

Temple in such a place rather then another : or to go thither to worship rather then another place (but by consequence and generall directions :) nor hath he determined what place the Minister shall stand to preach in, or where all the people shall have their seats. All these are but the circumstances of a holy action, which are left to humane prudence.

§. 8. 2. It is left to man to determine of the *Time* of holy duties, except only where God hath determined of it already. As that the Lords day shall be the Day for publick holy Assemblies, is a thing that God himself hath determined; and here we have nothing to do but to discern his determinations and obey them. But withall he hath in Generall commanded us to *preach in season and out of season*, and to Assemble frequently, on severall great occasions : And here he hath not determined of the *Time*, but left it to humane prudence upon emergent occasions, and according to their severall cases, to determine of what hour on the Lords day we shall begin; how long the Sermon shall be; what hour the Assembly shall be dismissed: what daies the Lords supper shall be administered, and how oft: when any shall be Baptized: what day the Lecture shall be on, or any more private meetings for edification: what hour, or just how oft men must pray in secret, or with their families: these with the like are undetermined by God (and good reason, as I shall shew anon,) and left to our selves and to our Governors: *Some Time* or other we are commanded by God himself to choose.

§. 9. 3. It is left to the determination of humane Prudence, what *Utensils* to imploy about the publick worship of God. For these in Generall are commanded by God, and so made necessary; as also in the nature of the thing. He that commanded us to do the work, that is not to be done without convenient *Utensils*, doth thereby command us virtually, the use of instruments fit for the work. What form and proportion the Temple where we meet shall have, is left to men: whether we shall preach in a Pulpit? and what shall be its shape? where we shall read? whether we shall Baptize in a River, or Pond, or Spring, or Font, or Bason, and what materials, whether stone or Silver, or Pewter, &c. they be made of? whether we shall

receive the Lords supper at a Table, or in our seats, and whether the Table shall be of wood or stone? whether it shall be round, or long, or square? whether it shall stand in the East or West end of the Temple, or the middle? whether it shall have rails, or no rails? whether the Bread be of wheat or other convenient grain? what vessel the Bread shall be put in? and what grape the wine shall be made of? and what vessel it shall stand in? and be delivered in? whether a cup, or other like vessel? whether of silver, wood, or pewter, &c? All these are left to humane prudence. In general, it is necessary that some such utensils in each case there be: but the special sort is left indifferent to our choice. So also the Bibles themselves, whether they be Printed, or Written, and in what hand, or colour? Whether bound, or in a Role? are things indifferent in themselves, and left to humane reason to determine. The like may be said of other utensils of worship, necessary *in genere*.

§. 10. 4. God hath not determined *in what language* the Scripture shall be read or preached to such or such a congregation (though by the generall Rule, that all be done to edification, and that we speak to the understanding, there is sufficient direction for it) But he that commandeth us to preach, implyeth that we translate the Scripture, and preach and read in a language fittest for the peoples edification. And if (as in many places of *Wales*) there be two languages equally understood, we may indifferently choose that which we think most agreeable to the generall rules.

§. 11. 5. The Scripture hath commanded us in general to sing Psalms: but it hath not told us whether they shall be in Rhythme, or Meeter, or in what tune we shall sing them. These *modes* are left to humane Prudence to determine of.

§. 12. 6. When there are *divers Translations* of the Scripture in the same language, or divers versions of the Psalms in the same language (as in *England*, here are the old version, the *New-England* version, *Mr. Rows's* first, and his second (or the *Scots*,) *Mr. White's*, *Bishop Kings*, *Sands's*, *Mr. Bartons*, &c.) God hath not told us which of all these we shall use, but given us generall directions, according to which our own Reason, or our Governors should make choice.

§. 13. 7. God hath commanded us to *Read the holy Scriptures*, and to expound them to the people, that they may understand and

and practise them: But he hath not told us *what Book of Scripture*, or *what Chapter* we shall read at such a day, or on such or such occasions; nor yet what order we shall observe in Reading; whether we shall begin the Scripture, and go on to the end; or whether we shall read more frequently some subjects of greatest use, and which? These therefore are left to humane prudence to determine of by generall rules.

§. 14. 8. Though God hath commanded us to Read the Scripture, and to sing Psalms, &c. yet hath he not told us *just how much we shall read at a time*, or sing at a time: and therefore this also is a matter left to humane Determination.

§. 15. 9. Though God hath commanded us to Preach the Gospell, and told us *what to preach*, and given us generall Rules for our direction, yet hath he not told us *what text*, or *subject* we shall preach on such or such a day: nor yet *what Method* we shall follow, there being various methods, suitable to severall Texts and people: It is left therefore to humane prudence to choose both Subject, Text and Method.

