

of Elymas, *Act. 13. 8, 10.* [O full of subtlety and all mischiefs, thou child of the devil and enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right wayes of the Lord? Satan would never transform himself into an Angel of Light, nor his ministers into the Ministers of Righteousness; nor would Pharisees and hypocrites cover oppression by long prayers, if Light, Righteousness, and long prayers, were not laudable in themselves, and necessary in the preachers of the word of God, and had not a goodness in them capable of being a cloak to their iniquity. *2 Cor. 11. 14, 15. Mat. 23. 14. God is Light. 1 Job. 1. 5. And God is Holy:* If therefore Satan or any hypocrite would credit their falshood and wickedness, they must pretend to *Light and Holiness*: And he that will keep up the true honour of his Ministry, and be accepted with God, and revered by good men; must do it by *real Light and Holiness*. An ungodly Minister hath a radicated enmity to the holy doctrine which he preacheth, and to the holy duties and life which he exhorteth the people to: And how well, how sincerely, how readily, how faithfully, they are like to do the work which they are enemies to, you may easily judge. *The carnal mind is enmity to God: for it is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be. Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8. I know that they are not enemies to the honour nor to the maintenance: and therefore may force themselves to do much of the outside of the work: But where there is an inward enmity to the life and ends of it, we can expect but a formal, unwilling, and unconstant discharge of such displeasing duty. Truth is for Goodness: The*

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Knowledge which maketh you not Good is lost, and hath mist its end. If therefore your Love to God and man, your mortification and unblameableness of life, your heavenly mindedness, be no greater than the peoples (or perhaps much less) do not wonder if you lose your honour with them, and if you grow contemptible in their eyes. *Mal. 1. 10. 14.* I have no pleasure in you saith the Lord — Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing. *Mal. 2.* And now O ye Priests, this commandment is for you: If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, I will send a curse upon you — The Law of truth was in Levi's mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn away many from iniquity! For the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts: But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the Law, ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts: Therefore also have I made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my wayes, but have been partial in the Law.

1 Sam. 2. 17. 24, 30. The sin of the young men was very great, before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord: — Ye make the Lords people to transgress — Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice, and at my offering, which I have commanded — I said indeed that thy house — should walk before me for ever: But now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

If as *Moses* you stand nearer to God than the people do, you must be so much holier than they, and your faces must shine with the beames of God in the peoples eyes. They that *with open face behold in Christ as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord,* 2 Cor. 3. 7. 17, 18.

If therefore by your low and common parts, and carnal lives, you make your selves contemptible, instead of exclaiming against the people, cry out against your selves, and lament your sins; and the more you have aggravated the crimes of Schism and other errors in your flocks, the more penitently bewail your sin which caused it, and remember that you have aggravated your own transgression. If you are children in parts and goodness your selves, you are unfit either to upbraid the people with their childish weaknesses, or to cure them.

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DIRECT, III.

In all your publick Doctrine and private Conference, inculcate still the necessary conjunction of Holiness and Peace; and of the Love of God and Man; And make them understand that Love is their very Holiness, and the sum of their Religion; the end of Faith, the heart of Sanctification, and the fulfilling of the Law: And that as Love to God uniteth us to Him, so Love to man, must unite us to one another; And that all Doctrine or practice is against God and against Christ and against the great work of the Spirit, and is enmity to the Church and to mankind, which is against Love and Unity. Press these things on them all the year, that your hearers may be bred up and nourished with these principles from their youth.

IF ever the Church be recovered of its wounds, it must be by the peaceable Dispositions of the Pastors and people. And if ever men come to a peaceable Disposition, it must be by peaceable Doctrine and principles: And if ever men come to peaceable Principles, it must be by the full and frequent explication of the nature, pre-eminence, necessity and power of Love: That they may hear of it so much, and so long, till Love be made their Religion,

