

Olga Maria Tabaco Pereira Mateus Baptista Gonçalves

Walke wyde in wordys
Contributo para a análise linguística de
Dialogue Concerning Heresies
de Sir Thomas More

Vol. II

Anexo I

Dissertação apresentada à Universidade de Évora para obtenção do grau de Doutor em Linguística sob a orientação da Professora Doutora Júlia Dias Ferreira.

Esta tese não contém as críticas e sugestões feitas pelo Júri.

Évora, 2005

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ANEXO I

DIALOGUE CONCERNING HERESIES

DE THOMAS MORE

REPRODUÇÃO DIGITALIZADA

The Complete Works of
ST. THOMAS MORE

VOLUME 6

A DIALOGUE CONCERNING HERESIES

PART 1

The Text

Reprodução digitalizada

*A dialoge of syr Thomas
More knyghte: one of the
counsayll of our souerayne lorde the kyng and chauncelloure
of hys duchy of Lancaster. Wheryn be treatyd dyuers maters /
as of the veneracyon & worshyp of ymagys & relyques /
prayng to sayntis / & goynge on pylgrymage.
Wyth many other thyngys touchyng the
pestylent secte of Luther
& Tyndale / by the
tone bygone in
Saxony / &
by the
tother laboryd
to be brought in to England.*

*Newly ouersene by the sayd syr Thomas More
chauncellour of England.*

1530.

The table of the furst boke

The furst chapyter.

The letter of credence sent from hys frende by a trusty secret messenger. Wyth the letter of the authore answerynge the same. The declaracion of the credence by the mouth of the messenger wheruppon the mater of all the hole worke dependeth.

The seconde chapyter.

Here sommarly ys declared what ordre the Author intendencyth to treat of the matters purposyd vnto hym. Whereof bycause the fyrst was an opynyon conceyued in some mennys heddys that a certayne person late abiured of heresy for prechyng agaynst pylgrymagys and ymagis and prayers made to sayntes was theryn greatly wronged / the author bryefly declareth hys mynde concernyng the confutacyon of those perylouse and pernycouse opynyons.

The thyrde chapyter.

The obieccyons of the messenger made agaynste prayeng to sayntes / worshyppyng of ymages / and goynge on pylgrymagys / wyth the answer of the author vnto the same. And incydently ys yt by the messenger moued / that there sholde seme no necessyte for crysten folke to resorte to any chyrches / but that all were one to pray thens or there. And that opynyon by the author answered and confutyd.

The fourth chapyter.

The author declareth in the comprobacyon of pylgrymagys that yt ys the pleasure of god to be specyally sought & worshyppyd in some one place before a nother. And albe yt that we can not attayne to the knowlege of the cause why god dothe so / yet the author proueth by great authoryte that god by myracle testyfyeth yt ys so.

The fyfte chapyter.

Bycause pylgrymagys be amonge other prouys testyfyed by myracles / the messenger doth make obieccyon agaynst those myracles / partely lest they be faynyd and vntrewe / partely lest they be done by the deuyll yf they be done at all.

The syxte chapyter.

Because the messenger thynketh that he may well mistrust and deny the myracles / bycause reason & nature tell hym that they can not be done / therefore fyrste the author sheweth what

vnreasonablenes wold ensue / yf folke wolde stande so styffe agaynste all credence to be gyuen to any suche thyng as reason and nature shold seme to gayne say.

The .vii. chapyter.

The author sheweth that neyther nature nor reason do deny the myracles to be trewe / nor do not gayne say / but that they may be well and easely done.

The .viii. chapyter.

The messenger allegeth that god may nothyng do agaynst the course of nature. Of whyche the authore declareth the contrarye / and ouer that sheweth / that our lorde in workynge of myracles doth nothyng agaynst nature.

The .ix. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that albe it men may mystrust some of the particuler myracles / yet can there no resonable man neyther deny nor doute but that many myracles hath there bene done and wrought.

The .x. chapyter.

The authour proueth that many thyngys dayly done by nature or crafte whereof we nothyng meruayle at all / be more meruaylous and more wonderfull in dede than be the myracles that we most meruayle of and repute most incredyble.

The .xi. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that a myracle is not to be mystrustyd though it be done in a small matter & semeth vpon a sleight occasyon.

The .xii. chapyter.

The authour somewhat noteth the froward myndys of many folke that wolde be very harde to byleue a man in a myracle vpon his othe / & very lyght in a shrewd tale to byleue a woman on her worde.

The .xiii. chapyter.

The authour sheweth the vntoward mynde of many men / whyche in myracles so hyely touchyng the honour of god and wele of theyr own soulys / wyll neyther byleue other folke that tell theym / nor theym selfe vouchsaufe to go proue theym.

The .xiii. chapyter.

The messenger maketh obieccyon that myracles shewed before a multytude / may be fayned / and by the authour shewed howe the goodnes of god bryngeth shortely the trouthe of suche falsched to lyght / wyth ensamples therof one or two rehersed / & further shewed that many myracles there be / which no good crysten man may deny to be trew.

The .xv. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that yf of those myracles that are told & wry ten to be done at dyuers pylgrymagys / and commenly byleued for very trewe / we certaynly knewe some falsly fayned / yet were that no cause to mystrust the remenaunt.

The .xvi. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that who so wolde enquire sholde sone fynd that at pylgrymagys bene dayly many great and vndoubted myracles wrought and well knowen. And specyally he speketh of the greate and open myracle shewed at oure lady of Ippyswytche of late vpon the doughter of syr Roger wentworth knyght.

The .xvii. chapyter.

The messenger layeth forth obieccyons agaynste myracles done at pylgrymagys / of whiche he confesseth many to be trew. But he layeth causes & reasons wherby he sayeth that many men be moued to byleue and thynke that those myracles that be done there be done by the deuyll to sette oure hartes vpon ydolatry by the worshyppyng of ymages in stede of god.

The .xviii. chapyter.

The authour deferreth the answeare to the foresayd obieccyons / and fyrst by scrypture he proueth that the chyrche of Cryst can not erre in any necessary artycle of Crystes fayth. And in this chapyter bene those wordes of Cryst specyally touched. Super cathedram Moysi sederunt. &c. Que dicunt vobis facite que autem faciunt nolite facere / concernyng the authoryte of the chyrche.

The .xix. chapyter.

The authour proueth that yf the worshyp of ymages were ydolatry than the chyrche byleuyng it to be lawfull and plesaunt to god / were in a mysse byleue and in a dedely erreure. And than were the fayth fayled in the chyrche / wherof Cryst hath promysed the contrary as is proued in the chapyter before.

The .xx. chapyter.

The messenger allegeth that the perpetuall beyng & assystance of Cryst with his chyrche to kepe it out of all damnable errorrs / is nothyng els but his beyng with his chyrch in holy scrypture / wherof the authour declareth the contrary.

The .xxi. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that yf it so were in dede as the messenger sayd / that is to wyt that Cryst contynued with his chyrche none other wyse but onely by the leuyng of his holy scrypture to them / and that all the fayth also were onely therin / than sholde it yet folowe that as far as the necessaryte of our saluacyon requyreth / god gyueth the chyrche the ryght vnderstandynge therof. And thervpon foloweth further / that the chyrche can not arre in the ryght fayth. Whervpon is inferred eftsones all that the messenger wolde haue fledde fro before. And theron also specyally foloweth / that all the textes of holy scrypture whiche heretykes allege agaynst ymages or any poynt of the comen byleue of Crystes catholyke chyrche / can nothyng serue theyr purpose.

The .xxii. chapyter.

Bycause the messenger had in the begynnyng shewed hym selfe desyrous & gredy vpon the texte of scrypture / with lytell force of the olde fathers gloses / and with dyspraysse of phylosophy & almost all the .vii. lyberall scyences / the authour therefore incydently sheweth what harme hath happed somtyme to fall to dyuerse of those yonge men whom he hath knowen to gyue theyr study to the scrypture onely / with contempte of Logyke & other seculer scyence / & lytell regarde of the olde interpretours. Wherfore the authour sheweth / that in the study of scrypture / the sure way is / with vertue and prayer / fyrst to vse the iudgement of naturall reason / wherunto seculer litterature helpeth moche. And secondly the commentys of holy doctours. And thyrddly aboue all thynge / the artycles of the catholyke fayth receyuyd & byleuyd thorow the chyrch of cryst.

The .xxiii. chapyter.

The messenger obiectyth agaynst the councell of the authour / in that he wolde that the student of scrypture sholde lene to the commentours and vnto naturall reason / whiche he calleth enemy to fayth. And there vpon the answeere of the authour to those obieccions / specyally prouyng that reason is seruaunt to fayth and not enemy / and must with fayth and interpretacyon of scrypture nedys be concurraunt.

The .xxiii. chapyter.

The messenger maketh obieccyons agaynste the authour / in that he counsayled the student of scrypture to brynge the artycles of our fayth with him for a specyall rule to conster the scrypture by. And the authour confyrmeth his counsayll gyuen in that byhalfe / declaryng that without that rule men may sone fall into grete errors in the study of holy scrypture.

The .xxv. chapyter.

The authour takynge occasyon vpon certayne wordes of the messenger / declareth the preemynence / necessaryte / and profyte of holy scrypture / shewynge neuerthesse that many thynges haue bene taught by god without wrytynge. And many greate thynges so remayne yet vnwryten of trewthes necessary to be byleued. And that the newe lawe of Cryste is the law so wry ten in the harte / that it shall neuer out of his chyrche. And that the lawe there wry ten by god / is a ryght rule to interprete the wordes wry ten in his holy scrypture. Whiche rule with reason and the olde interpretours / the authour sheweth to be the very sure way to wade with in the great streame of holy scrypture.

The .xxvi. chapyter.

The messenger sayeng that hym semed he shold not byleue the chyrch yf he sawe the chyrche saye one thyng and the holy scrypture another thyng / bycause the scrypture is the worde of god / the authour sheweth that the fayth of the chyrche is the worde of god as well as the scrypture / and therefore as well to be byleued. And that the fayth and the scrypture well vnderstanden be neuer contrary. And further sheweth that vpon all doubtys rysynge vpon holy scrypture concernynge any necessary artycle of the fayth / he that can not vpon all that he can here in the matter on bothe the sydes perceyue the better and trewer parte / hath a sure & vndoutable refuge prouyded hym by the goodnes of god to bryng hym out of all perplexyte / in that god hath commaundyd hym in all suche doutes to byleue his chyrche.

The .xxvii. chapyter.

The authour prouyth that god hath commaundyd vs in all thynges necessary to saluacyon to gyue ferme credence & full obedience vnto his chyrch. And a cause why god wyll haue vs bounden to byleue.

The .xxviii. chapyter.

