

And he that in these serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and (should be) approved of men, *Rom.* 14. 17, 18. *Ephes.* 4. 6, 7, &c. Nor is it lawful for any to hate, persecute, silence, or Excommunicate their Brethren that agree in these; or to divide, distract, or confound the Churches for the interest of their several Preeminences, or Provinces, which have no higher than humane authority, perhaps questionable, at least unquestionably below the authority of God, and *null* when it is *against* it.

I am sure by the Church-History of all ages since Christ, the great divider of the Christian World hath been the *Pride* of a *worldly* (too ignorant) Clergy.

1. Striving who should be greatest.
2. Striving about *ambiguous words*.
3. Imposing *unnecessary things* by their Authority upon the Churches; to be ignorant of this, is impossible to me when once I have read the History of the Church; which warneth me what to suspect as the causes of our distractions; for the things that had been, are.

And how unexcusable these three evils are, and how contrary to Christ, these Texts do tell me: I. *Luk.* 22. 24, 25, 26. I *Pet.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. I *Cor.* 3. 5, 6, 7, 22. 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. II. 2 *Tim.* 2. 14, 16, 23, 24, 25. I *Tim.* 1. 4, 5, 6. III. 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *Act.* 15. 28. *Revel.* 2. 24, 25. *Mat.* 15. 8, 9. *Rom.* 14. & 15, throughout.

To tell you, that I am not only as you say, on the *destructive* part, I have thus told you briefly what I assert as the way to peace. And now I shall *destructively* tell you why I differ from your Principles as truly *destructive* of truth, unity and peace.

Some of the Principles which I have heard from your mouth, which I dissent from, are these:

- I. That the Church must have some Ecclesiastical Governours that are absolute, from whom no man may appeal to an invisible Power.
- II. That Diocesan Churches are the first in order of Divine Institution.
- III. That Diocesan Bishops by consent may make other Church-forms, as National, Patriarchal, &c. And that such Churches are not made by Princes, but by the consent of Prelates.
- IV. That these Church-forms of mans making, stand in a Governing



verning Superiority over those of Gods making.

V. That where by such consent of Diocesans such superior Jurisdictions are once settled, it is a sin for any to gather Assemblies within the local bounds of their Jurisdiction without their consent.

VI. That you cannot see how those that do so, can be saved.

VII. That if I preach on the account of my Ministerial office, and the peoples necessity, to such as else would have no Preaching, nor any publick worship of God, (e.g. in a Parish where there are 40000 more than can hear in the Parish-Church), though I must conclude that according to the ordinary way of Salvation such could not be brought to Faith, Holiness and Salvation, for want of teaching, it is yet my sin to preach to them, and my duty to let them rather be damned, if I have not the Bishops consent to teach them; and that because it is the Bishop and not I that shall answer for their damnation.

VIII. That it is disputable with you whether those to whom Church power is given (*viz.* Diocesans) may not change (not only the local temporary circumstances, but) the very Church-forms, and suspend Laws of Christ.

IX. That Baptism entresth the Baptized into some particular Church, and consequently under this fore-described Church-Government.

X. That in the case of Preaching the Gospel, Ministers may in many cases do it, though Emperours and Kings forbid them, (as in the days of *Constantius*, *Valens*, yea and better men); but not if the Bishop forbid them, or consent not.

XI. That *circa Sacra*, if the King command the Churches for Uniformity, one Translation of the Bible, one Version or Meter of the Psalms, one Liturgy, one Time, or Place of Worship, &c. and the Bishop another, we ought to obey the Bishop against the command of the King.

XII. That the required Subscriptions, Declarations, Rubricks and Canons, are primarily the Laws of the Church, which the King and Parliament do confirm by their Sanction; and therefore the Church is the Expounder of them.

These are some of your Assertions, which I cannot yet receive.



1. My Reasons against the first are these: 1. Because this maketh *Gods* of men, and so is Idolatry, giving them Gods proper Power and Prerogative.

2. Yea, it taketh down *God* (or his Laws), and setteth them above him: For there cannot be two *Absolute Governors* that have not *one Will*. If I must not appeal from them to God, then I must appeal from God to them; that is, I must break *his Law*, if they bid me, or else they are not *Absolute*.

3. This maketh all Gods Laws at the will of man, as alterable, or dispensible: Man may forbid all that God commandeth, and I must obey.

