



CHAP. XI.

Prop. 11. *The Commands of Lawfull Governors about Lawfull Ceremonies, must be understood and obeyed with such exceptions as do secure the End; and not to the subverting of it.*

§. 1.



HE proof of this is obvious. These humane Ceremonies are appointed but as means to a further end. But that which would cross and overthrow the end, doth cease to be a Means; and cannot be used *sub ratione medii.*

§. 2. Order, and Decency are the pretended ends of the Imposed Ceremonies; and the right worshipping of God, and the good of mens souls are said to be the greater and remoter ends, and the glory of God the ultimate end. If then I have good assurance that I cannot use such or such a ceremony but it will prove the subversion of Order, or Edification, (though it should be by accident, through the infirmity of men,) I know no reason I have to use them, when such a mischief would follow, unless they can shew me some greater good that also will follow, which may recompence it.

§. 3. Therefore the commanding of unnecessary ceremonies, on such Penalty, as was done in England, and Scotland, to the

the silencing of the Preachers, and dissipating of the flocks, and casting out that worship, or hindring that Edification that was pretended to be their end, was preposterous both in the commanders and obeyers; and proved not convenient means to the ends pretended.

§. 4. If I be enjoined by the Magistrates (whom I mention as of more undoubted authority then our Bishops,) to read such and such chapters, and preach on such and such texts through the year, I am in reason to interpret their commands with this exception [*when it doth not apparently cross the main end.*] So that if in my course I should be commanded to read and preach of an aliene subject, when my hearers are running into schism, sedition, heresie, &c. I will suppose that if the Magistrate were present, he would allow me to read or preach according to the matter of present necessity. And if I were commanded to read the Common prayer in a Surplice and other formalities, I hope if the Church were all in an uproar, and the stools flying about my ears, as the women at *Edinburgh* used the Bishop, I might think it would not tend in that Congregation to order or Edification, to use such Ceremonies. Were they things of Gods institution, they would not edifie the people till they were prepared to receive them; and therefore that preparation should go first.

§. 5. Indeed it is the Pastors office to be the guide of his flock in the worship of God, and therefore to judge *pro re nata*, what subject to speak on to them, and what circumstances to choose, that may be most suitable to time, and place, and persons, to promote his ends, even the good of souls: And therefore no Magistrates should take the work or power of Pastors from them; though they may oversee them in the use of it.

CHAP. XII.

Prop. 12. It may be very sinfull to command some ceremonies, when yet it may be the subjects Duty to use them when they are commanded.

§. 1.



Add this Proposition as necessary both for Rulers and for Subjects: For Rulers; that they may not think that all may be lawfully Commanded which may be lawfully done when it is commanded. And for subjects; lest they think that all things are unlawfull to be done, which are sinfully commanded.

§. 2. Some Governors think, that the Sermons and Arguments that charge the people with sin for disobeying them, do all justify them for making the Laws, which others should obey: And all the words that are spent in aggravating the sin of the disobedient, they think are spoken in justification of their commands. And on the contrary, many people think that all that is said against the laws or penalties, is said in justification of their disobedience. And they are so lamentably weak that they cannot discern, how that can lawfully be obeyed, that is sinfully commanded: when yet the case is very plain.

§. 3. If a thing be simply unlawfull, as being forbidden by God himself, there no command of man can make it lawfull. But if it be but inconvenient or evil only by some accident or circumstance, it is possible for the commands of Governors to take off the accidental evil, and make it become a duty. For example,

It is not lawfull for me to travail one mile in vain: nor is it lawfull for a Prince to command me to travail a mile in vain: And yet if he send me such a command, to appear before him at such a place, (yea though it be many miles) it may become my duty to obey him. Otherwise subjects should not be bound to appear before any judicature, till they were satisfied of the cause, which is absurd. I a Prince command his officers to execute some unjust sentences, if they know it not, at least, it may be no sin of theirs, (in many cases) though it be his. Every war that is unlawfully undertaken by the Prince, is not unlawfull in all his Souldiers: Some of them that have not opportunity to know the evil of his undertaking, may be bound to obey (the case of others I determine not.)

