

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,

ment, and the other would have no subjects to be governed. Seeing therefore *bounds and limits* there must be, we may reckon them as the third sort of distracted persons, who think that the bounds are so undiscoverable, that the mention of them is in vain; and therefore either *All* or *None* must be tollerated according as Rulers are disposed, or their interest seemeth to require: And therefore they say, *What points be they that are necessary, and what unnecessary? What errors are tollerable, and what are intollerable? Can you name and number them? Or, who must be the judge?* To which I answer.

First, Let it be first supposed that *God hath given us a Law to judge by*, and then we shall quickly tell you who shall be the Judge (A question which the confused world doth further their confusion by, when they are a thousand times answered past all rational contradiction) *Judgement is private or publick: The judicium privatum discretionis*, which is but the guide of rational acts, belongeth to every private man (which none that is a man did ever yet deny) The *judicium publicum* is either *in foro civili* determining in order to *corporal coaction*, and this belongeth only to the Magistrates; Or it is *in foro Ecclesiae* determining in order to *Church-communion* or *Excommunication*; and this belongeth only to the Church; (but under the coactive Government of the Magistrate: the Pastors being the *Governors*, and the people in part the executioners.) He that requireth more understands not this.

Secondly, And what if there be a difficulty what points are necessary and what errors are intolle-

intollerable? Yet as long as it is certain that such a difference *there is*, and that accordingly men *must do*; doth it not rather concern both parties to search after it, and practise as far as they can discern, than to cast away Reason, because there is a difficulty in using it aright? Just thus the Papists do with us about the like notion of *fundamentals* or *essentials* of Christianity; They call to us for a just enumeration of the *fundamentals*, and because they find so much difficulty there, as may find words and work for a perverse wrangler, they insult as if they might therefore take either *all things* or *nothing* to be *essentials*, and of necessity: As if Christianity had no constitutive essential parts, and so were *nothing*. And when they have all done they are forced themselves in their writings to distinguish the *fundamentals*, *essentials*, and *universally necessary* points from the rest, (as *Davenport*, *Costerus*, *Bellarmino*, *Holden*, &c. do.) And doth it not then concern them as much as us, to know which they be? What if it be a hard thing to enumerate just how many bits a man may eat, and not be a glutton? or how many drops a man may drink and be no drunkard? or just what meats and drinks must be used, to avoid excess in quality? or just what sort of stufes or silks or cloth or fashions may be used without excess in apparel? will you thence infer that men may eat and drink any thing in quantity and quality, or else *nothing*? or that he may wear *any thing*, or must go *naked*? What if you cannot justly enumerate what herbs or roots or drugs are wholesome and what are unwholesome? which
purge

purge too much and which too little? Must therefore *all* be used indifferently or *none*? If I am not able to enumerate just how many faults or weaknesses may be tollerable in my servants? Must I therefore have none, till I have those that are *faultless*? or else must I allow them to do *anything* that they list? Though just at the *verge of evil*, even that which is *good* may be matter of doubt, yet God in *Nature* and *Scripture* hath given us sufficient light for an upright, safe & peaceable life.

Thirdly, And if ever Baptism had been well understood, by these objectors, the essentials of Christianity had been understood. Hath not Christ himself determined who they be that shall be *admitted into the Church* and numbered with Christians, in the very tenor of the Baptismal Covenant? And did not the Church take the *Creed* to be sufficient for its proper use, which was to be the *matter of the Christian profession*, as to the Articles of faith to be believed? And yet are we now to seek in the end of the world, what *Christianity* is, and what are the essentials of our faith, and who is to be received as a professor of Christianity.

But this is a subject more largely to be handled if Rulers will permit it: And in the meantime because it is not the Magistrates but the Pastors that I am now speaking to, I shall pretermit the most which is to be said, and only acquaint you in the conclusion, that one of these following wayes must be chosen.

I. Either to tollerate *all men* to do what they wil, which they will make a matter of conscience or religion; And then some, may offer their children

dren in sacrifice to the devil, and some may think they do God service in killing his servants; and some may think it their duty to perswade people that there is no God nor life to come, nor duty, nor sin; but all things are left to our own wills as lawless.

Secondly, Or else you must tolerate *no error* or *fault* in religion; And then you must advise what *measure* of penalty you will inflict. If but a *little*, then you tolerate the error still: For they that err will err still; and they that conscientiously pray as *Daniel* did, *Dan. 6.* or forbear to obey the King as the three Confessours did. *Dan. 3.* will do so still, for all your penalty; And so there is *no cure*, but a *tolleration* still.