Religion, and become as the very *Natural Heat* and *Constitution* of their souls. And if ever men be generally brought to this, it must be by daily sucking it from those breasts which nourish them in the infancy and youth of their Religion, and by learning it betimes as the sum of *Godliness* and *Christianity*. And if ever they come to this, the *Aged* experienced ripe and mellow sort of *Ministers* and private *Christians*, must instil it into *Schollars* and into the younger sort of *Ministers*, that they may have nothing so common in their ears and in their studies, as *Uniting-Love*: That they may be taught to know that *God is Love*, and that *he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God*, and *God in him*. 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. And that the *Love of God*, doth ever work towards his image in man: 1 *Joh.* 4. 7, 11, 12, 20. And that *all men as men* have some of his Image in their *Nature*, as they are *Intellectual*, *Free Agents* exalted above the bruits. *Gen.* 9. 6. And therefore we must *Love men as men*, and *Love Saints as Saints*; That it is *Love to God* and *man*, which is the true state of *Holiness*, and the *New creature*, and which *Christ* came to recover lapsed man to, and which the *Holy Ghost* is sent to work, and all the means of grace are intended and fitted for, and must be used for, or they are misused. In a word, that *FAITH WORKING BY LOVE*; or *LOVE* and *THE WORKS OF LOVE KINDLED BY THE SPIRIT BY FAITH IN CHRIST*; is the sum of all the *Christian Religion*. *Gal.* 5. 6, 13, 22. 1 *Tim.* 1. 5.

He that crieth up *Holiness* and *Zeal*, without a due commemoration of *Love* and *Peace*, doth first deceive

deceive the hearers about that very *Holiness* and *Zeal* which he commendeth, whilest he lamely and so falsely representeth and describeth it; and doth not make them know how much of *Holiness* consisteth in *Love*; nor that true *zeal* is *Love* itself in its fervent and intense degree: And so people are enticed to think that *Holiness* is nothing but the passions of *fear* and *grief*, and earnest expressions in preaching and praying, or scrupulousness and singularity about some controverted things, or some other thing than indeed it is. And they are tempted to think that *Christian zeal* is rather the violence of partial passions, and the fervor of wrath, and the making things sinful which God forbiddeth not, than the fervors of *Love* to God and man. And when the mind is thus mocked with a false image of *Holiness* and *Zeal*, it is cast into a sinful mold, and engaged in the pursuit of an erroneous dangerous course of life; And at last it cometh to an enmity and contempt of that which is *Holiness* and *Zeal* indeed: For it accounteth *Love* but a *Moral-vertue* (which they ignorantly take for a diminutive title of the great and primitive duties required by the light and law of nature itself.) And zealous *Love* is accounted by them but a carnal and selfish compliance and temporizing, and a pleasing of men instead of God; And zealous promoting of *Unity* and *Peace*, is taken but for a cowardly neutrality and betraying of some truth, which should be earnestly contended for.

And on the other side they that preach up *Love* to man, and *Peace* and *Concord* without putting first the *Love* of God, and a Holy and Heavenly mind

mind and life, they will cheat the poor ignorant carnal people, by making them believe that God and Heaven may be forgotten, and good neighbourhood to each other is all that is needful to make them happy.

And they will tempt the more religious sort to sin more against Love and *Peace* than before: Because they will think that it is but a confederacy for Satan against Christ, and a submission to the wills of proud usurpers, to strengthen their worldly interest against godliness, which these preachers mean when they plead for peace. And thus as I have known ungodly Preachers by crying down *Schism*, bring *Schism* into request, while it was no such thing as real schism, which they meant in their exclamations (till at last the true eruption of schism with its monstrous effects, made good people see that such an odious sin there is;) Even so I have known that a carnal Preacher, condemning Holiness, and crying up *Love* and *Peace*, hath tempted the people to have too light thoughts of *Love* and *Peace*, (because it was but a confederacy in sin with a neglect of godliness, which the preacher seemed to cry up.) Till ripper knowledge better taught good people to perceive, that *Love* and *Peace* are more Divine and excellent things, than carnal preachers or hearers can imagine. The wisdom from above is first pure then peaceable: Let it therefore be a true conjunction of *Holiness* and *Peace* which you commend.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. IV.

If others shew their weakness by any unwarrantable singularities or divisions, shew not your greater weakness by passions, impatience or uncharitable censures or usage of them : especially when any self-interest doth provoke you.

None usually are so spleenishly impatient at the weakness of Dissenters or Separatists as the Pastors are ? And what is the cause ? Is it because they abound most in Love to the souls of those who offend, or them who are endangered by them ? If so, I have no more to say to such. But when we see that the *Honour* and *Interest* of the Pastors is most deeply concerned in the business, and that they are carried by their *impatience* into more want of Charity, than the other express by their *separations* ; and when we see that they well enough bear with themselves in such sins as this, or in others as great ; and that they can bear with as great sins in the people with too much patience, when their own interest concurrerth not to raise their passions ; in such cases we have reason enough to fear, lest pride and selfishness have too great a part, in much that is said and done against schism in the world.