§. 4. So if a *Pastor* call the Assembly at an inconvenient hour, or to an inconvenient place, though it be his sin to do so, yet is it their Duty to obey. If in the manner of Prayer he (tolerably) miscarry, they may not therefore refuse to join with him. If of two Translations of Scripture, or two versions of the Psalms, he use the worser, (so it be tolerable) they must obey.

§. 5. Yet if the miscarriage be so great in the ordering even of these circumstances, or in the Manner of Duties, as shall overthrow the Duty it self, and be inconsistent with the ends, or bring greater evils upon the Church, then our refusing to obey the Pastors (in those cases) can do; then (as I have before shewed) we are not bound to follow him in such a case: But otherwise we are.

§. 6. The Reasons of this are obvious and clear. Even because it is the office of the Governours to determine of such Circumstances: It is the *Pastors* office to guide and oversee the flock. And so the determining of Time and Place of worship, (thats undetermined) belongeth to his office: and the choice of the subject on which he shall preach, the leading them in prayer, and praise, and choice of versions, translations, and other ordinary helps in his work. And therefore when he determineth these, he is but in his own way, and doth but his own work: and therefore he is therein the judge, if the case be controvertible. If none shall obey a Magistrate or Pastor in the works of their own office, as long as they think he did them not

the best way, all Government then would be presently overthrown, and obedience denied. We are sure that God hath commanded us to obey them that are over us in the Lord, (1 Thes. 5. 12. Heb. 13. 7, 17, &c.) And therefore a Certain duty may not be forborn upon uncerttain conjectures, or upon every miscarriage in them that we owe it to. This would unchurch all Churches (as they are Political Societies) For if Pastors be taken down, and the work of Pastors, the Church is taken down: And if Government and obedience be taken down, then Pastors and their work is taken down; Which will be the fruit of this disorder.

§. 7. And the things in which the Pastor is now supposed to err, are not of themselves unlawfull; but only by such an accident, as being over-weighed by another accident, shall cease to make them unlawfull. For instance: If the Pastor appoint a more imperfect version of the Psalms to be sung in the Church (as is commonly done in *England*,) the obeying of him in the use of this, will not bring so much hurt to the Church as the disobeying on that account would do: For besides the sin of disobedience it self, the Church would be in a confusion, if they forsake his conduct that preserves the union; and some will be for this, and some for that, and so the worship it self will be overthrown. But if the Pastor would command a version so corrupt as would overthrow the duty it self, or be as bad as non-performance, the Church is then to seek redress, and not obey him. So if he command a Time inconvenient, but tolerable (as to meet at sun rising or sun setting) it were better obey then dissolve the Church (if we cannot be otherwise relieved) But if he appoint a Time thats intolerably unfit (as at midnight) I would not obey (except in such necessity, as leaves to that time or none) the same I spoke before of other circumstances.

§. 8. On the other side, if Magistrates or Pastors shall think their Imposition lawfull, because the people may lawfully obey them, they are as much mistaken. Even many of those Divines that wrote for conformity to the late Ceremonies, did take it to be the sin of those that imposed them, as they were imposed, and would have written as much against the Imposition, if they had but had liberty: I mean such writers as Mr. *Sprint*, Mr.

Mr. Paybody, Dr. John Burgess (who told the King of Pollio's glasses that were broken by Caesar, that no more anger and danger of mens lives should follow; and would have had him so to have used our Ceremonies.) So Zanchy that judged the Ceremonies such as might lawfully be used, did write to the Queen to take them down, and not leave them as snares to cast out the Ministers, and at the same time he wrote to the Ministers to use them, in case the Queen would not be perswaded to forbear the imposing and urging of them.

