

no Vertue, if God no more regard it; and sin is no sin, if against no Law. Indeed while you live among Believers, where vice is in disgrace, you may for your credit seem to be *vertuous*: But your Profession alloweth us to judge that you avoid no evil that you dare commit, if it do but suit with your *fleshy interest*. He that believeth no Life to come, and tells me so, doth bid me, in effect, to suppose him resolved for all the wickedness imaginable, so far as he dare, and hath temptations and opportunity. Are you of this Brutish judgement! I shall expect from you then no better then a brutish life: and trust you less then I would do a brute, because you have more interest and temptation to do evil, and more cunning to perform it. Are you *Brutists* in opinion? Then you are *already habitually perfidious, cruel, covetous, malicious, murderers, whoremongers, thieves, lyars, and worse*, if any thing be worse! For honest you cannot for shame expect that any should esteem you. I will not believe a word you say, further then some interest of your own is concerned in the truth of it.

Qu. 17. If it be not the very *Light and Law of Nature* that teacheth and obligeth a man to believe a life to come, how comes it to pass, that all the world, except a few *Savages and Cannibals*, and here and there an *Apostate among us*, do universally profess to believe it? The Jews, the Turks, the Heathens of most Nations, besides the Christians, do all make it an Article of their Belief. We differ indeed about the way (and yet are all agreed that *Godliness and Honesty; fearing God, and doing Righteousness*, are necessary); but that there is another life, we are in almost all the world agreed. And will you go against the light of humane Nature it self? Or with what face can you expect that here and there such a wretch as you, should be though wiser then all the world, till you give us better evidence of your wisdom? And how justly do they perish that will follow you?

Quer. 18. Are not those that Believe the Life to come of *Holy lives* (for the generality) then those that do not? And whether is it like that God should reveal his mind to them, or unto wicked wretches? and is it liker that he should forsake all the holy persons of all ages, and give them up to deceit in the greatest matters, who most diligently study and pray for Knowledge, rather then forsake those sensual wretches that wilfully forsake him?

Quer. 19. Is there not in thy own Conscience, at least sometimes,

times, some fears yet left of a life to come? I believe there is: and when thou hast done thy worst, thou wilt hardly perfectly overcome them. Doth not conscience say, *O but what if there should be a Hell for the ungodly? Where am I then?* Harken then to thy Conscience.

Quer. 20. Dost thou believe that Spirits in borrowed shapes have oft appeared unto men, and in voices spoken to them, to draw them to sin, or to perdition? If thou dost believe it, thou maist easily believe that there is a Hell which they are so busie to perswade us to, and a Heaven of which they would deprive us. If thou believe not that there have been such Apparitions, I am able to give thee undenyable testimonies. Read what I have said in my Treatise against Infidelity of this. Read *Remigius, Bodin, Danaus, Matheus Maleficorum*, &c. of Witches; and Read a little Book called *The Devil of Mascon*, where is abundant testimony of his Vocal conference, for about a quarter of a year together, in the house of a godly Minister in a populous City, before Papists, Protestants, and all. Many I could give you that were done here at home.

In these twenty Questions I have but endeavoured to prepare you to Believe, by shewing you the very Light of Nature: But it is a lively faith in the word of God that effectually prevaieth against Infidelity: and therefore next let us come to that. I will not so much lose my time as to cite particular Texts of Scripture, for that which is the very work and drift of the Scripture. But because thou canst have no shift in the world for thy Brutish unbelief, but by denying the Scripture to be the Word of God, I referr thee to that which I have written in the Books forementioned to prove it: And at this time shall add to what is there said, but these few Questions.

Qu. 1. If the Scripture be not the Word of God, How could it tell us of the making of the world, and such like things, which none but God alone could tell? I know you will say, I know not whether it tell us true or not; or whether the world were not, as Aristotle thought, from eternity. But tell me this then (to pass by the rest now) How comes it to pass that in all the world, there are no Books or Monuments known of any longer standing then the time that Scripture assigneth to the Creation? It is not six thousand years since the Creation. If the world had lasted thousands and millions of years before, is it possible that all its Antiquities should be lost, and

and not one to be seen, nor mentioned by man in all the world, (For the fabulous tales of some in *China*, without all proof, are not worth the mentioning.) Certainly some Book would have been saved; or some Cities, or lasting piles or stony monuments preserved, or some sign or tradition kept alive, of some of all those many thousand years.

If you say, that *Writing or Printing were not then known*; you come to that which confounds you more. How is it possible that in so many hundred thousand years, the world grew to no more experience, and Arts and Sciences were ripened no more, when now they have ripened in a shorter time? How is it that *Printing and Writing* were not found out? and that all Sciences and Arts are of so late invention, and as it were, but in their youth? Certainly Knowledge is the daughter of Experience, and Experience the daughter of Time; and therefore if the world had been from eternity, it must needs have been many a hundred thousand years ago at a far higher state of Knowledge than is yet attained in the world. For every age receiveth the experiences and writings of the former, and hath opportunity still to make improvement of them. At least the world could not have been ignorant so long, of *Printing, Writing*, and a hundred things that are certainly of late invention. It is therefore an incredible thing that an *Eternal world* should lose all the memorials and monuments of its Antiquity, before the Scripture-time of the Creation. And therefore doubtless it began but then.

