

shews plainly they were not united to the Body or Church at Ephesus, where doubtless *Acquilla* and *Priscilla* had not been wanting to teach the way of the Lord perfectly. And Lastly, their being Baptized again, shews plainly they were not of the Church, || for if they had, why must not the Church also be Baptized again as well as they?

Now therefore, let it be considered, that had there been 120. instead of these 12. persons, in the same case with themselves, the Question of the Apostle, *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye Believed?* had concern'd them all; and then he must be but a partial Minister that would refuse to pray for all, seeing all wanted the same Blessing, and had equal right to it, by virtue of the same promise. And that *Paul* had an eye to the Promise, as it is general, is most plain, by his next Question, *Unto what then were ye Baptized?* as if he should say, your very Baptism if it be right, did inform you of, and intitle to the promise of the Holy Ghost, into whose name also ye ought to be Baptized.

Thus I trust we have sufficiently cleared the first ground of our Religious observation of Prayer, with the Imposition of Hands for the Promised Spirit, 1. From the consideration of the Nature, Order, or Connexion of the Principles, as they are contained and propounded, *Heb. 6. 1, 2.* 2. From the care of the Apostles, in the seeking to

God in the use of this * Ordinance, that the Churches might enjoy the benefit of the Promise of the Holy Spirit, which they knew belonged to them as they were the called of the Lord. And because the Nature and extent of that great Gospel Promise is a weighty consideration whereupon to ground the practice of Prayer with the Imposition of Hands, and without which the practice would be very insignificant, I

shall therefore add something, to shew the perpetual Right of the Church to that blessed Promise, even to the end of the

|| You see I do adhere to the Antient Exposition of this place, rather then to our late Curtail'd Expositions made by the Pædobaptists, who because they are unwilling to mend their Errours in Baptism, would fain have *Paul* to be of their mind, but they should remember that Reformation or amendment is no Errour.

* So I call it for five Causes, 1. Because of Prayer, the Moral part. 2. Because of Imposition of Hands the Ritual part. 3. Because of the Promise to which it refers, as the blessing signified by it. 4. Because it is placed among the Fundamentals of Religion, or called a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ. 5. Because it will bear the denomination of an Ordinance, as well as Imposition of Hands on Deacons, or other Officers of Christ's Church.

The Fourth Principle of

world: For it is remarkable that those that oppose us in the fourth Principle deal much after the manner of the Quakers in their opposing Baptism, hammering only upon the practick part, which they can easily despise, but when the more spiritual part of these Ordinances is considered, this takes off the courage of the most confident opposer.

Of the second Ground of the Practise of Prayer and Laying on of Hands, to wit, the Promise of the Spirit, and the Churches right to it, to the end of the World.

M. D. is pleased to say, pag. 47. *That in neither of those two places [meaning Acts 8. Acts 19.] can we find that there was a Laying on of Hands immediately after Baptism, nor with any certainty upon all, and every Member of the Church, nor to such an end as can be attainable in after times.*

Ans. I. But though Mr. D. cannot find the two first, yet many have found them there, unless by the word immediately he would be more curious then wise, for that this service was performed Acts 8. within a short time after, and as soon as they had a fit opportunity to do it, is plain enough, vers. 15, 16, 17. and for Acts 19. 5. 'Tis said, *when they heard this, they were Baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, and in the very next words 'tis said, *when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.*

And that the same individuals said to be Baptized, are as clearly found to have hands imposed, and Prayer made for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, is so very plain, that nothing but exceeding great weakness, or great perverseness can hinder any man for seeing it. And whether the end for which Prayer, with Imposition of Hands can now be attained, is the business now to be considered.