The messenger eftesones obiected agaynst this / that we sholde byleue the chyrche in any thyng where we fynde the wordes of scrypture semyng playnly to say the contrary / or byleue the olde

doctours interpretacyons in any necessary artycle / where they seme to vs to say contrary to the texte / shewynge that we maye perceyue the scrypture as well as they myght. And the answeere of the authour prouynge the authoryte of the olde interpretours & the infallyble authoryte of the chyrche in that god techeth it euery truthe requysyte to the necessaryte of mannes saluacyon. Whiche he proueth by a deducyon partely dependyng vpon naturall reason.

The .xxix. chapyter.

The authour proueth by scrypture that god instructeth the chyrche of cryst / in euery trowth necessarily requysyte for our saluacyon.

The .xxx. chapyter.

Where as the messenger had thought before / that it were harde to byleue any thyng certaynly saue holy scrypture though the chyrche dyd agre therin and commaunde it / the authour sheweth that sauynge for the authoryte of the chyrche / men coulde not knowe what scrypture they sholde byleue. And here is it shewed that god wyll not suffre the chyrch to be deceyued in the choyce of the very scrypture of god frome any counterfete.

The .xxxi. chapyter.

In that the chyrche can not arre in the choyce of the trewe scrypture / the authour proueth by the reason whiche the kynges hyghnes in his noble and most famous boke obiectyth agaynste Luther / that the chyrche can not arre in the necessary vnderstandynge of scrypture. And fynally the authour in thys chapyter dothe breuely recapytle certayne of the pryncypall poyntes that be before proued. And therewith endeth the fyrst boke.

The seconde boke.

The fyrst chapyter.

The messenger recapytelyng certayne thynges before proued / and for his parte agreyng that the chyrche of Cryst can not in any necessary artycle of the fayth fall in any damnable arrour / doth put in doute and questyon which is the very chyrch of Cryst / allegyng that they peraduenture whom we call heretykes wyll say that them selfe is the chyrche & we not. Wherof the authour sheweth the contrary / declarynge wherby we may knowe that they can not be the chyrche.

The .ii. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that no secte of suche as the chyrche taketh for heretykes / can be the chyrche / for as moch as the chyrche was before all them / as the tree from whiche all those wythered braunches be fallen.

The .iii. chapyter.

The messenger moueth that the very chyrche peraduenture is not the people that we take for it / but a secrete vnknowne sorte of such onely / as be by god predestynate to be saued. Where vnto the authour answereth and declareth that it can not be so.

The .iiii. chapyter.

The messenger moueth that thoughe the chyrche be not the number of folke onely predestynate to blysse / yet may it peraduenture be the number of good and well byleuyng folke here and there vnknowne / whiche may be peraduenture those whom we condempne for heretykes for holdynge oppynyon agaynste ymagys. Whereof the authour proueth the contrary.

The .v. chapyter.

The authour sheweth and concludeth that this comen knowne multytude of crysten nacyns not cut of nor fallen of by heresyces / be the very chyrche of Cryste good men and bad togyther.

The .vi. chapyter.

The messenger moueth / that syth the chyrche is this knowne multytude of good men and bad togyther / of whom no man knoweth whyche be the one sorte and whych be the other / that it may be peraduenture that the good sorte of the chyrche be they that byleue the worshyp of ymagys to be ydolatry / and the bad sorte they that byleue the contrary. Whyche obieccyon the authour doth answer and confute.

The .vii. chapyter.

The authour somewhat doth corroborat the truthe agaynst the heresyces holdyng agaynst ymagys / & recapytelynge somewhat brefly what hath bene proued / so fynysheth & endeth the profe of his parte.

The .viii. chapyter.

The authour entreth the answer to the obieccyons that had bene before layd by the messenger / agaynst the worshyp of ymagys / &

prayeng to sayntys / & goyng on pylgrymages. And fyrst he answereth in this chapyter the obieccyons made agaynst prayenge to sayntys.

The .ix. chapyter.

The messenger yet agayne obieteth agaynste relyques. And putteth greate doubte in canonysynge. Wherevnto the authour maketh answeere.

The .x. chapyter.

The messenger obieteth many thyngys agaynst pylgrymagys and relykes and worshyppyng of sayntes / bycause of moche superstycyous maner vsed therin / and vnlefull petycyons asked of them / and harme growynge thervpon.

The .xi. chapyter.

The authour answereth all the obieccyons proponed by the messenger in the tenthe chapyter. And some of them touched by the messenger more at large in other partes before.

The .xii. chapyter.

The authour confyrmeth the trouth of our fayth & vsage in the worship of ymages / by the consent of the olde holy doctours of the chyrche approuynge the same / as appereth well in theyr wrytynges / whom god hath by many myracles testyfyed to be sayntes. The messenger eftsome douteth whyther we can be sure that the myracles tolde by them were trewe or not / or them selfe sayntes or not. Whervpon the authour proueth that of any myracles tolde by any sayntes / we may be most sure of theyrs / & consequently by theyr myracles most sure of them that they be surely sayntes. And in this chapyter also proueth that the myracles & consent of those holy doctours do proue / that this must nedes be the very true chyrch in whiche they haue wry ten / & myracles haue bene done. Whervpon is fynally concluded eftsones the trouth of the pryncypall questyon / and therwith fynysheth the seconde boke.

The thyrde boke.

The fyrst chapyter.

The messenger hauynge in the meane whyle bene at the vnyuersyte / sheweth vnto the authour an obieccyon which he lerned there / agaynst one poynt proued in the fyrst boke / that is to wyt

that in the necessary poyntes of the fayth / egall credence is to be gyuen to the chyrche & to the scrypture. Which obieccyon the authour answereth & dyssolueth.

The .ii. chapyter.

Incydently somewhat is there touched the superstycyous fere & scrupulosyte that the persone abiured dyd as it is sayd begyn with. The werynes wherof draue hym to the delyte of suche lybertye as brought hym to the contempte of the good deuoute thynges / vsed comenly in Crystes chyrch. And in this chapyter is somewhat touched the good meane maner bytwene scrupulous superstycyon / & recheles neglygence / that wolde be vsed in the syngynge or sayenge of deuyne seruyce.

The .iii. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that men ought not to be lyght in mystrustyng of any iugement gyuen in the court. And that moch lesse ought any man to be bolde in the reprouyng of a comen law. And he sheweth also the cause why that the law admytteth more sleyght wytnes in haynous crymynall causes / than in sleyghter matters of couenauntes or contractes.

The .iiii. chapyter.

The authour sheweth vpon what grounde and cause the man was conuyct. And also dyuers other thyngys not than brought in iudgement / wherby it may well appere that he was gretely gyltye. And so he sheweth incydently wherefore it were not reason in a deteccyon of heresy / to suffer after the wytnessys publysshed and the cryme well proued any newe wytnessys to be receyuyd for the partye that is accused.

The .v. chapyter.

The authour proueth that the spyrytuall iudges dyd the man meruaylous fauoure / and almoste more than lafull / in that they admytted hym to suche an abiuracyon as they dyd / and that they dyd not rather leue hym to the seculer handys.

The .vi. chapyter.

The authour shewyth that the person abiured for his owne worldly honesty / and for the more frute of his prechyng / yf he be suffred to preche in tyme to come / it were moche better for hym openly and wyllyngly to confesse the trouth. And that nowe by the standynge styll in the denyall / he bothe shamyth hym selfe / and sholde yf he prechyd slaunder the worde of god.

The .vii. chapyter.

The messenger moueth a questyon / yf a man be sworne by a iudge to say the trouthe of him self in a cryme wherof he is had suspecte / whyther he may not lafully on his othe swere vntruth / where he thynketh the truth can not be proued agaynst hym. Wherevnto the authour answereth that he is bounden vpon parell of periury to say and confesse trouthe. And the moche more synne and foly bothe was it then for the man that thus was abiured to forswere hym selfe in the thyng that he wyst well wold be proued / and a shamlesse foly to stande styll by hys periury / whan he sawe the matter so cerely proued in dede. And with thys fynyssheth he the matter of his abiuracyon.

The .viii. chapyter.

The authour sheweth why the newe testament of Tyndals translacyon was burned. And sheweth for a sample certayne wordys euyll and of euyll purpose chaungyd.

The .ix. chapyter.

The authour sheweth another great token that the translacion was peryllous / and made for an euyll purpose.

The .x. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that the translacyon of Tyndall was to bad to be mended.

The .xi. chapyter.

The messenger fyndeth faute with the cerye / in that he sayth they haue made a constytucyon prouyncyall that no byble in englyshe sholde be suffered. And in this chapyter incydently the messenger moche reproueth the luyng of the clerye. Whervnto the authour somewhat sheweth his mynde / deferryng for the whyle his answeere to the obieccyon made agaynst the constytucyon.

The .xii. chapyter.

The authour toucheth one specyall prerogatyfe that we haue by a preste be he neuer so bad / in that his noughtynes can not take frome vs the profyte of his masse. Whervpon is by the messenger moued a doute / whyther it were better to haue fewer preestys and better with fewer masses / or mo and worse for to haue the mo masses. Whervnto the authour answereth.

The .xiii. chapyter.

The messenger moueth that it wolde do well that prestes sholde haue wyues. Whervnto the authour maketh answeere.

The .xiiii. chapyter.

The authour answereth the doute moued before in the .xi. chapyter concernyng the constytucion prouyncyall / and that the clergye is therin far fro the faute that is imputed to them in that poynte / shewynge also that the clergye hath not forboden the byble to be made & red in englysshe.

The .xv. chapyter.

The messenger moueth agaynst the clergye / that though they haue made no lawe therof / yet they wyll in de de suffer none englysshe byble in no mannes hande / but vse to burne them where they fynde them / & somtyme to burne the man to. And for ensample he layeth one Rychard Hunne / shewynge that the chaunceller of London murdered hym in pryson & after hanged hym / faynyng that he hanged hym selfe / & after condemned hym of heresy / because he had an englysshe byble / & so burned the byble & hym togyther / whervnto the authour answereth.

The .xvi. chapyter.

The messenger reherseth some causes whiche he hathe herde layde by some of the clergye / wherfore the scrypture sholde not be suffered in englysshe. And the authour sheweth his mynde that it were conuenient to haue the byble in englysshe. And therwith endeth the thyrde boke.

The fourth boke.

The fyrst chapyter.

The authour sheweth wherfore it were not well done to suffer Luthers bokes or any other heretykes / to go abroad and be redde amonge the people / thoughe there were some good thynges in them amonge the badde.

The .ii. chapyter.

The author sheweth many of Luthers heresyces to be so abhomynable / and some parte also so peuysh / that the very bare rehersall ys ynough wythout eny ferther dyspycyon theruppon / to cause eny good man abhorre them / and to be ashamed also to seme so folyshe as to hold them. And for a sample the author reherseth

dyuers / wherof some be newe set forthe by Tyndall in hys englyshe bokis / wors yet in som parte than hys mayster Luther ys hym selfe.