But if you inflict upon them, banishment, or death, you must resolve that the King shall dwell alone, and have no subjects, and so be no King; nor have any *servant*, and so be no Masters; nor endure so much as a *wife*, and so be no husband; and if he have children must use them as *K. Philip of Spain* did his eldest son *Prince Charles*, and so be no Father. It can be no less than this at last.

Or if you will *imprison them*, every *subject* must be in prison, and then who shall be the Jaylor, and who shall find them food?

Thirdly, Or else you must deal *partially* and *unjustly*, and condemn *one* while you acquit *another*, for the same fault; or condemn *one sort* of errors, while you allow to tolerate *others as great*: As if all were to be punished who believe *not Christs descent into Hell*, while all are tolerated, who deny the rest of the Articles of the Creed.

Fourthly, Or else you must make sure that all the Kings subjects shall be born under the same Planets, and of the same parents, and have the same temperament and complexion, and the same teachers, and company, and all hear the same words, and all see the same objects, and all have the same callings, employments, interests, passions, temptations, advantages, and the same degree of natural capacity, and of grace: That so there may be no difference or defect in their apprehensions.

Fifthly, or else you must distinguish and say, that *some are tolerable and shall be tolerated*, and *some errors are intolerable and shall not be tolerated* (in the tongue I mean; for you must tolerate them in the mind whether you will or not) And then you will find a necessity of discerning as well as you can, the *tolerable* from the *intolerable*.

And if so, for Christs sake and his Churches sake and your own sake, bethink you whether Christ be not the King of his Church, and whether he hath given his Church no Laws for its *Constitution* and *Administration*? By which we must try who are to be the members of himself and his Church, and to have Communion with himself and one another? and who are to be rejected and avoided? And whether the Holy Ghost is not the Author of the Church-establishment in the Scriptures? And whether we can expect more infallible deciders of such cases, than Christ, and his Spirit and Apostles? And whether the Church be not the same thing now as then, and and its *universal constitution* and *necessary administration* the same? And whether the primitive Church

Church or ours be the purer and more exemplary? And whether it would do Kings and Kingdomes and the souls of men any dangerous hurt, to have all Christians hold their *Union* and *Communion* just on the same terms as they did under *Peter* and *Paul* and all the Apostles? Or at least whether it be worthy all the calamitous divisions in Christendome, and the blood of the many hundred thousands that have for conscience sake been shed, and the enduring of the outcries of the imprisoned and banished, and their prayers to heaven for deliverance from mens hands, and the leaving of such a name on record to posterity, as is usually left in History on the authors of such sufferings; besides the present regret of mind, in the calamities of others, and the sad divisions and destruction of Charity, which cometh hereupon; I say whether it be worth the suffering of all this (and O how small a part is this) and all to keep our Churches from the primitive simplicity, and from the same way and Communion which *Peter* and *Paul* and the Churches of their times, established and practised? Shall we speak so highly of Christ and his Apostles and the sacred Scriptures, and yet think all this blood and misery, division and distraction, worthy to be endured, rather than our Union and Communion should be held on the terms which they did appoint and practise? or rather than such terms should be tolerated among us? I know what is said against all this; But this is no place to answer all that is said by such as cannot see how to answer themselves in so clear a case.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XII.

Remember that the Pastoral Government is a Work of **LIGHT** and **LOVE**: and what cannot be done by these is not at all to be done by you: And therefore you must make it your great study and employment, first to Know more than the people, and to Love them more than they Love you or one another; and then to convince them by irresistible evidence of truth, and to cause the warmth of your Love to be felt by them, in every word and act of your Administration; As the Milk is warm by the natural heat of the mother, and so is fitted for the nourishment of the child.

AS the Gospel is the revelation of the Love of God, and it is a message of Love which we have to bring, and a work of Love which we cooperate to effect; so it is a spirit of Love which must be our principle, and it is an office and work of Love which we are called to; and the manner must be answerable to the work. Faith is the Head, and Love is the Heart of the new Creature: And as there is no Light in our office and work, if there be no Faith and evidence of Truth, so there is no Life in it, if there be no Love. God himself in the great work of our Redemption, & Christ in his Incarnation, life and suffering, hath taught