§. 9. If I be bound to obey a Governour if he set me to pick straws, or to hunt a feather, it followeth not that he may lawfully command it. I have heard many pleading for Ceremonies say, that if the Magistrate commanded them, and would not otherwise permit them to preach the Gospel, they would preach in a fools Coat, and a fools Cap with a feather, rather then forbear. But I do not think that any of them would justifie that Ruler that would make such a Law, that no man should preach or celebrate the Sacraments, but in a fools Coat and Cap: such might expect to be judged by Christ, as the scorers of him and his Ordinances.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Prop. 13. *The Constant use of things indifferent should not be (ordinarily) commanded; but they should be sometimes used, and sometimes disused.*

§. 1.



WILL say but little of this, because I have opened it before in the Disputation about Liturgies. The Reasons of it are plain. 1. Indifferent things should be used as indifferent things, and therefore with some indifferency.

§. 2. And 2. The people else will be brought to think them Necessary, if they be constantly used, and custome will grow to a Law: And no contradicting this by doctrine will serve turn to rectifie the mistake: For we cannot be alway nor oft preaching on such things: And if we were, yet practice is much more observed by them then doctrine; which commonly they understand not, or forget.

§. 3. And 3. Hereupon their minds will receive a false impression about the nature of their Religion, and they will be brought to worship they know not how, and to set a high value on that which is not to be valued; and consequently it will kindle a false zeal in their affections, and corrupt all their devotions.

§. 4. And 4. It will make them disobedient against Magistrates or Pastors that would take them off from their false apprehensions, and misguided practices: and if they live in a place
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where the Governours are against their customs, they will disobey them on pretence of duty to God, and think that they do him service in it.

§. 5. Yea 5. They will be uncharitably censorious against their Brethren that are not of their mind, and look on them as men that are self-conceited or irreligious, as the Papists do by all that do not entertain every opinion which they annumerate with the Articles of their faith, and every practice which they place their Religion in.

§. 6. We see all this by sad experience among our selves. The imposers of our Ceremonies and the maintainers of them, did still profess that they were no parts, but Accidents of worship; and they pleaded for them but as things indifferent. And yet now the Magistrate, and their lawfull acknowledged Pastors, would bring the people in some of these Ceremonies to change their customs; they will not do it, in many places, but make conscience (as they profess) of Gestures, and forms and Dayes, and such like, as if they had been of Divine Institution. If they be things Indifferent, why may not they disuse an Holy day one year as they use it another or disuse a form of Prayer one day, as they use it another, or receive the Lords Supper one time sitting, as they do another time kneeling? But this they will not endure to yield to: so that you see that constant uninterrupted use, hath made custome a Law with them, and given the Lie to the Doctrine of the Bishops themselves, that called them but indifferent things; and caused the people to place Gods worship in them.

§. 7. And on the other side a constant purposed disuse of convenient Modes and Circumstances of worship, may draw people to think them things unlawfull, and to rise up against them as innovations, and strange things, when they are imposed.

§. 8. Yet here we must distinguish of indifferent things. Some are so convenient, that we cannot frequently vary, but with great inconveniency and wrong to the Church (as a due hour for Assembling, and a convenient place, and the best Translations, and versions of the Psalms, the fittest Utensils for worship, &c.) In all these cases it were giddiness to vary frequently and without need; and yet worse to tie men up from

varying when they find need. Other things are of ordinary inconvenience, which therefore ordinarily should be disused: though in some cases of necessity they must be allowed. Other things depend upon the will of men, and there is no great difference in point of convenience between the using and disusing them, but what the will of man doth cause: (as in our vestures, our gestures in some of the Ordinances, as in hearing, singing Psalms, and in abundance of Ceremonies or Circumstances, this is the case.) These are they that I say should be used, but unconstantly.

§. 9. As for them that cry out of Confusion and Sacrilege, and irreligiousness, and I know not what, if Ceremonies be not constantly used, and all forced to them, but be used with an indifferency; the distempers of their own souls contracted by such Customs, is a sufficient argument to move a sober considerate man, to desire that the Church may be delivered from such endangering customs. They do but tell us that custom hath made ceremonies become their very Religion! And what a kind of Religion is that?

CHAP.



CHAP. XIV.

*Reasons against the Imposing of our late
Controverted Mystickall Ceremonies,
as Crossing, Surplice, &c.*

§. 1.