The .iii. chapyter.

The author sheweth by what occasyon that Luther fyrste fell to the deuysing of these heresydes. And that the occasyon was such as well declareth / that he was prycked therto by malyce / and euer proceeded frome euyl to worse / not wyttyng where to holde hym / and that he refuseth to stand to the iudgement of eny folke erthely concernyng the treuth or falshed of hys opynyons saue onely hym selfe.

The .iiii. chapyter.

The author sheweth how that Luther in the boke that hym selfe made of hys owne actys at the cyte of Wormys in Almayne / dothe so madly ouersee hym selfe / that he dyscloseth vnware certayn folyes of hym self / whych a man wyll well laugh at & meruayle mych to se yt.

The .v. chapyter.

The author sheweth the perpetuall inconstaunce of Luther / and hys contraryete and repugnaunce agaynste hym selfe.

The .vi. chapyter.

The author sheweth how that Luther hath be fayne for the defence of hys vndefencyble errorrs / to go backe and forsake all the maner of profe and tryall / whyche he fyrste promysed to stande to. And nowe lyke a man shamefull & shamelesse / hath no profe in the world but hys own worde / and calleth that the word of god.

The .vii. chapyter.

The author sheweth what thyngis causyd the people to fall in to Luthers fonde and furyouse secte. And he sheweth also what myschyef the folowers of that sect haue done in Almayn / Lombardy / & Rome.

The .viii. chapyter.

The messenger sayth that the malyce of the men is not to be imputed to the secte / syth that of euery secte som be nought. And the author sheweth that in the Lutheranyes / the secte selfe ys the cause of the malyce that the men fall to.

The .ix. chapyter.

The author sheweth that yt ys a great token that the world ys nere at an ende / whyle we se the people so farre fallen fro god / that they can abyde yt to be content wyth this pestylent frantyke secte / whych no people cristen or hethen coude haue suffred afore our days.

The .x. chapyter.

The author inueyeth agaynste this detestable artycle of thys vngracyous sect / wherby they take awaye the lybertye of manns free wyll/ and ascrybe all thynge to desteny.

The .xi. chapyter.

The messenger sayth that howe so euer Luther & his folowers in Almayn byleue / yet he can not thynk that such as be Lutheranes in England / of whom sum he sayth haue semed good & honest / be so mad & vnhappy to byleue that all hangeth vppon desteny. Wheruppon the author sheweth the contrary / & that they be nought in dede seme they neuer so good. And for profe that how so euer they colour theyr wordes / they meane that all dependeth vppon only desteny / he reherseth a certayn dispycyon had wyth an here tyke detected to the bysshop & examined / the author beyng present / where the heretyque beyng lerned & a prechour / made many shyftys to make it seme that in his euyll wordes he ment but well.

The .xv. chapyter.

That prynces be bound en to punyshe here tykes / and that fayr handelyng helpeth lytell wyth many of them.

The .xii. chapyter.

The author inueheth agaynst the moste pestylent secte of these Lutherans / whych ascrybe our saluacyon and dampnacyon and all our dedys to desteny.

The .xiii. chapyter.

The author sheweth his opynyon concernyng the burnyng of heretykes / and that yt is lawfull / necessary / and well done / & sheweth also that the clergye dothe not procure yt / but onely the good and polytyke prouysyon of the temporaltye.

The .xiiii. chapyter.

The author somewhat sheweth that the clergye doth no wrong in leuing heretykes to seculer hande / though theyr deth folow theron. And he sheweth also that it is lawfull to resyste the turke & such

other infydels / & that prynces be bounden therto.

The .xvi. chapyter.

Of symple vnlearned folke that are deceyuyd by the great good opynyon thatthat they haue percas in the lernynge and lyuyng of some that teche them errors.

The .xvii. chapyter.

The author sheweth that some whyche be Lutheranes and seme to lyue holyly / and therefore be byleued and had in estymacyon / entende a ferther purpose then they pretende / which they wyll well shewe yf they may ones fynde theyr tyme.

The .xviii. chapyter.

The authour sheweth that in the condempnacyon of heretykes / the clergye myght lawfully do myche more sharpely than they do / and that in dede the clergye dothe now no more agaynste heretykes / then the apostell consayleth / and the alde holy doctours dyd.

Finis tabule.

A DIALOGUE CONCERNING HERESIES

The fust boke

It is an olde sayd saw / that one busynes begettyth and bryngeth
forth a nother. Whiche prouerbe as it happeth I fynde very trewe by
5 my selfe / whiche haue bene fayne by occasyon / fyrst of one
busynes / after to take the second / and vpon the second / now to
take the thyrde. For where as a ryght worshypfull frende of myne sent
ones vnto me a secrete sure frende of his / with certayne credence to
be declared vnto me / towchyng many suche maters / as beyng in
10 dede very certayne and owt of doute / be nethesse of late by lewde
people put in questyon / the specyaltees wherof do so ferforth in the
fyrst chapyter of this boke appere / that we shall here nede no
rehersall therof: I thought it fyrst Inough to tell the messenger my
mynde by mouth / accomptyng that after our communycacyon
15 ended / I sholde neuer nede ferther busynes therin. But after that
the messenger was departed / and I felte my stomake well eased / in
that I rekened all my labour done / bythynkyng my selfe a lytle
whyle theron / my busynes that I toke for fynyshed I founde very
farre fro that poynt / and lytell more than bygonne. For whan I
20 consydered what the maters were / and howe many great thyngys
had ben treated bytwene the messenger and me / and in what maner
fassyon / albe it I mystrustyd not his good wyll / and very well
trusted his wytte / his lernyng well seruyng hym to the
perceuyng and reportyng of our communycacyon: yet fyndyng our
25 treatye so dyuerse & so long / and somtyme suche wyse intrycate /
that my selfe coulde not without labour call it orderly to mynd / me
thought I had not well done / without wrytyng / to truste his onely
memory / namely syth some partys of the mater be suche of them
selfe / as rather nede to be attentely redde and aduysed / than
30 houerly harde and passyd ouer. And ouer this I consydered / that
thoughe I nothyng suspecte the messenger / as in good fayth I do
not / and to saye the treuth / am of my selfe so lytell mystrustyng /
that he were lyke very playnly to shew hymselfe nought / whom I
sholde take forbad: yet syth no man can loke into anothers breste /
35 as it is therfore well done to deme the beste / so were it not moche
amysse in suche wyse to prouyde for the worste / as (yf a man happe
to be worse than we take hym for) our good opynyon turne vs to none
harne. For this cause me thought that for the more suerty / my
parte were to sende our communycacyon to my sayd frende in
40 wrytyng. Wherby yf it had happed that his messenger had for any
synyster fauour borne towarde the wronge syde purposely mangled
the mater / his mayster shold not onely know the trewth / but also
haue occacyon the better to beware of his messenger / which ellys
myght hap to hurte whyle he were mystaken for good. Nowe whan I
45 had vpon this delyberacyon / taken with my selfe / wryten all the
matter / and sent it to my frende / than had I me thought all done /
and my mynde full set at rest. But that rest rested not longe / For
sone after it was shewed me / that of all my wrytynges were wrytten

dyuerse copyes / and one also caryed ouer the see. Where whan I
remembred what a shrewde sorte of our apostatas are assembled /
parte ronne out of relygyon / and all ronne out of the ryght fayth /
me thought grete parell myght aryse / yf some of that company
5 (whiche are confedered and conspyred togyder / in the sowynge and
settyng forth of Luthers pestylent heresydes in this realme) sholde
malycyously chaunge my wordes to the worse / and so put in prynte
my boke / framed after theyr fantasyes / whiche whan I wolde
afterwarde reproue and shewe the dyffrence / I myght peraduenture
10 seme for the coloure of my cause / to haue amended myne owne /
vpon the syght of theyrs. For eschewyng wherof I am now dryuen / as
I say to this thyrde busynes of publyshynge and puttyng my boke in
prynte myselfe: wherby theyr enterpryse (yf they sholde any suche
intende) shall (I trust) be preuented and frustrate. And this haue I
15 done not all of myne owne heed / but after the counsayle of other mo
than one: whose aduyse and counsayle for theyr wysdome and
lernyng I asked in that behalfe / and whiche haue at my request
vouchesaufed to rede ouer the boke ere I dyd put it forth. For albeit
that I dare be somewhat bolde to commen in famylyer maner / with
20 suche as for theyr fantasyes lyke to aske me of suche matters any
questyon / accordyng to the counsayle of saynt Peter / byddyng vs
be redy to gyue a rekenyng / and to shewe a reasonable cause to
euery man of that fayth and hope that we haue / yet to make and put
forth any boke (wherin were treated any suche thynges as touche our
25 fayth) wolde I not presume / but yf better lerned than myselfe /
sholde thynke it eyther profytable / or at the lestwyse harmlesse. To
whose examynacyon and iudgment I dyd the more studyously submyt
this worke / for two thynges in specyall / among dyuers other. The
one for the lyberall allegacyons of the messenger for the wronge parte
30 so layde out at large / that of myselfe I stode halfe in a doubte
whyther it were conuenient to reherse the wordes of any man so
homly / and in maner somtyme vnreuerently spoken agaynst goddes
holy halowes / and theyr reuerent memoryes. The other was certayne
tales and mery wordes whiche he mengled with his matter / and
35 some suche on myne owne parte amonge / as occasyon fell in
communycacyon. In which albeit I sawe no harme / yet somewhat
doubted I lest they shold vnto sad men seme ouer lyght and wanton
for the weyght and grauyte of suche an earnest matter. Wherefore in
these two poyntes though I had all redy sene some ensamples of
40 ryght holy men / whiche in theyr bokes answeryng to the obieccyons
of heretikes in theyr tyme haue not letted to reherse the very formall
wordes of them / whose wrytynges they made answere to / beyng
somtyme of suche maner and sorte as a good man wolde not well
bere / and haue not also letted to wryte a mery worde in a ryght
45 earnest worke / of whiche two thyngys I coulde out of godly mennys
bokes and holy sayntys workes gether a good sorte / yet in myne
owne worke I determyned that I wolde nothyng alowe nor defende /
that the Judgement of other vertuouse and connyng men wold in
any wyse mysse lyke. And therefore after that suche had red yt and

seuerally sayd theyr aduyce / I found as it often happeth / that som
thyng whiche one wyse and well lernyd man wolde haue out /
twayne of lyke wysdome and lernyng specyally wolde haue in /
neyther syde lackynge good and probable reasons for theyr parte.
5 Wherefore syth it became not me to be iudge ouer the judgement of
them / whome I toke and chose for my iudges / beyng suche of
them selfe / as harde were it for any man to say / whiche of them
byfore the other he coulde in erudycyon wytte or prudence any
thyng preferre / I coulde no further go / but lene to the more parte.
10 Whiche I so ferforth haue folowed / that lyke wyse as I dyuerse
thynges put out or chaunged by theyr good aduyce and counsell / so
let I nothyng stand in this boke / but such as twayn aduysyd me
specyally to let stande / agaynst any one that any dowte mouyd me
to the contrary. And thus moche haue I thought necessary for my
15 declaracyon and excuse to aduertise you all that shall happen to
rede this rude symple worke / prayeng you of pacyence and pardon /
whom god of his especyall grace graunt as moche profyte in the
redynge / as my pore hart hath mente you and entended in the
makyng.