And if it Cannot, it must be, because the Promise made to the Church then, is since taken away *de jure*, so that we may not lawfully ask it; for men not having the Promise, is no argument, James 4. 2, 3. ----- *ye have not, because ye ask not, ye ask and have not, because ye ask amiss.*

Now, that the gracious promise of the Holy Spirit [at least] it belonged to the Members of the Church in the Primitive times, and that in every part of it, from the time of its first effusion upon the day of Pentecost, Acts 2. doth belong to the Church

Church throughout all Ages to the end of the world, I hope to evince to the satisfaction of such as desire to know the Truth in this matter, which I shall do by transcribing and somewhat enlarging what we have already offered in our Pædobaptist * Apology for the Baptized Churches. *

* But Note that we have proved that

the promised Spirit is truly received where the sealing Graces are received through gifts be not received, and the promise being received, the end of Imposition of Hands is received. See our *Sigh for Peace*.

Beside, the Cloud of Witnesses, || which the Holy Scriptures do afford in this Case, we shall more particularly consider what the Apostle hath offered, 1 Cor. 12. 13. 14. Chapters. And 1. whereas it is his designed Subject to discourse of the Gifts of the Spirit, so he doth inform us, that God hath Set those Gifts in his Church, i. e. hath placed and fixed that one spirit (whose operations are divers or many) in that one body, not for a few dayes onely, and then to leave her as a Body without a Spirit for ever after in respect of SPIRITUAL GIFTS, but to abide there as his Temple, both by Gifts and Graces, even the same, which Christ by virtue of his ascension obtained when he ascended on high, which gifts are given to the Church for the work of the Ministry, for the edification of the Body till the whole be compleated.

|| Some of which I will here incert in a bottom by themselves, Joh 14. 16. 17. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth.

John 78. He that believeth on me — out of his belly shall flow Rivers of Living Water, — but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on his Name should receive.

Acts 2. 23. Therefore being by the right hand of the Father exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit, he hath shed forth that which you now see and hear.

Acts 2. 38, 39. For the Promise is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call, — ye shall receive the Holy Ghost.

Eph. 4. 4. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling. — And he gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Pastors and searchers, till we all come to the measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ.

Ephes. 4. 30. — The Holy Spirit of God, by which ye are sealed to the day of Redemption.

1 Cor. 31. Cover earnestly the best Gifts, — Cover to Prophecie, and forbid not to speak with Tongues, nor Prophecie in part, — but

when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, Gal 3. 13, 14. Christ hath Redeemed us, — that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, that they might receive the Promise of the Spirit through Faith.

Isa. 59. 21. As for me, this is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit which is upon thee, and the words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy Seeds Seed, from hence forth for ever.

The Fourth Principle of

2. From the extent of the Promise.

Againe, the Promise of the Spirit is made by our Lord himself to the Church for ever; *John. 14. 16. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, &c.* I say this Promise is made to the Church; for it were a strange exposition to restrain this [FOR EVER] to the age of the Apostles (as some do) for seeing the Apostles or the Churches, could neither pray nor Prophecie as they ought, but as that Spirit of Promise did help their infirmity; it is strange the Succeeding Churches should be able to do those duties, though deprived of that gracious assistance; for it is evident that the Spirit of Promise is a Spirit of Prayer, and Prophecie is one of the most excellent gifts thereof, as before we have shewed.

That great Apostle *S. Peter*, dates the Promise of the holy Spirit very Largely, as descending to the very skirt or Last age of the Church of God on earth, whiles he asserts it is the right and interest of all Saints, even as many as the Lord your God should call. *Acts. 2. 39.* And he hear takes the Promise in that sense wherein *Joel* meant it, and the Christian Church had then received it, which clearly intends both the gifts and graces of it, for as tis sure they then received great gifts, so tis said great grace was upon them all; this very promise of the Father is by this Apostle appropriated to all the called of the Lord (as we said) even the servants and handmaids *in these daies.*

Now, *These daies* must either be a few daies at the beginning of the Gospel, or it must be refer'd to the whole time of that glorious dispensation; if the first, then how shall all the called of the Lord receive it? Or who will tell us when *these daies* expired. But we know that these daies; the Latter daies, Last time, and Last daies, are used with some frequency in Scripture to point out the whole time of the Gospel, or Christian Church, as it succeeds the time of the Law.