Is it a greater shame for *children* to cry and wrangle with the Nurse and one another or for the Nurse or Parents to go to law with them for it, or to hate them, and turn them out of doors ?

Is it a fault for *children* to be so impatient as to cry and quarrel? And is it not a greater fault in *Parents* that pretend to greater wisdom, to be impatient with them for it? I know you will say that *Parents must not be so patient with sin, as to leave their children uncorrected*: But, I answer, correction must not be the effect of *impatience*, but of *Love* and *Wisdom* and dislike of sin, and must be chosen and measured in order to the cure of it. Its one thing to be angry for God against sin, and its another thing to be angry for our selves against the crossing of our wils and interests: And its one thing to correct so as tendeth to a cure; And another thing to be revenged or do mischief, or to cast out of doors. Are not you guilty of *Ministerial weaknesses* in preaching and praying, and of many omissions in your private oversight? And do you think that it is meet for the people therefore to revile you with odious titles, and stir up the Magistrate against you for your infirmities?

Is it seemly for them who are the fathers of the flock and should excel the people in Love and lowliness, in patience and gentleness and meekness, to be so proud and passionate, as to storm against the most conscientious persons, if they do but *set light by us* and cast off *our* Ministry, though perhaps they hear and submit to *others* who are as able and as faithful and more profitable to them than we? When we can easilier bear with a swearer or drunkard or the families that are prayerless and ungodly, than with the most religious, if they do not choose *our* Ministry, but prefer some others before us

as more edifying? When we can bear with them that have no understanding or seriousness in Religion at all, but make the world or their lusts their idols, but cannot bear with the weak irregularities of the most upright and devout? If they were never so irregular in preferring *us* before *others*, and in leaving others to follow *us*, we can easily bear with them, and think their disorders may be well excused: And to shew the height of our pride, we still are confident (whether we are uppermost or undermost, whether we have publick liberty or are forbidden to preach) that *we* are the persons only that are in the right, and therefore that all are in the right that follow *us*, and all are in the wrong that turn away from *us*; That it is *unity* and *duty* to follow *us* and adhere to *us*, and all are Schismatics who forsake *us* and choose others. And thus the selfishness and Pride of the Pastors, making an imprudent and impatient stir against all who dislike them, and applauding all how bad soever who adhere to them and follow them, is as great a cause of the disorders of the Church, as the weakness and errors of the people.

DIRECT. V.

Distinguish between those who separate from the Universal Church, or from all the Orthodox or purest and Reformed parts of it; and those who only forsake the Ministry of some one person, or sort of persons, without refusing Communion with the rest.

AS many occasions may warrant a removal from a particular Church, but nothing can excuse a separation from the Universal Church; so he that separateth only from some particular Churches, and yet is a member of the Universal Church, may also be a member of Christ and be saved. He may be a Christian who is no member of your flock, yea or of any particular Church: But he is no Christian who is no member of the Universal Church. Paul and Barnabas may in the heat of a difference part from one another, and yet neither of them part from Christ or the Church-Universal.

I do not excuse the fault of them who sin against any one Church or Pastor: But I would not have the Pastors therefore sin as much, by making their fault greater than it is; nor to suffer their own interest partially to call men Schismatics or Separatists, in a sense for which they have no ground. If they can learn more by another Minister than by me, what reason have I to be offended at their edification, though perhaps some infirmity

infirmity of judgement may appear in it. A true mother that knoweth her child is like to thrive better by a nurses milk than by her own, will be so far from hatred or envy either at the nurse or child, that she will consent, and be thankful, and pay the nurse. *Solomon* made it the sign of the false mother, that could bear the dividatur, the hurt of the child for her own commodity; and of the true mother, that she had rather lose her commodity than the child should suffer. And *Paul* giveth God thanks that *Christ* was preached, though it was by them that did it in strife and envy, to add affliction to his bonds. *Phil. 1.* He is not worthy of the name of a Physician, who had rather the patients health were deplorate, than that he should be healed by another who is preferred before him. If I knew that man by whom the salvation of my flock were like to be more happily promoted, than by me (whatever infirmity of theirs might be the cause) I should think myself a servant of Satan the envious enemy of souls, if I were against it.