4. Then all Villanies may be made Virtues, or Duties, at the will of man: If they command us to curse God, or Blaspheme, or be perjured, or commit Fornication, Murder, or Idolatry, it would become a Duty.

5. Then the Power, and Lives of Kings would be at the Clergies mercy; For if their power be *Absolute*, they may make Treason and Rebellion a Duty.

6. And all Family-Societies, and Civil Converse, might be overthrown, while an *Absolute Clergy* may disoblige men from all duty to one another.

7. Then the Council at *Lateran*, which you have excellently proved in your *Considerations*, to be the Author of its Canons, doth, or did oblige Princes to exterminate their Reformed Subjects, and disoblige Subjects from their Allegiance to Princes that obey not the Pope herein, and are excommunicate. So of *Greg. 7th's Council. Rom.*

8. Then did the Church, or Kingdom of *England* well, to disobey, or forsake the *Roman* Power, that was over them?

9. Were not our Martyrs rather Rebels, that died for disobeying an *Absolute Power*?

10. How should two contradicting *Absolute Powers* (*viz.* General Councils) be both obeyed? *E. g. Nicen. 1. and Arimini. Sirm. and Tyr. or Ephes. 2. and Calced.*

11. How will this stand with the Judgment and practice of the Apostles, that said, *Whether it be meet that we obey God, or man, judge ye?*

12. How



12. How will it stand with Conformity to the Church of England, that in the Articles saith, that General Councils may err, and have erred in matter of Faith? &c.

13. Is it not against the sense of all mankind, even the common Light of Nature, where utter Atheism hath not prevailed?

Say not, that I wrong you, by laying all this *odium* on your self. I lay it but on your words: And I doubt not, but (though disputing Interest draw such words from you) on consideration you will re-call them by some limitations.

II. My Reasons against your second, must pre-suppose, that we understand one another as to the sense of the word, *Diocesan Church*, which being your term, had I been with you, I must have desired you first to explain. The word, *Diocesis* of old, you know, signified a part of the Empire, larger than a Province, and that had many *Metropolitans* in it. I suppose that is not your sense. Sometimes now it is taken for that space of ground which we call, a Diocesis; sometimes for all the people in that space. And with us, a Diocesan Church, is a Church of the lowest Order, containing in it, a multitude of fixed Parochial Congregations, which have every one their stated Presbyter, who is no Bishop, and *Unum altare*, and are no Churches, but parts of a Church, and which is individuated by one Bishop, and the measuring-space of ground, whose inhabitants are its Members. Till you tell me the contrary, I must take this for your sense; For you profess to me, that you speak of such Diocesan Churches as ours (and they have some above a thousand, others many hundred Parishes), and you say our Parishes are not Churches, but Parts of a Church, and so Families are.

2. Either you mean, that a *Diocesan Church* is the first in order of Execution and Existence, or else in order of Intention, and so last in Existence and Execution. I know not your meaning, and therefore must speak to both.

I. That a *Diocesan Church* is first in Intention, is denied by me, and disproved (though it belong to you to prove it).



1. *Intentions* no where declared of God in mature or supernatural Revelations, are not to be asserted of him as Truths. But a *prime intention* of a *Diocesan* Church is no where declared of God: *Ergo*, not to be asserted of him as truth.

2. It is the *end* or *ultimum rei complementum*, which is first in *intention* (where there is *ordo intentionis*.) But a *Diocesan* Church is not the *end* or *ultimum rei complementum*: *Ergo*, not first intended.

The Major is not deniable: The Minor hath the consent as far I as know, of all the world. For they are all either *for* the Hierarchy, or against it. They that are *for* it, say that a *Metropolitan* is above a *Diocesan*, and a *Provincial* above a *Metropolitan*, and a *Patriarchal* above a *Provincial*, and a *National* (which hath Patriarchs, as the Empire had) above that; and say the new Catholics, an *humane universal* above a *National* Church, as the complement or perfection; and therefore must be first intended.

But those that are *against* the Hierarchy, think that all these are Church-corruptions, or humane policies set up by Usurpation, and therefore not of prime Divine Intention.

3. If you should go this way, I would first debate the question with you, how far there is such a thing as *ordo intentionis* to be ascribed to God. For though St. Thomas (as you use to call him) assert such *intentions*, it is with many limitations; and others deny it, and all confess that it needeth much Explication to be understood.

II. But if it be a priority of *Existence* in order of *execution*, that you mean, it disproveth it self. For,

1. It is contrary to the nature of production, that two, or twenty, or an hundred stated Congregations, should be *before* one; as it is that I should write a page before a line, and a line before a word, and a word before a letter.