taught the world, that the manifestation of Love is the way to win Love and to cure enmity: And he is not worthy the name of a Minister of Christ, who hath not learned this lesson, and doth not imitate his Lord in this: That as our office participateth subordinately of his office, both *Ruling, Teaching & Priestly*, so we may participate of that *Spirit of Love*, which was his *Principle* and must be *ours*. If it be not a work of *Love* which we do, it is not the work of a Minister of Christ, and Preacher of the Gospel. Can you well Preach so great *Love* of Christ to men without *Love*? if you shew not *Love* to them, you can never expect to win their *Love* to your selves. And when you overmuch desire to be loved your selves (as which of you doth not,) you pretend that it is, to make your endeavours more successful, when you perswade them to the love of Christ. And doubtless a just Love to the person of the Preacher is a good advantge to this success. And in good sadness, can you believe that any thing is so likely to win Love as Love, or did experience ever teach you, that reproach, or contempt, or hurting men, was the effectual way to make them Love you? This way hath been long tried by the Mountebanks in *Italy*; *Spain* and many other Countries, but alas with what success? Indeed *solitudinem faciunt & pacem vocant*, as *Tertullian* saith: When they have killed those that they had first oppressed, they affrighted the rest to say they loved them, and really won the Love of their surviving blood-thirsty enemies: but that was all. If the new knack of transfusion of blood cannot do this feat, by letting in the blood of a Spaniel

(who

(who loveth him that beateth him) when you let out their own, phlebotomy will never do it.

Account then that Sermon; that converse, that reproof, that discipline in which Love is not apparently predominant, to be but a lifeless useless thing, as to the winning of a sinners heart to Christ. Though I deny not but when the case of the sinner appeareth desperate, the severity of Discipline in casting him off, may express more of another affection as to him: But that is because in so doing you must shew greater Love to the Church which must be saved from the infection.

But perhaps you'l say, *They despise me, and injure me, and follow others and admire them, who deserve not so well of them as I do.*

Ans. First, we are most of us too partial to be competent Judges of our own deserts. Selfishness too often maketh us think better of our selves, our preaching and our lives, than there is cause: And it too often filleth men with envy against those, whose greater worth and better labours cause them to be preferred by the hearers: And envy usually breeds detraction. I know that many giddy persons heap up Teachers to themselves and follow seducers, & contemn the faithfullest servants of the Lord. But I know withall, that there is usually a convincing power in the preaching of able experienced Ministers, which is not to be found in the cold & formal discourses of an hypocrite. And that there is a suitable principle in true spiritual experienced Christians, which causeth them to relish this spiritual expe-

rimental preaching much more than the more-adorned carcases of formality: And seriousness is still acceptable to serious Christians: Yea even to common natural men, unless the malicious possess them by slanders with prejudice against it. Now if this should be the cause that others are preferred before you, O how heynous were your sin? As if it were not enough for you to *neglect* your duty, and to do the work of God deceitfully, and injure the souls of men in a cause of such importance, but you must also impudently justify such a crime, and also malign those that have more of the grace and gifts of God than you, and that do more to help to save mens souls!

Secondly, But suppose that your deserts be as great as you conceive, and their love to you as little; I would further ask you: First, is it for *their own sake* who thus hinder their own edification by it, that you are troubled at them? or is it for *your selves*, because you have not the respect which is your due. If it be the later, I need not tell you what it is for Ministers of Christ thus to seek themselves, and overvalue their own esteem: If it be the former, 2 Why doth it not please you then that they are edified by *others*, though not by you. Do you think that it is not the *same Gospel* which others preach to them. And may not that Gospel edifie and save them, by the Preaching of another as well as by yours. And if their dis-esteem of you, be a *sign* or *means*, that they are not edified by you, is not their great esteem of others who are as faithful a *sign* and means that they are or may be edified by them.

Third

Thirdly, And why are you not much more troubled at the state of all those who are not converted or edified by you, though they do not slight you or forsake you. How many be there that seem to love and honour you, and yet do not love and honour God? but despise religion and their own Salvation? If it be for *their* sakes and not your *own* that you are offended, you will grieve most for them that are most ungodly, though they honour you never so much; and you will be glad for them that are faithful and Godly, whose Ministry soever it be that they most esteem.

Fourthly, But suppose them yet so foolish and faulty, as to run from you to their own perdition; The question is, *What is the way to cure them?* Is Love caused by hard words or stripes? Will you say to them, *Love me, or you shall be fined or imprisoned?* Christ doth not teach you, to use such arguments when you speak for him, but to beseech men in his name and stand to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. But your own work will be done in your own way.

Obj. But Christ threatneth Hell to the impenitent, and Paul pronounceth him Anathematized that loveth not the Lord Jesus: and he talketh to his hearers of coming with a rod.