OW far Ceremonies are lawfull or unlawfull to the users, I have shewed sufficiently already: and therefore may omit the fourteenth Proposition as discussed before: But so eager are the minds of men to be exalting themselves over the whole world, and putting yokes on their Brethrens necks, even in the matters of God, and setting up their own wills to be the Idols and Law-givers to all others, that I take it for the principal part of my task, to give in my Reasons against this distemper, and to try if it be possible to take men off from Imposing or desiring, the Imposition of unnecessary things. I durst not desire the Imposing of our Mystickall Ceremonies, but had rather they were abolished, or left indifferent, for these followings Reasons.

§. 2. *Reas.* 1. To impose new symbolical Rites upon the Church which Christ hath not imposed, doth seem to me to be an usurpation of his Sovereign power. It belongeth to him to be the Law giver of his Church. No man hath Power to make him a new worship. Officers are but to see his Laws executed: and to determine only of such circumstances, as are needfull for the well executing them. To make new Symbols or instituted

signs to teach and excite Devotion, is to make new humane Ordinances: whereas it belongs to us only to use well such as he hath made: and to make no Laws but such as are thus needfull for the executing of his Laws. But of all this I have more largely spoken already.

§. 3. *Reas.* 2. The imposing of these Mystical Rites doth seem to accuse Christ of ignorance or negligence, in that he hath not himself imposed them, when he hath taken upon him that Royall office to which such Legislation doth belong. If Christ would have such Rites imposed on the Churches, he could better have done it himself, then have left it to man. For 1. These being not mutable circumstances, but the matter of standing Laws, are equally necessary or unnecessary to this age of the Church as to that in which Christ lived upon earth, and to those Countreys in which he conversed as to these. If Images, Crossing, significant garments, &c. be needfull to be imposed in *England*, why not in *Judea*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia*, &c. And if they are needfull now, why not then? No man can give a rational cause of difference, as to this necessity. If therefore Christ did neither by himself nor by his Apostles, (who formed the first Churches, and delivered us his mind by the Spirit) institute and impose these Rites, then either the imposing of them is needless, and consequently noxious: or else you must say that Christ hath omitted a needfull part of his Law and worship, which implies that he was either ignorant what to do, or careless and neglective of his own affairs, which are not to be imagined. *Moses* left nothing out of the Law that he delivered, that was to be the standing matter of the Law: nor omitted he any thing that God required in the instituting of the Legal worship. But Christ was faithfull to him that appointed him as *Moses* was in all his house, *Heb.* 3. 2, 3. therefore certainly Christ hath omitted nothing that was to be a standing Gospel Law and Worship nor done his work imperfectly.

§. 4. *Reas.* 3. And as this Imposition of Mystical Rites doth imply an accusation of Christ, so doth it imply an accusation of his Laws, and of the holy Scriptures, as if they were insufficient. For if it belong to Scripture sufficiency to be the full revelation of the will of God concerning Ordinances of worship and duties of universal or stated Necessity, then must we not
 imagine

imagine that any such are left out. If Scripture be Gods Law, it is a perfect law: And if it belong to it as a Law to impose one stated Symbol, Ordinance, or matter of worship, then so it doth to impose the rest of the same nature that are fit to be imposed. If we will do more of the same that Scripture was given for to do, we accuse it, while we seem to amend it.

§. 5. *Reas.* 4. And by this means we shall be brought to a loss for the Rule of our Religion. For if once we leave the holy Scriptures, we shall not know where to fix. If God have not instituted all the Ordinances of Worship (such as Sacramental, or Mystical Rites, &c.) that are meet to be stately Imposed on the Churches, then we are uncertain who is to be the institutor of them. The Pope will claim it: and General Councils will claim it: and Provincial Councils, and particular Bishops will claim it: and Princes will claim it: and we shall be at a loss for our Religion.

§. 6. *Reas.* 5. But whoever it be that will be the master of our Religion they will certainly be men, and so it will become a humane thing. Whereas Divine worship supposeth a Divine institution: and it is an act of obedience to God, and therefore supposeth a Law of God: For without a Divine Law there cannot be obedience to God.