2. It is contrary to the Scripture-History, which telleth us that Christ called his Disciples by degrees, a few first, and more after; and that the Apostles accordingly converted men; from the number of 120, they rose to 3000 more; and after to 5000, &c. And that ordinarily the Churches in Scripture-times were such as *could*, and often did meet in one place, (though that be not necessary as I said before) hath so copious evidence, as that I will not here trouble you with it.

3. Either



3. Either the Apostles Ordained Bishops before subject Presbyters, or such Presbyters before Bishops, or both at once. If both at once as two Orders, it's strange that they called both Orders promiscuously by the same names, sometimes Bishops, sometimes Presbyters, and sometimes Pastors and Teachers, without any distinguishing Epithere or notice. And it's strange that we never find any mention of the two sorts of Congregations, one the Bishops Cathedral, and the other the Parish Presbyters Congregation. If you say that they were the Bishops themselves, and first Ordained only subject-Presbyters under them, that cannot hold. For doubtless there were more than twelve or thirteen Churches (the number of Apostles in their times; nor were they *fixed Bishops*, but *indefinite gatherers* and *edifiers* of the Churches. And either those Elders first Ordained by the Apostles were Bishops, or else there were *Churches without Bishops*, for they *Ordained Elders in every City, and in every Church*. And either the Elders first Ordained by the Apostles had the power of Ordaining others, or not. If they had, then either they were Bishops, or else *subject-Presbyters* were Ordained to be *Ordainers*; yea to *Ordain Bishops* (if such were to be after ordained.) And so indeed it would be suitable to your conceit, that the inferiour order of Diocesans do by consent make superior Metropolitans, Provincials, Nationals, and Patriarchs to rule them; and with *Hieromes* report *ad Evagr.* that the *Alexandri* in Presbyters made the Bishops, as the Army doth a General. But this making of Children to beget Fathers, is so commonly denied, that I need not more dispute against it.

3. But I think most of the Hierarchical way will say, that the Apostles first Ordained Bishops, that those Bishops might Ordain subject-Presbyters. And if so, the Churches could be but single Congregation at the first till the subject-Presbyters were Ordained. Yea, Dr. *Hammond* (as aforesaid) asserteth (in *Act. 11.* and in *Dissert. &c.*) that there is no proof there were any of the Order of *subject-Presbyters* in Scripture-times; and he thinketh that most of his party were of his mind; and that the name Bishop, Elder and Pastor in Scripture signifie only those that we now call Bishops. And in this he followeth *Dion. Petavius*, and *Fr. a Sancta Clara de Episcop.* who saith that it came from *Scotus*. And if this be so, then in all Scripture-times there was no Church of more than *one worshipping Congregation*. For we are agreed that Church.



Church-meetings were for the publick Worship of God, and celebration of Sacraments, and exercise of Discipline, which no meer Lay-man might lawfully guide the people in, and perform as such assemblies did require. And one Bishop could be but in one place at once. And if there were *many Bishops*, there were many Churches. So that according to Dr. *Hammond* and all of his mind, there was no Church in Scripture-times of more than one stated ordinary Worshipping Congregation, because there were no subject-Presbyters.

If you say that yet this was a *Diocesan Church*, because it had a Diocesan Bishop; I answer, why is he called a Diocesan Bishop if he had not a Diocesan Church?

If you mean that he was designed to turn his single Congregation into many by increase: 1. That must not be *said only*, but *proved*. 2. And that supposeth that his *one congregation* was first before the *many*. And I hope you take not *Infidels* for parts of the Church, because they are to be *converted* hereafter. Those that are no members of the Church make not the Church, and so make it not to be Diocesan. One Congregation is not an *hundred* or a *thousand*, because so many will be hereafter.

If you mean that such a *space of ground* was assigned to the Bishops to gather and govern Churches in. I answer,

1. Gathering Churches is a work antecedent to Episcopacy.
2. The *Ground* is no part of the Church. It is a Church of *men*, and not of *soil* and houses that we speak of.
3. Nor indeed will you ever prove that the Apostles measured out or distinguished Churches by the space of ground. So that the first Churches were not Diocesan.

