

expressly tells us, all enemies must be subdued under his feet, *Psal. 110. 1. Psal. 8. 6. 1 Cor. 15. 24, 25. Heb. 2. 6, 7.* which is not yet effected, for Christs enemies, viz. the *Deuill, Sinne, Babylon, Antichrist*, the opposite oppressing ciuill powers of the world, death, and the grave, and the rule and authority they bear rule with, are not yet wholly by Christ put downe, therefore the Office of his Mediatorship still stands in force; Hence we may safely conclude.

First, That if Christ be a substantiall Mediator, truly spirituall, his Gospel then, which he and his Apostles hath declared, is not a bare outward Relation, History, or carnal Letter, but a spiritual and substantiall Truth and Mystery, containing the whole Minde, Will, and Law of God, for us and all Saints to believe and practise throughout all Ages.

Secondly, It must needs be as durable as the Mediator is, for the Law of Christs Priesthood is as durable as the Priesthood it selfe, the Law depending upon the Priesthood; for the change of the Priesthood and Law goes together, and so the Priesthood of old being changed, the Law then, and not till then was changed also, *Heb. 7. 18.* So when Christs Priesthood is changed, then the Law of that Priesthood, and not till then shall be changed also.

Thirdly, It must also be granted, That the Scriptures which doe declare this great myserie of Jesus Christ and his Gospel, be the holy Scriptures, and the infallible Word of God, for it could never have entred into the heart of man to have knowne or manifested those hidden mysteries, had not God himselfe by his owne Word revealed them from Heaven; now the Scriptures are Gods Word, declaring his minde, making knowne his Councel, being able to make the people of God wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, being given by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproose, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousnesse, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, *2 Tim. 3. 15, 16.* and therefore not to be slighted and undervalued, as a dead Letter, a bare History, a carnall empty Story. Therefore dearely beloved brethren, we beg and intreat you, and every one that loves his soule, to feare and tremble at the thoughts of slighting and despising Christ and his Gospel, or any one of his laws, or holy commandements revealed in his word, for know that *God will set his Son upon his holy Hill of Sion, Psal. 2. 8.* and will call all his enemies that will not have him to reigne over them,

and slay them before him. He is to be received to rule over us as King, as well as to be an oblation for sin, as he is a Priest and Sacrifice, so also a Prophet and a King, to teach and govern his people, being the author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him. Therefore that man that departeth from the way of subjection to Christ in his holy Commandements & Ordinances, refuseth Christ to be his Lord, and King, and judges himselfe unworthy of eternall life; Wherefore we in tender compassion to your soules, and zeal for the glory of God, doe beseech & exhort you, that you still keep the holy commandements, as they were delivered unto you, that you doe shew the same diligence to the end (for he that endureth to the end shall be saved) that ye stand fast, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, that no man take your crown from you, and that you take heed that you be not led aside with the workers of iniquity. O let none of us dally with the wayes of God, lest we be given up to the error of the wicked, even to those horrible delusions before mentioned, for God is a just and holy God. O that God would give his people this wisdom in all Nations to keep his holy commandements, for holiness becomes his house for ever; O that Gods severity might prevaile with all that professe his name, to search their owne hearts, least not receiving the truth in the love thereof, they be given up to strong delusions to believe a lye, lest they making sin their work and pleasure, God make condemnation to be their wages, and disannulling their league with hell and death, he pull them down from the top of their vanity, whether they have above the heights of the clouds exalted themselves, and laugh at their destruction, and mock when their feare comes.

*Ob.* But many may be ready to object, that those who have fallen into such desperate abominations, were sometimes members of our Congregations, and from thence are apt to contemn our profession, and question whether our way be of God or no, saying, you see what your judgement leads to.

*Sol.* In answer to this we say,

1. That it is a great mistake to judge that those persons were all of our societies, for this we can clearly evince, that many, if not most of them were never members with us.

2. Suppose they had been all of us (which yet is not so) yet we say that none may thence reasonably condemn our profession, nor our selves scruple it, as not of God, which we doubt not, but they will confesse, if they consider.

1. That

1. That from the undeniable truths of God, and from the Churches gathered immediately by the holy Apostles themselves (which by all are granted to be the purest) many professors have gone astray, and fallen into great condemnation: *Hymenus and Alexander* made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, *1 Tim. 1. 19.* affirming (as many of these in our dayes doe) that the resurrection was past already, destroying the faith of some, *2 Tim. 2. 18.* severall in *Corinth* denying any resurrection at all, *1 Cor. 15. 12.* others falling into very great abominations; *Jude* tells us, *vers. 4.* That there were certain men crept in unawares, being of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousnesse, and denying the onely Lord God, and our Lord *Jesus Christ*. To add one instance more for all (*John* saith) Little children it is the last time, and as you have heard that *Antichrist* shall come, even now are there many *Antichrists*; whereby we know that it is the last time; they went out from us, but they were not of us, *Joh. 2. 18, 19.*

2. The spirit of God foreseeing such things should be, that we might not be stumbled when they come to passe, hath expressly foretold them; As to the Elders of *Ephesus*, *Acts 20. 28, 29, 30.* saith *Paul* by the Spirit, Take heed to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his owne blood; for I know this, that after my departing shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: Also, of your selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them; so also by the Apostle *Peter*, *2 Pet. 2. 1, 2.* &c. There shall be (saith he) false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, and many shall follow their pernicious or lascivious wayes, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of: *Jude* excites the Saints to remember the words of the Apostles of our Lord *Jesus*, how they foretold there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts, separating themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit, *vers. 17, 18, 19.* and from whom shall they separate, but from the true Churches of *Jesus Christ*, professing the faith of *Christ*, and being baptized in his name (the Scripture no where approving any other Churches, that we read of) *Paul* also tells *Timothy*, the time would come (and surely those propheties are now fulfilled) when they would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts,

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Heart bleedings for Professors abominations.

heap to themselves teachers, having itching eares, that should turne away their eares from the truth, giving heed unto fables.