§. 7. *Reas.* 6. These impositions seem to be plain violations of those prohibitions of God, in which we are forbidden to add to his worship, or diminish from it. As *Deut.* 12. 32. [What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.] *Object.* But we add nothing to the Word of God, though we impose such Mystical Rites as he imposeth not. *Ans.* The text doth not say Thou shalt not add to my Command] but [Thou shalt not add to the thing that I command thee.] It is the Work, Worship, or Ordinances that you are forbidden to add to, or diminish from, and not the Word or Law it self only.

§. 8. *Reas.* 7. It seemeth to be a very great height of *Pride* that is manifested in these impositions. 1. When men dare think themselves wise enough to amend the work of Christ and his Apostles, and wise enough to amend the holy Scriptures: is not this exceeding *Pride*? How can man more arrogantly lift up

himself, then by pretending himself to be wiser then his Maker and Redeemer? Is it not bad enough to equalize your selves with him, unless you exalt yourselves above him? If you do not so, what mean you by coming after him to correct his Laws, or mend his work, and make better laws and ordinances for his Church then he himself hath done? 2. And I think it is no better then Pride for men so far to exalt themselves above the Church of God, as to institute new signs and ordinances, and say, [*I command you all to worship God according to these my institutions and inventions: and he that will not thus worship him, shall not have liberty to worship him at all, nor to live in the Communion of Christians.*] What's Pride and arrogancy, if this be not?

§. 9. *Reas. 8.* None knoweth the mind of God concerning his worship, but by his own Revelation: If therefore he have not Revealed it to man, that he would be served by such mystical Rites, and Ceremonies, then no man can know that it will please him. And if it please him not, it will be lost labour and worse: and we may expect to hear [*who requireth this at your hands?*] How do you know that it pleaseth him to be served by Images, Exorcisms, Crossings, and many pompous Ceremonies? He hath nowhere told you so. And your will is no proof of the will of God.

§. 10. *Reas. 9.* God would not have taken down the Legal Ceremonies, and delivered us from them as a burden, and commanded us to stand fast in the Liberty with which Christ hath made us free, and not again to be entangled with the yoke of bondage *Gal. 5. 1.* if he would have given men leave to have imposed the like burdensome observances at their pleasure. If you say that these present Ceremonies are not burdensome; I aske, why then were those of Gods institution burdensome? That yoke was freight and burden heavy; and Christ hath called us to take upon us his yoke that is easy, and his burden that is light. *Matth. 11. 28.* It was not only the threatnings conjunct against the disobedient, that made the Jewish Ceremonies to be a burden, which they were not able to bear, *Act. 15.* nor yet because they were but Types (for to be Types of Christ, was their highest honour:) But also because they were numerous, and required labour and time, and were unnecessary (when Christ was come) and so against the liberty of the Church, as

Col. 2. 16. &c. And is it a likely thing that God would take down his own institutions when they became unnecessary, and at the same time give commission to the Pastors of the Church to set up unnecessary Ceremonies of their own? Yea or give them leave to do it, without his commission? If it be such a mercy to be delivered from Divine Ceremonies, when they grew needless, and a liberty which we are commanded to stand fast in, I know not why men should impose on us unnecessary Ceremonies of their own, and rob us of our Mercies.