20

The furst chapter

25

The letter of credence

Mayster chauncellour as hartely as I possyble can I recommend
me to you. Not without a thousande thankys for your good company
/ whan we ware last togyther. In whiche for as moche as it lyked you
30 to spend some of your tyme with me in famylyer comunycacyon /
wherof some parte I truste so to remember as my selfe shall be the
better / and some other neuer the worse / which shall haue cause
and haue all redy to gyue you great thanke therefore / I am bold at
this tyme to sende you my specyall secret frend this berer / to broke
35 with you somewhat ferther / partely of the same matters partely of
some other / suche as are happed there synse / wherof great speche
and rumour runneth here / wherby ye shall haue occasyon more at
length (yf your leysour wyll serue) to touche certayne dowtes moued
synse of the matters treated betwene vs byfore. Wherin were it not for
40 your other busynes I wolde be bolde on your goodnes / to desyre you
to take good tyme with hym. And yet neuerthelesse do requyre you
hartely / as your leasour wyll serue you / to satysfy hym at the full.
For he shall (howe longe so euer he tary therefore) gyue attendaunce
vnto you / dayes and houres / as ye may spare hym tyme / whiche
45 can not in these thynges be but well bestowed / consydyryng that
the matters be suche / orthy to set worldely busynesse asyde /
specyally in suche nede. For I assure you / some folke here talke very
straungely of the thynges that he shall moue you / Not onely for

suche wordes as they tell / that come from thense / but also most
especyally thurgh the occasyon of some letters lewdely wrytten
hyther out of London by a preest or two / whom they take here for
honest. But what so euer any man tell or wryte / I shall for the
5 confydence and trust that I haue in you / surely take and tell forth
for the very truth / what so euer ye shall affyrme vnto my frende /
whome I sende vnto you / not so moche / bycause I may not come
my selfe (how beit therefore to) as for bycause / I longe to haue hym
talke with you. To whome what so euer ye say / reken it sayd to my
10 selfe / Not onely for his trouthe and secretnesse / but also for his
memory / with whom to commune / I trust shall not myslyke you.
For eyther myn affeccyon blyndeth me / or ye shall fynde hym wyse /
and as other say / that can better iudge it then I / more then meanly
lerned / with one thyng added / where with ye be wonte well to be
15 contente / a very mery wytte. He is of nature nothyng tonge tayed.
And I haue in these atters bydden hym be bolde / without any
straynyng of curtesye / wherof the serymonyes in dysputacyon
marreth moche of the matter / whyle one studyeth more howe he
may behaue hym / than what he shall say. I haue I say therefore
20 boden hym more to mynde his matter / then his curtesye / and frel
to lay forthe / not onely what he breke with you somewhat ferther /
partely of the same matters partely of some other / suche as are
happed there synse / wherof great speche and rumour runneth here
/ wherby ye shall haue occasyon more at length (yf your leysour wyll
25 serue) to touche certayne dowtes moued synse of the matters treated
betwene vs byfore. Wherin were it not for your other busynes I wolde
be bolde on your goodnes / to desyre you to take good tyme with
hym. And yet neuerthelesse do requyre you hartely / as your leasour
wyll serue you / to satysfy hym at the full. For he shall (howe longe
30 so euer he tary therefore) gyue attendaunce vnto you / dayes and
houres / as ye may spare hym tyme / whiche can not in these
thynges be but well bestowed / consyderynge that the matters be
suche / worthy to set worldely busynesse asyde / specyally in suche
nede. For I assure you / some folke here talke very straungely of the
35 thynges that he shall moue you / Not onely for suche wordes as they
tell / that come from thense / but also most especyally thurgh the
occasyon of some letters lewdely wrytten hyther out of London by a
preest or two / whom they take here for honest. But what so euer any
man tell or wryte / I shall for the confydence and trust that I haue in
40 you / surely take and tell forth for the very truth / what so euer ye
shall affyrme vnto my frende / whome I sende vnto you / not so
moche / bycause I may not come my selfe (how beit therefore to) as for
bycause / I longe to haue hym talke with you. To whome what so
euer ye say / reken it sayd to my selfe / Not onely for his trouthe and
45 secretnesse / but also for his memory / with whom to commune / I
trust shall not myslyke you. For eyther myn affeccyon blyndeth me /
or ye shall fynde hym wyse / and as other say / that can better iudge
it then I / more then meanly lerned / with one thyng added / where
with ye be wonte well to be contente / a very mery wytte. He is of

nature nothyng tonge tayed. And I haue in these matters bydden
hym be bolde / without any straynyng of curtesye / wherof the
serymonyes in dysputacyon marreth moche of the matter / whyle one
studyeth more howe he may behaue hym / than what he shall say. I
5 haue I say therefore boden hym more to mynde his matter / then his
curtesye / and frely to lay forthe / not onely what he thynketh / but
also what hym lyst / gyuyng no fote in dysputyng vnto your
authorytye / but yf he be borne backe with reason. Thus may ye se I
am bolde on your goodnes / to put you to labour and busynes / and
10 sende one to face you in your owne house. But so moche am I bolder
/ for that in such chalenges I know you for a redy and sure defender.
And of suche laboure your wysdome wyl seeth / that god is the
rewarder / who longe preserue you and all yours.

15

The letter of the author send with the boke

Right worshypfull syr after most harty recommendacyon / albeit
that of late I sent you my pore mynde by the mouth of your trusty
20 frende / to whom ye desyred me by your leters to gyue no lesse
credence / than to your selfe / concernyng all suche thynges as he
brake of / and communed with me in your behalfe (and that for the
confydence that ye haue in hym / the wyt and lernyng that I founde
in hym / and honesty that I so moche the more thynke hym to be of /
25 in that I perceyue you beyng of suche wysdome and vertue / to haue
hym in so specyall trust) I neyther do nor can byleue the contrary but
that he hath of all our communycacyon made you faythfully / playn
and full reporte / yet syth I suppose in my selfe / that yf we had
mought conueniently come togyther / ye wolde rather haue chosyn to
30 haue hard my mynde of myne owne mouth than by the meane of
another / I haue synse in these fewe days (in whiche I haue ben at
home) put the matter in wrytting / to the ende / ye may not onely
here it by the mouth of your frende / but also (whiche better is /
than sodenly ones to here yt of myne owne mouth) rede yt (yf ye lyst)
35 more often at your best leysure aduysedly from myne owne pen.
Which thyng I verely thought my selfe so moche the more bounde to
do / for that it lyked you of your specyall fauour and affeccyon
toward me / so greatly to regarde and esteme my mynde and
answere in those matters / that no rumour there runnyng or tales in
40 your cowntre tolde or letters thyder wrytten / nor reasons or
argumentys there made to the contrary / shold let or withstande /
but that ye wold (as ye wrote) take that thyng for vndowted trouthe
that I shold (by your frentle) acertayne you. And surely syr in this
poynt / ye may make your selfe sure / that I shall neuer wyllingly
45 deceyue your trust. And lest I myght hap to do it of ouer syght
vnware / albe it I nothyng sayd vnto your frende by mouth / but that
I was ryght well enformyd of the trouthe / yet for as moche as I
perceyued by hym that some folke dowted / lest many thynges were

layd to the charge / not onely of that man ye wrote of/ but also of
Luther hym selfe / otherwyse than coude be proued / I dyd so moche
therin that I was sufired to se and shewe hym as well the bokys of the
tone / as the very actys of the court concernynge the other / that we
5 myght bothe by so moche / the more surely warraunt you the trouth.
Wherin yf ye fynde any man that yet dowlth / whether he tolde you
and I wryte you the trouth or not / I shall yf he vnderstand the latyne
tonge fynd the meane at your pleasure /that he shall so se the bokes
hym selfe / that were he neuer so full of mistrustyng / he shall not
10 fayle to be fully content and satysfyed. And this warantyse wyll I
make you as farforth as concerneth any acte done here. But as for
thyngys reasoned and dysputed bytwene vs / the conclusyons selfe
be so sure trouthes / that they be not dysputable. But whyther the
reasons by me made in them / ben effectuall or insufficyent (albe it
15 your frende eyther for that of trouth he thought so or for that of
curtesye he sayd so / accepted them for good) yet without preiudyce
of the pryncypall matters ye may your selfe be iudge. And thus I pray
you take in good worth the lytell laboure and great good wyll of hym /
whom in any thyng that may do you pleasure / ye maye to the
20 vttermooste of his lytell power well and boldely commaunde. And
thus oure lorde sende you with my good lady your bedfelowe and all
yours / as hartely well to fare as you wold all wysshe.

25 **Y**our frende fyrst after your letter redde (whan I demaunded hym
his credence) shewed me that ye had sent hym to me / not for any
doubte that your selfe had in many of those thynges that he sholde
moue vnto me / but for the doubte that ye perceyued in many other /
and in some folke playne persuasyon to the contrary / whome ye
30 wolde be glad to answeere with the trouthe / albeit some thynges he
sayd were also there so talked / that ye wyst not well your selfe
whiche parte ye myght byleue. For it was there not only spoken / but
also thyder wrytten by dyuers honest preestes out of London / that
the man ye wryte of / was of many thynges borne wronge in hande /
35 and therin so sore handeled / that he was forced to forswere and
abiure certayne heresydes / and openly put to penaunce therfore /
where he neuer helde any suche. And all this done for malyce and
enuye / partely of some freres (agaynst whose abusyons he preched)
partely for that he preched boldely agaynst the pompe and pryde and
40 other inordynate luyng (that mo men speke of than preche of) vsed
in the clargye. And they take for a great token / that he sholde not
meane euyll / the profe and experyence whiche men haue had of hym
/ that he lyued well / and was a good honest vertuous man / farre
from ambycyon and desyre of worldely worshyp / chast / humble /
45 and charytable / free and lyberall in almouse dede / and a very
goodly prechoure / in whose deuoute sermons the people were
greatly edyfyed. And therefore the people say that all this gere is done
but onely to stoppe mennes mouthes / and to put euery man to
sylence that wolde any thyng speke of the fautes of the clargye. And

they thynke that for none other cause was also burned at Poules
crosse the newe testament late translated in englysshe by mayster
Wyllyam Huchyn / otherwyse called mayster Tyndall / who was (as
men say) well knowen or he wente ouer the see / for a man of ryght
5 good lyuyng / studyous and well lerned in scrypture / and in dyuers
places in england was very well lyked and dyd gret good with
prechyng. And men mutter amonge them selfe that the boke was not
onely fautes / but also very well translated / and was deuysed to be
burned / bycause men sholde not be able to proue that suche fautes
10 (as were at Poules crosse declared to haue bene founde in it) were
neuer founde there in dede / but vntruely surmysed. And yet suche
as they were (some men saye) were noo fautes at all / yf they hadde
be so translated in dede / but blame layed and faute founde with
thynges nothyng blame worthy / onely to deface and enfame that
15 holy worke / to the ende that they myghte seme to haue some iuste
cause to burne it.