Ans. No doubt but the corrupted mind of man, hath need not only of Love to draw them home to God, and work the cure, but of Threatnings to drive them and to help on the cure! And though it be Love that causeth Love, which is their Holiness, yet Fear removeth many impediments: But still remember that it is Love which

is predominant, and *fear* is but subservient; And that the *fear* which is contrary to *Love* is a *vicer*, and hindereth their salvation: And remember that *Fear* and *Love* towards God, will better stand together, than *Fear* and *Love* to you will: For men know Gods *Sovereignty* and *Justice*; and know that he is not to be questioned or resisted: But if they suffer by you, it will not be so digested, nor will it so consist with love. A patient will not bear to be whipt by his Physician to force him to take his medicines, though a child will bear it from his parents, whose *Love* and *Power* are more unquestionable to him. I desire you but to mark your own experience, and let your *Love* be predominant in all your ministrations, and use no force or hurting course which will really abate their *Love* to you, and then I shall leave you in the rest to your discretion. Secondly, Yet still we grant that Christs threatnings may be preached by you, and must be; Thirdly, And that the rod of discipline must be used: But this must be done only on the scandalous and such as more dishonour Christ than you: And it must be so done, that it may appear to be *Christs own work*, and done by you upon *his interest* and at *his command*, and not either arbitrarily or for your selves.

And I shall be bold with confidence to add that in those cases where violent restraint or coercion is necessary, the Pastor is the unmeetest person to meddle in it. It is the Magistrates work to drive and force (where it must be done) and the Pastors to perswade and draw. The flock of Christ

Christ is led by himself the Lamb of God, and his Ministers must go before with him, and attend him in the conduct; and the Magistrate must come behind and drive; and it is the hindermost, and not those before that must be driven. Pastors should be so far from calling out for the help of violence (unless it be to keep the peace) that they should rather shew their love and tenderness, by seeking as far as they may to mitigate it: And they should desire that no such ungrateful work be at all imposed upon them, as to seem the afflictors of their flocks: because when once they have lost their love, they have lost their opportunity and advantage of edifying them.

And it is not *Pilate's* hypocritical washing of his hands, that will excuse him: Nor the *Romish* Clergies disclaiming to meddle in a judgement of blood, which will reconcile the minds of sufferers to them, as long as they are Masters of the Inquisition, or deliver them up to the secular power, and excommunicate and depose the temporal Lords who will not do such execution as they require.

Though I have some where else mentioned it, I will again request the Reverend Pastors of the Church, to peruse the story of *Idacius* and *Martin* in *Salpistris Severus*. The sum of it is this. *Priscillian* and many others (some Bishops and some Presbyters and some private persons) were zealous in religion, but heretical (Gnosticks saith *Salpistris*;) *Ithacius* and *Idacius* were two Orthodox Bishops who were very hot against these hereticks: Both of them men of rash and haughty spirits, and one of them at least (saith

Sulpitius) an injurious person that scarce cared what he said or did by others (see what persons a good cause may be defended by.) These Bishops drew in the Bishops of the neighboring Churches, & in their Synods first condemned the Priscillianists; and next provoked the Emperour against them. The Priscillianists found that if that were the way, an Emperours Court was not so Orthodox or constant, but there might be as good hopes for them: And therefore they got a powerful friend in Court to undertake their business, and got the better of the Bishops: The Bishops being born down for a time, at last *Maximus* was proclaimed Emperour, and came over with power and victory into *Germany* (such another as *Cromwel*, who by the Bishops was accounted a very Religious Christian, but usurped the Empire, and fought against and killed one of the Emperours, and pretended that the souldiers made him Emperour against his will.) This *Maximus* (whether sincerely or for his own advantage is unknown) did take part with the Orthodox and greatly honour the Bishops and promote Religion, and got a great deal of love and honour. *Isidore* and *Idacius* and the rest of the Bishops apply themselves to *Maximus* against the Priscillianists; who hearkened to them, and to please them put *Priscillian* and some others to death, and punished others by other wayes of violence. The more rude ungodly sort of Christians, so far concurred or over-went the Bishops, that they turned their fury against any that seemed more Religious than their neighbours: so that if any one did but fast and pray more, and read the Scriptures

tures more than others, he was reproached as a Heretick and favourer of the Priscillianists: *Martin* Bishop of *Turen* was at that time a man of no great Learning, but so famous for Holiness, Charity, and numerous miracles, as the like is scarce written with credibility of any man since the Apostles (for which he is canonized a Saint.) This *Martin* was grieved partly to hear strictness brought into reproach, and partly to see Magistrates called to the suppression of heresies by the Bishops; and so every heretick taught how to persecute and suppress the truth, who could but get the Emperor on his side: Therefore he petitioned the Emperour for mercy to the Priscillianists, and told him that it was a thing not used by Christians, to propagate sound doctrine, or suppress mens errors by the sword: He also avoided the Synods of the Bishops, and refused not only their Councils, but their Communion: Whereupon the Bishops not only despise him as an unlearned man, and one that deceived the people with false miracles; but also suggested to the Emperour that he was a favourer of the hereticks himself: Insomuch that *Martin* hardly escaped suffering with them, through the Bishops calumnies. But the great piety and clemency of the Emperour preserved him; And at last did promise him the saving of the lives of some that were further appointed to suffer, on condition that he himself would communicate with the Bishops. *Martin* saw that there was no other means to save the life of one that else was presently to die, and thinking that Christ who would have mercy and not sacrifice, would in such a case al-