Qu. 2. And if God were not the Author of the Scripture, how come so many clear and notable Prophecies of it to be fulfilled? How punctually doth *David*, and *Isaiab* (53.) describe the sufferings of Christ, and *Daniel* foretell the very year? and so of many others?

Qu. 3. And how comes it all to contain but one entire frame, conspiring to reveal the same doctrine of grace and life, (at first more darkly, and in types and promises, and afterwards more clearly in performance) when the writers lived at hundreds and thousands years distance from each other?

Qu. 4. And if thou hadst not a blinded prejudiced mind, thou wouldst perceive an unimitable Majesty and spirituality in the Scripture, and wouldst savour the spirit of God in it as its author: and wouldst know by the image and superscription, that it is the Word of God. It beareth unimitably the Image of his Power, and

and *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*; so that the blessed Author may to a faithful soul be known by the work.

Qu. 5. If the *Scripture* came not from the *Spirit*, it could not give or cause the *spirit*; and if it bore not Gods Image it self, how could it priet his Image upon the souls of so many thousands as it doth? The *Image of God* is first engraven on the seal of his holy *Doctrine*, and thereby imprinted on the heart. There is no part of that *holy change* on man, but what that *holy Doctrine* wrought. If therefore the *change* be of God, the *Doctrine* that wrought it is of God: For both of them are the same *Image*, answering each other, as that on the seal and on the wax. But it is most certain that the *Holy change* on the soul, is of God. The nature of it sheweth this: For it consisteth in the destruction of our sin, and the denyal of our selves, and the raising the heart above this world, and the total Devoting of our selves and all that we have to God, and conforming our selves to his will, and resting in it, and seeking and serving him with all our power, against all temptations, and living in the fervent Love of God, and of our Brethren, and desires after everlasting life; and a taking Christ for our Lord and Saviour, to reconcile us to God, and do all this in us by his Spirit: And surely such a work as this must needs be of God. If it be *Good*, it must needs be *Originally* from him that is most *Good*: this is undenyable. (And he that will say, this is *Evil*, is so much of the Devils nature and mind, that it is no wonder if he follow him, and be *Brutified*). And you cannot say, that the *Work* is good, and the *Doctrine* bad: For the *Work* is nothing but the *Impress* of the *Doctrine*: And God doth not use to appoint or use a frame of falsehoods and deceits, as his ordinary means to renew mens souls, and work them to his Will.

Perhaps you will say, that you see no such change made by the Word, nor any such spirit given by it unto men, but only the effects of their own Imaginations. But, 1. The Question is, Whether they are *True* or *false Imaginations*? Gods truth causeth that *Impress* on the mind of man, which you call his *Imaginations*: For where should *Truth* be received, but in the mind? and how should it work, but by *cogitation*? They are *cogitations* above and contrary to those of flesh and blood, that are wrought by this *holy Doctrine*. It is nevertheless of the *spirit*, because it moveth man by *consideration*.

2. And

2. And if you see not a work on the hearts of the regenerate appearing in their lives, which raiseth them to a far better state then others, it can be no better then *strangeness* or *malice* that can so far blind you.

3. But if it be *so with you*, give leave yet to the *persons that know* this holy change in themselves, to believe the more confidently the Word that wrought it. We know that we are renewed and passed from our former spiritual death to life: and therefore that it was the *Truth of God* that did the *Work of God* upon us. Nothing but *Truth* can *sanctifie*: But the Word doth *sanctifie*: therefore the Word is *Truth*.

Indeed the *Holy Church* of Christ throughout all ages of the world, hath been his *living Image*, and so a *living Witness* of his Word, as shewing by *their lives* the transcript of it in *their hearts*. It is easie for any that know them, except the maliciously blind, to perceive that the true servants of Christ are a more purified, refined, honest, conscionable, holy, heavenly people then the rest of the world. For my part, I am fully convinced of it; I see it; there is no comparision: for all their imperfections which they and I lament, I am fully satisfied that there is much more of God on them then on others. And therefore there is much more of God in the Doctrine that renewed them, then in any other: The Church is the *living Scripture*, the *pillar and ground of the truth*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. the *Law is written in their hearts*, Heb. 8. 10. better then it was in the *Tables of stone*, 2 Cor. 3. 3. And by their *holy Love and Works*, the world may know that *Jesus Christ* was sent of the Father, and may be brought to believe in him, by their *Unity*, John 17. 21, 22, 23. Matth. 5. 16. God would not concur so apparently and powerfully with a *false doctrine*, to make so great a change in man; nor so far own it, as to use it for the doing of the most excellent work in all this world, even the gathering him such a Church, and sanctifying to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14.

If you say that *some of the Heathens have been as good*: I answer, 1. The Goodness found in them, is but in *temperance*, *fidelity*, and such like; and not a holy spirituality, or heavenliness, no nor a through-conscienciousness in what they knew.