And that for none other entente / but for to kepe out of the
peoples handes all knowledge of Crystys gospell / and of goddys lawe
/ excepte soo moche onely as the clargy them selfe lyst nowe and
20 than to tell vs. And that lytell as it is and seldom shewed / yet as it is
fered not well and truely tolde / but watered with false gloses / and
altered from the trouth of the very wordes and sentence of scrypture
only for the mayntenaunce of theyr authoryte.

And the fere lest this thyng sholde euydently appere to the people
/ yf they were suffered to rede the scrypture them selfe in theyr own
tonge / was (as it is thought) the very cause not onely for whiche the
newe testament translated by Tyndale was burned / but also that the
clargye of this realme hath before this tyme by a constytucion
prouyncyall prohybyted any boke of scrypture to be translated into
30 the englyshe tonge / feryng men with fyer as heretyques who so
sholde presume to kepe them / as though it were heresy for a
crysten man to rede crystys gospell.

And surely syr quod he some folke that thynke this dealynge of the
clargye to be thus (and good men to be myshandlyd for declarynge
35 the trouth / and the scrypture selfe to be pulled owt of the peoples
handys / lest they shold perceyue the trouth) be ledde in theyr
myndys / to dowte whyther Luther hymselfe (of whose oppynyons or
at the lest of whose workys all these busynesse bygan) wrote in dede
so euyll as he is borne in hande. And many men there be that thynke
40 he neuer mente such thyngys. But that bycause he wrote agaynst the
abusyons of pardons / and spake somewhat lyberally agaynst the
courte of Rome / and generally agaynst the vycys of the clargye /
therefore he was brought in hatered / and fyrst cyted to Rome. And
whan that for fere of bodely harme with wronge / wherof it wolde
45 haue bene to late to loke for remedy after / yf he had ones be burned
vp before / he durst not come thyther / than was he accursed / and
his bokys dampned / and vnder great paynes forbodden to be redde.
And that thyng done bycause it sholde not be knowen what wronge
he had / and that he neyther meaneth nor sayth suche odyouse and

abhominable heresyas / as the people be borne in hande to enduce
theym to hated of hym / as it wolde peradventure appere yf his
bokys were suffered to be redde.

5 And they say that it were no mastery to make it seme that a man
shold be an heretyque / yf he may be borne in hande that he sayth
the thyng / which he neuer sayde / or peradventure one lyne taken
out amonge many / and mysconstrewed / not sufferyng the
remenaunt to be sene / wherby yt myght more clerely appere what he
10 meaneth. By whiche maner of delynge a man they saye myght laye
heresy to saynt Poule / and fynde a faute in saynt Iohans gospel.

And yet they say / the worst of all is this / that the clargye cease
not hereby / nor holde themselfe content wyth the condempnyng of
Luther / and forbyddyng of his bokys / but further abuse the
15 hated of his name / agaynste euery manne that is (in prechyng of
the worde of god) any thyng suche as sholde be / that is to wytte /
playne and bolde without glose or flateryng / where yf they fynde a
man fautye / let them lay his faute to his charge / what nedeth to
call hym a Lutherane? Thoughe Luther were a deuyll / yet myght a
20 man percase say as he sayth in some thyng / and say trewe ynough.
For neuer was there heretyque / that sayd all false. Nor the deuyll
hym self lyed not / when he called Cryst goddes sonne. And therefore
men thynke / that this name of a Lutherane serueth the clargye / for
a common clocke of a false cryme / that where they lacke specyall
25 matter to charge one with by iudgement / they laboure to bryng
hym fyrst in the infamy of that name / that compryseth (as they
make it seme) a confused hepe of heresyas / no man can tell what.

And yet in suche delynge they wounde theyr owne matter another
way. For whyle they deffame for Lutheranes men that be of knowen
30 vertue and connyng / what do they therby / but one of the twayne /
eyther cause the people (that haue for good lyuyng and lernyng /
those men in grete reputacyon) to thynke that the clargye for malyce
and enuy doth vntruly defame them / or els the Luthers doctryne is
good / whyle so connyng men & good men lene therto.

And therefore it were wysdom / not to call them Lutheranes / but
35 rather when they teche and holde any such oppynyons / as the
people knowe for Luthers / let it eyther be dyssymuled / or they
secretly by fayre wayes enduced to the contrary / yf the poyntes that
they teche of his be nought. Lest by callyng good and connyng men
Lutheranes / they may peradventure bryng themselves in suspicyon
40 of malyce and enuye / And Luther amonge the people in to good
oppynyon / Thynkyng as they begyn to do all redy / that eyther
Luther sayd not so euyl as is surmysed vpon hym / or els that those
thynges that he sayth / as odious as they seme / be good ynough in
dede.

45 He sayd also that it semed vnto many men a sore thyng / and fer
vnreasonable / that pore symple and vlnerned men (all though they
fell in to errorrs / and were led out of the ryght way / by that they
lened to the auctoryte of such men / as they byleued to be vertyous
and connyng) shold in stede of techyng / be beten cruelly with

abiuracyons and open shame / with parell of burnynge also / yf a fewe false wytnesse shall after suche abiuracyon depose that they haue harde hym fall in relapse.

5 Fynally he sayd that many good and well lerned men thought playnely that the clargye semeth farre out of all good order of charyte / and that they do contrary to the myldnesse and mercyfull mynde of theyr mayster / and agaynst the ensample of all the olde holy fathers / in that they cause for any errour or wrong oppynyon in the faythe / any man one or other to be put to dethe.

10 For they say that the olde holy fathers vsed onely to dyspute with heretyques / techynge them and conuyctynge them by scrypture / and not by fagottes. And that by that way / the fayth wente well towarde / and one heretyque so tourned dyd tourne many other / where as nowe men abhorre this crueltye in the chyrche. And they
15 that seme tourned / thynke styll the thynges that they dare not say. And of the assches of one heretyque spryngeth vp many. And that nowe we make the fassyon of crystendom / to seme all turned quyte vp so down. For where as Cryst made infydels the persecutours / and his crysten people the sufferers / we make the crysten men the
20 persecutours / and the infydels the sufferers whereby men thynke / that secretly Crystes order yet standeth styll / though it be not so taken and so perceyued. For the people take it / that styll those that persecute be the myscreauntes / and those pore people that suffer it / be (vnder the false name of heretyques) the trewe byleuyng men /
25 and very crysten martyrs.

Cryst also they say wolde neuer haue any man compelled by force and vyolence to byleue vpon his fayth / nor wolde that men sholde fyght for hym or his matters. In so ferforth that he wold not suffre saynt Peter to fyghte for his owne selfe / but reprobued hym for
30 strykyng Malchus. Nor wolde not defende hym selfe / but helyng the ere agayne of Malchus his persecutour / whiche Peter had smytten of / and gyuyng all his holy body to the pacyent sufferaunce of all the paynfull tourmentes mentes / that his cruell enemyes wolde put to it / shewed vs as well by his effectuall ensample of his dethe / as by his
35 godly counsayle in his lyfe / and after that conformed by the contynuall passyon and martyrdoms of his holy martyrs / that his wyll and pleasure is / that we sholde not so moche as defende our selfe agaynst heretyques and infydels / were they paganes / turkes / or sarasyns. And moche lesse than sholde we fyght agaynst them and
40 kyll them / but that we sholde perseuer in sittyng forth his fayth agaynst myscreauntes and infydels / by such waves as hym selfe began it / kepe it / and encrease it / as it was gotten. And that was by pacyence and sufferaunce / by whiche the fayth was dyuulgate and spred almost thorowe the worlde in lytell whyle. Not by warre &
45 fyghtynge / whiche way hath (as they saye) well nere all redy lost all / that the other way wanne.

When your frende had thus declared his credence / he desyred me bothe on your behalfe / and on his owne / in suche thynges as were percase not well sayde / to take them as they were in dede / the

mynde of other / whome ye wolde fayne answeere / and satysfye with
reason / whiche ye trusted to be the better able to doo / by myne
answeere / and neyther the mynde nor opynyon of you nor hym /
whiche dyd and wolde in all thyng stande and abyde / by the fayth
5 and byleue of Crystes catholyke chyrche. But as for such partes of
this matter as concerned not any parte of our byleue / but the
dealyng of this worlde / as the iustyce or vniustyce of some spyrytuall
persons / in the pursuyng and condempnyng men for heretyques /
or theyr workes for heresy / he thought he sayd (as of hymself) that
10 men myght without any parell of heresy / for theyr owne parte /
notwithstandyng any mannes iudgement gyuen / yet well and
reasonably doubt therin / For though he thought it heresy / to
thynke the oppynyons of any man to be good and catholyque /
whiche ben heresy in dede / yet myght a man he thought without
15 any parell of heresy / doubt whyther he were an heretyke or no /
that were by mannes iudgement condempned for one / syth it myght
well happen that he neuer helde those oppynyons that were put
vpon hym / but that he was eyther by false deposycions of
wrongfull wytnesse / or by the erreure or malyce of vniust iudges
20 condempned. And that somtyme percase / the ignoraunce of some
iudges / wolde condempne for heresy suche artycles / as wyser and
better lerned wolde in poynte of iudgement alowe for good and
catholyque / and of the other iudgement deserue and iudge the
contrary.

25 Howe be it / he sayd that ye had in me and my lernynge / so
specyall trust and confydence / that in any of all these thynges /
what so euer ye had herde / or sholde here els where / ye were fully
determynd to gyue full credence to me / and take for the trouthe
suche answeere / as he sholde bryng you from me / wherin ye ryght
30 hartely desyred me / to take some payne / that ye myght in these
matters / by his mouth knowe my mynde at large.