3. From the Nature and perpetuity of the duties of the Church.

During all which time we are sure that the duties in general (and perhaps some difficult undertakings not formerly known) which were imposed upon the first Churches, are laid upon the Church to the end of the World, *Matth. 28. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, &c.* Must the Churches now contend earnestly for the faith (and that against both old and new errors) must she be still the salt of the earth, the light of the world? Must she still strive to Preach the Gospel of

of the Kingdome to all Nations? must she keep her self in the Love of God, building up her self in her most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, &c. if these Duties remain, and the Lord requires that she should glorifie him in the constant and faithfull discharge thereof, as also in suffering for his sake; it cannot reasonably be imagined that he should recall his holy Spirit, in the gifts thereof, from his Servants, who when they had all those gifts, had nothing that was superfluous, but stood in need of all, to furnish them for the work they had to do, as the Churches of Christ; sith then our God doth require the same services of his Churches now, which (in generall) he required of the Churches in the first ages of the Gospel, Let us not imagine he will require the same Brick, and not allow the same Straw, for he is not like *Pharaoh*, but just in all that he requireth.

That the gifts of the Spirit here intended by our Apostles, are the portion of the Church in every age (as her right) appeareth further from the Nature of the exhortation she is under to ask them, Luk. 11. 13. *How much more shall your Heavenly Father, give his holy Spirit to them that ask it; -- ask and it shall be given unto you, ver. 10.* How frequent is the Apostle in these three Chapters, in exhortations to this Church (and in them to all Churches) to desire Spirituall gifts, to covet earnestly the best gifts, to covet to Prophesie, wishing that they may speak with tongues, and warning them not to Prohibit that gift. Now to what purpose is all this, if these gifts be ceased? and if the Church may not now expect them, why should she ask them? I hope no man will say, these exhortations are now out of date, least in so doing, he deprive us of the exhortation to Charity also, for they are so Linked together, as the one cannot cease (as it is an exhortation) before the other. *Follow after Charity, and desire Spirituall gifts, 1 Cor. 14. 1.*

Thus we see the Church being under Perpetual exhortations to Seek for Spiritual gifts without any restriction, necessarily infers her perpetuall right to them, and every of them, which consideration alone is Sufficient (as I conceive) to satisfie any Christian that the promise of the Spirit (even the same that was given to the first Churches generally, in respect of its gifts as well as graces) belongs to the Church of Christ throughout all ages:

Let

4. That the Nature and perpetuity of the Exhortation to seek for the Spirit

The Fourth Principle of

from the
signation
spiritual
in the
Church to
day.

Let us now consider, whether the Church of God do not even now enjoy the promised Spirit, in the gifts and graces of it at this day? For the graces, I think none do question it, and yet should the fruits or graces of the Spirit (as they may be distinguished from gifts) which now appear, be strictly considered, by what did formerly shine forth in the Churches, it might without all peradventure put us to some pause, yet may we not thence conclude, that the graces thereof are ceased, but it would surely become a Provocation to cry mightily unto God for an enlargement of what in that behalfe we have received.

And as I intend not to boast of the gifts of any, so I may safely presume that the gifts received in these daies by the Church of God, are far greater then I can set down, or give you account of, because the Church being diffused though many Nations, her gifts must needs be unknowne to me: I will then restrain my observations to the Churches in this poor Island, who may not vie with all Churches, but rather in humility conclude themselves inferiour to many in respect of gifts: And yet shall we say she hath none of the gifts of Gods holy Spirit? or may we not rather say, she hath many that are endowed with a *Word Of Knowledge*, and that meerly by gifts from God, having otherwise no capacity or faculty more then others, but therein far short of many of their Bretheren; only the gift of God, and no natural faculty, makes the difference. How have men of knowledge, in this world, been found to have no skill in the things of God, and the foolish to attain knowledge, and some to excell so far as to confound the wisdom of the wise, and to bring to naught the understanding of the prudent, yea, we still see that out of the mouths of Babes, your God ordains strength sometimes to still the Enemy.