2. That good was rare in comparision of that which the *Gospel* worketh, as well as *small*.

3. That good which they had, was wrought only by some

scraps or parcels of the *same holy Truth* that is contained in the Scriptures. And therefore even so much Truth among the Heathens as profited them to any Reformation, was the word of God, and owned by him.

Quer. 6. Do you believe that Jesus Christ did rise again from the dead, or not? and that he and his Disciples did work those many uncontrolled Miracles, or not? If you do believe it, then what need you further testimony to prove the doctrine to be of God? or to prove that there is a Life to come? Shall the Captain of our Salvation himself Rise from the dead, and conquer death, and ascend up into Heaven, to shew us that there is a Life to come, and yet will you not believe it? Or would God lend to any man his Power to confirm a false doctrine to the world? If so, then 1. It would be God himself that should mislead us: For it is he that worketh the Miracles, or granteth special Power to the instrument to do it. 2. Man should be unavoidably misled. For if a man rise from the Dead, and raise others, and give to thousands the gifts of *Languages, healing*, and the like, and all this have no greater contrary evidence from God of some contradiction or controullment, I am unavoidably deceived; and neither my greatest innocency, or diligence, or any other help from men, could possibly relieve me. And he that can believe that the *Infinitely Powerful, Wise, and Good*, is either necessitated or disposed to deceive the world, and Rule them by deceit and falshood, and to lend his power to confirm a doctrine that he *hateth*, and is against himself, this man indeed believeth not that there is any God. 3. Even the *Brutists themselves* and all the *Infidels* with whom we talk, will confess that if they should see *Christ Rise*, or see such *Miracles*, they would believe: and therefore they do confess that they are *cogent Evidence* to those that know of them.

Obj. Did not the sorcerers in Egypt work Miracles?
Ans. 1. Wonders they did, but not Miracles. 2. They were controlled and shamed and disowned by God, by Moses his contradictory conquering Miracles.

Obj. But some might have dyed between the Magicians wonders and Moses controulment, and so have been unavoidably lost. Answ. 1. The time was neer, and that not likely of those that knew of them. 2. At the first wonder of the Magicians, Aarons Rod swallowed up their Rods, Exod. 7. 12. and therefore the conquest obliged them to suspend belief of the other. 3. The Miracles of
Moses

Moses were not to reveal a *new doctrine* of *salvation* that could not otherwise be known : but partly to convince *Pharaoh* that the Lord was God, and partly to cause him to let go the Israelites. The peoples salvation lay not on the later ; and the former they had abundant means to know by the works and light of Nature it self. And the *Magicians* wonders were not to reveal a *New false doctrine* any further then to contend againg *Moses Miracles* ; and if they had, yet being against the doctrine of the whole Creation, that revealeth the Creator, no man could be excusable for believing them, because God hath given so full a testimony before against them, so that this objection is plainly but an impertinent cavil.

But I doubt not but you will say, that you are not sure that *Christ* rose again, and that ever such *Miracles* were done. I Ask therefore,

Quer. 7. Whether it be possible, that so many and so wise and godly men (as their writings prove them) should give up their lives and all that they had and could have hoped for in this world, to perswade the world that they saw Christ Risen, if it were false ; and to draw them to believe a falshood that tended to the worldly ruine of them all ?

Quer. 8. And is it possible that if they had been so bad and mad, that so many thousands would have believed them, When their own frequent Miracles, Language, &c. were the witness of their fidelity to which they openly appealed ? and this in the very age and place where all these things might easily be confuted if untrue ? If I should pretend to convince the world by Languages not learned, and by other Miracles and guifts which I never had, would countreys, or any sober persons believe me ? or should I not be the common scorn ? Would the Churches of the world have been planted by pretended Miracles that never were ? would they all have given up estates and lives upon an evident lye ? It was easie for them all to see and hear whether these things were done or not. And therefore he that seeth those Churches which were the proper effects of Miracles, may know the Cause ; A real effect had a real cause.

Quer. 9. Was it possible that so many hundred or thousand persons, dispersed about the world on a sudden, could without coming neer each other, agree both upon one and the same false doctrine throughout, and on the same practices to deceive the world ?

Quer. 10. Is it possible that among so many thousands, that torments, or death, or common ingenuity, would not have forced some to have repented, and opened the deceits of all the rest?

Quer. 11. Is it possible that so many Hereticks that did fall from them and set against the true Apostles, would none of them have disclosed the deceit, if really the Miracles had not been done?

Quer. 12. Is it possible that none of the Jews, their bitter Enemies, nor any of the Learned Romans of that age, would have discovered the fraud, and by writing confuted the matters of fact, being publick, and if false, so easily confuted? Where are the Books that ever any one of them wrote to disprove any of these Miracles? If you say, *The Christians burnt them*; give us the least proof of it if you can. When did any Jew complain of such a thing? Nay how could the dispersed persecuted Christians destroy the writings of their reigning enemies? The writings of Jews and Romans then written remain to this day, and had fuller humane advantages of preservation, then any that are against them. No Jews or Romans complained or to do this day complain of such a thing; nor tell us of any such writings of theirs, that ever were in the world.