§. 11. *Reas. 10.* The imposition of unnecessary Ceremonies, is a certain means for the Division of Christians, and therefore is but an engine of the Devill, the great divider. As the Papists set up a Vicechrist and false Center of union, under pretence of the unity of Christians, when nothing is so great a cause of their division; so usually the Imposers of Ceremonies pretend the Unity and Peace of Christians to be their end, when they are most effectually dividing them. They are preserving the house by casting fire into the thatch. There is no more effectual means of Division, then to set up impossible terms of unity, and tell men, that they must Agree upon these or none. All Christians will unite in Christ, and Agree in all the essentials of Christianity, and all that is the known word of God: But no wise man will expect that all Christians should ever Unite and Agree about the Mystical signs and Ceremonies of mans invention and imposition. Come to a Congregation that walke in unity and holy order in the simplicity of faith and Scripture ordinances, and make Laws to this Church, that no man shall joyne in the worship of God, that will not Crosse himself, and be sprinkled with holy water, and bow toward the Altar, and wear a sword and helmet, to signifie the spiritual warfare, and such like; and try whether this course will not divide the Congregation; Men are liker to agree in few things then in *many*; in *Certain* truths, then in uncertain *Controversies*; in *Divine* ordinances, then in *Humane inventions*. Undoubtedly if you impose such Ceremonies, multitudes of honest Christians will dissent. And if they dissent, what will you do with them? If you leave them to their liberty, then your Ceremonies are not imposed. If you do not, you will drive them to a separation, and break all in pieces.

pieces by your violence, and exasperation of mens minds.

§. 12. *Reas. 11.* And by this means you will be led, and also lead others into the haynous guilt of persecuting the members of Christ. For when you have made Laws for your Ceremonies, you will expect obedience, and take all for schismaticks or disobedient that refuse them; and its like your laws will be backt with penalties; you will not be content to have the liberty of using these Ceremonies themselves, and to leave all other to their liberties. We hear (and formerly heard it more) how impatient almost all of this way are of diversity in Circumstances and Ceremonies. They take it to be intoterable confusion to have diversity in these things: what say they? shall one use one gesture, and another use another? what confusion will this be? or if a few of the wiser sort have more wit, yet custome will bring the multitude to this pass. We see now, they will not endure to joyn with those that sit at the Lords Supper, though they may kneel themselves. If they see but two or three shops in a Town open on Christmas day, they throw stones at them and break their windows, where they dare, and are ready to rise up against such as enemies in war. Besides you will take it as a contempt of your Laws, if men do not conform to them: And if you use the Ceremonies, and others disuse them, you will think they censure your practice by their forbearance. And its like they will be forced to give some *reasons* of their forbearance: And those Reasons must needs be against your way, and consequently seem to disparage you, so that I may take it for granted, that those that would have Ceremonies, would have them forced on the Church, and so would raise a persecution to maintain them.

§. 13. And then this persecution when its once begun, its never like to stay till it reach to the height of Cruelty. For 1. When you have begun, you will think that you are engaged in honour to carry it on, and not to suffer every poor man or woman to disobey you, and disparage your wisdom. 2. And if you lay but a gentle penalty on dissenters, it will do no good on them (but perhaps excite them to the more opposition.) When Conscience is engaged against you, it is not small mulcts nor imprisonment neither that will alter the judgements or the waies of such. And therefore you must either proceed to
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blood or banishment, or you miss your ends, and will but be opposed with greater animosity.

§. 14. *Reas.* 12. And then this will raise an *odium* upon your Government, and make men look upon you as tyrants: For naturally men pity the suffering party, especially when it is for the cause of God, or Profession of more then ordinary exactness in the obeying of Gods commands: And then mens minds will by this be tempted to disloyal jealousies, and censures, if not to the opposition of the Rulers.

§. 15. *Reas.* 13. And it were an evil which your Ceremonies will never countervail, if it were but the *uncharitableness* that will certainly be raised by them. When you will persecute men, and force them against their Consciences in such indifferent things (as you call them) you will occasion them to judge you persecutors, and cruel, and then they will censure you as ungodly, yea as enemies to the Church: And then you will censure them for schismatical, and self-conceited, and refractory disobedient people. And so Christian love, and the offices of love will be extinguished, and you will be mutually engaged in a daily course of hainous sin.

§. 16. *Reas.* 14. And it will be the worse, in that your persecution will oft fall on the most conscientious persons. Hypocrites and temporizers dare do any thing; and therefore will follow the stronger side, and obey him for their worldly ends. But the upright Christian dare not do that which is displeasing to God, for a world: He is the man that will be imprisoned, or banished, or rackt, or slain, rather then he will go against his Conscience. And is it not a horrid thing to make such Laws, that the most conscionable are likeliest to fall under, and to perish by? May it not make you tremble, to read that God himself doth call such his Jewels (*Mal.* 3. 16, 17.) and saith, he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye, and that it were better for him be cast into the depth of the sea with a Millstone about his neck, that offendeth one of these little ones? Away with the Ceremonies that are unnecessary, and yet have such effects, and bring you into such danger.