III. As to your Third Opinion, 1. Officers are denominated from the work which they are to do. There are works to be done, *circa sacra*, about the holy Ministerial works, as Accidental: as to see to Church buildings, Utensils, and Lands, to Summon Synods, and Register their Acts; to moderate in disputations, and to take votes, &c. These the Magistrate may appoint Officers to perform; and if he do not, the Churches, by his permission, may do it by consent.

And



And there are works proper to the Magistrate, viz. to force men to their duty by mulcts, or corporal penalties. I deny none of these.

But the works of *Ordination, Pastoral Guidance, Excommunication, and Absolution*, by the power of the *Keys*, are proper to the *sacred Office*, which Christ hath instituted. And I shall not believe, till I see it proved, that any men have power to make any new *Order*, or *Office* of this sort, which Christ never made by himself, or his Spirit in his Apostles; much less that *Inferiors* may make *Superior Offices*: For 1. It belongeth to the same power to make one (especially the Superior) Church-Office, which made the other of the same General nature. If without Christs institution, no man could be *Episcopus gregis*, and have the power of the Keys over the people, then by parity of Reason, without his institution no man can be *Episcopus Episcoporum*, and have the power of the Keys over the Bishops.

2. Dr. *Hammond's* argument against Presbyters Ordination is, *Nemo dat quod non habet*; which though it serve not his turn on several accounts (both because 1. *They have* the Order which they confer. 2. Because *Ordination* is not *giving*, but *Ministerial delivery* by *Investiture*); yet in this case it will hold; For 1. This is supposed to be a new institution of an Office. 2. And that of an higher power than ever the Institutors had themselves: The King giveth all his Officers their power, but all of them cannot give the King his power. The Patriarch cannot make a Pope, nor the *Metropolitans* a Patriarch, that shall have a power over them, which they never had themselves.

And what I say of Superior Orders, and Offices, I say of *Synods*; For whether the power be Monarchical, or Aristocratical, or Democratical, there is need of the same power in the Cause that maketh it: No man can give that which he hath not to give.

If you should fly to such popular Principles, as the Episcopal Champion, *Richard Hooker*, doth, and the Jesuites in their Politicks, and many; yea, most other Writers of Politicks, and say, That as the people are the givers of power to the Sovereign, though they are no Governours themselves, so the Bishops give power to the *Episcopi Episcoporum* (personal, or Synodical), I answer, The Principle is false about *Civil Policy*, as



I have proved against Mr. *Hooker*, in my *Christian Directory*, and as Dr. *Hammond* hath proved in the Kings Cause, against *John Goodwin*. The power every man hath over himself, doth so specifically differ from the power of Governing Societies, that the latter is not caused by all mens Contribution of the former; and much more in Church-Government, which God hath left left the Will of man (as Mr. *Dan. Cawdrey* hath proved).

To conclude, I grant the Superiority of Magistrates, and of their Officers, *circa sacra*, but not that Inferior Clergymen may by consent, make a Superior Species of Rulers (or *Episcopus Episcoporum*) by the Keys, *in eodem genere*.

But I confess, that how far *Christ himself* hath made *Apostolick Successors*, or *Archbishops*, as to the ordinary part of governing many Churches, is a question to me of much more difficulty, and moment.

As for the Patriarchal, and other Superior Church-power in the *Roman Empire*, that it was made partly by the Emperors themselves (as the instances of the two *Justiniana's*, and many others shew), and partly by Councils, Authorized thereto by the Emperors, is past all doubt.

IV. As to your fourth Opinion, I include the reason of my denial of it, in the description of it. Whether you confess particular worshipping Churches, that have each *unum altare*, to be of *Divine Institution*, I cannot tell: but that you take the Diocesan to be so *Divine*, you have told me; and that you take the Superior Ruling-Churches, to be made by them. Now that Churches of *mans making* (Universal, or National, or Patriarchal, &c.) should be the rightful Governors (by the Keys) over the Churches of *Gods making*, must be either *jure Divino*, or *humano*: not *jure humano*; For 1. Man cannot give the power of the Keys without God. 2. And mans grant cannot over top Gods. Indeed there is no power but of God.

2. Not *jure divino*; For if God give them the power, God maketh that Species that containeth that power. For God not to make the Office, and not to give the power, is all one.

3. At least, what satisfying proof you will give us, that indeed God giveth power to Church-Officers of his own making, themselves



sevesto make *nobler* superior Officers or Churches than themselves, I cannot foresee. And till it's proved, it is not to be believed.