Quer. 13. Nay the Jews confessed the Miracles themselves, and had no shift left for their unbelief, but by Blaspheming the Holy Ghost, and saying that they were done by the Power of the devil.

Quer. 14. All the dispersed Churches and Christians of the world, have universally concurred in delivering us down these matters of fact, and the Writings that contain them; and this as a thing that they grounded all their hope of Salvation on, and for which they contemned this present world: And the Enemies that gainsaid their doctrine, did not gainsay these matters of fact. Could this be feigned?

Quer. 15. Have I not fully manifested in my Book against Infidelity (to which I must again dismiss you) that there is a full and infallible Evidence, that this Scripture was written by the Apostles, and Evangelists; and these Miracles done, as there is that any of the Statutes of this Land are the currant Statutes of those Parliaments that are said to make them? And your Lands and Lives are held by the credit of these Statutes.

A word or two to the objections of a *Masked Infidel* of this Countrey, *Clem. Writer*.

Saith he, *Men be not commanded to believe these Statutes on pain of damnation: Therefore the case is not like.*

Ans. But men are commanded to obey them upon pain of death; and believing is prerequisite to obeying: therefore the case is like. Death is the utmost penalty that man can inflict: or if there be greater, it all runs on the same foundation: And sure that evidence that proves men culpable for breaking mans *Laws*, must prove him culpable for breaking Gods. You have no other eyes to read the *Laws of God*, then those by which you read mans *Laws*: And doth it follow that God must not condemn you for breaking his *Laws*, when men do but hang you for breaking theirs? Sure Gods *Laws* and mans may be printed in the same Character, and read with the same eyes, and both have the same Natural means of delivery, and yet the sin and punishment differ as the Authority doth.

Objection. But (saith he) *Can the Miracles confirm the Scripture, when it is the Scripture that reports the Miracles?*

Ans. 1. Cannot a *Statute* tell you what Parliament made it, and what matters of fact were the occasion, and also what shal be your duty upon pain of death? so that the *Makers* and *facts* shall give force unto the *Law*, and yet the *Law* reveal the *makers* and *facts*? Do not *Church Constitutions* do the same? The Scripture hath two parts: the *History* and the *Doctrine*. May not the *History* confirm the *doctrine*, and that *doctrine* oblige us to our duty?

2. But you suppose that the *Miracles* and *facts* can only be known by a *Divine belief of the History*? But that is false. The common Evidence that all *Statutes*, *Histories*, and *Actions* in the world have to make them certain to posterity, (as *Cicero's* or *Virgils* Writings, or *Casars* Reign, &c.) the same have the *Books* and *Miracles of Scripture* to us. And by these we can know them *de facto* to be such, before we believe them by a *Divine faith*. And as the Scripture is a *History* that hath the same Evidence as the best of *Histories* have, so it may concur with abundance of other Evidence (which I have recited in my *Determination against Infidelity*, and in my *Key for Catholics*,) to prove the *Facts*: and then those *Facts* will fully prove the

the Truth of all the Doctrines which they attest, and consequently, we shall add to our humane Faith and Knowledge, a Divine faith concerning the *History* it self.

Object. 3. *But (saith Writer) If God had meant that the Scripture should be a Law to all, he would not have writ it in a language which they understand not ?*]

Ans. Any thing will serve to make an *Infidel*, when the mind is corrupted and deplorate. Were they *no Laws* which the *Romans* wrote in *Latin*, for the Government of all the Nations of the Roman World? It was enough that the *Rulers of the Provinces* caused them to be so far understood by the People as was necessary to a righteous Government. I mean, those Laws that were added to the proper Laws of that people.

2. Was there any *one Language* then that all the world understood? And was it not enough that God appointed the *Ministerial Office* purposely to preserve and publish this Gospel to the world from generation to generation? And is not *Translating* (whether by Voice or Writing) a part of that *preaching* or explication? Did not the Ministers of Christ preach the *same doctrine* to the world then, in the *several languages* of the Nations where they came? And were not the Scriptures presently translated according to the use of the Churches? Upon how silly a pretence then would your silly Imperial Majesty impose it on the God of Heaven, to write his word in as many Languages as are in the world, if he would be believed?

I'll trouble you with no more such wretched Cavils: These three are the main strength of three Pamphlets written against the *Holy Scriptures* and me, by this *Apostate*. Their sum is [*Man is man: therefore we are not sure that Scripture is true, or that God is God:*] I mean [*Men cannot understand the minds of others but by signs: All signs whether words or deeds have some ambiguity, or lability to misunderstanding; therefore nothing can be known concerning God or man by signs.*] These are not his words; but the true scope and life of all the Writings of him and all the *Infidel Seekers*.

If you chide me for troubling the *Christian Reader* here with so much against the *Infidels* and *Brutists*: I answer, 1. I did it because that sort increase, and threaten the Land. 2. Because the strengthening of the Belief of the best Christians, is the removing the Cause of all their weakness and complaints. 3. And Principally

Principally, because when once the certain Truth of another Life is manifested, he must be a Bedlam or worse that will not be *Godly*, or that will open his mouth any more against a *Holy Life*. What ! is it possible for a sober man to Believe that he is so near an *Everlasting Joy or Misery*, and yet to neglect it, and oppose them that make it their chiefest care and labour to prepare for it ? The *Brutist* hath drowned his Reason ; and the careless Professor laid it to sleep ; the *Malicious ungodly* Professor of Christianity fights against it : and only the *serious Holy Christian* doth use it for his Everlasting good.