And as WISDOME is usefull to direct, so hath God given it to such as feare him, who if we respect their education, &c. could never have acquired it; some by a *word of wisdom* here, understand the well ordering of affairs in the Church, others the right or most usefull application of the word, surely according to these expositions (which are not to be contemned) the Church hath given her of the Lord to go before her in the exercise of this gift of the Spirit.

Neither is the gift of *healing* so abnegated but that something of it hath appeared, as many Living witnesses by experience have testified,

testified, and how far faith (over and beside the common faith of Christianity) hath therein appeared, as also in some memorable undertakings against Sathan himself, or his malicious designs, with some Good success becomes others, to consider more then it doth me to write: as for my own part I rest satisfied wherein, that Miracles are not ceased (*de jure*) as a gift to the Church of God, though perhaps (*de facto*) they are but rarely found, as being in the wisdom of God not so necessary, now in many places as in times past. Now for the gifts of *Prophecie* which the Apostle intends, tis certain the Church enjoys it very graciously in these days, sith she hath them, that by the gift of Gods Spirit (and not by acquired Arts) do minister to her the word of Life, by exhortation to edification and comfort; which yet she could not have, if the gifts were ceased, seeing Prophecie is not only one of the gifts of the Spirit, but the very best and greatest of all the rest.

Nor is the Spirit of our God removed in the gift of *discerning of Spirits*, for if it were false Spirits, had by their subtilty ere this day, made havock of the Churches, but through the grace of God, notwithstanding all their cunning craftiness, they have been discovered, and their clandestine hypocritical and ruinous designs prevented. And though perhaps Charity for some time hath born with such, in hope of the best, yet this is no other thing then ought to be, as may be seen by the carriage of our Lord towards *Judas* and his Apostles.

For *Revelations*, there might perhaps sometimes be strange or hidden things, made known by some special Gift of God; and who can say God may not do such things now, however, it is not unsafe to understand the Revelations here meant by *1 Cor. 14. 30.* *If any thing be Revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his Peace, &c.* which cannot so well be understood of any new Oracle, as of some further Subject, or more full Explication of the matter treated on by him that spake first, according to which Exposition (which is probable enough) we may say the Church hath yet the Gift of Revelation, which also she is to pray for continually, *Ephes. 1. 17.* *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of him.*

And thus far we seem to be got safe, not any thing so materially intervening as to conclude against the continuance of these

The Fourth Principle of

these Spiritual Gifts in the Church to this day, so that the present repairers of the House of God, his Church I mean, may comfort themselves by the consideration of the words of the Prophet, *Hag. 2. 5. According to the word which I Covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not.*

But now the gifts of Tongues, and Interpretation of Tongues, these! where shal we find them? Doubtless these gifts are rarely (if at all) found, in these days, and in this Nation, so as to suite with those, who frequently in some Churches received those gifts. The reasons are many, (but none such as conclude any thing rationally for the cessation of those gifts, in respect of the Churches right to them) as first, these gifts differ much from the rest, chiefly in this, that they may be supplied another way, for the conversion of persons of all Languages, or such as can speak divers Tongues, and interpret the same by means of Education, doth well supply the absence of

is probable that Paul
the use of his Education
speaking other Languages
as may be perceived
his discourses in the
of the Apostles; and
the Epistles which he
to several Churches,
using therein (frequently)
the Greek Tongue
as is generally con-
d.

those gifts. || 2. The Churches in this, (and I suppose other Nations, have very little present need of these gifts, and therefore considering they are not so necessary as the rest, the Apostle leaves these with a *forbid them not*, whilst the rest he wills us to *covet earnestly*. But 3. one great cause (as I suppose) why these gifts are so much absent; and the other no more received, is because we ask them not at all, or else we ask amiss, (*for he is faithful that promised*) and indeed Christians generally have been so far from asking these gifts of the Spirit, that in