§. 17. *Reas.* 15. And then a more grievous evil will follow: the Ceremony will devour the substance, and shut out the preachers, and consequently the word and worship of the Lord.

For you will never give men Liberty to forbear them. And when godly Ministers will not be conformable to your will, you must silence them, lest they draw the people from you. And so the ignorant must be left in their ignorance, and the prophane in their prophaneſs, and the godly in their sorrows for want of their faithful Teachers, and the ordinances of grace.

§. 18. *Reaf.* 16. And then it will follow, that ignorant, idle, ungodly Ministers must be taken in to supply their rooms: For if the best disobey you, you will think your selves necessitated to take such as will obey you. And so God shall be dishonoured, his word and work abused, his people grieved, his enemies encouraged, the wicked hardened, and the unworthy Ministers themselves undone and destroyed; and all for a few unnecessary ceremonies of your vain invention.

§. 19. *Reaf.* 17. And now it were more unexcusable then ever before, to Impose such unnecessary burdens on the Churches, when we have so lately seen and felt the sad and miserable effects of such impositions. We are scarce out of the fire, that this straw and rubbish kindled in this land. We are the men that have seen the Churches divided by them, and the preachers cast out for them, and persecution occasioned by them, and the Nation hereupon corrupted with uncharitableness, the Bishops against the people; and the people against the Bishops; and war and misery hence arising. And yet shall we return to the occasion of our misery, and that while we confess it to be a needless thing?

§. 20. *Reaf.* 18. Yea this course is like to kindle and maintain Divisions between the Churches of several Nations, as well as among those that are under the same government. For either you will have all the Christian world to join with you in your Mystical and unnecessary Ceremonies, or not: All cannot be expected to join with you: For 1. The world will never agree in such humane unnecessary things. 2. There is no universal governor to Impose one Law of Ceremonies on all the Churches. Christ only is the universal King and Head: and he hath done his part already. If you will have more universal Laws, you must first have another universal King or Head. And there is none such. Only the Pope and a General Council pretend

pretend to it ; and they are both deceived (in this) and would deceive us. They are none of our Lords, as I have elsewhere proved. But if you expect not universal Concord in your Mystical signs and Ceremonies ; then 1. Why should you cast out your Preachers and brethren, for those things which other Nations may be so well without : and hold communion with foreigners that avoid them, and deny Communion to neighbors as good, that are of the same mind ? And 2. This will make foreign Churches and you to grudge at one another, and the diversity will cause disaffection : especially when you persecute your members for the cause thats theirs. We find now by experience, that the Images, Exorcism, Crossing, &c. of the *Lutherans* doth exceedingly hinder their Peace with other Churches, while others censure them as superstitious ; and they by custome are grown so highly to value their own Ceremonies, as to censure and disdain those that are not of their mind.

§. 21. *Reas.* 19. It easily breedeth and cherisheth *ignorance and formality* in the people. You cannot keep them from placing their Religion in these Ceremonies : and so from deceiving their souls by such a Pharisaical Religiousness, in washings and observances : And so in vain will they worship God, while their worship is but a Conformity to the doctrines, traditions, and inventions of men. *Mat.* 15.

