

There is no Unity to be expected, if you will so far depart from the Scripture sufficiency, as to make any more for sense or phrase, of absolute necessity to our peace. By *phrase* or *terms*, I mean either the same numerically (as in the Original) or equipollent (as in translations.) And I say not that it's necessary to the unity of the Church, that *every word in Scripture* (Original or Translations) be subscribed to; (for some may doubt of the corruption of a word or Book) But that *no more* is necessary. If all Scripture be not of that degree of Necessity, much less humane additions, *Isa. 8. 20. 1 Tim. 3. 17. 2 Tim. 1. 13. 1 Cor. 9. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 20. Act. 20. 32.*

12. The Churches Unity & Peace must not be laid upon all Divine Truths: as not on lesser darker points, which neither the being nor well-being of Christianity is concerned in so much as to rest upon them, *Phil. 3. 15, 16. Rom. 14. 15, 17, 20. Heb. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. 1 Cor. 7. 19. Gal. 5. 6. & 6. 15. Col. 3. 11.*

13. We ought to love and esteem as Christians and members of the Catholick Church all those that profess to believe the Essentials of Christianity, and to be sanctified by the Spirit of God, and lead a holy upright life; so they make a credible profession, not evidently contradicted by words or deeds: though these persons may differ from us in many lower points of Doctrine, Worship or Government, *1 Cor. 1. 2. Eph. 6. 24. Gal. 6. 15, 16. Phil. 3. 16. Rom. 15. 1, 2. & 14. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 8. 9.*

14. We ought so to manage the Worship of God in our particular solemn Assemblies, that no sober peaceable Christian may be repulsed or forced from our local Communion, through differences in things of indifferent nature, *Heb. 8. 5. Mat. 15. 9. Rom. 14. 13. & 14. 1. 2 Cor. 11. 3. Joh. 4. 23, 24.*

15. If any Churches differ from us in Ceremonies or smaller things, or if any particular Christians differ, so that they cannot in conscience hold local Communion with us in the same Assemblies for Worship (*E. G.* if we sit at the Lords Supper, and they dare not take it without kneeling: if we sing a version of the Psalms which they scruple to joyn in; If we permit none to joyn that will not conform in disputable things) in such cases, though it be first our duty to do our best to remove all offences, yet if that cannot be done, we may and ought in several Assemblies to take each other for Brethren, and of the same Catholick Church,

Church, so be it we all hold the same essentials of Faith and Godliness, and walk accordingly, and especially if we also hold those weighty superstructures, that the welfare of the Church is most concerned in.

Though here were few or no instances of this case in the days of the Apostles, when divisions were not so great as now, yet the general rules in the fore-cited Texts do prove it.

16. Ecclesiastical Ministerial Government (by whomsoever exercised) must not degenerate into a secular coercive Government; nor may we use carnal weapons, nor meddle by force with mens bodies or estates; nor yet can we oblige the Magistrate to do it, merely to execute our censures, or without sufficient Evidence to prove it his duty; nor can we oblige the people against the Word of God, *claverrante*: so that neither Bishop, nor Council hath any such power as is properly decisively Judicial obliging to execution, be the sentence right or wrong: But our people must know that though we be their Guides or Rulers, yet are we but Ministers, and that they have a higher power to regard, and must not obey us against the Lord, but in and for him. The Power of Pastors therefore is not like Magistrates, or absolute Judges (as is said before, but like a Physitian in his Hospital, or in an infected City among his Patients, and like a Reader of any Science to voluntary Scholars, in his School: and as an Ambassador to them to whom he is sent. So that our Governing being but by the Word, and on the Conscience, is of the same nature with our Directing. 1 Pet. 5. 3. Luke 22. 25, 26. 3 Joh. 9. 10. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2.