3. God in his wisdom permits these things, that those which are approved may be made manifest, and those that seeme to be what they are not, may be discovered; for hypocrites have and will be creeping into the Church (and that no marvel, for Satan himselfe is transformed into an Angel of Light) but because they receive not the truth in the love thereof, God sends them strong delusions that they should believe a lye, that they all may be damned, who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousnesse, *2 Thess.* 2. 10, 11, 12, &c. *1 Job.* 2. 18, 19.

4. Wee cannot wonder that those who draw neer to God in the visible profession of his Name, being destitute of the power of godlines, do thus fall away: for God will be sanctified in them that draw nigh to him, either in making them conformable to his Will to the praise of his grace, or else in discovering their fallshood, hypocrisie & madness, making them dreadfull examples of his wonderfull severity, to the glory of his Justice. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, for offering strange fire, which the Lord commanded not, were destroyed by fire from Heaven, *Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3. The Lord himselfe proclaimes from Heaven, that his wayes are righteous, & the just shall walk in them, but transgressors shall fall therein, *Hos.* 14. ult. The narrow path of the Saints righteous walk, suits not with the licentious principles and interests of carnal men, and though sinners may be in *Sion* for a time, yet fear surpriseth them, and by reason of the purity & brightnes of the wayes of God, they cannot abide therein, but cast Christs yoke from their necks, because it will not be subservient to their owne lusts. A remarkable example of Gods severity against those that sometimes professed the truth, whose hearts were not right before God, we may see in *Judas*, and in *Ananias*, and *Sapphira*, who for lying against the holy Ghost were suddenly destroyed, to the great feare of all the Church of Christ: As in nature the corruption of the best things, is the greatest corruption, so the greater profession men make of the truth, when once they be corrupted, they fall into the grossest abominations. The truth is, this is no ground to suspect our profession, because some fall from it, for who is it that sins the unpardonable sin, but one that professed the truth of the Gospel, *Job.* 1. 5, 6. Who are those that are twice dead, plucked up by the roots? except those that by profession were formerly alive in the truth.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, and lastly, We do acknowledge, though some eminent Professors of the same truth with us have fallen foully (which hath been the occasion of much griefe to us) yet it hath been hitherto, and we hope ever shall be our care (as they have been by the righteous judgement of God discovered) according to our duty to put them from amongst us, endeavouring to preserve our selves from all iniquitie, and not to have fellowship with the unprofitable works of darkness, but rather to reprove them: We conclude this, saying of them that are gone from us, and fallen into such notorious wickedness, as *John saith, They went from us because they were not of us, for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us, but they went out from us, that they might be manifest not to be of us.*

If any shall judge what we have here declared doth savour of uncharitableness, rigidnes, censoriousnes & bitterness of spirit to them that dissent from us, we desire all such seriously to take notice, that true love and charity is not the soothing of any in their sins, the healing of wounds slightly, the crying peace, peace, when sudden destruction is at hand; it is not the daubing with untempered mortar, but it is a true love to the Truth, and to all for the Truths sake, consisting in plainness and simplicity, engaging us to endeavour the restoring of them that are fallen, to pull them as brands out of the fire, to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, to note such persons that walk disorderly, to endeavour the preserving of them that are sound in the faith.

While some men cry out against us for uncharitableness, in crying down sin and sinful practises, O how uncharitable in truth are they, that can suffer God to be dishonoured, his Sonne to be vilified, his Truth trampled underfoot, his Ordinances slighted, and their own and thousands of poor souls in danger of being utterly seduced; to their own destruction, and yet have not a heart to relent for such practises, nor a tongue to plead against them, whereby others might be forewarned of their swift approaching danger; our consciences bear witness, that the honour of God, the love of his Truth, zeal for his Name, and if possible, the saving of souls from death, hath been the prevailing argument with us, thus to express our selves; beseeching the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, that by the same power which raised him from the dead, he would make this instrumentall to confirm those who yet abide in the truth, to restore all the simple in heart, who are ready to turne aside from the voyce of the true Shepherd, and to follow strangers, and the cunning sleights and de-

vices of the Destroyer, that walks up and downe as a roaring Lyon seeking whom he may devour, who hath cast down many wounded, & slain many strong men: And that it may also to all men more fully discover the desperate folly and madnes of those who triumph in their proud imaginations against the Truth and Scepter of the Lord Jesus, that all may clearly see their house is the way to hell, going downe to the chambers of death, least they, poor souls, through fained speches, being inticed to yeild, and forced through the flattering of their lips, should goe after them straight way. *As an Ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a Fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike thorow their liver, basting as Birds to the snare, not knowing that it is for their life;* and we by uncharitable silence would become guilty of their blood. Now brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, praying that you may stand upon your watch, cloathed with the whole armour of God, and that you may be kept blamelesse, living by faith, untill the comming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, not casting away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward; For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. *Amen.*

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