§. 22. *Reas.* 20. To prevent these evils (and yet in vain) your Rites and Signs must bring New doctrines, and new labours into the Church, which will exceedingly hinder the doctrine and work of Christ. The Ministers must teach the people the meaning and use of all these Ceremonies (or else they will be dumb signs, contrary to your intent, and the use of them will be vain) And if we must spend our time in opening to our people the meaning of every ceremony that you will impose : 1. It will be but an unfavoury kind of preaching. 2. It will divert them and us from greater and more needful things. Yea we must teach them, with what *Cautions*, in what *manner*, to what *ends*, &c. to use all these Ceremonies ; or else they will turn them all to sin ; if not to Popish, yea to heathenish formalities. And alas, how much ado have we to get our people to understand the Creed, and the Kernel of the Gospel, the essentials of Christianity, and the two Sacraments of Christs institution,

tion, and some short Catechism that containeth these? And when we have done our best in publick and in private, we leave many of them ignorant what these two Sacraments are, yea or who Christ himself is. And must we put them to so much more labour, as to learn a *Rationale* or exposition of all the Ceremonies, holy dayes, &c? We shall but overwhelm them, or divers them from the Essentials.

And here you may see the unhappy issue of humane wisdom and false means. It is to be teachers of the ignorant that men pretend these Signs, Images and Ceremonies to be usefull. And yet they are the causes of ignorance, and keep men from necessary knowledge. If you doubt of this, do but open your eyes, and make use of experience: See whether among the common people the most Ceremonious are not commonly the most ignorant? yea and the most ungodly too? It is a truth so notorious, that it cannot be denied. Who more ignorant of the Sacraments, then they that rail at them that sit in the act of receiving? Who more ignorant of the doctrine of the Gospel? who more obstinate enemies of a holy life, more worldly, self-conceited, licentious, prophane, despisers of their faithfull Teachers, then the most zealous persons for all these Ceremonies?

§. 23. *Reas.* 21. Moreover these new Laws and services introduce also a new office into the Church. There must be some of pretended Power to impose all these Ceremonies, and see them executed: or else all is vain. And no such office hath Christ appointed. Because men thought it necessary that all the Christian world should have but one way and Order in the Ceremonious worship which was commonly approved, therefore they thought there was a Necessity of one Head to maintain this unity of order: and so came up the Pope, (as to one cause.) And so in a Nation, we must have some one or more Masters of Ceremonies, when Ceremonies are kept a foot. And so whereas Christ hath placed officers in his Church to teach and guide them, and administer his own Ordinances, we must have another sort of officers, to make Laws for Mystical signs and Ceremonies, and see them executed, and punish the neglecters, and teach the people the meaning and the use of them. The Primitive Bishops had other kind of work; we find directi-

ons to the Pastors of the Church containing the works of their office (as to *Timothy, Titus, &c.*) But we no where find that this is made any part of their work, to make new Teaching signs and Ceremonies, and impose them on the Church, nor have they any directions for such a work : which surely they much needed, if it had been their work indeed.

§. 24. *Reas. 22.* When we once begin to let in humane Mystical Rites, we shall never know where to stop, or make an end. On the same ground that one Age inventeth three or four, the next think they may add as many, and so it will grow to be a point of devotion, to add a new Ceremony (as at *Rome* it hath done) till we have more then we well know what to do with.

§. 25. *Reas. 23.* And the miserable plight that the Christian world hath lain in many ages by Ceremonies, may warn us to be wise. *Augustine* complaineth that in his time the Church was burdned with them, and made like the Jewish Synagogue. The most of the Churches in *Asia* and *Africa* are drowned too deeply in Ceremonious formality, turning Religion into ignorant shews. The Church of *Rome* is worse then they ; having made God a worship of histrionical actions, and shews and signs and Ceremonies : so that millions of the poor blind people worship they know not *whom* nor *how*. And if we abate only of the number, and keep up some of the same kind, (even Symbolicall Rites of mans institution, to teach us, and excite our devotion) we shall harden them in their way, and be disabled from confuting them. For a Papist will challenge you to prove just how many such signs are lawfull : And why he may not use threescore as well as you use three, when he saith he is edified by his number, as you say you are with yours ?

§. 26. *Reas. 24.* It is not inconsiderable that God hath purposely established a spiritual kind of worship in the Gospel, telling us that God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and in truth : Such worshippers doth God require and accept : Bodily exercise profitech little. The kingdom of God is not in meats or in drinks, but in Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost : Neither Circumcision availeth any thing in Christ Jesus, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and faith that worketh by Love. God would never have so much