DIRECT. VI.

Distinguish between those who deny the Being of the Church or Ministry, from which they separate: and those who remove only for their own edification, as from a weaker or worse Minister, and from a Church more culpable and less pure.

For these last are not properly Separatists in a full sense: Though they think it *unlawful* to joyn with you, as supposing that you impose some sin upon them, or that you deprive them of discipline or some ordinance of God; Whether they be in the right or in the wrong, yet still they hold *inward Communion* with you, in faith and love and in the *same species* of worship. And this is such a communion as we hold with many *forreign Churches*, with whom we have no local present communion.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. VII.

Distinguish between those who hold it simply unlawful to have communion with you; and those who only hold it unlawful to prefer your assemblies before those which they judge more pure; but hold it lawful to communicate with you occasionally; yea and statedly when they can have no better.

I Excuse not all such from the guilt of all sin herein. For if they prefer that Church or Ministry which they should not prefer, it is their sin. But it is not *that sin* which of old hath been called *Separation* and *Schism*. While a man is free, if he love himself we cannot wonder if he choose that society and Ministry where he thinketh his salvation may be best furthered and secured: All sober Divines who write of the *Ministry* and of *company*, do declare that the difference between *good* and *bad*, yea *good* and *better*, in both these, is of so great importance, that all wise men should be very careful of their choice. If we may without reproach be allowed to be cautelous what wife we choose, what master or servants, what house, what neighbourhood, what soil, what ayr; Much more may we be allowed to be cautelous what *Church* and *Ministers* we joyn with; And if we are allowed to choose

what Physician we will commit our health and lives to, and are not constrained to use one that we judge to be ignorant or false, surely it would be no heinous schism, if the like liberty be granted and used for our souls. The very Papists give the people liberty to choose their *Confessours*, without removing their dwellings for it: And surely my conscience would tell me at last, that I am very selfish and proud if I thought none so fit to instruct and edifie any of the people as my self? No nor *tolerable* in endeavouring it. Have I not heard many, do I not know many, who preach more convincingly, more plainly and more powerfully than I? And what harm is it then if the people hear them? So Christ be preached, and the people instructed, sanctified and saved, what if it be done by another rather than by me? Have not I liberty to do my best? Shall I be an envier at the Gospel and its success! God forbid that I or any faithful Minister, should ever be guilty of so odious a sin! I speak without respect of persons: It is easie and usual both in publick allowed Churches, and in private assemblies, to preach *our selves* while we seem to be preaching Christ; and by our *perverse preaching* to seek disciples and esteemers for *our selves*, when we are preaching up self-denial, and seem to be most zealous for the saving of souls. *Acts. 20. 30. 11.*

DIRECT. VIII.

Remember Christs interest in the weakeſt of his ſervants, and do nothing to them which Chriſt will not take well.

THink well how far he beareth with them, and how far he owneth them, and how tender he is of them in all their weakneſſes. If it be a member of Chriſt that you are offended with, though you muſt never the more love the fault, yet remember how you muſt uſe the perſon. It was not for nothing that he ſetteth little children before his diſciples, when he would teach them not only humility, but reſpect and patience towards each other by his example. *Matth. 18.* And how terrible a paſſage is it *v. 5, 6.* *Who ſo ſhall receive one ſuch little child in my name, receiveth me: But who ſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones, that believe in me, it were far better him that a millſtone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the ſea.* And *Matth. 23.* *What is done to one of the leaſt of his brethren (for ſo he calleth them) Chriſt judgeth as done unto himſelf.* He will not break the bruſed reed, nor quench the ſmoking flax, until he bring forth judgement unto victory. Remember but Chriſts intereſt in them and affections to them, and imitate his tenderneſs and pity.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. IX.

Distinguish between weakness of Gifts and of Grace, and remember that many that are weak in the understanding of matters of Church-order, may yet be stronger in grace than you.

HE is the strongest Christian and the most Godly man, who hath the greatest Love to God, and heavenliness of mind and life: And this may be the case of many a one, who by some error about the circumstances of discipline and worship, is yet a trouble to the Church. He that offendeth you by his mistake and unwarrantable singularity, though he be weak in judgement in that point, and perhaps in many other controversies, may yet be a far stronger Christian, than I who see his error: He may have more Love to God and man, more humility and self-denial, more fear of sinning, and more fitness to die, and more heavenly desires, and patience in tribulation. Let us therefore value men according to the Image of God upon them, and not despise them as weak in grace, because they are weak in this point of knowledge: Though still their errors are not to be owned.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. X.