Truth they have been arguing that these gifts of the Spirit are not attainable, and then 'tis no wonder they have not been received. And where there hath been any measure of understanding of the Interest which we have in these gifts of the Spirit, their Faith hath been, and perhaps is very low, and attended with great wavering, and then little is to be expected at the hand of the Almighty, *Jam. 1. 6, 7. For he that wavereth, is like a wave of the Sea, driven of the wind, and tossed, for let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

And here let me premonish you that are most concern'd in the service of the Churches, of one thing which (by my little Reading) I perceive to have been one great provocation to the
Lord

Lord to withdraw the gifts of his Spirit in times past, (and I doubt now is) a desire to be too curious and formal in performing that work which God gave gifts for, to wit, the Ministering his blessed Word; for when the Churches grew populous, and great personages came to her Communion, the unwary Pastors let go the simplicity of the Gospel, adding themselves so much to curiositie, that some Councils decreed that a Bishop, (or overseer in the Church of Christ) should not read *Heathen Authors*; and *Gratian* is said to have this passage on the like occasion, *viz. doth he not seem to walk in vanity and darkness of mind, who vexing himself day and night in the studies of Logick, in the pursuit of Physical speculations, one while elevates himself above the highest Heavens, and afterwards throws himself below the nethermost part of the Earth.* True it is, the use that may be made of Reading, is one thing, and the abuse is another. However, this I desire, that the least gift of God be preferred in Ministering the Word above the greatest of Human Arts, otherwise we are in danger to incur the guilt of despising Prophecies.

Lastly, the Truth under enquiry, appeareth from the great silence of the Scripture, as to the privation or taking away of any of the gifts of the Spirit, till that which is perfect be come, *1 Cor. 13. 8, 9. Charity never faileth, but whether there be Prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be Tongues, they shall cease; whether there be Knowledge, it shall vanish away; for we know in part, and we Prophesie in part; But when that which is perfect is come, THEN that which is in part shall be done away.*

6. From the utter silence of the Scripture, as to the privation of the gifts of the Spirit.

Hence observe a final and full determination of the matter in question; if any ask when the gifts of Knowledge, Prophecie, and Tongues, &c. shall cease, The Apostles Answer is, even *T H E N* when that which is perfect is come, or when we come to see face to face, or as we are seen. So then, seeing the gifts of the Spirit do yet remain to the Church (*de jure*) and every of them as her need requires are attainable, it remains that we humbly consider our wants, and desire spiritual gifts, yea, let us covet earnestly the best gifts.

The Conclusion is, that howsoever it is too true, that the gifts received by the present Churches are but low, (and truly so are her graces) yet hence we may not, we ought not, to infer that the gifts promised are ceased, or that the Church hath

The Fourth Principle of

now no interest therein; but contrariwise, as it is evident the promise both of gifts and graces belongs to us, as we are the called of God, we ought to stir one another up with all diligence and full assurance, to seek for the promise of the Spirit, which being received, will abundantly supply our wants, help our infirmities, convince the contrary minded, by its powerful evidence and demonstration in the Ministry of the Word and Prayer.

*There be two things Objected against that which we have said,
The First,*

Objec. 1. If the promise of the Spirit do thus belong to the Church, then this will follow, that the Doctrines delivered by such gifted men, must pass for Oracles of God, being the effects of the spirit of Truth, whose property it is to lead into all Truth. And hence some have conceived the Decrees of their Counsels to be Infallible, and others have given out of their private Letters or Books, that they were as infallibly the word of God as the Scriptures.

Answ. 1. 1. Those gifts do not argue the Infallibility of him that hath them, for then all the gifted Brethren at *Corinth* had been Infallible, which yet they were not, witness their great want of Wisdom how to use their gifts to edification, as also the Apostles referring what they delivered to tryal and censure, telling us of gifted Persons in general, (and as such, not excluding himself) that they see but darkly, Prophecie but in part, know but in part, so that perfection herein is not to be pretended.