CHAP. IV.

Holiness is Best for all Societies.

Reader, if thou be but a man that hast the free use of thy reason, I have already removed the greatest impediment out of thy way, and said enough by confuting thy *Infidelity*, to prove that *godliness* is the *Better part*. Thou hast nothing left now to say against it, but what fighteth against Reason in the open light, and therefore I shall find an easier task with thy understanding in all that follows, though with thy corrupted Will and Concupiscence the conflict yet may be as strong.

Well ! if yet thou art not resolved, that *Diligent Serious Godliness is that Good part that all should choose, and better then all thy worldly pleasures*, I shall now discover it to thee in these particulars.

1. I shall shew you that *Godliness is Best for all Societies*.
 2. That it is *Best for every Person*. And that 1. It is the *safest* way. 2. It is the *Honestest* way. 3. That it is the *most gainful* way. 4. That it is the *most Honourable* way : and 5. That it is the *Pleasant and Delightful* way. Yea, that there is no other true *Safety, Honesty, Profit, Honour or Delight* but what is to be found in this way. I lay not only all the reputation of my understanding, but all the hopes and happiness of my soul upon the proof of this point. If I prove it not, I will confess my self a fool and undone for ever. But if I prove it, let the ungodly make
 this

this sad Confession, and choose the *Better* part while they may have it.

I. And first, That *Godliness is the Best for all societies*, (that are just) I prove thus.

1. *Godliness doth Unite or Center all Societies in the Only Head and Center of Unity; that is, the Blessed God himself.* A Common-wealth will never have *Peace* in a state of *Rebellion* against their Sovereign, (unless he be one that they can overcome :) Nor Souldiers in a state of *Mutiny* against their *General*: nor Schollars in shutting out their Master. God is the only Sovereign of the whole world. The godly all unite in him. Ungodliness is *Rebellion* against him. The Rebels are alwayes in his Power. There is no *Peace* nor safety therefore, nor any *Unity*, but an *Agreement* in *Rebellion* for a while, to any that are not by *Holiness* united in him, and Loyal subjects to him, Isa. 48. 22. *There is no Peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.*]

Object. *But do we not see that the main Divisions of the world are about Religion?* Answ. 1. Its true; but not by the *truly Religious*. The great quarrel of the world is *against Religion* in the life and practice of it. 2. It is *unholy* men that cannot abide to be *accounted unholy*, that are the chief dividers. 3. Among the *truly Godly*, there is no division in the *main*, but only differences about the smaller Branches of Religion, which are *Numerous*, and *less discernable*, and *less necessary* then the common Truths. They are all *Agreed* of Truth enough to bring them to Heaven; and therefore enough to unite them in dear Affection upon earth. Nay there is not one of them that hath not a special love to all that he discerneth to be the servants of the Lord. If any be without this, he is *ungodly*. And we are not to answer for the misearriages of every *Infidel* or *ungodly man*, that will put on the *Name of Christianity* and *Godliness*. If there should be fallings out among the godly, they cannot rest till they are healed and set in joynt again. But you must not then be so unjust as to conclude, that we can have no *Unity*, till we are in all things of a mind. May not men of various complexions be of one Society? Are not the multitudes of Veins and Arteries in your Bodies, united in the trunks and roots? Is not the Tree one, that hath many branches?

Object. *But God whom you will needs unite in, is far from us, and*
his

his mind unknown, and so is not the mind of Princes: and therefore we cannot unite in God.

Answer. In things Necessary to our future Happiness and present unity in special Love, the mind of God is more plainly and fully opened to us, then the mind of any Prince unto his subjects. What precepts can be plainer, then to Love God above all, and our Neighbour as our selves, and first to seek the Kingdom of God, and to Repent and Believe in Christ? How plain are the Articles of our Faith and the ten Commandments? Divisions have been about niceties; I hope God will call back his Churches to the Ancient simplicity and Practicall Godliness, and then the Christian world will be agreed, except the wicked.

2. Godliness proponndeth and prosecuteth the most Uniting, Excellent, Powerful End, for all that duty that should advance Societies: and therefore must needs be Best for all Societies. God and Heaven is the common End of all the Godly. They are Agreed every man of them in One End; and so are not others. Their End hath that Power in its attractive Excellency, by which it can do the greatest things that are to be done with the will of man. The Ends of the ungodly are small and childish toys. Our End also is as the Sun, sufficient for all; and therefore not a matter of contention: All may have God as well as One, without diminishing the happiness of any.