low it, he promised to have Communion with the Bishops, and so did communicate with them the next day, and saved the mans life. When he had done it he was in great doubt and perplexity about it, whether he had done well or not? and in this trouble went secretly out of the City homewards: And by the way in a Wood as he was in heaviness and doubt, an Angel appeared to him, and rebuked and chastened him, for communicating with them, and bid him take warning by this, lest the next time he hazarded his salvation it self by it. And *Martin* professed that long after this, the gift of miracles was denied him; but he communicated with the Synod and Bishops no more.

This History I only recite without determining how far the Reader is to believe it: But I must say that the reading of it was a temptation to me, to doubt concerning my Communion, the Reader may easily know with whom. For though I know how credulous and fabulous many ancient Writers were, yet I considered, that this Historian is one of the most ancient, one of the most learned, one of the most strictly Religious of all the old Historians of the Church; and that he was himself an intimate acquaintance of *Martins*, and had it from his own mouth; and most solemnly protesteth or sweareth that he feigneth nothing, and that the miracles of *Martin* were known to him partly by his own sight, partly by *Martin's* own Relation, and partly by many credible witnesses: And they were so believed commonly in that age by good men, that it was the occasion of his Canonizing. And if such History is not to be believed,

believed, I will not mention the consequences that will hence follow.

And yet on the other side I considered ; First, That it was possible that a holy man might be mistaken by fear and scrupulosity , and take that for an Angels apparition which was but a dream: Secondly, That his avoiding Communion with the Bishops might be only a prudential act, fitted to that time and place , upon accidental or circumstantial reasons which will not suit with another time and place : Thirdly, It is dangerous making the actions of any men, upon pretense of any Revelations and Miracles , to be instead of Scripture, the rule of our faith or duty ; much more to prefer them before the Scripture when there is a contrariety between them. Fourthly, And his separation was but temporary, not from the *Order*, nor from any of the *other Pastors* , or from the *people* ; but only from *those individual persons* , whom he supposed to be scandalous. And these considerations I judge sufficient to resist that temptation.

Whoever understandeth what a *man* is, and what a *Christian* is, and what the office and work of a *Pastor* is, will make no doubt, but that his Guidance must be *paternal*, and that as *Love* is the effect to be produced in the people, so *Love* in him must be the *means* of causing it; & that he must expect that the success of his preaching & discipline should not exceed the measure of *Love*, which is manifested therein; further than as God may extraordinarily work beyond the aptitude of the *means*. And when he hath complained of the people as sharply as he will , he shall find that *whatsoever* it

is that Love cannot do, in order to their conversion and edification, and which Light or evidence cannot do in order to their conviction, is not by him to be done at all. And if he will be trying with edge tools, he may cut his own fingers sooner than cure an erring mind; And shall find that the people will much worse endure acts of force and corporal penalty, from a Pastor, than from a Magistrate; and will hardly believe by any cloathing that he is a sheep, if they once perceive that he hath bloody teeth. Our work is to win the heart to Christ: And he is unfit to be a Pastor, that knoweth not how hearts are to be won.

DIRECT. XIII.

When you have thought of all the evils that will be uncured, when Love and evidence have done their part; yet reject not this way till you have found out a better; which will do the work that is to be done, and that with fewer inconveniences.

I Am not now about to state the bounds of Liberty in matters of Religion; (It requireth a full Treatise by it self; and many tediously dispute the case before they ever truly stated it.) Much less am I perswading Magistrates, that they must permit every deceiver to do his worst, to draw the people from God, or from Christ Jesus the Mediator, from faith and godliness, any more than

than from *Loyalty, Peace and Honesty*. But I am speaking only against that partial, factious, needless, dividing and pernicious *violence*; which is pretended to be the *chief*, if not the *only* cure of all the errors or disagreements in the Churches, by those that know no part of Chyrurgery but amputation.