4. Yea it confoundeth the Inferiours and the Superiors. For the Diocesans are so far the Superiors to the Provincial, National, Patriarchal, &c. in that they make them, or give them their power, and yet inferior in that they are to be subjects to them.

More Nonconformists do deny the power of *men* to make new Species of Churches, and Church Rulers, than their power to make new Ceremonies.

V. Your next mention'd Opinion, (that it is a sin to preach and congregate people within the local bounds of Diocesan or Provincial, or other superior Jurisdictions without their consent) falleth of it self, if those foregoing fall, which it is built upon.

1. If it prove true that they that made these superior Jurisdictions had no power to make them, but gave that which they had not to give, then your foundation faileth.

2. If it be proved that neither Christ nor his Apostles ever made a Law that Bishops Jurisdictions shall be limited, measured and distributed by space of ground, as our Parishes and Diocesses are, so that all in such a compass shall be proper to one Pastor, much less did ever divide our Diocesses or Parishes; (which methinks none should deny) then Preaching in that space of ground is no sin against such an Order of Christ.

3. If it be proved (as I undertake to do) that this distribution by spaces of ground, is a work that the King and his Officers are to do, (or the Churches by his permission by way of contract, if he leave it to them), and this in obedience to Gods General Laws (of Order, Peace, Concord and Edification), then these things will follow,

1. That if the King give us Licenses to Preach within such a space of ground, we have good Authority, and break not the restraining Law: And yet such as you accused us of schism as well when the King Licensed us, as since.

2. That this Law of local bounds doth bind us but as other humane Laws do; which is, say many Casuists, not at all out of the case of scandal, when they make not for the *bonum publicum*.



But say others more safely, not when they notoriously make against, 1. Either the *bonum publicum*, which is *finis regiminis*: 2. Or the general Law of God which must authorize them, (being against edification, peace, &c.) 3. When they are contrary to the great, certain and indispensable Laws of God himself. And that in such cases patient suffering the penalty which men inflict, is instead of obedience to the prohibition, (and as in *Daniels* case, *Dan.* 6. and the Apostles, &c.)

Therefore I am ready to give you, 1. My Concessions in what cases it is sinful to disobey the Magistrate in Preaching where he forbiddeth it: 2. And in what cases it is a great duty. But to say that it is a sin because that the Clergy forbiddeth it, must have better proof than I have seen, even, 1. That such Clergymen are truly called by God. 2. And that they have from him the assignation of this space of ground. And 3. are by him empowered to forbid all others to preach on their land. 4. And that even when Gods general Laws do make it our duty, that they can suspend the obligation of such Laws, even the greatest: I am ready upon any just occasion to prove to you, that I were a heinous sinner, if I should have ceased such Preaching as I have used, upon all the reasons that you alledg against it. And woe to them that make our greatest and dearest duties to pass for sin, and our greatest sin, *Isa.* 5. 20. Were it but one of the least commands, I would be loth to break it, and teach men so to do, much less one of the greatest; when men whose consciences tell them, that they are totally devoted to God as Christians, and as Ordained Ministers, deny their worldly interest and preferments, and serve him in poverty, beholden for their daily bread, and to the ruin of their worldly Estates, and the hazard of their lives in the Common Goals, endeavour nothing but to Preach Christs Gospel to save mens souls from ignorance, unbelief, sensuality, worldliness, &c. in case of the peoples undeniable necessity; I say, when such meet with men of the same profession, who think not the Common Goals among Rogues, and the forfeiture of Forty pound a Sermon, as Enacted by Law, to be enough to restrain them, but also as in the name of Christ they will charge us with heinous sin unless we will perfidiously break our obligations to Christ, and sacrilegiously alienate our selves from the work which we are devoted to (many of us under the Bishops hands) and unless we will be cruel to miserable souls, and shut up



up the bowels of our compassion from them, while we see them in need and in danger of damnation, what fortitude do we need against such kind of Tempters, and such Temptations? If Drunkards and boys in the street only scorn'd me as a Puritan, or Precisian, it were less. If *Turkish* Rulers did persecute me for my Preaching Christ, it were less. If mistaken Christian Rulers made me the scorn of the Nation, and stript me of all my worldly maintenance, and laid me with Malefactors in Prison, it were a less temptation, than for a man to come in the name of Christ, to tell me that I sin against him, unless I will forsake my Calling, break my Vows, cease Preaching his Gospel, betray thousands of souls to Satan and damnation, and encourage all that endeavour it, by yielding to all their temptations, and giving them success. But as Christ must be accused of sin, as well as crucified, and not allowed the honour of suffering as innocent, so must his servants.