§. 16. 10. God that hath commanded us to pray, and praise him, and preach, &c. hath not told us *just what words we shall use* in any of these holy exercises. He hath indeed given us the *Lords Prayer*, which is our Rule for matter, and Method, and a lawfull form for words: but he hath not tyed us to this only, nor told us *what words we shall use besides this*: whether we shall use words long before premeditated (call'd a form) or only such as are immediately or neer before our speaking premeditated, or in speaking, adapted to the matter in hand? whether our premeditated prayers shall be expressed in our *own words*, or such as are prescribed us by *others*? whether such forms shall be expressed in *Scripture words*, or not? whether we shall sing the *Psalms of David*, or compose any Evangelical Hymns our selves? whether many Churches shall use one and the same form of words, or various? whether our Sermons, and Catechisms, and Confessions of faith, shall be a studied or prescribed form of words, or the *matter and method* only studied? &c. These, with many other such like, are left by God, as things undetermined, that men may determine of them prudentially as occasions require, according to his directions.

§. 17. 11. He that hath commanded us to express our minds

in severall cases about his worship, (as in Confession of our sins, in Profession of our faith, in choosing of our Pastors, in Consenting to the casting out, or taking in, or restoring of members, in renewing promises of obedience, and the like) hath hereby made a *Profession* necessary in general, and so hath made it our duty to signify our Consent in all these cases, by *some convenient sign*: For mans mind is not known to others, but by signs. But he hath not tied us absolutely to *any particular sign*. If a Confession of faith be read, and we are called to signify our Consent, or if we are called to signify our Consent to be Church members, or to be guided by our Pastors, or submit to Discipline; God hath not tyed us in such Cases, whether we shall signify this Consent by *speaking*, or by *subscribing our names* (Ma. 4. 3, 4, 5.) or by *lifting up the hand*, or by *laying it on a Book*, (as in swearing) or by *standing up*, or such like. A sufficient signification or Profession of our minds is necessary; but the special sign is left to our own, or our Governors determination. Of which I shall speak more anon.

§. 18. To this end, and on these terms was the sign of the Cross used heretofore by Christians, and to this end they used *standing in publick worship every Lords day* (forbidding *kneeling*,) and afterward *standing up at the Creed*: as also *adoring with their faces towards the east, &c.* They used these only as significations of their own minds, instead of words; As the Prophets of old were wont by other signs, as well as words to prophesie to the people. And as *Eusebius* tells us how *Constantine* measured the length and breadth of a man on the earth with his spear, to tell the Covetous how little must serve them (only a grave place) after death. And I dare not condemn the Cautelous use of such Professing signs as these: Though the tongue be the chief instrument, yet not the only instrument to express the mind; and though words be the ordinary sign, yet not the only sign. Dumb men must speak by other signs: And usually more silent signs are fitter for Assemblies, to avoid disturbance: And sometimes more *Permanent* signs (as *subscription*, or a *stone* or *pillar* of Remembrance, as *Job. 24, &c.*) are more desirable. And this is left to humane prudence.

§. 19. And therefore I durst not have reprov'd any of the ancient Christians, that used the sign of the Cross, merely as a
Professing

Professing signal action, to shew to the Heathen and Jews about them, that they believed in a Crucified Christ, and were not ashamed of his Cross. The *occasionall, indifferent* use of this, when it is *meerly* to this end, I durst not have condemned. Nor will I now condemn a man, that living among the enemies of a Crucified Christ, shall wear a Cross in his hat, or on his breast, or set it on his doors, or other convenient place, meerly as a professing sign of his mind, to be but instead of so many words, q. d. [*I thus profess my self the servant of a Crucified Christ, of whom I am not ashamed.*] Whether these things be *fit or unfit*, the time, place, occasion, and other circumstances must shew: but the *Lawfulness* I dare not deny.

§. 20. 12. He that hath commanded us to celebrate the publick worship, and to preach, pray, praise God, &c. doth imply in this command that we must do it in *some Gesture* or other: For it is impossible otherwise to do it. But he hath not tied us to any one: In prayer we may kneel or stand: In singing Praises (and Petitions) to God, we may kneel, stand, or sit: At the Lords Table, though we have an example of *sitting* at the celebrating and receiving that Sacrament, yet no express command, nor a certain obligation. It is therefore left to humane prudence, to order our gestures by the general Rules, of Order, Decency, Edification, &c. in Preaching, Praying, Hearing, Singing, Receiving, &c. For God hath not tied us himself to any one particular gesture.

§. 21. 13. God that hath required us to celebrate his worship, doth imply that we must do it in a *decent Habit*: Nakedness is a shame: Cloathing we must wear: but he hath not told us what it must be: Whether Linnen or Woollen: whether black or white: or of what shape and fashion; This therefore is left to humane Prudence.

§. 22. 14. God that hath commanded us to celebrate his Praise and other publick worship, hath left it to our Liberty and Prudence to make use of such *Helps of Nature, or of Art*, as may most conduce to further our obedience, and stand in a due subserviency to his institutions. As for instance: he that hath commanded us to study his word and works, hath not prescribed me a certain *Method* for my studies, nor told me what *Languages or Sciences* I shall learn, or first learn: nor what Authors

I shall read in Logick, Physicks, Metaphysicks, &c. It is im-
 pyied that in all I use the best helps, and in the best order that
 I can. So he that bids me read the Scripture, hath not tyed me
 to read only a *Printed*, or only a *Written* Bible; nor to read with
 spectacles or without. He that hath commanded me to Preach,
 hath not told me whether I must *write* my Sermon before or not:
 or use *Notes* for the help of my memory, or not; but hath left
 these to be determined as general Rules, and emergent occasions
 and circumstances shall direct us. And he that hath commanded
 us to preach and pray, hath not told us whether we shall use the
 help of a *Book*, or not; nor whether we shall use an *hour-glass*
 or a *clock* to measure our time by. He that hath commanded
 us cheerfully and joyfully to sing his Praises, hath not told us
 whether we shall use the meeter, or any melodious tune to help
 us: or whether we shall use or not use a Musical Instrument:
 or the help of more Artificial fingers, or choristers? These are left
 to our reason to determine of, by general rules which nature
 and Scripture have laid down.