After this or I made any answeere to his wordes / I demaunded
hym what maner acquayntaunce was bytwene hym and you. And
there vpon perceyuyng hym to haue your sonnes at scole /
35 enquiryng further of hym / to what faculte he had most gyuen his
study / I vnderstode hym to haue gyuen dyligence to the latyn tonge
/ As as for other facultyes he rought not of. For he told me meryly /
that Logycke he rekened but bablynge / Musyke to serue for syngers
/ Arythmetrycke mete for marchauntes / Geometry for masons /
40 Astronomy good for no man / And as for Phylosophy / the most
vanyte of all / And that it and Logycke had lost all good dyuynyte /
with the subtelyes of theyr questyons / and bablynge of theyr
dyspycyons / buyldyng all vpon reason / whiche rather gyueth
blyndnesse than any lyght. For man he sayd hathe noo lyght / but of
45 holy scrypture. And therefore he sayd that besyde the latyn tonge he
had ben (whiche I moche commende) studyouse in holy scrypture /
whiche was he sayd lernynge ynoughe for a crysten man / with
whiche the appostles helde them selfe contente. And therein he sayd
he laboured not onely to can many textes thereof by harte / but also

to enserche the sentence and vnderstandynge therof / as ferre as he
myght perceyue by hym selfe. For as for interpretours / he tolde me
that neyther his tyme wolde well serue hym to rede / and also he
founde so grete swetnes in the texte selfe / that he coulde not fynde
5 in his harte to lese any tyme in the gloses. And as touchyng any
dyffycultye he sayd that he founde by experyence that the best and
surest interpretacyon was to lay and conferre one texte with another
/ which fayle not amonge them well and suffycyently to declare
themselfe. And this way he sayd that he vsed / whiche he founde
10 suffycyent and surest. For so sholde it most surely tary whan it were
founde out / and lerned by a mannes owne laboure. And that he sayd
euery man was able ynoughe to do with helpe of god / which neuer
fayleth them that faythfully trust in his promyse. And he hath
promysed / that yf we seke we shall fynde / and if we knocke we
15 shall haue it opened to vs. And what shall be opened? but that boke
which as saynt Iohan sayth in the apocalyps is so shyt with .vii.
clapses / that it can not be opened / but by the lambe / that whan
he shytteth then can no man open it / and whan he openeth it / than
can no man shyt it.

20 Vpon these wordes and other lyke / whan I consyderd that your
frende was studyous of scrypture / and all thoughe I now haue a very
good oppynyon of hym / nor at the tyme had not all the contrary /
yet to be playne with you and hym bothe / by reason that he set the
matter so well and lustely forwarde / he put me somewhat in doubte
25 whether he were (as yonge scolers be somtyme prone to newe
fantasyes) fallen in to luthers secte. And that ye peradventure
somwhat ferynge the same / dyd of good mynde the rather sende
hym to me / with suche a message / for that ye trusted he sholde be
somwhat answered and satysfied by me. I therfore thought it not
30 metely in so many matters and weyghty to make hym an vnaduysed
answere / but with good wordes welcomyng hym for the tyme /
pretendyng lacke of leasure for other present busynes / requyred
hym to retoune on the morowe / Agaynst whiche tyme I wolde so
order myne affayres that we wolde haue conference togyder / of all
35 his erande at length. And he in this wyse beyng departed / I began
to gather in mynde / the hole effecte as my remembraunce wolde
serue me of all that he had purposed. And because I wold haue it the
more redy at myne eye / so that I myght the more fully and
effectually answeere it / leuyng no parte vntouched / in suche ordre
40 as he had purposed it / that is to wytte / after the maner that I haue
aboute reherced / I bryefly commytted it to wrytyng.

The seconde chapter

45

On the morow whan he was comen agayne somewhat before .vii. of
the clocke (for so I appoynted hym) takynge hym with me into my
study / and my seruauuntys warned that yf any other sholde happen

to drsyre to speke with me (certayne except of whom I gauethem
knowledge) they sholde dyfferre them tyll another leasour / I set hym
down with me / at a lytell table. And then I shewed vnto hym / that
where he had purposed on your byhalfe in short wordys / many longe
5 thyngys / wherof the rehersall were losse of tyme / to hym that so
well knewe them all redy / I wolde (all superfluous recapytulacyon set
aparte) as bryefly as I conueniently coude shewe hym my mynde in
them all. And fyrst begyn where he bygan at the abiuracyon of the
man he spake of. Secondly wolde I touche the condempnacyon and
10 burnyng of the new testament / translated by Tyndale. Thyrdly
somwhat wold I speke of Luther and his secte in generall. Fourthly
and fynally / the thyng that he touched last / that is to wyt / the
warre and fyghtyng agaynst infydels / with the condempnacyon of
heretykes vnto dethe / whiche two poyntys / hym selfe had
15 combyned and knytte togyther.

And fyrst as touchyng the matter of the mannes abiuracyon /
where it is reported / that the spyrytualtye dyd hym wronge / and for
to make that seme lykely / there is layed in them dysplrasure /
malyce and enuy towarde hym / for prechyng (as ye say quod I)
20 agaynst theyr vycyous lyuynge / and in hym is on the other syde
alegyd moche connyng / vertue and goodnes. I wyll neyther enter
into the prayse of them nor into the dysprayse of hym / wherin
standeth nothyng the effecte of this mater. For yf there dyd: I wold
not passe ouer som parte therof so shortly.

But now for this matter / all though the hole spyrytualtye (wherin
no man doubteth to be many a ryght vertuous and godly man) were
in theyr lyuynge farre worse than deuylls / yet yf they dyd that man
no wronge / there hath for this matter no man agaysnt them any
cause to complayne. And ouer this yf that man were in all his other
30 lyuynge as innocent as a saynt / yet yf he were infected and fautye in
these heresyys / he had than in this matter no wrong. And yet besyde
all this / yf he not only were in all other thynges very vertuous / but
also were in all these heresyys (wherof he was detected) vtterly clene
and fautles / yet yf it were by suffycyent wytnesse (were they neuer
35 so false in dede / semyng honest and lykely to say trewe) preued in
open courte that he was fautye therin / albeit in suche case his
wytnesses had wronged hym / yet had his iudges done hym but ryght.

And therefore lettyng passe as I say / the prayse or dysprayse of
eyther his iudges or hym / as thynges impertynent to the poynt / I
40 wyll shewe you that they not onely dyd hym no wronge / but also
shewed hym in my mynde the grettest fauour / and vsed towarde
hym the most charytable mercy that euer I wyst vsyd to any man in
suche case.

And fyrst as for any wronge that his iudgys dyd hym / I meruell
45 me moche / wherin they that report it coude assygne it. For yf any
were done hym / it must nedys haue ben in one of the two thyngys /
eyther in that he was vntruly iudgyd / to haue prechyd suche
artycles / as he was detectyd of / where he prechyd none such in
dede / or elles in that some suche artycles as he prechyd / were

iudged and condemned for heresy / where they were none in dede.
Excepte that any man wolde say that though he were proued and
conuertyd of heresy / yet he sholde haue bene put to no penaunce
at all / or ellys to no suche as he was. And of that poynte yf any man
5 so thynke / I shall speke in the fourth parte / where we shall towche
in generall the order / that the chyrche takyth in the condemnacyon
of heretyques. But as for the other poyntys / fyrst yf any preste wrote
out of London into your cuntrey / that any suche artycle of his
prechyng / was by his iudges declared for heresy / as were in dede
10 good and not agaynst the fayth of crystys chyrch / let hym name
what artycle. And eyther ye shall fynde that he shall name you suche
as the man was not charged withall / or ellys shall ye fynde that
suche as he shall name you / were suche in dede / as your selfe
shall perceyue for heresy at your ere. For the artycles where with
15 he was charged / were that we sholde do no worshyp to any ymages /
nor pray to any sayntes / or go on pylgrymagys / whiche thyngys I
suppose euery good crysten man wyll agre for heresy. And therefore
we shall let that poynt passe and so resort to the seconde / to se
whyther it were well prouyd that he preched them or no.

20 Syr quod your frende / I wolde for my parte well agre them for
heresy / but yet haue I hard som or this that wold not do so. And
thrfore whan we call them heresy / it were well done to tell why /
syth some men wolde (I wene yf they myght be hard) styfly say nay /
whych now hold theyr pease / and bere them self full coldely that
25 wolde take the matter more hote / saue for burnyng of theyr lypys.

Now forsoth quod I / who so euer wyll say that these be no
heresy / he shall not haue me to dyspute it / whiche haue
connyng in suche matters / but as it best becometh a lay man to do
in all thyngys / lene and cleue to the comen fayth / and byleue of
30 crystys chyrche. And therby do I playnly know it for an heresy / yf
an heresy be a secte and a syde way (taken by any parte of suche as
ben baptyssed / and bere the name of crysten men) from the comen
fayth and byleue of the hole chyrche besyde. For this am I very sure
and perceyue it well / not onely by experyens of myne owne tyme /
35 and the places where my selfe hath ben / with comen report of other
honest men / from al other places of crystendom / but by bokes also
and remembrauncys left of long tyme with wrytyng of the olde holy
fathers / and now sayntes in heuen / that from the appostles tyme
hytherto / this maner hath ben vsed / taught and alowed / and the
40 contrary commonly condempned / thurgh the hole flocke of all good
crysten people.

And as touchyng suche textes as these heretyques allege agaynst
the worshyppyng of ymages / prayeng to sayntes / and goynge on
pylgrymagys / as they lay the lawe gyuen to the Iewes. Non facies tibi
45 sculptile / thou shalte carue the none ymage. And the psalme. In
exitu Israel de egipto. And Soli deo honor et gloria. Onely to god be
honour and glory. And Maledictus qui confidit in homini. Accursed is
he that putteth his trust in man / with many suche other lyke /
whiche heretyques haue of olde / euer barked agaynst Crystes

catholyke chyrche / very sure am I that saynt Austyn / saynt
Hyerome / saynt Basyle / saynt Gregory / with so many a godly
connyng man / as hath ben in Crystes chyrche from the begynnyng
hytherto vnderstode those textes / as well as dyd those heretyques /
5 Namely hauyng as good wyttes / beyng farre better lerned / vsynge in
study more dylygence / beyng an hepe to an handfull / and (whiche
most is of all) hauyng (as god by many myracles bereth wytnes)
besyde theyr lernyng / the lyght and clerenes of his especyall grace /
by whiche they were inwardly taught of his onely spyryte / to
10 perceyue the wordes spoken in the olde lawe to the iewys people
prone to ydolatry / and yet not to all them neyther (For the prestes
than / had the ymages of th aungell cherubyn in the secret place of
the temple) sholde haue no place to forbyd ymages amonge his
crysten flocke / where his pleasure wolde be to haue the ymage of his
15 blessyd body hangyng on his holy crosse / had in honour & reuerent
remembraunce / where he wolde vouchsaufe to sende vnto the kyng
Abiagarus the ymage of his owne face / where he lyked to leue the
holy vernacle / the expresse ymage also of his blessyd vysage / as a
token to remayne in honour amonge suche as loued hym / from the
20 tyme of his bytter passyon hytherto. Which as it was by the myracle
of his blessyd holy hande expressed & lefte in the sudari / so hath it
ben by lyke myracle in that thyn corruptable clothe / kepte and
preserued vncorrupted this .xv.C. yere yere fresshe & well perceyued
to the inwarde comferte / spyrytuall reioysyng / & great encrease of
25 feruoure & deuocyon in the hartes of good crysten people. Cryst also
taught his holy euangelyst saynt Luke / to haue an other maner
mynde towarde ymages / than haue these heretyques / whan he put
in his mynde to counterfete & expresse in a table / the louely vysage
of our blessyd lady his mother. He taughte also saynt Amphybalus /
30 the mayster & techer of the holy fyrst martyr of England saynt Albane
/ to bere aboute and worshyp the crucyfyxe. Who shewed also saynt
Albane hym selfe in a vysyon / the ymage of the crucyfyx / but god:
whiche thyng wrought in that holy man so strongly / that he with
fewe wordes of saynt Amphybalus / at the syght of the blessyd ymage
35 (which our lord had before shewed hym in his slepe) was clene
toured to crystendome. And in the worshyppyng of the same ymage
/ was taken & brought forthe to iudgement / and afterworde to
martyrdome.