17. Magistrates are Governors of the Church even as a Church, and of Christians as Christians, though not Absolutely; nor in the same respects, by the same means, & to the same neereit Ends, as Pastors. Magistrates must force us to our duty, and punish us if we be wicked or negligent, even as Pastors, and cast us out of our Benefices, and deny us encouragements, if we be insufficient: so that *ad hoc* the Magistrate is the only Judge what is sound doctrine, and what heresie, what Ministers are sufficient or insufficient, culpable or not; I say, *ad hoc*, so far as to Judge who shall have publick Liberty and Countenance, and who shall be punished, restrained and discountenanced: Thus far the Magistrate is Judge in Religion; (besides that Judgement of Choice

which every private man hath) And therefore the Princes of the Christian world should hold some correspondencies like General Councils, among themselves by their agents for carrying on the work of Christ, and much of the unity and prosperity of Christians lyeth on their hands, *Isa.* 49. 23. *Psal.* 2. 12. *Rom.* 13. 1, 2, 3, 4. *1 King.* 2. 27, 35. & *2 King.* 18. 4. & *2 King.* 23. 8, 20. *2 Chron.* 14. 3, 5. *Josh.* 1. 8. *1 Tim.* 2. 2.

18. Yet are the Pastors of the Church in their places Rulers or Guides of Princes and Magistrates: that is, we Guide them by Doctrine and Church discipline, as they Rule us by force. The Pastors are the Judges of Heresie and Vice, *ad hoc* thus far, so as to judge who shall be Denounced by themselves unmeet for the Churches Communion; and Judges of sound Doctrine so far as to resolve what is by themselves to be taught to the people: and Judges of that Magistrate so far, as to determine whether he be a fit subject for their Administrations and Communion. For every man is to judge when he is to act and execute (in these cases,) and therefore when the Question is, Who is to be tolerated or forcibly restrained, the Magistrate is the only Judge, and the Minister but a teacher: But the Question is, whom should I admit or not admit to my Communion, and whom should I perswade and require the Church to avoid or to receive? Here the Pastors are the Judges: And when the Question is, Whether the Pastor go according to Gods Word or not, here the people have *Judicium Discretionis*, and cannot be forced; though they ought to obey where they see not sufficient reason to the contrary, *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. *Heb.* 13. 17. *1 Thes.* 5. 12. *1 Cor.* 4. 1. *Luk.* 12. 42, 44. *1 Sam.* 28. 18. *Dan.* 9. 8, 10. *Joh.* 20. 23. *2 Chron.* 36. 14, 15, 16.

19. The honor and power of the Pastors is for their work: And so great is that work, that as to fleshly accommodations, it layeth us under abundance more trouble, then the power and honor affordeth us relief from. All true Pastors therefore should be so far from striving for Power, & Greatness, and Rule, and extent of their Diocess as matters of advantage, that they should still look on their Power but as Power to thresh, or plough, or sow, or reap, a Power to give alms to all the poor in the Town, to visit all the sick, to cure mad men that will abuse me, &c. such a Power to labor and suffer in doing good. And thus he that will be the Greatest, but think of no other kind of greatness, but a power

power to become the servant of all : If men had these true apprehensions of the Episcopal office, they would be no more forward in contending for power and large Diocesses, then now they are in contending who shall Instruct most of the ignorant, or go to the poor ungodly families to further their reformation; or intreat, beseech, exhort most of the obstinate from man to man; or who should relieve the most of the poor of all the Countrey about. And if this be it they contend for, they may Rule without a Commission from the Prince: Who will hinder them, that hath any fear of God? *1 Cor. 4. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16. Act. 20. 18. to the end. 2 Cor. 1. 24. Mark. 10. 44. 1 Thes. 2. 9. Luk. 10. 2.*