§. 23. 15. In Civil actions, that are *Religious only finally*,
 and by Participation, and not any acts of special worship, it
 is lawfull to use *Symbolical Rites*, that are in their kind
 neer of kin to *Sacraments in their kind*, and may be called, *Civil*
Sacraments: such is the sealing and delivery of Indentures, or
 other Covenant writings: and the delivery of Possession of a
house by a Key, and of the *Temple* by a *Book* and *Bel-rope*, and
 of *Land* by a *twig* and *turf*; and of *Civil Government* by a
Crown, or *Scepter*, or *Sword*, &c. And such is the use of a *Ring*
 in *Marriage*.

§. 24. 16. Though God hath commanded that certain per-
 sons thus and thus qualified shall be *elected* and *ordained Ministers*
 of Christ, and separated to the Gospel of God; yet hath he not
 nominated the *individual persons*, but left it to man to choose
 them, according to the directions that he hath given them: Pru-
 dence therefore is here the judge.

§. 25. In all these cases, it is no usurpation, nor addition to
 the word or institution of God, for man to determine: It is but
 an obeying of Gods commands: All these are Necessary in their
Genus, and commanded us of God, and the *Species* (or individu-
 als in the last case) no where by the word of God determined of:
 so

so that if we must not determine of them our selves, the Scripture should contradict it self, or oblige us to natural impossibilities. Had God said, [Thou shalt Pray, at some Time, Place, in some Habit, Gesture, &c. but neither I, nor thou shall determine what,] this had been no better.

§. 26. Most of these forementioned particulars, are but abusively or improperly called *Ceremonies*, they being only the determination of Circumstances and Modes, and subservient common helps, which are Religious only Relatively and by Application, being in themselves but such common modifications as are necessary in Civil and Common moral actions. Yet because the word [*Ceremonie*] is an equivocal, let them be so called.

§. 27. Though all these things are left to humane Determination, and so are Indifferent in themselves, before; yet may they become *Accidentally Necessary* or unlawfull. And though man must Determine of them, yet not *as he list*, without a Rule: but by those sufficient General directions which God hath given in Scripture, and the End and Nature of the work. And to cross these directions is a sin in him that doth determine.

§. 28. Though all these are left to humane Prudence, yet not alwaies to the Governors to be passed into *Laws*, and forced on the subjects. Most of the points forementioned, ought not be statelily determined by Law, but left to him that is upon place to determine of, according to variation of occasion which anon.)

§. 29. Yet if just Authority shall (injuriously) determine of them, it may be the subjects duty to obey; except in some cases to be after mentioned; Because they are not matters aliene to their Power, and without their line: but only its an imprudent over-doing in a work that is belonging to them, in its manner and season to be done.

§. 30. Having shewed you what man *May* determine of, in worship: I shall next shew you what he *may not* determine of: or what is exempted from his power. And 1. Some things as to the *Substance*. 2. Other things only as to the *Manner*, are out of mans power.

§. 31. 1. No man may bring a New Revelation, which he received not from God, (whether it be about greater or smaller points,)

points,) and say to another, or himself, *This you or I are bound to believe, by a Divine faith*: For nothing but a Divine Revelation can be the material object of a Divine faith.

§. 32. 2. And as far is it from the power of this man, to say [*I received not this from God, but yet you are bound to believe it as from me, with a faith as certain and confident, as a faith Divine.*] For this were to equall man with God.

§. 33. 3. And far is it from the power of man to obtrude at all upon another any supernatural matters, and Command him to believe them, though but with a *humane faith*, when he cannot prove that the things are committed to him, nor give men an Evidence of their Credibility. He may not say [*Though God revealed not these supernatural matters to me, yet hath he given me Authority to command you to believe them, or made it your duty to believe them, when I speak them, though without Evidence of Credibility.*] So that here are three sorts of things about matters of Belief that man may not do. The first is, that he may not *Counterfeit a Divine Revelation*: and the 2. is, he may not command men to believe his *lawfull humane testimony, with a faith equall to Divine*: and 3. he may not command so much as a *humane faith* to supernatural assertions which he had no authority to utter. I speak this without mens power in matters of faith, as preparatory to that about worship.

§. 34. In like sort, 1. Man may not say [*This God hath commanded you in or about his worship*] when it is not so: For were to belie God, and to add to his Law, as if it said that which it doth not say. Here none I hope will gainsay me.

