flowers shoot forth and vegetate, in every place; the voice of the turtle dove is heard. The wholesome, holy word, the word of repentance, the word of grace and eternal peace, is testified with word, writings, life and death, in many countries.

"The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape, give a good smell; arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," Cant. 2: 13. Faith assumes verdure, love blooms, the sun softens, and the truth is published and testified to, which remained fruitless for so many years; although you must, for a short time, bear the heat of the sun, yet you so well

know that the kingdom of glory, in eternal joy, is promised and prepared for you.

Rejoice and watch; thou art black but comely, thou art as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out," Cant. 4: 16. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, not the perishing kingdom of Assyria, Media, Macedonia, nor of Rome, but the kingdom of the saints, the kingdom of the great King, the kingdom of David, the kingdom of grace and eternal peace, which shall never more perish, but shall abide and stand forever, therefore, hear him and be obedient, that you be not thrust out with the haughty, disobedient Vashti, but with the pious Esther, live in endless glory, before the true Ahasuerus, Christ, and abide with him forever.

Arise, thou daughter of Zion, and observe what is promised thee. O Jerusalem, although thou, as a comfortless one, sittest for a while, and must bear all manner of storms and hail, but your helper will arrive in time, who brings forth thy righteousness as the morning, and is thy shelter from the wind and storm. For He who loved thee has said, "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles and all thy borders of pleasant stones, and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression," Isa. 54: 11—14.

Behold, thy wall stands firmly upon twelve foundations, thy gates are of pearls, the city is of pure gold, the river of living waters, proceeding from the throne of God and the lamb, is in the midst of your way, and the tree of life is on either side, and its leaves serve to heal the nation. Happy and holy is he who has part in this city.

Therefore, so purify yourselves, you who seek the Lord, circumcise the foreskin of your hearts, for the holy city may be inhabited by no uncircumcised person, the golden streets are trodden by no unclean

feet; the unclean, drink not of the pure waters; the fruit of life shall never be eaten by any of the ungodly, "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," Rev. 22: 15.

Be ye all minded like Christ Jesus. Be earnest to hold the union of the Spirit through the covenant of peace; ye are all one temple, house, city, mountain, body and church in Christ Jesus.

Place your candle upon a candlestick, build your city upon a high mountain; live unblamably, behave in all things consistent with Christianity, fear God in all your ways, praise him in all your works; for great is the grace which has appeared. Prove yourselves in all things, as those who are born of God; shun all false doctrine; repay not evil with evil, but return the evil with good; pray without ceasing; in patience possess your souls; judge all your thoughts, words, and lives, after the thoughts, words, and life of Christ, so shall you in eternity never more be deceived.

Walk worthily after the calling whereby ye are called. Let the tyrannical, blaspheming, upbraiding, and furious, hate the Lord and his word, they persecute you not, but Christ Jesus, to whom they are inimical, they will be judged in their time, and, if they do not repent, will be repaid again in their own bosoms.

Strive and wrestle valiantly, in order that the crown be not taken from you. Fly to the mountain of the covert of Christ Jesus. Gird yourselves with the weapons of righteousness, declare God's word with freedom, neither shrink nor give way. God is your conductor; be faithful unto death, so shall you inherit the crown of life.

Whosoever overcomes, will be clothed with white clothing, and his name shall not be erased from the book of life. Although we appear to the unwise, to die and depart from the right way, our souls are, nevertheless, in hope and peace, Wis. 3: 2.

"It is a faithful saying," says Paul, "for if we be dead with him (Christ), we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us," 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12. There-

fore, fear your God from the heart, watch and pray and commend to him your affairs, as Jeremiah did. He has chosen you to be his loving bride, children, and members; called you to the kingdom of his grace, and the inheritance of his glory, and has bought

you with the immaculate blood of Christ Jesus.

Peace be with you, the Spirit, power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with all my fellow laborers, believers, brethren and sisters, till eternal life, Amen.

CONCLUSION OF THIS BOOK.