I wolde also fayne wytte / whyther these heretyques wyll be
40 contente that the blessyd name of Iesus be had in honoure and
reuerence or not. If not / then nede we no more to shewe what
wretches they be / whiche dare dyspyse that holy name that the
deuyll trembleth to here of. And on the other syde yf they agre that
the name of Iesus is to be reuerenced and had in honoure / then syth
45 that name of Iesus is nothyng els but a worde / whiche by wrytyng or
by voyce representeth vnto the herer the person of oursauour Chryst
/ fayne wolde I wytte of these heretyques / yf they gyue honour to the
name of our lorde / whiche name is but an ymage representyng his
person to mannes mynde and ymagynacyon / why and with what

reason can they dyspuse a fygure of hym carued or paynted / whiche representeth hym and his actes / farre more playne and more expressely.

5 Syr quod he as touchynge the coste done vpon thre arche / and
the temple / and the prestes apparell by the commaundement of god
/ there is a proper boke & a very contemplatyue wrytten in englysshe
/ & entytled the ymage of loue / which was made as it semeth by
some very vertuous man contemplatyue & well lerned / In whiche
10 boke that reason of yours is not onely well answered / but also
toured agayne agaynst you. For therin the good holy man layeth
sore agynst these carued & paynted ymages / gyuyng them lytell
praysse / and specyally leste commendyng suche as be most costely /
curiously / and most workemanly wrought. And he sheweth full well
15 that ymages be but lay menes bokes / and therefore that relygyous
men and folke of more parfyte lyfe / and more instructe in spyrytuall
wysdome / sholde let all such dede ymages passe / & labour onely
for the lyuely quycke ymage of loue and charyte. And very sore he
speketh there agaynst all this costly ornamentes of the chyrch /
wherof the money were (as he sayth) better bestowed vpon pore folke.
20 And he sheweth that the sayntes and holy doctours of olde tyme
wolde suffre no suche superfluyte in the paramentes of the chyrche /
but only se that they were clene and pure / and not costely. And
therefore he sayth that in theyr tyme they had trene chalyces and
golden prestes / and nowe haue we golden chalyces and trene
25 prestes.

Surely quod I / that boke haue I sene / whereof who was the
maker I knowe not. But the man myght peradventure meane well &
renne vp so hyghe in his contemplacyon spyrytuall / that whyle he
30 thought he sat in god almyghty his bosom vp an hyghe in heuen / he
contempned and set at nought all erthely thynges / and all temporall
servyce done to god here bynethe amonge pore sely men in erthe. And
veryly of his entente and purpose I wyll not moche medle. For a ryght
good man maye happe at a tyme in a feruent vndyscrete / to saye
some thyng and wryte it to / whiche when he consydereth after more
35 aduysedly / he wolde be very fayne to chaunge / but thin dare I be
bolde to say / that his wordes go somewhat further then he is able to
defende. For I doubte it not but that in the dayes of those holy
sayntes / ornamentes in chyrches of cryst were not only pure & clene /
but also very costly. And it myght well be / and so haue I redde that it
40 hath be in some great derthe of corne and famyne of people / that
some good holy bysshoppes haue releued pore people with the sale of
some of the vessell and plate of the chyrch. But I suppose he shall
neuer fynde (excepte in some such great vrgent cause chauncynge
vpon some occasyon) that euer those holy men refused to haue god
45 serued in his chyrches with the best and moost precyous of suche
metals as his goodnes gyueth vnto man / of whiche it is very ryght and
good reason that man serue hym agayne with the best / and not do as
Caym dyd / kepe all that ought is lor hym selfe. / and serue his
mayster and his maker with the worst. And bycause he nameth saynt

Ambrose / I wene there wyll no man doubte of the emperour
Theodosyus / a man so deuoute vnto god as he was / that he wolde be
serued hym selfe in cuppes of golde / and suffre his and our
sauyoure Chryst in the chyrche of Myllayne / where hym selfe
5 resorted / & saynt Ambrose was bysshop / to be armed in chalyces of
tree. Nor verely I can scante byleue that any crystrn people / all were
they very poore / wolde at this day suffre thr precyous blode of our
lorde to be consecrate and receyued in tre / where it sholde cleue to the
chalyce and synke in and not be clene receyued out by the preste. But
10 the worde I wene he set in for the pleasure that he had in that
proper comparyson bytwene trene chalyces and golden prestes of
olde / and nowe golden chalyces and trene prestes. But of trouth I
thynke he sayth not trouth / that the chalyces were made of trene
when the prestes were made of golde / and shall fynde that then were
15 of olde tyme many mo chalyces made of golde / then he fyndeth nowe
prestes made of tre. If he loke well in platina de vitis pontificum. I wene
he shall well perceyue that Cryst was serued with syluer & gold in the
vessels vtensyls and ornamentes of his chyrche / longe tyme or saynt
Ambrose was borne / or the eldest of those olde doctours that he
20 speketh of. And I dare make me bolde to warraunt that they them
selfe vsed not to say masse in chalyces of tre. And me thynketh that
the pleasure of god can not in this poynt better appere / then by his
owne wordes wrytten in holy scripture / as in the arche of the
testament and the ornamentes of the preste / and the cost and
25 rychesse bestowed aboute the temple of Salomon.

Mary quod he that is the thyng that is in the boke of the
ymages of loue as I was aboute to tell you very well & clerely
answered.

In what wyse quod I?

30 Mary quod he for fyrst whan the arche was made / there were
no pore men to bestowe that rychesse vpon / for whyle the
chyl dren of Israeli were in deserte they were fedde with manna /
and theyr clothes neuer wasted / nor were the worse in all that
fourty yere. And as for the rychesse of the temple made by
35 Salomon / coulde make no matter to the people / for there was
then no poore folke neyther. For as the very wordes of the
scripture sheweth / there was in his dayes so great plentye of
golde / that syluer was not set by.

40 Forsothe quod I the man maketh a propre answeere for the
arche. But I wolde fayne wytte of hym thoughe there were no pore
folke among them at the tyme of the makynge / was there neuer
none amonge them after the tyme of the kepyng? I wene he wyll
not say nay. And then yf there were / syth god wolde by his
reason rather haue commaunded to gyue that golde to pore men
45 yf there had ben suche / then to make it in the arche: he wolde
by the same reason after when there were suche / haue
commaunded then to breke it agayne & gyue it them / rather
then to kepe it in the arche. And as for the rychesse bestowed
vpon the temple of Salomon / where he sayd that there were

then no poore men because there were so great plentye of golde /
that syluer was not set by: euery man may well wytte / that yf
euery man had in his tyme ben ryche / he had not had so many
worke men. But weneth he that bycause there was in his dayes
5 so moche golde / that therefore all the people had ynough therof?
I rather fere me that bycause he was so ryche / his people were
the porer. For albeit he had great gyftes sente hym / and also vsed
not his owne people of the chyldren of Israeli for bonde men and
slaues / yet it is lykely that he set great and sore imposycyons
10 vpon them / wherby he gathered great rychesse / & they grewe
in great pouertye. And yf any man thynke the contrary / let hym
then loke after Salomons deth in the bryngynge of his sonnes
reygne whyther all the people dyd not so sore complayne therof /
that (bycause they coulde not gete a promyse of amendement as
15 sadde men aduysed the kyng / but by the lewde counsayle of
yonge laddes that then ledde the yonge kyng to foly / were with a
prowde rygorous answeere put in fere of worse) of the .xii. tribus of
Israeli .x. fell clerely from hym / and lefte hym no mo but
twayne. And therefore by the rychesse and royaltie of the prynce
20 to proue that there was no pore people in his royalme / is a very
pore profe. For so may it happe that the prynce may be most
ryche when his people be most pore / and the ryches of the one
causyng the pouerty of the other / yf the peoples substaunce be
gathered in to the prynces purse. And for conclusyon it is lytell
25 doubte but Salomon myght haue founde poore folke ynoughe to
haue gyuen his golde vnto that he bestowed vpon the temple of
god. And therefore that answeere answereth not well the matter.

Well quod your frende / yet hath that boke one answeere that
assoyleth all the hole matter. For as it is sayd there / all those
30 thynges that were vsed in the olde lawe / were but groce &
carnall / and were all as a shadowe of the lawe of Cryst / and
therefore the worshyppyng of god with golde and syluer & suche
other corporall thynges ought not to be vsed amonge crysten
people / but leuyng all that shadowe / we sholde drawe vs to the
35 spyrytuall thynges / and serue our lorde onely in spyryte and
spyrytuall thynges. For so he sayth hym selfe that god as hym
selfe is spyrytuall / so seketh he suche worshyppers as shall
worshyppe hym in spyryte / & in trouthe / that is in fayth /
hope / & charyte of harte / not in the ypocrysy & ostentacyon
40 of outward obseruaunce / bodyly seruyce / gay and costely
ornamentes / fayre ymages / goodly songe / flesshly fastyng /
& all the rable of suche vnsauoury ceremoneyes / all whiche are
now gone as a shadow. And our sauoure hym selfe whose fayth
is our iustifycacyon / calleth vpon our soule / and our good
45 faythfull mynde / and setteth all those carnall thynges at
nought.