§. 35. And 2. No man may of his own head Command any thing in or belonging to the worship of God: but he must have either a Special or General warrant and command from God himself to do it. Gods Law must either make the thing Necessary *in specie*, and so leave man nothing about it but to second it by his Law, and see it executed: or else Gods Law must make the thing Necessary *in genere*, and so leave man to determine of the *species* (as is oft said.) But where neither of these are done by God, man hath no Power for the imposing of that thing.

§. 36. More particularly, 1. God hath not left it to the Power

Power of man to add to the *ten commandments* any universal precept for obedience. 2. Nor to add to the *Lords Prayer* and other holy Scripture, any general article of request to God. 3. Nor to add any *officers* to his Church, that are strictly Divine, or for Divine uses. 4. Nor to add any *substantial ordinance of worship*. 5. Nor to add any *substantial* part of holy *Discipline*. 6. Nor to institute any *new Sacrament* in the Church, or any thing that hath the *Nature* of a Sacrament, though it have not the *name*.

§. 37. It seemeth to me that *Mystical signs* stated by man in Gods publick worship, directly to work grace on his soul from God, and that as instituted, and also to oblige man to God again, are unlawfully brought into the Church.

§. 38. By what hath been said, you may see which of the late English Controverted Ceremonies, I take to have been Lawful, and which unlawfull. Too many years did I spend long agoe about these controversies; and the judgement that then I arrived at, I could never find reason since to change, notwithstanding all the changes of the times, and the helps I that have since had; And it was and is as followeth.

§. 39. 1. About Episcopacy (which was the principal point, concomitant with the Ceremonial Controversie) I have given you my thoughts before. 2. The ceremonies controverted among us, were especially, *The surplice, the gesture of Kneeling in Receiving the Lords supper, the ring in Marriage, Laying the hand on the Book in taking an Oath, the Organs and Church musick, Holy daies, Altars, Rails, and the Cross in Baptism.* (To say nothing of the matter or form of the Prayers.)

§. 40. And 1. If the *surplice* be Imposed by the Magistrate (as it was) who is a lawfull Governor, and that directly but as a *Decent Habit* for a Minister in Gods service, I think he needlessly strained his Power, and sinfully made an engine to divide the Church, by making such a *needless law*, and laying the Peace of the Church upon it; But yet he medled with nothing but was within the reach of his Power in the general. *Some Decent Habit* is Necessary. Either the Magistrate or the Minister himself, or the Associated Pastors must determine what. I think neither Magistrate nor Synod should do any more then hinder undecency; But yet if they *do* more, and tye all to *one Habit*, (and suppose

it were an undecent Habit) yet this is but an *imprudent use of Power*. It is a thing within the Magistrates reach; He doth not an *aliene work*, but his *own work* a mis: and therefore the thing in it self being *lawfull*, I would obey him, and use that gar ment, if I could not be dispensed with. Yea though *Secondarily* the *Whiteness* be to signifie Purity, and so it be made a teaching sign, yet would I obey: For *secondarily*, we may lawfully and piously make Teaching signs of our food and rayment, and every thing we see. But if the Magistrate had said that the *Primary* reason or use of the *Surplice* was to be an *instituted sacramental sign*, to work grace on my soul, and engage me to God, then I durst not have used it, though *secundarily* it had been commanded as a *decent garment*. *New Sacraments* I durst not use, though a *secondary use* were lawfull.

§. 41. 2. And for *Kneeling at the Sacrament*, I doubt not at all, but the imposing it, and that on such rigorous terms, tying all to it, and casting all out of the communion of the Church, or from the participation of the Sacrament that durst not use it, was a very grievous sin, and tended to persecution, injustice, and Church-dividing. It is certainly in a doubtful case the safest way to do as Christ and his Apostles, and the universal Church did for many hundred years. That none should Kneel in publick worship on the Lords day, no not in Prayer, much less in receiving the Eucharist, was a Custome so ancient and Universal in the Church, that it was everywhere observed before general Councils were made use of; and in the first general Council of *Nice*, it was made the last Canon; and other general Councils afterward renewed it, so that I know not how any Ceremony can possibly pretend to greater Ecclesiastical Authority then this had. And to cast out all from Church Communion in Sacraments that dare not go against the examples of Christ and his Apostles, and all the Primitive Church, (who long received the Eucharist in another gesture) and against the Canons of the first and most famous, and other succeeding general Councils, this is a most inhumane part. Either the gesture is *indifferent in it self* or not: If it be, how dare they thus divide the Church by it, and cast out Christians that scruple it, when they have these and many other reasons of their scruples (which for brevity I omit.) If they say that *Kneeling* is of it self *Necessary*, and not *Indifferent*, because it is *Reverent* &c. then 1. They make Christ an imperfect Law-giver:.

giver: 2. They make himself, or his Apostles, or both to have been sinners. 3. They condemn the Catholick Church of sin. 4. They condemn the Canons of the Chief general Councils. 5. And then if the Bishops themselves in Council should charge the gesture, it were unlawfull to obey them. All which are consequents that I suppose they will disown. What a perverse preposterous Reverence is this? when they have leave to lie in the dust before and after the very act of receiving, through all their confessions and prayers, yet they will at other times stand, and many of them sit at prayer, and sit at singing Psalms of Prayer and Praise to God, and yet when Christ doth invite them to a feast, they dare not imitate his Apostles and universal Church in their gesture, lest they should be sinfully-unreverent.