Remember the common calamity of the Church and of all mankind: What strange disparity there is in mens understandings! and how the Church on earth is a Hospital of diseased souls, and no one man perfectly healed in this life.

WHo can say I have made my heart clean?

Prov. 20. 9. He that is kept from presumptuous sins, and heartily prayeth and striveth against his known infirmities, and is desirous to know his unknown sins that he may avoid them, hath attained so far as to be justified by Christ, and loved of those who love as Christ doth. Psal. 19. Job. 3. 19, 20. Seneca could say that to carp at that fault, which was every mans fault, is not to reprove an offender, but to reproach humane nature and all mankind: Christians indeed must lament even the vices which are common to depraved nature, but it is with a common lamentation, which falleth on one man no more than on another. Even as we lament mortality, which is the common punishment of mankind. But he that would have punishment inflicted for a fault which is common to all, would have all men punished or is partial.

If our infirmities are not all the very same, yet it is certain that we are all infirm. Yea we are all of imperfect and erroneous understandings, though all err not the same errour. And we

we are every man certain in general that we have errors, though no man know in particular which be his own errors! (For it is a contradiction to say that while I err in judgement I know my error) so that other men know our errors when we know them not our selves , as we know theirs which are unknown to them. For as all have their *common defects*, so most men have their *peculiar defects* and errors, and others excel those persons in some particulars, who excel them in almost all the rest. Therefore if no error were to be tolerated, no man were to be tolerated: And the wisest in the world must be numbered with the intolerable as well as the rest. And everyone that punisheth others, must be conscious of the same intolerable evil in *himself*, and that nothing but *power* exempteth him from the same suffering, and therefore none but the King should escape. *In many things we offend all: Therefore be not many Masters (too imperious or too censorious towards dissenters and the infirm) lest ye receive the greater condemnation.* Jam. 3. 1, 2.

GOD who is *One*, hath made the creatures *MANY* and divers: And the further they go from *Him*, the more they run into *multiplicity* and *diversity*: It is admirable in *Nature* to see that among the millions of persons in the world, there are no two that differ not sufficiently to be discernable from each other: And among the bruits and inanimates it is so too: Among horses and oxen and sheep and all creatures, yea though *non ovum ovo similis* be a proverb, yet there are no two that do not differ: No nor among the millions of stones which lye scattered over the surface

face of the earth. There are no two persons in all the world, who are just of the same intellectual complexion and degree, nor no two who are in all things of the same opinions or apprehensions: No nor any one man who is in all things long of the same apprehensions and opinions with himself: Nor is there any man whose *thoughts* and *affections* do perfectly consent with themselves in *matter* and *order*, any two hours in all his life. And if *multiplicity* and *diversity* have so much cause in *nature*, how much more must needs be added by the common *corruption* and *pravity* of *nature*? When all mankind hath so much ignorance of the mysteries of Religion, and so many degrees of enmity and unsuitableness to holy things, a great difference of judgement is an unavoidable consequent of this.

And mens various *educations*, and *converse*, and *employments* must needs cause a great variety of apprehensions: As their *nature* so their *education* may agree in some *generals*: But there are no two persons at age in the world, whose *educations* have been the same in all *particulars*: Though they were children of the same parents, and bred in the same *house* and *time*, yet all that they have *seen* and *heard* and medled with hath not been in all points just the same: the same in *matter*, and *time* and *order* and all circumstances. And we see what great diversity of judgements any one of these doth daily cause. To have parents of several minds and tempers: To be bred in families where there is great diversity of knowledge and practise: To live among company of contrary principles and practise; when one man
heareth

heareth *one thing*, talkt of and maintain'd in his daily converse, and another the contrary: When one hath a teacher of one opinion and another of another: Or one hath a teacher that is cold, and another one that is fervent; one a judicious one, and another a rash and intemperate one; what diversity of apprehensions may arise from any one of these?