20. No man is called by God to more work then he can possibly do, nor should desire and undertake more. And therefore if Prelates, and Councils, and Popes would but conscionably bethink them of the work, what it is, and how to be done, & of what weight, and how strict will be the account, and then consider how they can do it, our differences would quickly be at end: For though godly men would put off no service they can do, yet when they lookt on the undertaking of these Impossible, they would tremble to think on it. All conscionable men are sensible of their weakness, and the weight of the work, and say who is sufficient for these things; And I dare say the strongest of them all would feel the weight of the burden of one Parish, and be readier to beg and seek about for help, then to contend for a larger Diocess, unless as the meer necessity of the Church for want of laborers might call them to labor in other parts. Duty supposeth Authority, and Authority supposeth ability and opportunity; even natural ability and mental qualification, *Psal. 131. 1, 2. 2 Cor. 2. 16.*

BY this much you may see what Unity may be expected in the Church on earth. 1. A unity of internal Faith and Love, and Spirit among all real Christians. 2. A Unity of Profession, all professing the same Belief, that is of the word of God in General; and of the Creed and Essentials of Religion in particular; and as many more of the particular truths as they can reach.

3. A Unity of Professors in local communion in the same Assemblies in Gods publick Worship, in the Word, Prayer, Praises, Sacraments, &c. Where they cohabite, or have opportunity for such communion.

4. Among those that are out of our reach, or being neer us, yet differing in some smaller things, where a difference is tolerable, we may yet in word, writing and deed own each other as Brethren, and combine for the promoting of the common good, and the commonly received truths and duties. So that we have in these four, the unity of the spirit in the bond of Peace : One Body : (the Catholick Church comprehending all properly called Christians) One Spirit (The sanctifying Spirit of Christ :) One Hope of our calling (One Promise or Gospel, and One Heaven and End :) One Lord (even Christ the only Head of the Church) One Faith (Both objective, in Scripture, and the Creed : and subjective, specifical, which is our Reception of Scripture doctrine, and of Christ with his benefits :) One Baptism (entring all one and the same Covenant with Christ, to be his, and take him for our Lord and Saviour, renouncing the world, the flesh and devil, and signifying this by external washing in the name of that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.) One God and Father (Our Creator, Preserver, our End and Happiness) *Ephes. 4. 3, 4, 5.*

And is all this Nothing to you that seemed so much to *Paul*? that unless you have also an Earthly, Universal Head, and an Unity in Ceremonies (wherein all must be of your mind, and conform to you as if you were Gods) you will revile at our divisions, and run to *Rome* for further Unity.

HAVING laid down those Grounds or Principles on which the Unity and Peace of the Church must be built, there appears not any great need of adding any more for the reducing these to practice; if these were but received, the way of practice would be obvious. But briefly I shall lay down these few Propositions, implied in those exprest before.

1. Let every man profess his belief of the Holy Scriptures in General; and in particular of all that Scripture hath exprest to be of Necessity to Salvation: by denouncing death to them that have it not; And let them also Profess to consent that God be their God, and Christ their Saviour, and the Holy Ghost their Sanctifier, and that they renounce the flesh, the world and Devil, resolving to live a holy life. And let this be by a credible way of Professing. And all that do thus, let us esteem,

esteem, love, and use them as Christians, till they some way plainly disown this Profession.

2. Let every such Baptized Professor, owning also the Ministry, Church and Worship Ordinances, plainly required in Scripture; be a member of some particular Church, where he may worship God in the Communion of Saints.

3. Let those that make not the foresaid Christian Profession, be excluded the number of Christians, and those that own not the Fundamentals of communion, (the Church, Ministry, Word, Prayer, Praise, Sacrament of Communion) be taken as unmeet for actual communion with us, though yet we censure them not to be no Christians.

4. Let those that are obstinate and impenitent in any Errors, contrary to the said Profession and Ordinances, or in actual gross sin, or discovering an ungodly heart, be rejected by the Church, after due admonition and patience.

5. Let all the Pastors Associate, and hold constant correspondence according to their nearness and opportunity, for helping and strengthening each other, and unanimous carrying on the work of Christ.

6. Let these Associations have standing Presidents, where the peace of the Church requireth it.

7. Let no particular Pastors set up any thing in Gods publick Worship which is not Necessary, and may tend to make divisions by driving tender Consciences from his communion.