Some speak much of the many disorders which will be uncured, if *Violence* do not more than *Teaching and Love*: But I humbly ask of them: First, are those disorders such as are *curable* in this life; or such as are the *unavoidable* miseries of our corrupt and imperfect state? Secondly, will *force* cure them better than *evidence* of truth, and *Love* will do? Thirdly, will they be so cured without a greater mischief! God telleth the Sabbath-breakers of *Israel*, that when they were rooted out, the *land should keep her Sabbaths*: Was that a *mercy* or a *judgement*? Would you *so cure* Sabbath-breaking and disorder? and take a *solitude* for *Peace*? Fourthly, is not the work to be done, the saving of mens souls? And shall any be saved against his will? And then should not all force be meerly such as is subservient to the ends of Love? Fifthly, will stripes change the judgement in matters of Religion? Sixthly, is he any better than a Knave or an hypocrite, who will say or swear or do that through *fear*, which he verily thinketh God forbiddeth him, and is displeased for, and feareth it may damn his soul? Seventhly, Is it the honour and felicity of souls to be such? or of Church or Kingdome to be composed of such? Eighthly, is not a conscientious fear of sinning against God, a thing well

well pleasing to him, and necessary to mens salvation, and to the Churches welfare, and to the safety of the lives of Kings, and of the Kingdoms peace? And is there not then great cause to cherish it (though not the errours that abuse it.) And should not all care be used to cure the ungodly world, of impiety and fearedness of conscience, which makes them make a mock of sin. And if conscience were once debauched and mastered by fear, and the people be brought to prefer their their fleshly interest before their spiritual, and to fear mens punishment more than Gods, would not such debauched consciences have a great advantage, to make such men the masters of the estates and lives of others? And are the lives of Kings, and the estates of neighbours, and the peace of Kingdomes, competently secured, where God is not feared more than fines or corporal penalties? Ninthly, if force be so far followed till it have changed mens judgements or conquered conscience, or exterminated and destroyed all that will not be thus changed or conquered, who differ from superiors in unnecessary things, will it not (all things well considered) prove a dear price for that which might be had at much cheaper rates? Are not the most conscientious, necessary helpers of the Ministry, by their example, to cure the unconscionableness of the rest? And therefore should be countenanced & encouraged? Tenthly, would not the cessation of unnecessary impositions, cast out the most of the scruples of conscientious people, and cease the saddest divisions of the Churches? If *Rome* could have been content with a Religion of no more Articles than the

the Apostles was, and would on those terms have held Communion with other Churches? O what rends and ruines had it prevented in the Christian world? Are not the old Apostolical rules and terms sufficient to the safety and peace of Christians? Were those worthy persons. B. Usher, B. Hall, B. Davenant, B. Morton, with the Bergii, the Crocii, and all the great pacificators deceived, who wrote and preached and cried out to the world that [*so much as all Christians are agreed in, is sufficient matter for their concord; if they would lay it upon no more*] vid. Ush. serm. before King James at Wansted. Or do you think it was their meaning [*Let all Rulers multiply unnecessary scrupled impositions in their own dominions, and for scrupling them, let them silence, imprison and banish at home; And then let them send to their neighbour Churches for Unity, Peace and Concord, and tell them that the subscribing to the Scriptures generally, and to the Creed, Lords Prayer, and Decalogue and Sacraments particularly, are terms sufficient to this end.* (Supposing that good order, decency and peace be kept up by suitable discipline both Ecclesiastical and Civil.) And why would not this serve for all the world? Or why should more scrupled things be called necessary to order and decency than indeed are so? My desire of the Churches peace which caused me to write all the rest, provoketh me to touch this subject briefly, which will scarce endure to be touched.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XIV.

When you reprove those weak Christians, who are subject to errors, disorders or divisions, reflect not any disgrace or contempt upon Religion, and conscientious strictness; but be the more careful to proclaim the innocency and honour of serious Godliness, lest the prophane and ungodly take occasion to despise it, by your opening the faults of such as are taken for the zealous Professours of it.

HOnest hearers take most notice, what is the main scope which the Preacher aimeth at, and the business which he driveth on. Some men take occasion by the errors and faults of such as have seemed seriously religious, to make all *seriousness* and *diligence* for our salvation, to seem to the hearers to be meer hypocrisie, and not only a *needleless*, but a *hurtful* thing; and to perswade the people that an ignorant carelesness of their souls, with good neighbour-hood, quietness and mirth, is better than all this ado. Which is no more or less than to preach for Atheism and Ungodliness in practise, so it be veiled with the hypocritical profession of the Christian faith. And this unhappy sort of Preachers do seldome miss to fall upon the real and supposed miscarriages of men that are or seem religious, in some part of their sermons and familiar discourse; which being