And so there may from variety of *passions* of the mind, through a diversity of bodily temperatures: One that is naturally *fearful* is apt to apprehend a thousand things as *terrible*, and consequently to be filled with scruples, and to run away from *doctrines* and practises as *dangerous*; where another doth apprehend no danger. And one that is dark, or incredulous, or rash or stupid, or hardened by any sinful course, is apt to conceive that he is safe in every dangerous way, and to sleep quietly at the brink of death and hell, and to laugh at them that tell him of his peril: As men sit under the same instructions with variety of affections, of fear or hope, of Love or hatred, of joy or sorrow, so variously are they disposed to apprehend what they hear, seeing *recipitur ad modum recipientis*.

And variety of Gods disposing providences must needs also have some such effect. While one is rich and another is poor; one hath crosses of divers sorts, and another hath prosperity; one is full and another is hungry; one is observed, admired and honoured, and another is taken little notice of, or is vilified and despised; One hath many friends and another many enemies: One hath friends that are kind and constant, and the

the other such as are unkind and mutable; One is preferred by Rulers, and the other is ruined or oppressed; All these will occasion variety of apprehensions: As it was with the Lady who coming in very cold, in a frosty day, pitied the naked beggars at the door; but when she was well warmed chid them away: We all find that our apprehensions are very apt to vary in sickness from what they were in health; and in poverty from what they were in plenty; and when we are angered, displeased or abused, from what they were when we were pleased: Yea when we have but read a lively book, or heard a lively Sermon, from what they were before our affections were so excited.

Also variety of *Temptations* may occasion great variety of apprehensions: When one mans temptations are all alluring, to lust or gaming or stage-plays, or Romances, or drunkenness, or gluttony, or pastime; and anothers temptations are all to melancholy, and inordinate austerities and despair; When one man is tempted to errors of one kind, and another to the contrary. Even he that overcometh in the main, yet seldome so far conquereth as to receive no misimpression upon his mind.

Moreover variety of *Callings, studies and employments* occasioneth variety of apprehensions: A mans mind is much wrought upon by the business and objects which he is daily conversant about: And therefore we find that usually the Courtier, the Souldier, the Sea-man, the Citizen and the Country-man much differ in their apprehensions. And usually (though not every indivi-

individual yet) as to the *most* part, all men are *wisest* in their *own* professions: Lawyers are wisest in matters of Law and Divines in matters of Divinity. Opportunities of *study* and *instruction* make exceeding great differences in the world. The Lawyer and Physician perhaps may on the by, have bestowed a few years time in Divinity, in the midst of other interrupting studies: When the *Divine* hath studied almost all his life, and drawn out his meditations in one uninterrupted thread. And so we discern that Lawyers and Physicians have oft different apprehensions, of matters of doctrine, worship and discipline, from those of the best Divines.

And diversity of *Interests* maketh no small difference of apprehensions. And those that are advantaged by their helps and studies may be disadvantaged by their *interests*. And therefore we say the *Magistrate* and the *subject*, the *Lawyer* and the *Divine*, the *Prelate* and the *Presbyter*, the *Papist* and the *Protestant* (both *Princes*, *Prelates* and *People*) so strangely differ in their thoughts; that one seemeth certain of that which another seemeth certain to be false; and one ventureth his salvation on that, which another ventureth his salvation against. *Interest* worketh secretly and too much with the best; but openly and predominantly with the worst.

And then the interest and opinion of the several Kingdomes, Churches, Pastors, parties or Sects which men are related to, or are engaged with, doth strongly tend to different apprehensions in all matters which those interests are concerned in. And many very good men think,
that

that *publick interest* may be allowed much power upon their minds, though *private and personal* must be denied. Is it not a wonder to see, not only that almost all *Christians* are incorporated into one sect or party or other, but how easily the inconsiderable reasons of their party can prevail with them, and how hardly the better reasons of their adversaries, seem to them of any weight or worth? Not only the parties of Papists and Protestants, Lutherans and Reformed, &c. shew this; but in the same Church the Regulars and Seculars, the Bishops and the Jesuits, the Dominicans and Jesuits, the Thomists, Scotists, &c. declare it. And the difference made by *natural capacities* is yet more than all this. When one man is born to a duller understanding, and another hath a quick and clear apprehension; All that these men read and hear and meditate on, is like to make different impressions on their minds. And this is the greatest thing of any one, which maketh many controversies endless, and maketh both Divines and people run away from one another as dangerously erroneous: If a few men have clearer understandings than the duller and unstudied sort, they are like to be the minor part: For the dull and slothful (and yet self-conceited) will ever be the greater part, many to one, till the golden age return. And when all the world feeleth the consequents of this difference, can we doubt of it, or so far dote, as to think it possible to cure it?