I will venture upon one argument on the by that may be somewhat by others, though nothing to you for the invalidating of your accusation. I saw from the hands of a Noble Lord, an excellent truly The Earl of Orery. Learned Manuscript, said by him to be the Bishop of *Lincoln*, to satisfie you who are said to judg it unlawful to subscribe to *Athanasius's* Creed. What else you refuse I know not; but by that much I perceive you are a strange kind of *Nonconformist*. Now if it be unlawful for you to subscribe and conform, or unlawful for me, (which I here undertake to prove before any equal competent Judges) then it is unlawful for all the Ministers of *England*; for none of them may do evil that good may come by it. And then all the Ministers in *England* ought to cease Preaching, if I ought to cease, when they are forbidden. The consequence will be denied by others, though not by you. (And by the way, How can you take the Bishops for Absolute, *from whom there is no appeal to an invisible power*, and yet disobey them, if they bid you subscribe *Athanasius* Creed?) If it be a sin in me not to cease Preaching when I am silenced for Nonconformity, and yet Nonconformity be a duty, then it is a sin in all the Ministers of *England* not to be Nonconformists, and so not to cease Preaching. But the latter part of the consequent is false: *Ergo*, so is the Antecedent.

2. Yea, directly your assertion puts it in the power of one superior to put down the Preaching of the Gospel, and all Gods publick Worship, in whole Countries or Kingdoms, (if not in the world), and so Christ must be at their mercy whether he shall have



any Church, and so whether he shall be Christ; and God, whether he shall have any publick Worship. In *Ethiopia* (though *Brierwood* saith that yet after the decay of the *Abassine* Empire, it is as big as *Italy, Germany, France* and *Spain*) they have but one Bishop, called their *Abuna*. And if he forbid all Preaching or publick Worship in the Empire, it is a sin to obey him. And it is a great duty to gather Churches within his Church. It is a sin in the Empire of *Muscovie*, that all their Clergy obey their Patriarch and Prince in forbearing to Preach. If all the Bishops of *England* should agree to reduce the Kingdom to one only Bishoprick, and one Church, and turn all the rest into Parish-Chappels, it were a duty to disobey them, and gather Churches in that one Church. If the Patriarch of *Alexandria, Antioch, or Constantinople*, had forbidden all in their limits to Preach and worship God publicly, it had been a wickedness to obey them. When *Severus Antioch*, the *Eutychian*, forbid the Orthodox to Preach in his Patriarchate, it had been their sin to obey him, (yea or if *Theodosius* or *Anastasius* the Emperours had done it): yea, though a General Council of *Ephes. 2.* (if not *Ephes. 1.*) was on his side. If the Pope (whether as Pope or as Patriarch of the West), Interdict all the Preachers and Churches in *Venice*, or in *Britain*, it were a sin to obey him.

The reasons are, because their power is derived and limited (to pass by the *no power* of Usurpers) the greatest have it for edification, and not for destruction. None of them have power to make void the least (continued) Law of God by their Doctrines, Precepts or Traditions. All men must take heed of the leaven of their false Doctrine, and must beware of false Prophets, and must prove all things, and hold fast that which is good. There is no true power but of *God*, and therefore none against him. It is better to obey God than men. But of this you may in season have larger proof, if you desire it.

VI. Your excluding *us from Salvation*, that will not cease Preaching the Gospel of Salvation, and worshipping God, remembreth us:

1. What a mercy it is that neither Pope, nor any such condemner is made our final Judg.
2. How most Sects agree (*Papists, Quakers, &c.*) in damning those that dance not after their Pipe.
3. What



3. What various wiles of temptations Satan useth to hinder Christs Gospel, and mens Salvation.

At once I have, 1. A backward flesh, that is the worst of all, that saith, *Favour thy self, and expose not thy self to all this labour, obloquie, hatred, suffering, loss and danger of death for nothing, but that work which thy superiours think needles, and forbid.*