3. Godliness takes away the Ball of the worlds contention, that sets men everywhere together by the ears. It teacheth men to slight the Honour and Vain-glory that the Gallants will fight and die for: And to contemn that wealth, that Towns, and Countries, and Kingdoms are divided and destroyed by. It teacheth men to slight that Money, the Love of which is the root of all evil, 1 Tim. 6. 10. It sheweth men a better Treasure, and not only Verbally, but Effectually teacheth them to trample upon that which the tumultuous world doth so much scramble for, and seek by such rapine, oppression, deceit and blood. If all the Ambitious climbers and State-troublers, were truly godly, they would quietly seek for higher Honours. If all the covetous Noblemen, Souldiers, Landlords, and Rich men were truly Godly, they would never set both City and Countrey into combustions, and poor oppressed families into complaints, for the Love of Money. If thieves turned godly, you might travail safely, and spare your locks, and keep your purses. If Tradesmen were all truly Godly, deceit would

would not so break their peace. What is there for Societies to strive about, when the bone of contention is taken away, and Godliness hath cast down the Idol of the world, that did disturb them?

4. *Godliness takes down the great disturbing and dividing Principle in mans soul; and that is, Selfishness: And it both commandeth and worketh self-denial.* Every ungodly man hath a private End, and a private Spirit, and Interest, that is dearer to him then any other. So many ungodly men as there are, so many Ends and Interests: And how then can there be a Possibility of Unity? The wisest Law-givers could never yet contrive an effectual course for the uniting of all these. If *Selfishness* were down, I scarce know what should trouble the peace of Kingdoms, Cities, Families, or any other Societies. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:* Or, [*Thou shalt not covet*] is the summe and conclusion of all the Law of God, concerning our carriage one to another. And it is *Godliness* and nothing else that perfectly teacheth, and truly (though imperfectly here) effecteth this *Self-denial*: (But of this elsewhere.)

5. *Godliness hath the most perfect Righteous Laws; and therefore is best for all Societies.* If God can make better Laws then man, then this is past all question. His Laws require nothing but what is for mens good. They prescribe nothing that is dishonest or unjust: They promise the greatest Rewards to the obedient: They drive on the backward by the threatening of the greatest punishments. Their Authority is highest and most unquestionable. They all proceed from one absolute Sovereign, and are the same to all the people of the world: They change not, but are to endure to the worlds end. Whereas all the Laws of men, are limited to their own Dominions, and endure but while their power can enforce them. They are subject to error and injustice, and are not the same in one Countrey as in another; or in one age as in the former: and their Rewards and punishments are but temporal: and therefore though under the Laws of God, they are necessary for the Government of Common-wealths, yet without Gods Laws they would be utterly insufficient.

6. *The way of Holiness is contrary to all Evil whatsoever, and therefore hath nothing to disturb a Common-wealth:* It is true, we cannot say so of the persons, because they are but imperfectly sanctified. Were they in all things such as their Lord, and Rule, and

and Religion do require, they would have nothing that might be injurious to any. But surely as a *sick man* or a *lame*, is better then a *dead corps*; and as a man of *mean understanding* is better then an *ideot*, and a *mean Schollar* better then the *illiterate*; so a man *imperfectly sanctified*, is better in a *Common wealth*, then the *ungodly*. You blame not the *Laws* of this Land, because that *Thieves* and *Murderers* break them: The *Laws* are *Good*, if they oblige men to nothing but what is *Good*, though bad men break them. The *Rules* of *Christian Religion* are most perfect, and direct or command men nothing that is evil. There may be faults in us, but there is none in the holy *Laws* which we desire and endeavour to obey. Religion therefore is the way to the perfecting and securing of all *Societies*, and the want of it subverteth them.

7. *Holiness* doth not only tell men of a right way, and shew them their duty, but also effectually Disposeth their very minds to the performance of it, and causeth them to walk therein. The nature of it is, to be the very *Right Disposition* of the heart, and right ordering of the life. The truly gracious soul is *habitually* an enemy to all known sin, and addicted to obey in all known Duties: And surely persons thus *habituated*, are liker to live according to their Dispositions, then others to live well that hate the good in their hearts which they should practise. *Mens Laws* can command good, but cannot give men good hearts to practise it, as God doth by his servants. If you cannot tell whether wicked men that love sin, or godly men that hate it, are better members of a *Commonwealth*, you know not what *Societies* are for.

8. *Holiness* destroyeth the root of iniquity, and teacheth men to hate even secret sins, which are in the heart, or which none can see but God alone. The *Laws* of men restrain the Subjects but from open injuries: but *Holiness* restraineth men from doing the most secret wrong to others, or once thinking, speaking, or contriving any evil against them. It reacheth the conscience; it cleanseth the heart, from whence all evil doth proceed. 2 Sam. 12. 12. Deut. 27. 24. Psalm 90. 8. Eccles. 12. 14. A man fearing God, as such, dare not deceive or wrong another, though he were sure that it would never be known on earth: For he knoweth that the Lord is the avenger of such things, 1 Thes. 4. 6.

9. *Holiness* cementeth the members of all *Societies* with the strongest cement of endeared Love. It bindeth them together in the bond

bond of Charity. He is *not Godly* that Loveth not all men, even his enemies, with that common Love that is due to humanity, and that Loveth not all that Fear the Lord with a special Love. *Psalms* 15. 4. *Joh.* 13. 34, 35. & 15. 12, 17. 1 *Joh.* 3. 14, 23. & 4. 7, 11, 12, 20. *Luke* 6. 27.