Yea the various degrees of the *Grace of God*, do certainly also make great variety of apprehensions. When God giveth to some those true

illuminations, those thirsting desires after truth, those heart-experiences, those delightful relishes, those powerful effects and victories, which he giveth not to others, they are made to differ & must needs have different apprehensions of such things. In which sense Christ saith, that he came not to send *peace but division*, that is, to be such an object, and preach so holy a doctrine, and give such *grace*, as would occasion divisions, by making his sanctified ones differ from the world, and occasioning the erritation of the worlds malignity.

And indeed the grand difference between the seed of the woman and of the serpent, the holy and the carnal seed, is that which is the root of the greatest and forest divisions in the world; which will never be reconciled till Christ at the day of judgement shall say to one part, *Come ye blessed*, and to the other *Go ye cursed*: For the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be (*in sensu composito*.) Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8. It was not for nothing that God permitted that great eruption of it, in the first man that ever was born into the world, against his innocent brothers life, on the bare account of their religious sacrifices! And the Cainites are still too strong for Abel's successors, and too numerous. And why did he kill his brother? But because his own works were evil and his brothers righteousness. Gen. 4. 10, 11. 1 Joh. 3. 12. And as Paul saith of the two sons of Abraham, as he that was born of the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now. Gal. 4. 29. For the flesh fighteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh,

flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other. Gal. 5. 17. And that which is born of the flesh is flesh, & that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Joh. 3. 6. And they that are of the flesh do savour mind or understand the things of the flesh, and they that are after the spirit do mind the things of the spirit. Rom. 8. 5, 6. Our heavenly teacher told his disciples, that if they were of the world the world would love them; but because they are not of the world, but he had chosen them out of the world, the world would hate them (even as it hated him.) Joh. 15. 18, 19, 24, 25. Joh. 17. 14. And every one that doth evil hateth the light. Joh. 3. 19, 20. Nothing then can be surer or plainer to a believer, than that there will be still as great divisions and diversitie of apprehensions as radicated enmity can breed.

And (to prevent many objections) let these three things be noted.

First, That this grand difference which lieth in the greatest matters, in head and heart, must needs have influence upon abundance of inferior controversies: Both as the *Persons* and *matters* are concerned in them. Reason and experience have put this past controversy.

Secondly, That this doth not concern only the *visible Church* and the *world*, but the *visible Church within it self*: For all the *Hypocrites* and *carnal worshippers*, have still the *Cainish serpentine nature*: Yea those that by advantages and interest are brought over to the *Orthodox* as well as *Christian* side. And it is a happy Church where the *Hypocrites* are not the *greater part*: And it is neither great Learning, nor degrees, nor the Pa-

storal office, nor the profession of the highest zeal, which will serve turn to cure the *carnal enmity*, without the sanctifying spirit of grace. So that when controversies arise, we see not in the *hypocrites* that *carnal mind*, which in the strictest profession, or greatest learning, or most venerable function, will work against the interest of holiness: But we are sure that *there it is*, though we know not the persons in whom but by the full effects.

Thirdly, And note also that there is a mixture or remnant of this unhappy root and principle even in the *sanctified themselves*. And it is hard in a controversy to perceive in *our selves*, much more in *others*, how much our judgements may be moved by this party; and what influence it may have into our conclusions.

So that all this maketh it but too manifest, what a certainty there is of perpetual differences in the Church, upon all these foresaid accounts.

Add also this great and unavoidable cause, that one *error leadeth in another*: And no man being without some; and every one being *generative*, and inferring more, what will it come to when all those also shall have their *off-spring*? and the further they go, the more they will increase and multiply?

And as the judgement by *one* is laid open to *another* (even as *truth* inferreth *truth*) so the *will* is engaged, and espouseth mens own opinions as their *interest*; which maketh them stretch their wits in study to maintain what once they have received and asserted: And alas how often have I
heard

heard wise and reverend persons cry out against this pride and partiality in *others*, who in their next discourse or the same, have shamefully shewed it in themselves: making much of their own inconsiderable reasonings, and vilifying cogent evidence against them; and being so intent on their own inventions and cause, that they could scarce have patience to hear another speak; And when they have heard him, their first words shew, that they never well weighed the strength of his arguments, but were all the while thinking what to say against him, or how to go on as they had begun.