2. That the Apostles did deliver infallible and undoubted Verities, for all others to submit as to the very word of God, proceeded not hence, *viz.* because they were gifted men, but as they were the chosen witnesses of God, and purposely ordained by him to that very end, for which cause they say that just one, heard the words of his Mouth, and by Infallible proofs were assured of the Resurrection of our Lord, and of his Will concerning his Church or Kingdom, *Joh. 15. 16.* *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go, and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my Name, he may give it you. A& 10. 40, 41.* *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly, not*

to all the people, but to witnesses, chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the Dead, *Act. 22. 14. 15.* The God of our Fathers hath chosen thee, that thou should know his will, and see that Just one, and shouldest hear the Voice of his Mouth, FOR thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast SEEN AND HEARD.

These are the Fathers of the Churches, the Foundation Layers, the Master Builders, in such an elevated consideration, as that the Authority of one of them, is to be valued above the authority of ten thousand subsequent Teachers, which is a greater number then ever yet convened in a general Council, *1 Cor. 4. 15.* These were such Fathers, as laid up such a Stock of Doctrine for their Children, as whoso bringeth not along with them, is not to be received, *2 Joh. 8. 9, 10. verses,* and whosoever corrupteth their Doctrine, by adding, taking away, or perverting the same, is to be held accursed, to be nameless in the City of God, and the Book of Life.

The result is this, gifted Persons, on whom the Holy Ghost fell, as it did on the Apostles at the beginning, were not thereby impowered to propose new Oracles, or to be the Apostles Competitors, and if any pretend to such power in these days, they shall fulfil that sentence, *2 Tim. 3. 9.* They shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men, as theirs also was.

If the Gifts of the Spirit, *1 Cor. 12.* have continued in the Church as you teach, 'tis strange we have no account of them since their days, unless we shall regard the Papacy, who have claim'd the gift of Miracles in every Age, which also they urge as an undoubted argument that they onely are the Church of Christ. *Objed. 2.*

It is true that People do pretend to Miracles, as 'tis said in the objection, But it is not now my business to examin the goodness of that pretence, only this I say, they cannot find their Church to have had a Being in every Age since Christ, and therefore very unlikely to prove what they say in the case of Miracles. They oft tell us of Antiquity, but sacred Antiquity they have none, for in the Apostles time they had no being in the World, for if they had had then any Being, the Apostle Paul would certainly have given some account of such a Church-State as they maintain in his Epistle to the Romans. But this he hath not done in any part of that *Ans. 2.*

The Fourth Principle of

Epistle, and yet speaks expressly of the Estate of the Church of Christ then at Rome, therefore the Papists at that time had no being at Rome, and consequently no where else; for the Church at Rome, and all other Churches in the Apostles days were of one manner of Constitution and Government.

2. But put case now, that since they have had some being in the world, some signs or wonders have been done among them, yet hence to infer the Truth of their Church-state is very unsafe, sith before an equal Judge, others will be found to have as clear a claim to Miracles as themselves. Which yet shall avail them nothing, because they wanted Truth with their gifts, *Matth. 7. 22. Many shall say unto me in that day, Have we not Prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name have we not cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wondrous works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of Iniquity.*

And though our Saviour saith, no Man can do a Miracle in his name and Lightly speak evill of him; yet that very Speech Supposes the thing Possible. It doth not follow therefore that wheresoever Miraculous gifts are, [or the gifts of the Spirit, as Prophecie, &c.] that there is the true Church [and therefore Let not the great Preachers of any sort deceive themselves, that because of their ability that way they are therefore own'd of God as Ministers of his Churches, for it's evident the false Apostles seem'd to our-vie Paul himself in * wording their Matters.] But the Church is only known by her conformity to the Doctrine of God our Saviour, chiefly
 * 2 Cor. 10. 10. in her care of the Principles * of Christianity (to which she knows the whole Body of Christian Doctrine is reducible) For we are his House if built upon that foundation of Repentance, Faith, &c. and partakers of him IF we hold the beginning of
 || Heb. 3. 6. our Confidence || stedfast to the end, and not otherwise; if any
 14. come to you and bring not this Doctrine (though he can talk Like an Angel) receive him not to house; no, though he work Miracles. For thus saith the Lord, * If there arise among you a Prophet, or a Dreamer of Dreams, and giveth the a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he speak unto thee, [now observe, if he do this] saying, let us go after other Gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken to the words of that Prophet---for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether you Love the Lord your God with all your Heart and withal your Soul. And hence