8. Let Associations forbear making Laws to others, and imposing as Governours, and let them make Agreements for certain Duty, and not Laws that pretend to make new duties; and let them Agree on nothing unnecessary.

9. Let them study Holiness as much as Peace, and keep clean themselves and their societies as far as they can, and look at labour and suffering, and not at any other honour and power, but what is for duty; and let them look abroad and help the dark parts within their reach, and lay out themselves freely and industriously for God, and have the chief regard to the most publick good.

10. Let him that is justly cast out of one Church, be received by none into communion till he be reconciled; and if they suspect that he is unjustly cast out, let him not be received till

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the Church that cast him out be heard, and the injury or his Repentance manifest.

11. Let those that cannot hold local communion, because of some smaller practical difference (as gestures, words, &c.) and yet agree in the foresaid Profession, and Fundamentals of Communion : yet own each other professedly as Brethren, and maintain Love and communion in other respects.

12. Let all differing Christians consult and agree how to hold their differences, so as may least prejudice the common truths which all receive, and as may least hinder the salvation of the ungodly, or offend the weak.

13. Let none judge or defame each other till they are heard, and see they have sufficient cause by certain proof : And then admonish them, and bring the cause to the Association, before they proceed further.

14. Let the correspondency of Pastors extend as far as there is Capacity, Opportunity, and need. We cannot correspond with the Antipodes, nor much with the *Ethiopians*, nor such remote parts : there is seldom opportunity, and seldom necessity of actual correspondence with forreign Nations: But yet when publick occasions require it, (the publickest cases being the weightiest) we should by Delegates or Messengers from several Associations, perform our duties in all such correspondencies, whether in Councils or otherwise.

15. If any members of our Churches travail into other parts, they should take Certificates or Communicatory Letters, that they may be admitted to the communion of the Churches where they travail or abide.

16. The chief consultations for General Peace and effectual promoting the healing of the Churches, and the propagation of the Gospel into the unbelieving parts of the world, should be done by Christian Princes by their Agents : and though Ministers are fit to be (partly) their Agents in such consultations, yet not meerly as Pastors, but as fit men employed by their Princes. He that lives to see but this much reduced to practise, will see a better unity and peace in the Church, then ever was or will be attained by an earthly Head and Judge of the Universal Church, whether Pope or Council, or then the Agreement of the five Patriarks, and the later Primates and Metropolitans will procure. Let us be content with one Head, and one Heart,

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and center there : but though the fingers and toes be more, we can well bear it. Take up with the Holy Scriptures as the sufficient Rule : Let the Profession of that be the mark of a believer : and all such believers betaken to be, as they are, the Catholick Church ; and no faction Schismatically and presumptuously confine it to themselves ; Let this Intellectual Unity of faith, be seconded with a cordial Unity of Holy Love, to Christ and his Members : (that so our Unity may begin at the Head and Heart, and not perversly at the fingers and toes of smaller matters, or at the hair and nails of Ceremonies and indifferent Modes ;) Let this be manifested in Professions of Love, and publick ownings of the Catholick Brotherhood, and of Christians as Christians ; and by publick disclaiming all selfishness, and partiality, and private Interests, and all reproachfull words and writings, and by actual communion as far as we can. Let the Worship of God be performed in such holy simplicity that none may be driven from the sacred Assemblies ; and let the people be suffered to go the same way to heaven as *Peter and Paul* did go themselves, and lead their hearers in ; Let us not be ambitious of Church Union or Communion with those that ought to be cast out of the Church, and whom we are in Scripture commanded to avoid ; but let the three attributes of [*Holy Catholick, and Apostolical*] be still affixed to the Church ; and be practically considered ; and those considerations issued in [*The Communion of Saints*] And then we shall have so much Unity and Peace, as may honour the Christian Religion, and strengthen us in the way to our *Perfect Peace*, which is not to be expected in this dark, diseased, imperfect world. This is the way, and none but this.