being done to so odious an end, as to bring *serious* Religion self into dislike, it maketh the best of the hearers abhor such reflections, because they abhor the *scope* of them; Believing that Holiness need not to be preached against in the world, till mens hearts are more enclined to it, and till all its enemies abate their opposition! And if it were to be done, yet not by a Minister of Christ: He that preacheth against Holiness (how covertly soever) preacheth against God. Whereas if a mans designe be to *promote Religion*, the sober hearers (though partly guilty) will bear his reproof of the faults of professors, with much more patience, when they see it is for God and godliness that he doth it. I speak by experience, and must give them this testimony, that I have many and many a time poured out my soul in earnest reprehensions of the errors and disorders of rash-dividing zeal; and the hearers have taken all with patience: when the same persons could not bear the tenth part so much, from some preachers whom they imagined to aim in it at the depressing of the honour of true and serious religion. Therefore be sure what sort of men soever you are reproofing, that you say nothing which tendeth to make the ignorant or ungodly sort of your auditors think, that it is *zeal*, or *strictness*, or careful diligence about their souls, which you condemn: But still put in sufficient caution for the necessity of a holy heart and life.

DIRECT.

DIRECT. XV.

Discourage not the Religious from so much of Religious exercises in their families, or with one another, as is meet for them in their private stations.

BY this means many Pastors have been very great causes of schisms and separations. Some of them are so carnal and selfish, that they make the Ministry but a trade for their benefice and honour: And therefore for fear lest the people should encroach upon their advantages, they drive them as far off as they can, and care not how ignorant they are, so that thereby they may but lock up the mystery of their trade securely for themselves; and keep the people in a blindfold reverence, dependance and obedience: How ordinarily the Roman Clergy practise this iniquity, the nations that are kept in darkness by them, are doleful testimonies. Like the great dog that will not endure the little one to come near his carrion or his bone. And some are so excessively fearful of schism, that they dare not endure the people to pray together, or repeat a sermon, or search the scripture, and exhort one another daily, in that manner which God requireth private men to do, for fear lest they should go further, and grow proud of their own gifts and doings, and despise their Pastors, and set up for themselves! When as this very inordinate jealousy is the likely and the common way

way to bring them, to the evil that is so much feared. While peoples care of their salvation is cherished and stirred up, and the Pastors do provoke them to pray and search the scriptures and help each other in the way to heaven, they are honoured and loved by the faithful of their flocks, as men that indeed are true to their great trust, and have a love and care for the peoples souls: And then those Pastors who further the people in such religious exercises, may usually as fathers rule them in it, and keep them from usurping any thing that is proper to the officers of Christ, and from errors, and factions and divisions; and may easily suppress any arrogancie when it appeareth. And that honest desire which religious persons have to do good to others, is thus satisfied by such sober exercises as belong to them: And so Pastor and people do peaceably, lovingly and successfully concur to carry on the work of Christ, whilest each one moveth in his proper place. I speak this, through the great mercy of God, from very great and long experience: having still kept up such lawful meetings and sober exercises as are not unfit for private Christians, and thereby kept out all heresies, factions, schisms, and arrogancies from the flock; with the great increase of their knowledge, humility, piety, and just observance of their guides.

Whereas when the foresaid inordinate jealousy doth restrain people, or discourage them from any of that which is their proper work; First, they grow into distaste of such Pastors, and take them for enemies to godliness and to their souls:

Secondly, they grow next as jealous of all the Pastors *doctrine*, as he is of them; and think it no fault to draw off further from him themselves, and then to disaffect others to him: Thirdly, their appetite to religious exercises, when it is restrained groweth inordinate, and affecteth that which belongeth not to them. Fourthly, they conceit that there is some necessity of their turning *teachers*, to do that which the Teachers will not do. Fifthly, they next keep their meetings *by themselves*, from under the eye and inspection of their Teachers. Sixthly, then they take liberty to vent what cometh in their minds, whilst there is none to regulate and contradict them. Seventhly, and at last they set up for themselves, and the chief speakers among them become Pastors to the rest, and so too often speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them. *Act.* 20. 30.

Wisedome and Love may prevent all this: Envy not the gifts or graces of your people? Is it not the end of all your studies and labours to promote them? Are they not the fruits of Gods mercies and your own endeavours: Will you grudge at your own successes? In stead of restraining them, let none so earnestly drive them on, to such religious exercises that belong to them, as your selves; and help them and oversee them in the performance; And then you shall have advantage to restrain them from that which belongeth not to them: And you shall have them the great assistants of your Ministry, who will more uphold your honours, than all the prophane and ignorant will do: yea they will be your glory,

ry, crown and joy at the appearing of Jesus Christ. *1 Thes. 2. 19, 20.*

DIRECT. XVI.