hence Learn this one thing; That Gods Truth is not to give place to any gifts, but all gifts ought Subserve to the furtherance of the truth, therefore regard no man but as he regards the Truth.

To conclude, as we ought not to be Ignorant of the gifts of the Spirit so neither of the meanes ordain'd of God to obtain these gifts; The primative Churches herein our best guides as the word directs, and 'tis well known (and I think granted on all hands) that they used the holy Ordinance of Solemn Prayer and Imposition of hands, for obtaining the promised Spirit, at least with respect to these gifts. Now be it so (though I say for the graces also, 2 Tim. 1. 6. 7.) then seeing these gifts are promised to us as well as unto them, and are attainable, and in part attained by many, what should hinder the Churches but that now they should tread in this path with Faith and full assurance that a Blessing is in it? As in holy Baptism we are placed (as it were) among those whose sins are washed away in the Blood of the Lamb. So in this holy Ordinance of Prayer, and Imposition of Hands, we are in a solemn manner ushered into the Promise of the Holy Spirit. And as the pardon of our sins signified in Baptism, doth not prevent, but better capacitate us to Pray daily, *Forgive us our Trespases*. So the Prayer of Gods Ministers, with the Imposition of Hands, doth put us into a better capacity to seek daily for the gifts and graces of the Spirit, because now solemnly admitted to the gracious obtaining of the Promise, in that very way wherein the primative Saints were admitted thereunto, *Acts* 8. 15, 17. *Acts* 19. 2, 6. 2 Tim. 1. 6, 7. *Heb.* 6. 1, 2.

Who, when they were come down, Prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the Gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.

Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed, and when Paul had laid his Hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them.

The foundation of Repentance from Dead works, and of Faith towards God, of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of Laying on of Hands, &c.

What

The Fourth Principle of

What shall I say? the Scriptures are evidence sufficient that this Ordinance is of Divine Institution, is from Heaven. The promise which it leads to is perpetual and universal, it belongs to the whole Body. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.

But now (after this Digression, which I hope will not offend) to return to Mr. D. I trust by this time he will consider that there is no good ground for him, or any body else to say, the End of Prayer, with Laying on of Hands, cannot be attained.

Neither is there any reason for Mr. D. to be astonished (as he pretends, p. 35.) because we urge him to produce better evidence for Womens receiving the Lords Supper; Or clearer Precept or President for the Ordination of Officers by Prayer and Laying on of Hands, then we are able to produce in our Case, nor need he count this a thing either unreasonable or dangerous, &c.

For how should this be dangerous? must not the grounds of one practice be examined as well as another? Or why unreasonable? Is not our Brethren bound to stand to their Principles one time as well as at another? Or will they impose Principles to lead us through the whole work (as Mr. D. pag. 40.) and not be lead by them themselves?

For my part, I am fully satisfied there is sufficient ground in holy Scripture for Womens coming to the Table of the Lord, and for the Ordination of Church Officers by Prayer and Laying on of Hands; And I do solemnly profess, to dislike any Principle or Practice in Religion, which cannot fairly be demonstrated by the evidence of Holy Scripture; But, yet this I must needs say, That there is as clear (if not clearer) grounds for the Fourth Principle as we hold it, as there is for either of the other points, specially the latter. For first, Womens receiving at the Lords Table, it is gathered by a rational deduction from the Holy Scripture, as appears by Mr. D. pag. 54. wherein he hath done well as others in the same case hath done before him; yet should any man use his own Weapons against him, which he uses against his Brethren, they might worst him because of his inconsistency, though his cause be good.