§. 42. But yet, as sinfully as this Gesture was imposed, for my part I did obey the imposers, and would do, if it were to do again, rather then disturb the Peace of the Church, or be deprived of its Communion. For God having made *some* Gesture necessary, and confined me to none, but left it to humane Determination, I shall submit to Magistrates in their proper work, even when they miss it in the manner. I am not sure that Christ intended the example of himself and his Apostles as obligatory to us that shall succeed. I am sure it proves *strictly* lawful: but I am not sure that it proves it *necessary*: (though *very* convenient) But I am sure he hath commanded me obedience and peace.

§. 43. 3. And for the *Ring in Marriage*, I see no reason to scruple the lawfulness of it: For though the Papists make a *Sacrament* of *Marriage*, yet we have no reason to take it for any ordinance of Divine worship: any more then the solemnizing of a contract between a Prince and People. All things are sanctified and pure to the Pure: but that doth not confound the two Tables, nor make all things to be parts of Worship that are sanctified. The Coronation of a King is sanctified as well as Marriage, and is as much a *Sacrament* as Marriage, and the *Ceremonies* of it might as well be scrupled: especially when God doth seem to go before them by the example of *Anointing*, as if he would confine them to that Ceremonie; which yet was none of his intent, nor is it much scrupled.

§. 44. 4. And though the *taking of an Oath* be a sort of worship,

worship, yet not the *natural* worship of the first Commandment, nor the *Instituted* of the second, but the *Reverent use* of his name in the third; so that it is not *primarily* an act of worship, but *Reductively*, and *Consequentially*: It being the principal use of an Oath to *Confirm the Truth*, and *End strife*, by appealing to God, which appellation is indeed an acknowledgment of his Government and Justice. And the *laying the hand upon the Book*, or *Kissing it*, is but a Professing sign of my own Intentions, such as my words themselves are: and therefore is left to humane choice, and a lawfull thing. And I have met but with very few, among all our Ceremonies, that questioned this.

§. 45. 5. And for *Organs* or other instruments of *Musick* in Gods worship, they being a Help partly *natural*, and partly *artificial*, to the exhilarating of the spirits, for the praise of God, I know no argument to prove them *simply unlawful*; but what would prove a *cup of wine* unlawful, or the *tune* and *meeter*, and *melodie* of singing unlawful. But yet if any would abuse it, by turning Gods worship into carnal Pomp, and levity, especially by such non-intelligible singing, or bleating as some of our Choristers used, the Common people would have very great reason to be weary of it, as *accidentally evil*.

§. 46. 6. And as for *Holy daies*, there is great difference between them: Those are lyable to *most question* that are obtruded on the Church with the *greatest confidence*. As for such daies as are appointed upon some *emergent occasions*, that arose since Scripture was indited, and are not common to all times and places of the Church, there is no more question whether the Magistrate may command them, or the Pastors agree upon them; then whether a *Lecture-day*, or *fast-day*, or *thanksgiving-day* may be commanded, or agreed on: *some time* for Gods worship, besides the Lords Day must be appointed: And God having not told us *which*, the Magistrate *may*, on fit occasions. And this is no derogation from the sufficiency of Scripture: For the *occasion* of the day was *not-existent*, when the Scripture was written: such occasions are various according to the various state of the Church in several ages and Countries. And therefore to keep an Anniversary day of Thanksgiving, such as we keep on the *fifth of November* for our deliverance from the *Papists powder plot*, is no more questionable then to keep a Lecture. Nor for
my

my part do I make any scruple * to Keep a Day in Remembrance
 of any eminent servant of Christ, or Martyr, to praise God for
 their doctrine or example, and honour their Memorial. But the
 hardest part of the Question is, *whether it be lawfull to keep daies,*
as holy, in celebrating the memorial of Christ's Nativity, Circum-
cision, Fasting, Transfiguration, Ascension, and such like? And
 the great reasons of the doubt are, 1. Because the occasions of
 these holy daies was existent in the Apostles daies: and therefore
 if God would have had such daies observed, he could as easily
 and fitly have done it by his Apostles in the Scripture, as he did
 other the like things. 2. And this is a business that if it were
Necessary, would be Equally necessary to all Ages and Parts of the
Catholick Church. And therefore it cannot be necessary, but it
 must be the *Matter of an universal Law.* And God hath made
 no such Law in Scripture: And so Scripture sufficiency, as the
 Catholick Rule of faith and universal Divine obedience, is utterly
 overthrowed: which if we grant, and turn Papists to day; we
 shall have as strong temptations to make us turn Infidels to mor-
 row, so poor is their evidence for the supplemental Traditional
 Law of God. 3. And God himself hath already appointed a day
 for the same purposes as these are pretended for. For the *Lords*
Day is to commemorate the *Resurrection*, as the great Trium-
 phant act of the Redeemer, *implying all the rest of his works:*
 so that though it be *principally* for the *Resurrection*, above any
 single work of Christ, yet also for *all the work of Redemption:*
 And the *whole* is on that day to be commemorated with holy Joy
 and Praise. Now when God himself hath set apart one day in
 every week to commemorate the whole work of Redemption,
 it seems an accusing of his Institutions of insufficiency, to come
 after him to mend them, and say we must have an anniversary day
 for this or that part of the work. 4. The fourth Commandment being
 one of the Decalogue, seems to be of so high a nature, that man
 is not to presume to make the like. Else why may we not turn
 the ten commandments into twenty or a hundred? But it seems
 a doing the same or of like nature to what God hath done in the
 fourth commandment, if any will make a necessary stated holy
 day to the universal Church. 5. And it seems also that these
 Holy daies (excepting *Easter and Whitsontide* and other *Lords*
daies) are but of later introduction. Many passages of Anti-