2. I feel Satan setting in with the flesh, and saying the same.

3. Carnal and worldly friends say the same (as Peter to Christ, Mat. 16.)

4. Displeased Sinners and Sectaries wish me silent.

5. What Superiours say and do, I need not mention.

6. And to perfect all, some Preachers in Prefs and Pulpit, and you in Discourse, declare us in danger of damnation, as Schismatics, unless we will give over Preaching the Gospel. O how easie were it to me to avoid that damnation! And if I incur it, how dearly do I purchase it! It is a sad case that such poor souls as we are in, that would fain know Gods will whatever study or suffering it cost us, and after our most earnest search and prayers, believe that if we forlook our trust, and office, and the peoples souls, we should be judged as sacrilegious, perfidious hypocrites, and yet we are told by wiser and greater men, that our labours and sufferings do but damn us; may not a man be damned at a cheaper rate than Forty pound a Sermon, or the loss of all his worldly Estate, and lying with malefactors, and perhaps dying in a Goal, under the published sacred infamy of being Schismatics and enemies of the publick Government and peace, &c? But this also we must be fortified against. For Satan is sometime utterly impudent, and will say, *Damn your selves by perfidiusness, and let the people be damned quietly, or else you shall be damned for Schismatics.* But the long noise of damning Papists and Quakers have somewhat hardned or emboldened us. It was an early trick, *Act. 15. Except ye be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses, ye cannot be saved.* When lands and livings will not prevail; when profit, pleasure and honour fail; when poverty, reproach and prisons will not serve, then comes, *You cannot else be saved.* How many Sects say, *Say as we say, and do as we do, and follow us, or you cannot be saved?* But saith St. Paul, *It is a small thing with me to be judged of man, or at mans day: I have one that judgeth me, even the Lord,* (to whom we will appeal whatever you say against it.) But you must give me leave to think, that to draw men from their great duty, and the saving souls, to heinous sin,



sin, as in the name of Christ, and to frighten men into Hell with the fear of damnation, and the abused Word of God, hath heinous aggravations, which enticing men by sensuality to drunkenness, whoredom or theft, hath not.

VII. To the next, the matter of fact, and antecedent Suppositions cannot be denied, viz. 1. That it is probably supposed that there are inhabitants more than can hear the Preachers voice in the Parish-Churches, in *Martins* Parish about 40000, in *Stepney* Parish near as many, in *Giles Cripplegate* 30000, in *Giles* in the *Fields* near 20000, in *Sepulchres*, *Algate*, *White-chappel*, *Andrews Holborn*, and many other Out-Parishes very many thousands. The last Bill of Mortality that I saw, saith there died in *Stepney* Parish as many wanting one, as in all the Ninety-seven Parishes of *London*, and in *Martins* as many within six, and in *Giles Cripplegate* as many within eight, or thereabout.

2. *How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe if they hear not? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? If the Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: Where Vision faileth, the people perish, even for lack of knowledg.*

3. Yet people by our Church Laws must be presented and prosecuted as Recufants if they come not to Church, and so 40000 or 30000 should be presented and punished for want of room; but it is a greater punishment to be strangers unto the Gospel.

4. The Canon forbiddeth them going to, and communicating in other Parishes, and forbiddeth the Ministers to receive them.

5. The Children of Christians are born with no more knowledg than the children of Heathens; and need teaching as well as theirs, to bring them to knowledg when they grow up.

6. God will not save any adult person that is an Infidel, impenitent, unsanctified, because he is bred up among Christians, and Churches, or born of Christians, and Baptized; but it will go worse with such unholy persons in the day of Judgment, than have had the greatest means.

7. If you can cast the fault on the people, and say that they might remove their dwellings, or (break the Law, and) go to other Parishes, or read at home, &c. that excuseth us not. For the worse they are, the more need they have of help. If they were faultless, what need had they of us?

8. As



8. As to my own case whom you condemn, I have told you, that I have the Ordination of a Bishop, and the License of the Bishop of this Diocese (not nulled or recalled) which by your principles one would think might serve if it had been against Gods own Laws. And yet Gods Law and the Bishops License will not serve.