10. *Holiness* maketh Princes and Rulers a double blessing to their people. It maketh them the more Divine, and bear the more excellent Image of God: How precious is the name of a *David*, an *Hezekiah*, a *Josiah*, a *Constantine*, a *Theodosius*, (though they had all their falls) in comparison of the name of a *Saul*, a *Jeroboam*, an *Ahab*, a *Nero*, a *Julian*? O how sweet is the name of a *Godly King* in the Subjects mouths? Even those that are enemies to *Godliness* as in themselves, (because they cannot endure to be curbed and troubled with it) do yet use to admire and honour it in their Kings and Governours. *Authority* and *Holiness* conjunct are two such rayes of the Heavenly Majesty and Goodness as place man in the state of highest excellency on earth, and make him so much to resemble his Creator, as hath given such the highest place in the esteem and honour of the world, of any mortals: And it is not easie for a people to value such Holy and Pious Princes and Governours too highly, or to be sufficiently thankful for them unto God.

1. *Holiness* effectually teacheth Governours to Rule for God: To set him highest, and make it their work to seek his *Glory*, and to avoid all *selfish* contradictory interests; and to own nothing that stands at enmity with his honour: but to judge that they have most happily attained the ends of their Government and lives, if they have promoted the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ, and the work of *Holiness* in the world.

2. *Holiness* will cause Rulers to prefer Gods Laws before their own; and to be examples to their Subjects of obedience to God; and to desire that all men should stand in far greater awe of God than of them: It will make them careful to form all their Laws and Government to the pleasing of God, and promoting mens obedience to his Laws; and to take heed that there be nothing in them injurious to Christ, or contrary to his Will. It will teach them with *David* to enquire of God, and make him their Counsellour: And with *Josiah*, to search the Book of the Law, and humble themselves when they have violated it. And with *Josna*, Not to suffer it to depart out of their mouths, but to meditate in it day

day and night, that they may observe to do according to all that is written therein: And then God hath promised to make their way prosperous, and to give them good success, Josh. 1. 8.

3. *Holiness* will cause the Rulers of the world to Love those that are Holy, and to promote the Communion of Saints, and to be Nursing Fathers to the Church, even that part of the Holy Catholick Church which they are entrusted with; and to protect them from the violence of men: It will keep them from the sins of *Jeroboam* that corrupted Gods worship, and put forth his hand against the Prophet that spoke against it: Whereby God will be engaged to be their Protector in Peace and War: When Princes and people that fall out with *Holiness* and take part with the flesh, and set themselves against the servants, the worship, and the wayes of Christ, do put themselves from under his protection, and put themselves under the battering and piercing stroakes of his displeasure: And *wo to him that strive with his Maker*, and that *kicks against the pricks* of his severity, Isa. 45. 9. Acts 9. 5. & 26. 14. The fatal ruine of the Kingdoms of the world, or at least the final ruine of the persons, is from their enmity and rebellion against the Lord, and because they will not be his Kingdoms, but hate and quarrel with his wayes, and persecute his servants: And Godliness preserveth Princes and Magistrates from this sin and ruine.

4. *Holiness* will cause the Rulers to hate sin in themselves and others, and to remove the abominable thing from before the eyes of Gods jealousy; and to drive away the fromard; and not to know the wicked and the proud, and to cut off the slanderer, and the wicked doers, and to set no wicked thing before their eyes, Psalm 101. In their eyes a vile person will be contemned, but they will honour them that fear the Lord. By this means their Kingdoms may be Holy, and God will delight in them, and dwell among them, and it shall be said of them, as Jer. 31. 23. [The Lord blest thee, O habitation of Justice, and mountain of Holiness.] And when Israel is [Holiness to the Lord] all that devoure him shall offend, evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord. Jer. 2. 3. The holy examples, and holy Government of Godly Kings and Magistrates, will draw the hearts of the people to Holiness, and cause it to flourish in the Lands: Whereas the wicked examples and government of the ungodly, tendeth to make all about them wicked: For, as Solomon saith, Prov. 29. 12. [If a Ruler hearken

to liss, all his servants are wicked.] And then they are fuel for the wrath of God, both as offenders, and as enemies: For they will be still rebelling and opposing him; and carnal interest and enmity will pervert them to use the reprovers as *Asa*, and *Amaziah*, and *Jeroboam*, and *Jezebel*, and *Joash* did: and to think with *Saul* that *Doeg* was the best subject that would kill the Priests at his command, and those the worst that would not betray them, or destroy them: and to say to false accusers as he did to the *Ziphites*, 1 Sam. 23. 21. *Blessed be ye of the Lord, for ye have compassion on me.*] And saith the Lord, Isa. 27. 4. *[Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together.]*

5. *Holiness* will save Princes and Rulers from the great and dangerous temptations of their Riches, and Honours, and Power, and Pleasures, and will teach them to mortifie the flesh, and live after the spirit (Rom. 8. 1, 6, 13.) and will keep them hereby from those sins that would subject them to the consuming wrath of the impartial God, and will bring them to Heaven notwithstanding all the impediments of the world, even as a Camel through a needles eye, by the power to which all things are possible. And doubtless that which maketh men most acceptable to God, and tendeth to the everlasting happiness of the persons, must needs be better for all societies than that which prepareth them for damnation, and keepeth them here under the indignation of the Lord. See 2 Sam. 23. 3. Lev. 25. 46, 53, 43. Isa. 32. 1. Rom. 3. 4, 5, 6. & 12. 8.