Behold, dear sirs, friends and brethren, here we have briefly pointed out and declared upon what foundation and Scriptures we are built, what we seek and have in view, and how we rebuke, with the word of the Lord, all abominable sects and ungodliness of the whole world, both with the greatest and the smallest, without any respect of persons, and we point out to every one, the wholesome, pure truth. The god-fearing may read and judge. But this I have not done in order that the cross of Christ may be avoided, in no wise, for I know and am persuaded, that the lamb with the wolf, the dove with the kite, and Christ with Belial, can never be at peace, the truth must be hated; and were it so, that Christ himself should speak from heaven, still would neither Scripture nor godliness, neither Christ nor apostle, neither prophet nor saints, neither lives nor property, be regarded by men. All those, who rebuke, in pure, upright zeal, the haughty, avaricious, proud, idolatrous, bloodthirsty world, and who seek their happiness and eternal welfare, with all the heart, must suffer and be oppressed.

You must (said Christ), be hated of all men for my name's sake. Through much tribulation you must enter into the kingdom of God. Christ himself so suffered and then entered into his glory.

Therefore, I have done this, that the precious, pure truth, might be revealed; that here and there some might be won; the right way pointed out to the blind; the hungry fed with the word of God; the erring directed to Christ, the shepherd; the ignorant taught; the kingdom of God extended; and his holy name magnified and praised,

this, together with our innocence, shall be a witness on the day of judgment to all bloodthirsty tyrants, and all deceivers, false prophets, and all hardened and impenitent, that to them the truth had been testified. But will ye not hear, then be your sins upon you; I have declared unto you according to my small gifts, God's Spirit, word, foundation, ordinance and will, and have pointed out to you righteousness. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear, and whoever has understanding, let him understand.

I testify my Savior openly; I acknowledge him, and dissemble not. If you repent not and be not born of God, in your spirit, belief, life and worship, and become not one with Christ, then is the sentence of your condemnation on your poor souls already finished and prepared.

All, who teach you otherwise than we have here taught and testified to you, from the Scriptures, deceive you. This is the narrow way through which we all must walk, and must enter the strait gate, if we would be happy. Here is excepted, neither emperor nor king, duke nor count, knight nor nobleman, doctor nor licentiate, rich nor poor, man nor woman. Whoever boasts that he is a christian, the same must walk as Christ walked. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9. "He that committeth sin is of the devil," 1 John 3: 8. Here neither baptism, Lord's Supper, confession, nor absolution will avail anything. These and other Scriptures stand immoveable, and judge all those who live out of the Spirit and word of Christ, and

whose thoughts are upon earthly and carnal things; they shall never be overthrown, perverted nor weakened, by angel or devil.

Will you say, with refractory Israel, we will not hear the word which you have preached to us in the name of the Lord? but we will do as our forefathers, our kings and princes have done from former years till the present time. So I answer with holy Jeremiah and say, Although you have pleasure in lies, and do such abominations, so hath the Lord taken your wickedness to heart, and has sent you one hard punishment after another, as hunger, pestilence, storms, grief, misery and the consuming, devouring sword, that your land is turned to a waste, to amazement and a curse, as one evidently may see in many places, because you perform strange worship: despise the Lord, your God; cast his word aside; shed innocent blood; walk according to your wantonness; sin against God, and walk not according to his law, ordinance and commands, as the mouth of the Lord has commanded you.

Again, as the unprofitable and rebellious world are warned and rebuked against their will, the prophets, and the true servants of

God, are judged and destroyed by the princes and magistracy, as seditious mutinists, and are persecuted by the priests and common people as deceivers and heretics. Therefore, we have made up our minds to both teach and suffer, expecting that we will fare no better in this matter than they did, but we say with Ezekiel, That when this shall come to pass, then shall you find that the undissembled, pure word of the Lord, had been taught to you.

The merciful, gracious father, through his loving Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, grant to you all, the gift and grace of his Holy Spirit, that you may hear and read these our christian labors and service of true love, with such hearts, that you may strive for, confess, believe, and follow after the genuine truth, with all your soul, and be eternally saved, Amen.

Dear, worthy lords, grant to your poor servants, that we may fear the Lord from the heart, and preach the word of God, and do right. This we pray you for Jesus' sake. O Lord! Father of all grace, open the eyes of the blind, that they may see thy way, word, truth and will, and walk therein with faithful hearts, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