* In point of
 Lawfulness;
 For Conveni-
 ency is accord-
 ing to several
 accidents.

quity seem to intimate, that *Christmas Day* it self was not of many hundred years after Christ. I remember not any before *Gregory Nazianzene* that seem to speak of it. The allegations out of spurious authors, and that of later date, such as the counterfeit *Clement, Dionysius, Cyprian, &c.* are brought to deceive and not to convince. 6. Yea more, the time was a matter of controversie among the Churches of the East and West, for many hundred years after Christ. *Epiphanius*, and the Churches of *Indea* and all those Eastern parts, took the *sixth of January* to be the day (see *Casaubones Exercitat.* on this, and *Cloppenburgius* more fully in *Thef.*) *Chrysostome* saith, it was but ten years before he wrote that *Homilie* that the Church at *Constantinople* was perswaded by them at *Rome* to change their account of the day: And is it possible that, when for about four hundred years or more the Churches were utterly disagreed of the day, that it was then *Commonly kept as an Holy day*? The keeping of it would sure have kept a common knowledge of the day: Or at least, the difference of observation would have raised contention, as the difference about Easter did: can any believe that the famous Council of *Nice*, and the vigilant Emperour, that were so exceeding impatient of a diversity of observations of Easter, would have let a diverse observation of Christmas alone, without once thinking or speaking of it, when they were gathered about the like work, if the Church had commonly observed it then as a Holy day? Or was the Church of *Indea* where Christ arose, in any likelihood to have lost the true account of the day, if it had been observed by Apostolical Tradition from the beginning? 7. And it seems that God did *purposely* deny us the observation of this Day, in that he hath *certainly kept the time unknown to the world*. The confidence of some bewrayes but their ignorance. Chronologers are never like to be agreed of the year, much less of the *moneth or day*; some think we are *four years* too late, some *two years, &c.* Many think that Christ was born about *October* (as *Scaliger, Broughton, Beroaldus, &c.*) and many still hold to the old Eastern opinion, for the Epiphany being the Nativity, on *Jan. 6.* and others are for other times; but none are certain of the time. 8. Sure we are, *where there is no Law, there is no Transgression*: but here is no Law of God commanding Christmas day or the other Holy daies; therefore there is no transgression

gression in *not keeping* them. And then 9. it is *not so sure* that there is no transgression in *keeping them*: therefore the surer side is to be taken. 10. And it seems strange that we find not so much as any ancient * general Council making any mention of Christmas or such daies (though of the Martyrs daies some do.) All these reasons (which I run over hastily) and many more (which for brevity I pretermit) do seem to make it a very hard question, whether the keeping of this sort of Holy daies be lawfull.

* The Provincial Confil. Agalb. Can. 14. is the first that I remember mentioning them.

§. 47. And it is not to be much stuck at, that a Day to Christ doth seem more necessary and pious, then a Day in commemoration of a Martyr, or a particular Mercy: For in the highest parts of Gods worship, God hath left man least to do, as to Legislation and Decisions: and usurpations here are far most dangerous. A *weekly Day* is somewhat more then an *Anniversary*: And yet I think there is few of the contrary minded, but would doubt whether man might impose on the Church the observation of another *weekly Holy day*, in commemoration of *Christs Nativity*. The *worship of God* is a more excellent and necessary thing, then the veneration due to a worthy person: And yet we have not so much liberty to make new waies of worshipping God, as of veneration to men. So is it here, though even the Daies that are for the memorial of the Saints, are ultimately for the honour of God; yet those that are set apart directly and immediately to commemorate the work of Redemption, are Relatively much higher, and therefore seem to be more exempted from the Determination of humane laws.