11. And as *Holiness* thus maketh the most excellent Princes and happy Governours, so it maketh the most Loyal and obedient Subjects, and is the most powerful preserver of peace in all Societies.

If any shall say, that the people that are accounted Holy have caused as great contentions and rebellions in the world, as any other, witness the wars in France, Savoy, Bohemia, Scotland, England, &c.] I shall first prove undenyably from the nature of the thing, that true Godliness must needs make the best Subjects, and tend to the happiness of Common-wealths, and then I shall more nearly answer the Objection.

1. *Holiness* effectually teacheth subjects to know themselves; To know their weakness and meanness and unworthiness, and to know their places and their proper work. It kills that pride that makes

makes men think that none are so fit to Rule as they ; and it makes them so humble as to think themselves unworthy of protection in the meanest station. And also it so takes them up with a higher ambition, and sets their heart on the greater things, that they are dead to the Ambition of the world, and can easily leave these things to others : Their Kingdom is not of this world : They are taught to expect affliction and persecution, and not to aspire after crowns. No man can deny that this is the lesson set them by their Lord, and the Covenant which they make with him when they become his Servants. Whereas the *ungodly* having their portion in this life, and relishing and minding most the things of the world, will snatch and scramble and turn every stone and do any thing within their reach for worldly honours.

2. *Holiness* teacheth *subjects* to see God in their Rulers, and honour and obey them as *his officers*, even with an honour and obedience *participatively Divine* ; And no men can give them a higher honour then they that thus honour them on Gods account : and no men can give them so full and firm and constant obedience, as they that obey God in their Governours : No man can give them higher titles, then they that take them to be the Officers of God. Carnal men obey their Governours meerly as men that are able to do them good or hurt. If they were sure to receive no damage by contemning them, they cared not to trample them in the dirt. Though that people sinned in desiring a King, yet when they had chosen that kind of Government, and Saul was set over them, those that went with him were such [*whose hearts God had touched : but the Children of Belial said, How shall this man save us ? and they despised him and brought him no presents*] 1 Sam. 10. 27.

3. *Holiness* causeth *subjects* to obey and submit for conscience sake : They do it because God himself hath commanded them to do it. They pay tribute, and give honour and obedience because it is part of their Obedience to God, required of them in the fifth Commandment, which is the first with promise : Outward prosperity is especially promised to them that honour their Parents and superiours. And the commands and promises of God with the bonds of Conscience do tie men faster to their duty, and restrain more effectually from disobedience then the words of men alone can do. Conscience holdeth strongly and constantly ; and

and it holdeth as well in *secret* as in *publike*; so that if a man were sure to do a mischief and never be discovered, he would never the less abhor it, as being not unknown to God and conscience. A man that feareth not God and conscience, will never stick to do a mischief, if he may escape the eye and revenging hand of man: *Faux* will set fire to the train to blow up King and Parliament, if he see but a probability of escape. But he that feeleth the bonds of God upon him, dare not rebel.

4. *Holiness* destroyeth *Self-love* which is the Spring of all *discontents*, and *disobedience*: and teacheth a man to own no Ends or interests but what stand in *due subordination* to the honour of God and the *common good*; and in *due coordination* with the welfare of our neighbours: Whereas the *ungodly* are every man of them an Idol to himself: *self* is the only Lord and Law, set up against God and King and Countrey; And if God or King, or Countrey be served by them, it is but in subserviency to themselves, as they look to attain some wealth or dignity or honour by it. The *self-seeking man* is faithful and trusty to no man but himself. And the *self-denying man* hath no great temptation to be unfaithful.

5. *Holiness* doth partly consist of *charity*, and teacheth men to do as they would be done by: And how can it goe ill with any societies where *Love* prevaileth, and men are as loth to *wrong* as to *be wronged*, and to do hurt to others as to themselves!

6. *Holiness* brings down Gods blessing on each particular subject: and maketh a people the delight of God; and brings them under the promise of his favour. *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. What abundance of promises are there to the obedient? *Isa.* 1. 19. *Deut.* 4. 30. *Exod.* 23. 22. *Deut.* 11. 27. & 13. 4. & 30. 2, 8, 20. *Jer.* 7. 23. & 11. 4, 7. &c.

7. *Holiness* maketh men meek and patient, and teacheth subjects not to make too great a matter of any injury that is done them; nor to censure unwarrantably the actions of their superiours: nor to murmur and stir up *discontents*; but quietly to bear all in obedience to God, and for the common good.

8. *Holiness* disposeth men to *Unity* and *Concord*, and is as much