2. In all the Scripture there is no express command to Lay hands on *Deacons*, nor any Example that Prayer was used at all in their Ordination, nor that any but Apostles ordained such Officers,

Officers, and but one example for that neither; and for Elders of particular Congregations, not one Example that Hands was imposed on them, or Prayer used in the act of their Ordination, nor any plain Precept for so doing (as is said before) yet Mr. D. is satisfied in these things, and thinks 2 Tim. 5. 22. a full precept for Imposing Hands upon Officers, (howbeit his Brethren no less judicious than himself, believe no such thing as is seen in their *Search for Schism*) And to speak as it is, this place is an express prohibition to Lay Hands on any man suddenly, and though it may hence be inferred, that Hands ought to be Laid on some men deliberately, yet this is a consequence, and when so much is granted, he is yet to prove that this is meant of Officers (for some think otherwise) and here he must use our *Logick from Heb. 6. 2.* It can be no other, *Ergo*, it must be that on Officers, and his Antecedent must be demonstrated by reason, with which he may easily satisfy me, but if another will not be satisfied with him, I cannot help him, because he denies the same reason in our case, which he makes use of in his own.

By this it may appear, how little cause Mr. D. had to be grieved at us, as if we should slight the Wisdom or Authority of Christ, or as if we should think we had not sufficient direction in the Scripture for all parts of Gods Worship; for we do cordially believe these holy Directions to be sufficient, yet as one of the Antients truly said, these things are so penned, *as that he that will learn, may learn; and he that will cavil, may find occasion.* And the truth is, those are they whose arguings do render these directions insufficient, who destroy or condemn the same reason in another, which they allow in themselves, specially when they become pertinacious.

Sufficient therefore is that which hath been said, if not to convert them (in this particular) yet to leave them without excuse, *Quia ex ore judicium.*

But to the residue, who have stumbled at this Truth, either through our default, in not asserting this Truth as was meet; or their own, in not duly considering what we say, or through those unhappy Divisions which have fallen out, through the heats of men intemperately Zealous on either side; I say to these I now address my self.

Declaring in all faithfulness, that though the Truth in question is to me as dear as other Truths, (and therefore am resolved,

The Fourth Principle of

solved, what in me is, to defend it with the rest) yet I stand ready to abate whatsoever, upon a fair Tryal, may appear too harsh, or any way justly offensive as to the business of separation; not doubting (though I was unconcern'd in the Original of the division) that Mr. D. hath too much cause to complaine of some, whose unkindness to their Brethren, in the ill management of a good Cause might prejudice the Truth it self; but withal, I must tell him, he was too short in that he did not also blame some of his own party, whose impatience and imprudence, too much provoked to that Division, which by all means should have been prevented. And let me faithful to Mr. D. in remembring him of the saying, *Medice Cura teipsum*, for he that blames another for making unnatural separations, should remember, that he that Judges another, and doth the same thing, is in danger of the Judgment of God.

The Conclusion.

Finally, I am resolved to meet my opposite (after all this conflict) in that friendly and moderate passage wherein at Length he delivers himself, saying, P. 51. *We are not offended at a practice of that kind, be it Lifting up, or Laying on of Hands, provided it be not urged as a thing of absolute necessity.*

To which I say, let the Spirit of opposition to the Practice of Prayer with Imposition of hands for the Spirit of God, but be laid aside, that the truth may grow as God shall enlighten his people in it; And then let an Expedient be Concluded, for settling all the Churches concern'd in such a state, as may comport with the peace of the whole, and the Presperity of every part.

To which purpose I could wish that a Competent number of select Brethren on both parts might convene this Summer to consult and offer such an expedient to the Churches, for the accomplishment of this happy end, for I never expect to see an end of this Controversy by writing Bookes one against another.

F I N I S.