§. 48. By this and much more, I am fully satisfied, 1. That the keeping of these daies is a thing of it self *unnecessary*: 2. And that there being none on earth that can justly pretend to a power of universal Government over the whole Catholick Church, it is certain that none on earth can bind the Catholick Church to such observances; (The Canons of Pastors are *Authoritative Directions* to their *own flocks* that are bound to obey them, so it be in lawful things; but to *other Churches*, or to their *fellow Pastors* they are but *Agreements*, and how far they bind, I shall shew anon.) 3. And even in a single Church, or a Province, or Nation, I am satisfied that it is a great sin for Magistrates or Pastors to force all that scruple it, to the observance.

tion of these daies, and-to lay the *unity or Peace* of their Churches on it, and to cast out, censure, reproach, or punish them that dare not obey such impositions for fear of sinning against God. And it is a most dsingenuous thing to insinuate and put into the minds of men accusations of the *Impiety* of the dissenters; and to perswade the world that it is irreligiousness, or humorous singularity, when it is so known a thing to all that know them, that the persons that scruple or disown these daies, do ordinarily walk in uprightness and the fear of God in other matters, and profess that it is only a fear of breaking the Laws of God that keeps them from conformity to the will of others: and that they are reproached by the multitude of the observers of these daies, for their spending the Lords Day in Holy exercises, which the reproachers spend too much in idleness, sensuality or prophaneſs; and it is not long since many of them were cast out of the Ministerial service or suspended, for not reading a Book authorizing Dancing and other recreations on the Lords day. In a word, to reproach them as *Precisians* and *Puritans*, for the strictness of their lives, and yet at the same time to perswade men that they are ungodly for not keeping Holy daies, or not kneeling at the Sacrament, is not ingenuous dealing, and draws too neer the Manners of the Pagans, who called the Christians *ungodly*, because they durst not offer their sacrifices, and when they dragd them to the judgement-seats, they cryd *Tollite impios*, as if themselves were the *Godly men*: I compare not the matter of the causes here, but only the temper of the persons, and manner and justice of proceedings.

§. 49. And yet for all this I am resolved, if I live where such Holy daies as these are observed, to censure no man for observing them, nor would I deny them liberty to follow their judgements, if I had the power of their Liberties; provided they use not reproach and violence to others, and seek not to deprive them of their Liberties. *Paul* hath so long agoe decided these cases, *Rom. 14. & 15.* that if men would be Ruled by the word of God, the controversie were, as to the troublesome part of it, at an end. They that through weakness observe a Day to the Lord, that is not commanded them of God, should not judge their brethren that observe it not: and they that observe it not, should not despise or set at naught their weaker (though censorious)

rious) brethren that observe it ; but every one should be fully perswaded in his own mind. The Holy Ghost hath decided the case, that we should here bear with one another.

§. 50. Yea more, I would not only give men their Liberty in this, but if I lived under a Government that peremptorily commanded it, I would observe the outward rest of such a Holy day, and I would preach on it, and joyn with the Assemblies in Gods worship on it. Yea I would thus observe the Day, rather then offend a weak brother, or hinder any mans salvation, much more rather then I would make any division in the Church. I think in as great matters as this did *Paul* condescend when he circumcised *Timothy*, and resolved to eat no flesh while he lived rather then offend his brother, and to become all things to all men for their good. Where a thing is evil but by accident, the greatest Accidents must weigh down the less. I may lawfully obey and use the day, when another doth unlawfully command it : And I think this is the true case.

§. 51. 7. And for the next ceremony, the *Name and form of an Altar*, no doubt it is a thing indifferent, whether the Table stand this way or that way : and the Primitive Churches used commonly the names of *Sacrifice*, and *Altar*, and *Priest*, and I think, lawfully: for my part, I will not be he that shall condemn them. But they used them but *metaphorically*, as Scripture it self doth, *Heb.* 13. 10, 15, 16. *Rom.* 12. 1. *Ephes.* 5. 2. *Phil.* 2. 17. & 4. 18. All believers are called *Priests*, and their service, *Sacrifices*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5, 9. *Rev.* 1. 6. & 5. 10. & 20. 6. I conceive that the dislike of these things in *England* (the form and name of an Altar, and the Rails about it) was not as if they were simply evil : But 1. because they were illegal innovations, forced on the Churches without Law, or any just authority. And 2. because the way of those times did cause men to suspect, that somewhat worse was intended to be brought in by such preparatives ; especially when the Ministers were cast out.

§. 52. 8. But of all our Ceremonies, there is none that I have more suspected to be simply unlawfull then the *Cross* in *Baptism*. The rest, as I have said, I should have submitted to rather then hinder the Service or Peace of the Church, (had I been put to it : For living in those daies in a Priviledged place, I had my liberty in all save *Daies* and the *Gesture*.) But this I durst

never meddle with. And yet I know that many think it as reasonable, and more venerable then any of the rest. Yet dare I not *peremptorily* say that it is *unlawfull*: nor will I condemn either *Antients* or *Moderns* that use it: nor will I make any disturbance in the Church about it, more then my own forbearance will make: only my own practice I was forced to suspend, and must do if it were again imposed on me, till I were better satisfied. The Reasons that most move me, I shall give you in the end, but some of them take at the present.