9. Some other may say, *What's your case to many others?* I answer: To pass by a great deal not now to be said, Let it be understood that the case is this. Men are first silenced and excommunicated, and so forbidden the publick Churches, and all publick worship of God; and then the Excommunicate are prosecuted and accused for not coming to Church. Divers Canons do *ipso facto* (that is, *sine sententiâ*) excommunicate all that do but say that any thing in the Liturgy or Discipline is unlawful, or may not be done with a good conscience (which all *Nonconformists* hold). And it is not possible for us to repent of that as a *wicked Error*, which after all means that we can possibly use, appeareth unto us an undoubted truth, that so our Excommunication may be taken off. Now these *silenced men* are assured, that God disobligeeth them not from the duty of Preaching; and these *excommunicate men* are assured that God doth not disoblige them from the duty of *publick worship* and *Church-communion*. Therefore they must use it as they can, when they may not use it as they would. Men say the *Papists* should not call us Schismatics, because they *cast us out*, and *went from us*; and will you silence and excommunicate men, as they undertake to prove, for obeying God, and then call them Schismatics for not communicating with you, or for worshipping God in such Church-communion as they can? Indeed many of us communicate with you, because we think not our selves bound, tho' you excommunicate us *ipso facto*, to do execution on our selves, or to go further from you than necessity compelleth us (tho' I must profess that *Cyprians* 68. Epistle, p. 200. and *St. Martin's* Separation from the Bishops, confirmed by Miracle, sometimes sticks in my stomach). But I cannot make so light of you do, 1. Of such Texts as 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judg the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom, preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.*



102. Nor of the murderous famishing of thousands of souls, when to murder one child by famine deserveth death and hell.

103. Nor of Christs Law of preferring *Mercy* before *Sacrifice*, necessary *Morals* before *Rituals*, *Circumstantial*s or *Ordinals*, which are all but *propter rem ordinatam*. I remember you have told me, That if the Bishop forbid all Gods publick worship in the *Assemblies*, we must forbear. Such sayings, and this, That I must let so many souls be untaught though they be damned, because it is the Bishops fault and not mine, do make me ready to tremble to think of them. If Christs works be saving, whose work is it to make so light of mans damnation? Is it any wonder if such Principles be called *Antichristian*? I cannot but perceive from whom they come, when the damnation of poor people must be so easily submitted to, if the Bishop do but command the means. Methinks you wrong the Bishops by such odious *Suppositions* and *Assertions*, as if you would make men believe that they are the *Grievous Wolves that spare not the flock*, and the *thorns and thistles* that are made to prick and rend the people. But I believe that the Bishops faultiness in mens damnation would be no excuse to me if I be accessory.

4. And I doubt not but if you unjustly *ipso facto* Excommunicate men, it neither depriveth them of the right, nor absolveth them from the duty of publick Worship, and Church-Communion. And I am ashamed to read and hear Preachers publicly reproaching them for not holding constant Communion with the Parish-Churches, when it's notorious that the Canon hath thus Excommunicated them, yea though it were their duty sometime to intrude.

And I beseech you judg as a Christian or a man, whether you can think such Arguments should draw the people themselves to be of your mind: Go to them and speak out, Neighbours, I confess that while you live in ignorance and sin for want of teaching and publick worship, you are in the way to damnation; but it is the Bishop, and not the silenced Preacher that shall answer for it. Will they not reply, *And shall not the Bishop then be damned instead of us, as well as instead of the silenced Preacher?*



VIII. Your doubt about *mens power to change Christs settled form of Church-government*, is but a consequent of your first, of *mens absolute power*.

But 1. if they change Gods Laws, or instituted Church-forms or Government, may they not change *their own*? And if so, there is some hope of a Reformation. But why then did the Canons of 1640. in the *Et cetera* Oath, swear the Clergy *never to consent to change*? And why are we now to swear in the Oxford Oath, That we will *never endeavour any alteration of Church-Government* (tho' the keys be in the power of Lay-Chancellors, and tho' the King may command us to endeavour it) must the Nation or Clergy swear never (in their own places) to endeavour any alteration of *the Bishops Institutions* (as you take e them), and yet may the Bishops alter the very *Form of Government*, and *Churches* made by our Universal King?

2. What an uncertain mutable thing may Christs Laws or Church-Government prove, while mutable men may change it at their pleasure.

3. To what purpose is *Antiquity and Tradition* so much pleaded by Hierarchical Divines, as if that were the Test to know the right Government and Church, if the Bishops may alter it?

4. If thus much of Christs Laws and Institutions may be altered by Prelates, how shall we be sure that all the rest is not also at their will and mercy? or which is it that they may alter, and which not?

5. Doth not this set man so far above God, or equal with him, as will still tempt men to think that more are Anti-christian than the Pope? If you say that it is by Gods own grant, I wait for your proof, that God granteth power to any man above his Laws: Those that he made but *Local or Temporary* himself, are not abrogated or changed by man where they bind not; for they never bound any but their proper subjects, e. g. The *Jewish* Laws, as such, never bound the Gentile world; and the command of washing feet, bound only those where the use of going bare-leg'd with Sandals in a hot Country,