Lastly (not to run into any more causes) there is an universal lamentable cause of differences, that almost all people naturally are apt to be *very confident of all their own apprehensions*, And very few have any *due suspicion* of their own opinions; or an understanding submission to wiser men. Yea boyes (that are once past their Tutors dictates) and the weakest women, are usually as confident that they are in the right, as the most learned and experienced persons. Yea none are so apt to be too doubtful and diffident of their own understandings, as the Learned who are next the highest form: For they have knowledge enough to know what can be objected against them, and to see an hundred difficulties, which the ignorant never saw. So that the more *weak & worthless* and erroneous any ones judgment is, usually the more furious are they in their prosecution of it, as if all were most *certain truth* which they apprehend: These are the boldest both in *schisms* and *persecutions*; as being so sure that

that their conceits are right, that they dare *censure or separate or scorn or despise, or afflict* dissenters.

It is a common thing to hear religious people *speak* meanly and humbly of their own understandings in the *general*; But when it cometh to *particulars*, it is the rarest part of humility in the world, to find: Very few do shew any competent *modesty* (except the grossly ignorant who have no *pretence* to wisdom): What abundance of good people of the darker sort, have I been fain to rebuke for their *over-valuing me* and *my understanding*; who when I have but *crossed their opinions* about any thing, which most groundlessly, they took for a duty or a sin, have held as fast their vain conceits, and made as much of their most senseless reasonings, and as passionately and confidently rejected the most unquestionable proof which I have offered them, as if they had been *infallible*, and had taken me for an errant fool.

And this is not the case of one or two *Sects* only; but *naturally* of almost all men, till God hath taught them that rare part of humility, to have *Humble Understandings*, and low thoughts of their own judgements, and a due suspicion of their apprehensions.

And their cure is the harder because they know not how to have a humble suspicion of themselves without running into the contrary extrem of scepticism, and being cold and unfaithful to the truth; They know not how to hold fast that which is good, and to be constant in religion, without holding fast all which they have once *conceited* to be good, and being constant in their error:

Especially

Especially when *good* or *evil* is voted to them by that party whose piety they most esteem and reverence.

Nor is this a *Religious* distemper only, but it is so natural to mankind, that even in *common matters* neighbours and neighbours, masters and servants, husband and wife, and almost all, have a strange diversity of apprehensions: One thinks that this is the best way, and another that the other is best; and let them reason and wrangle it out never so long, usually each party still holdeth his own, and hardly yieldeth to anothers reasons.

And when they *do yield*, they are so unhappy that they are as like to yield to one more *erroneous* than themselves, and to change into a *worse* opinion, as to yield to the truth. For commonly, *Appearance, Advantage, Interest*, and a taking tone and voice, do more with them than solid evidence of truth.

Out of all this if you infer a necessity of *Government*, so do I. But if a necessity of *force and rigor*, think on it again, and first hear what I shall further say: And consider what I have said already. Distinguish between the *common frailties* of mankind, and *special enormities*: And forget not that you are *men* and live among *men*: And let not men be cast out for *Original sin*; nor punish a few for that which is common to all the world; Nor condemn not your selves in condemning others. Of which I further add:

DIRECT. XI.

Evermore distinguish between the necessary truths and duties, and those which are not of necessity ; and between the Tollerable and the intollerable errors : And never think of a Common Unity or Concord, but upon the terms of necessary points, and of the primitive simplicity of doctrine, discipline and worship ; and the forbearance of dissenters in tollerable differences.

IF I were to speak but once to the world whilst I lived, this should be my Theam : And yet (for ought that I can perceive by any visible effects) I never spake of any thing with less success. One party writeth copiously of the mischiefs which will follow *Tolleration*. And they say true, if they mean the tolleration of things *intollerable* : The other write as copiously of the necessity of *Tolleration* and *Liberty* of Conscience : And they say true, if they mean only the *Tolleration* of things *tollerable*. But neither of them saith true if they mean *universally*, and speak in any other sense : There is nothing more plain and sure, than that the tollerating of *all errors and faults* which conscience may be pretended for, or of *none at all*, are utterly destructive of Christian and humane peace and safety. He is scarce well in his wits that holdeth either part *universally* and *unlimitedly* : For the one would have no Government,