§. 53. 1. This is not the meer *circumstance* of a Duty, but a *substantial humane ordinance of worship*: nor is it necessary in *genere* that man ordain any such *symbolical Mystical signs* for Gods worship: And therefore it is a matter totally exempt from humane Power. There must be some Time, some place, some gesture, some vesture, some utensils, &c. But you cannot say that, There must be some teaching symbols, or mystical signs, stated by humane institution in Gods worship: There is no command to man in Scripture *de genere* to institute any such thing. And therefore in the case of *Circumstantials* I shall usually (of which more anon) obey the Magistrate, even where he doth mistake, because it is his own work, though he misdoe it: But here his action is like that of a judge *in alieno foro*, in another court, where he hath no power, and therefore his judgement is null. It is not an act of Authority to make and state new mystical signs (that are such in their primary use,) in Gods worship: For there is no Power but of God: And God hath given no such power: They that say, *he hath*, let them prove it if they can. *Natural and Artificial* helps we disallow not: But *Instituted signs*, that have what they have by Institution, and that as a *solemn stated ordinance*, I know not that ever God required or accepted from the invention of man. I doubt this will prove a meer usurpation, and nullity, and worse.

§. 54. 2. Yea I suspect it will prove a *humane Sacrament*: either fully a Sacrament, or so neer akin to Sacraments, as that man hath nothing to do to institute it. The common prayer saith, that [a Sacrament is an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace, given to us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof] (in the

the Catech.) Let us try by this definition whether the *Cross* in *Baptism* as used in *England*, be a Sacrament.

§. 55. And 1. I may take it for granted that the want of the *Name*, makes it not to be no Sacrament. And 2. whereas in the definition, it is said that it is [*ordained by Christ himself*] that belongs to a *Divine* Sacrament only, and not to a *humane* Sacrament devised by usurpers. Otherwise you must say, that there is no such thing possible as a *humane* Sacrament imposed by usurpers on the Church; what if all the essentials of a Sacrament, such as are found in Baptism and the Lords supper, be invented by man, and forced on the Church, is it therefore no Sacrament? or only, no *Divine* Sacrament? However, let us not differ about bare names and words: It is the same thing that you call a Sacrament, when God is the ordainer: and sure it will not prove it lawfull because man is the ordainer; that's it that makes it *unlawfull*, because he wants authority, and acts as an usurper. The Papists affirm that man hath not power to make new Sacraments; no not the Pope himself. Let not us go further.

§. 56. And 1. the outward visible sign here is the *Cross* made in the fore-head: 2. The inward and Spiritual grace is, a holy Resolution to fight manfully under the banner of Christ, and to persevere therein. The *Cross* signifieth the Instrument of the sufferings of Christ, and that we do own this Crucified Saviour, and are not ashamed of him, and will manfully fight under him. So that here is 1. a signification of Grace to be wrought on the Soul, and given us by God. 2. an engagement to perform the duties of the Covenant our selves. On Gods part, we are to receive by this sign, both Qualitative or actual Grace, and Relative Grace. 1. The *Cross* is to teach our understandings, and help our memories, and quicken up our dull affections, by minding us of a Crucified Christ and the benefits of his *Cross*.

§. 57. That it is ordained for this use, appeareth from the words (anon to be recited) in the use of it, and by those words prefixed before the the Common prayer-book, [*of Ceremonies; why some are abolished, and some retained*] where they say that they [*be not darke and dumb Ceremonies, but are so set forth that every man may understand what they do mean, and to what use they do serve:*] and [that they are such as are apt to stir up

the dull mind of man, to the remembrance of his duty to God, by some notable and special signification, whereby he might be edified.] So that this and such other (if there be more such) are appointed by their signification to teach the Understanding, and stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God : Which are good works, but to be done only by good means.

§. 58. And that this is a way of working Grace in the same kind as Gods word and Sacraments do, is undeniable. For the word and Sacraments do work Grace but *Morally*, by propounding the object, and so objectively Teaching, Remembring, and Exciting, and thus working on the Understanding, Memory, and Will, and Affections. However the spirit may work within, its certain that the ordinances work no otherwise. And not only Protestants are agreed on this, but one would think that the Jesuits and all of their mind should be most of all for it. For faculties, they that will not confess any Physical determination of the but make all operations both of Word, Sacraments, and Spirit it self, to be but suafory or Moral, one would think should hold more tenaciously then others, that Sacraments work Grace but *Morally*. And if no Sacraments do more then objectively Teach and excite ; and the Cross is appointed to do as much in this, then there is no difference between them to be found.

§. 59. And then for *Relative Grace*, it is plain, that by the sign of the Cross as well as by Baptism, we are entred into a *State of Christianity* ; and so it is an *Investing Sacramental sign* ; It listeth us under the banner of Christ Crucified : And that is the very essential nature of the Sacrament of Baptism it self. As *Lifting* investeth the soldier in his Relation, and consequently in his Priviledges, so doth Baptism by Gods appointment ; and Crossing is supposed by mans appointment, to invest men in the Relation of the soldiers of Jesus Christ.

§. 60. Yea (more then is expressed in the Definition of a Sacrament in the Common prayer book) if you judge it essential to a Sacrament to be an *engaging Covenanting sign*, the Cross is instituted to this end. Yea more then that ; if you judge it essential to a Sacrament, to be an *engaging sign in the very Covenant of Grace it self*, and not only in some particular promise, this also is the end of its appointment. It is to engage our selves to a Crucified Christ as our Captain and Saviour by his Cross, and to bind