But is there any hope that while men are as they are, such healing Truths should be received and obeyed ? Yes : by here and there a man, who shall have the Peace of their peaceable Affections and Endeavours ; but not by the most either of the people or the Pastors ; let the evidence of the truth be never so clear. Who can expect any great success of such Proposals, that knows the world ? (till the time come when Light shall go forth with an absolute resolution to prevail.) God is one ; and all that Deny *themselves* and center in him, must needs be One : But *self* is as various and numerous as Persons are. And this *self* is the Heart of

the Natural man, and the *Center* of all the unsanctified. And every *self* is a grain of *Sand*, thats hardly made coherent with another. The *Darkest* mind, is *self-conceited*: and the poorest child or beggar is *self-affected*; and high and low, Princes and people have *self-interests*, which draw them several wayes. And in the sanctified this *self* is mortified but in part, and is the first living, and strongest, and last dying sin, in all; and giveth strength to all the rest. What hope then of *Unity*, while every man hath a numerically different *Center*, Principle, & End, and so few forsake it, and devote themselves to God the common *Center*, and End of the Saints? and those few so Imperfectly, permitting *self* to live and do so much within them. And though the Papists have devised a way to make this sand into a rope, or cement innumerable *selves* together, by finding out such a *Carnal Head* and *Center* where every man may find his own *Carnal Interest* involved in the *Interest* of that *Head* and his body; and so may have a carnal unity of a multitude of carnal ones to glory in; Yet Christ is another kind of *Head* and *Center*, condemning and destroying carnal *self*, and commanding all his followers upon pain of damnation to deny it, though to nature it be the dearest thing in the world. No wonder therefore if the number of his Adherents be few, and the unity of those that center in him, be less conspicuous and glorious in the world. With strong *Desires* therefore, but *Low Expectations* I propound these terms of Unity to the Church, as knowing how many thousand of the *Dark* and *selfish* will not only neglect them and reject them, but rise up against them (if they come into their hands) with no small *self-conceited* confidence and scorn.

But the Church is the Lords, who hath purchased it by his blood; his Interest in it is more then mine; & it is infinitely dearer to him then to me; & his wisdom is fittest to dispose of the success of our endeavours, & to determine of the season and measures of its cure: He is the Physitian, and hath undertaken the work, and in the fittest way and time will perfect it, and be the finisher as well as the Author of our faith. The eye of the chief Shepheard is even now upon all his scattered flock, and of those that are given him to be saved, he will lose none; he is neither insufficient for them, nor careless of them; but will gather into one the Elect that are dispersed; and present them all pure, unblamable, and spotless to his Father at the last; and as much as they seem now to us, to be incurably

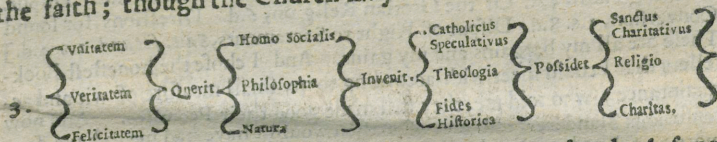
curably divided, we shall then see them perfectly healed and united, and made up One Glorified Body of our Head. For that blessed Marriage day of the Lamb, and the Glory of the New Jerusalem, we therefore Pray, and Hope, and Wait, in our passage through this sinful and distracted world.

Here are three common sayings in which I am much delighted that conduce to the Illustration of what I have said.

1. *Servanda in Necessariis Unitas; In non-necessariis libertas: in utrisq; charitas.* Vulg.

2. *Contra Rationem nemo sobrius; Contra Scripturam nemo Christianus; Contra Ecclesiam nemo pacificus.* August.

Scripture is the test of Christianity, and must shew us sound in the faith; though the Church may shew us Peaceable.