Be not wanting in abilities, watchfulness, or diligence, to resist seducers by the evidence of truth; that there may be no need of other weapons: And quench such sparks among your people before they break out into flames.

THe clamours and wayes of violence used by many Pastors, are oft but an unhappy means to supply the defect of their own abilities and duties: And those who are conscious of an insufficiency in themselves to do their parts, do most intemperately call out to the Magistrates to help them, and do most unmannerly censure them, if they answer not their expectations: And indeed if the sword of the Magistrate be such an universal remedy, and may serve instead of the ability and labour of the Minister, let it also serve to cure the sick, instead of the skill and labour of the Physician; and let all other callings as needless be put down, and let us have none but Magistrates alone.

First, Some Ministers are so ignorant, that if one of their people do but turn Antinomian, Anabaptist or Separatist, they are not able to confute them: Much less if one that is learned and well-studied introduce these errors: If the

Se&ary challenge them to dispute, its two to one but error will triumph, through the insufficiency of him that should defend the truth. And then this insufficient Minister, will turn to railing, or call out to the Magistrate for his help, to declare to all that he is too weak: which will harden and encrease the seduced party, and make them think that it is the *weakness* of his *cause*.

Secondly, And too many Ministers, who seem more able, are Lordly and lazy, and carry themselves strangely and at a distance from the people, and are seldome familiar with them in private: And so they give advantage to such seducers as creep into houses, to sow their tares; and for the weaker sort to vend their errors, when there is none to contradict them: These Pastors take their proper work, to which they are called, for a *slavery* or a *toil*. They are so *proud* and *idle*, that for them to watch over all the flock, and to teach them publicly and from house to house, night and day with tears as *Paul* did, and to watch wher eany spark appeareth, and presently to quench it, doth seem to them such a drudgery and burden, that God were unmerciful if he should impose it on them: That is, They think God unmerciful if he will not rather let the patient die, than put the Chyrurgeon to the trouble of dressing his sores: If he will not let the people be damned rather than put Ministers to so much labour to instruct and save them. If it were but to take their tythes and honour, and to be revered by the people, and to preach once or twice a week, a sermon which tendeth to their applause, they could submit to this

this much: But *Paul's* exhortation *Act. 20.* seemeth intollerable preciseness. But souls will not be informed or reformed at so cheap a rate. *Sin* hath corrupted them more than so. If we will sleep, the envious man will not sleep: but when we awake, we shall find that he hath sowed his tares. Sometimes grievous *Wolves* will enter, not sparing the flock: and sometimes of our own selves will men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them: Therefore watch. Study hard and meditate on these things, and give your selves wholly to them, that your profiting may be known to all: that you may be able to stop the mouths of gain-sayers; and to edifie and stablish all the flock; that they be not as children tossed to and fro, and carried up and down by every wind of doctrine, by the cunning slight and subtilty of men, by which they lie in wait to deceive. For to this end did Christ give offices and gifts: Study therefore to shew your selves workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing, methodizing, opening, and so defending the word of truth. *Act. 20. 20, 28, 29, 30. Eph. 3. 12, 14. 1 Tim. 4. 15, 16. 2 Tim. 2. 2, 15.*

DIRECT. XVII.

*Be not strange to the poor ones of your flock ;
but impartial to all ; and the servants of
all ; mind not high things, but condescend
to men of low estate. Rom. 12. 16.*

ALL souls are equally precious unto Christ ; whether rich or poor. O set the strange example of Christs condescension still before your eyes. Was it the *high* or the *low* that were his familiars ? Did he live in *falsehood*, and ride in *pomp*, and associate only with the *rich* and *great* ? O see him washing his disciples feet ? And hear him teaching them by that example, what they ought to do for one another. *He came not to be ministered unto but to minister* : How sharply did he rebuke his disciples when they *strove* who should be *greatest* ? And setting a little child before them, hath taught us what must be our ambition : And that he *that will be the greatest must be the servant of all* : Our greatness lieth in the greatest of our *humility* and *usefulness* : *Math. 18. 1, 2, 3, 4. & 23. 11. Luk. 22. 24, 25, 26. Math. 20. 28.*

It is lawful and meet that men in power should be honoured by us, and also that the people be taught to honour them : and that you keep such interest in them as is needful to the publick good : and therefore all converse with them is not unlawful : But when Ministers *only attend on the rich*, and are *strange* and *seldome* among the poor, it makes them accounted carnal worldly men ; and