Therefore to seek for Unity, Verity or Felicity, by the loss or destruction of Sanctity, Religion, Charity; is really to renounce, oppose and lose them.

Satisfaction to certain CALUMNIATORS.

I Am informed from London, and several parts of the Land, that some of my Books having lately been sold at excessive rates by the Booksellers, it is somewhat commonly reported that it is caused by my excessive gain, which say they is at least three or four hundred pounds a year. I thank the Lord that doth not only employ me in his service, but also vouchsafe me the honor and benefit of being evil-spoken of for doing him the best service that I can, *Mat. 5. 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 13, 14, 15, 16.* Blessed *Augustine* was put to vindicate himself by an oath, from the infamy of a coverous design, which was raised by one godly woman, upon a disorderly action of other men, and to that end he wrote his 225. Epistle. I find no call to use his oath; but yet I judge it my duty to imitate him in patience, and in rescuing the slanderers from their sin, that they abuse not their souls by uncharitable surmises, nor their tongues by false reports. To which end I give them this true information: The two first Books I printed, I left to the Booksellers Will; for all the rest, I agreed with them for the fifteenth Book, to give to some few of my friends, hearing that some others agreed for the tenth. Some time

time my fifteenth Book coming not to an hundred, and sometime but to few more, when of Practical Books I needed sometime 800. to give away. Because I was scarce rich enough to buy so many, I agreed with the Bookseller, (my Neighbour,) to allow 18. d. a Ream (which is not a penny a quire,) out of his own gain towards the buying of Bibles, and some of the practical Books which he printed, for the poor: Covenanting with him, that he should sell my Controversal Writings as cheap, and my Practical Writings somewhat cheaper then books are ordinarily sold. To this hour I never received for my self one penny of money from them for any of my Writings, to the best of my remembrance: but if it fell out that my part came to more than I gave my friends, I exchanged them for other Books: My accounts and memory tell me not of .li. that ever was returned for me on these accounts, which was on literary occasions: so that my many hundreds a year is come to never a penny in all, but as abovesaid, in some exchange of Books. And the price I set on my Books which I exchanged for theirs at the dearest rates, is as followeth, [Treat. of Conversion, 2.s. Treat. of Crucifying the World, 2.s. Disput. of Justificat. 2.s. 4.d. The Call to the Unconverted, 8.d. Disput. of saving Faith, 5.d. Of the Grotian Religion, 6.d. Directions for sound Conversion, 1.s. 8.d. Disput. of Right to Sacraments, Edit. secund. 2.s. 4.d.] These are all my bargains and my gains. And I chose the honestest Booksellers that I could meet with, according to my small measure of wit and acquaintance; who told me, they still made good their Promises. And now censorious Slanderers tell me, what thou wouldst have had me to have done more? if I had got Food and Rayment out of my own hard labors, had it been unlawful or dishonourable, when Booksellers get so many hundred pounds by one Book, that never studied nor spent their time and cost for it, as I have done? And yet dost thou reproach me that receive not a groat? But because I will not oblige my self to the same course for the future, and that thou mayst know at what rates I serve thee, let me tell thee, that in these labors early and late my body is wasted, my precious time laid out, and somewhat of my Estate, and somewhat of the labor of my friends. I cannot have twenty quire of my writing well transcribed, under fifty pounds. And who shall pay for this, or maintain me in thy service? I have troubled a Neighbour-Minister in the tedious work of transcribing my Characters (for some books,) for which, neither he nor I had ever one penny. These personal matters are unsavory to me, and I take it for a great injury that thou puttest upon me a necessity of mentioning them. But I have yielded this once to thy unrighteous importunity, that thou mayest hereafter learn what to believe and utter, and make more conscience of thy censures and reports. And that thou mayst have the utmost relief that I can procure thee for the time to come, I shall agree with my Booksellers, to sell all that I publish at three farthings a sheet, and to print the price of every book at the bottom of the Title page.

Farewell.

October 11.

1658.

Richard Baxter.