The boke quod I sayth not fully so farre as ye reherce /
howbeit in dede many other men do. But these men that make
them selfe so spyrytuall / god sende grace that some euyll

spyryte enspyre not totheyr hartes a deuylysshe deuyce /
whiche vnder a cloke of specyall zeale to spyrytuall seruyce / go
fyrst aboute to destroy all suche deuocyon / as euer hath hytherto
shewed it selfe / and vttred the good affeccyon of the soule by good
5 and holy workes / vnto goddes honour wrought with the body.
These men be commen in to so hyghe poynt of perfeccyon / that
they passe all the good men that serued god in olde tyme. For as
for the good godly man Moyses / he thought that to pray not
onely in mynde / but with mouth also was a good way. The good
10 kynge Dauyd thought it plesaunt to god / not onely to pray with
his mouth / but also to synge & daunce to / to goddes honoure
/ and blamed his folysshe wyfe / whiche dyd at that tyme as
these folysshe heretyques do nowe / mockynge that bodyly
seruyce. Holy saynt Iohan the Baptyst not onely / baptysed &
15 preched / but also fasted / watched / prayed and ware here.
Cryst our sauour hym selfe / not onely prayed in mynd / but
also with mouth / which kynde of prayer these holy spyrytuall
heretyques nowe call lyppe laboure in mockage. And the fastynge
whiche they set at nought / our sauour hym selfe set so moche
20 by / that he contynued it fourty dayes togyder, Nowe as for the
ymages which ye call one of the shadowes.

Nay by saynt Mary quod he I called gay ornamentes of the
chyrche and suche other outwarde obseruaunces and bodyly
ceremonyes / as the ymage of loue calleth them / suche thynges I
25 called as the boke doth / shadowes of the olde lawe. But as for
ymages the boke aduyseth men eyther clene let passe and leue of /
or yf we wyll nedes haue any / care not how symple it be made / for
as well may the most rude ymage and moost symply wrought / put
vs in mynde of Cryst / and our lady / and any other saynt / as
30 may the most costely and most curyous that any payntour or
caruer can deuyse.

And verely to say the trouthe / as for ymages they be no
shadowes of the olde lawe / but thynges therin playnely and
clerely forbeden / as well in dyuerse other places of scrypture /
35 as in the textes late remembred by your selfe. Non facies tibi
sculptile / thou shalt carue the nor graue the none ymage. And
by all the hole psalme. In exitu Israel de egipto / is it with
grete execacyon and maledyccyon prohybyted.

Fyrst quod I ye may not take those wordes for suche a precyse
40 prohybycyon / as sholde forbede vtterly any ymages to be made /
for as I shewed you before / they had in the temple the ymages of
cherubyn. But it was prohybyted to make suche ymages as the
Egypcyans and other paynims dyd / that is to wytte / the ydols of
false goddes / for it appereth in the psalme selfe / where he layeth
45 for the cause of the prohybycyon. Quoniam omnes dii gentium
demonia / dominus autem celos fecit. For all the goddes of the
paynims be deuyls / but our lorde hath made the heuens. Doth it
not by these wordes well apere what ymages were in that psalme
forbeden / that is to wytte / the ymages & ydols only of those

paynym goddes? For els I pray you tell me what reason were this /
yf one wolde say make none ymage of Cryst / nor of our lady /
nor of any crysten saynt in no wyse / for all the goddes of the
paynyms be but deuyls? were not this a wyse reason well
5 concluded?

There is also in these prohybycyons intended / that no man
shall worshyp any ymage as god. For yf he sholde / then sholde he
fall in the contempte of the precepte of god / by whiche we be
10 commaunded to worshyp onely one god / & forboden to worshyp
any false goddes. And therefore where it in wrytten. Non facies
tibi sculptile. Thou shalte graue the none ymage / it goeth nexte
before. Non habebis deos alienos. Thou shalte haue no false
goddes. And it is also wrytten. Nolite conuerti ad ydola neque
15 deos conflatiles faciatis vobis. Tourne not to ydols / nor make not
for your selfe any goddes of metal cast in a molde. And where
it is forboden to worshyp any ymage / there is the worde that
sygnyfyeth the honoure & seruyce onely perteynyng to god.
And therefore neyther may we do any worshyp to any ymage and
ydole of any false paynym / nor with honour and seruyce done as
20 to god may we neyther worshyp ymage of any saynt / nor yet the
saynt it selfe. But I suppose neyther scripture nor naturall reason
doth forbede that a man may do some rcuerence to an ymage /
not fyxynge his fynall intente in the ymage / but referrynge it
further to the honour of the person that the ymage representeth
25 / syth that in such reuerence done vnto the ymage there is none
honour withdrawen neyther from god nor good man / but bothe the
saynt honoured in his ymage and god in his saynt. Whan a meane
man an embassyatour to a great kynge hath moche honour done
hym / to whom doth that honoure redounde / to the
30 embassyatoure or to the kynge?

When a man at the receyte of his prynces letter putteth of his
cappe and kysseth it / doth he this reuerence to the paper or to his
prynce?

In good fayth to say the trouthe these heretyques rather tryfle then
35 reason in this matter. For where they say that ymages be but lay
mennes bokes / they can not yet say nay but that they be necessary
yf they were but so. Howbeit me thynketh that they be good bokes
bothe for lay men and for the lerned to. For as I somewhat sayd vnto
you before / all the wordes that be eyther wrytten or spoken / be but
40 ymages representyng the thynges that the wryter or speker
conceyueth in his mynde: lykewyse as the fygure of the thyngre
framed with ymagynacyon and so conceyued in the mynde / is but
an ymage representyng the very thyng it selfe that a man thynketh
on. As for ensample yf I tell you a tale of my good frende your mayster
45 / the ymagynacyon that I haue of hym in my mynde / is not your
mayster hym selfe but an ymage that representeth hym. And when I
name you hym / his name is neyther hym selfe / nor yet the fygure of
hym / whiche fygure is in myn ymagynacyon / but onely an ymage
representynge to you the ymagynacyon of my mynde. Nowe yf I be

too farre from you to tell it you / then is the wrytyng not the name
it selfe / but an ymage representyng the name. And yet all thes names
spoken / and all these wordes wrytten / be no naturall sygnes or
ymages but onely made by consent and agrement of men / to betoken
5 and sygnyfye suche thyng / where as ymages paynted / grauen / or
carued / may be so well wrought and so nere to the quycke and to the
trouth / that they shall naturally / and moche more effectually
represent the thyng then shall the name eyther spoken or wrytten.
For he that neuer herde the name of your mayster / shall yf euer he
10 sawe hym be brought in a ryght full remembraunce of hym by his
ymage well wrought and touched to the quycke. And surely sauynge
that men can not do it / els if it myght commodiously be done / there
were not in this worlde so effectually wrytyng as were to expresse all
15 thyng in ymagery. And nowe lykewyse as a boke well made and well
wrytten / better expresseth the matter then doth a boke made by a
rude man that can not well tell his tale and wrytten with an euyl
hande: so doth an ymage well workmanly wrought / better expresse
the thyng then doth a thyng rudely made / but yf it moue a man
20 for some other specyall cause / as peradventure for some great
antyquyte or the great vertue of the workeman / or for that god
sheweth at the place some specyall assystence of his faouere and
grace. But nowe as I began to say / syth all names spoken or
wrytten be but ymages / yf ye set ought by the name of Iesus
25 spoken or wrytten: why shold ye set nought by his ymage paynted or
caruen that representeth his holy person to your remembraunce / as
muche and more to / as doth his name wrytten. Nor these two wordes
Christus crucifixus / do not so lyuely represent vs the remembraunce
of his bytter passyon / as doth a blessyd ymage of the crucyfyx /
30 neyther to lay man / nor vnto a lerned. And this perceyue these
heretyques them selfe well ynough / Nor they speke not agaynst
ymages for Any furtheraunce of deuocyon / but playnly for a
malycious mynde / to mynysshe & quenche mennes deuocyons.
For they se well ynoughe that there is no man but yf he loue
35 another / but he delyteth in his ymage or any thyng of his. And
these heretyques that be so sore agaynst the ymages of god / and
his holy sayntes / wolde be yet ryght angry with hym that wolde
dyshonestly handle an ymage made in remembraunce of one of
them selfe / where the wretches forbere not vylanously to handle
40 and cast dyrte in dyspyte vpon the holy crucyfyxe / an ymage
made in remembraunce of our sauour hym selfe / & not only of his
most blessyd person / but also of his most bytter passyon.

Nowe as touchynge prayer made vnto the sayntes / and worshyp
done vnto them / moche meruayle is it what cause of malyce these
heretyques haue to them. We se it comen in the wretched
45 condycyon of this worlde / that one man of a pryde in hym selfe
hath enuy at a nother / or for dyspleasure done / bereth to some
other malyce and euyl wyll. But this must nedes be a deuelysshe
hatred / to hate hym whom thou neuer knewest / whiche neuer dyd
the harme / whiche yf he coulde now do the no good where he is /

yet eyther with his good ensample gone before the / or his good
doctryne lefte behynde hym / dothe the (but yf thou be very nought
of thy selfe) great good in this worlde for thy iourney towarde heuyn.
And this must nedes be an enuy comynge of an hye deuelysshe
5 pryde / and farre passynge the enuye of the deuyll hym selfe / for he
neuer enuyed / but suche as he sawe / and was conuersaunt with /
as whan he sawe man and the glory of god. But these heretyques
enuye them whom they neuer sawe nor neuer shall se / but whan
they shall be sory & ashamed in them selfe of that gloryous syght.

10 For where they pretende the zele of goddes honoure hym selfe /
as though god (to whom onely all honour and glory is to be gyuen)
were dyshonoured in that some honoure is done to his holy sayntes
/ they be not so mad nor so chylidysshe as they make them selfe.
For if all honour were so to be gyuen onely to god / that we sholde
15 gyue none to nocreature / where were than goddes precepte / of
honoure to be gyuen to our father and mother / to prynces /
gouernours / and rulers here in erthe / And as saynt Poule sayth
euery man to other.

And well they wote that the chyrche worshyppeth not sayntes
20 as god / but as goddes good seruauntes / and therefore the honoure
that is done to them redoundeth pryncypally to the honour of theyr
mayster / lyke as in comen custom of people we do reuerence
somtyme and make greate chere to some men for theyr mayster sake
/ whom els we wold not happely byd ones good morowe.

25 And surely yf any benefyte or almes done to one of crystes pore
folke for his sake / be by his hygh goodnes reputed & accepted / as
done vnto hym selfe / And that who so receyueth one of his apostels
or discypels receyueth hym selfe / euery wyse man maye well
consyder that in lyke wyse / who so doth honour his holy sayntes for
30 his sake doth honour hym selfe. Excepte these heretyques wene that
god were as enuyouse as they be them selfe / And that he wolde be
wroth to haue any honour done to any other / though it therby
redounded vnto hym selfe. Wherof our sauour cryste well declareth
the contrary / for he sheweth hym selfe so well content that his holy
35 sayntes shalbe perteners of his honour / that he promysyth his
apostels / that at the dredfull dome (whan he shall come in his
hyghe maiesty) they shall haue theyr honourable seetys / and
sytte with hym selfe vpon the iudgement of the worlde.

40 Cryst also promysed that saynt mary magdalene shold be
worshypped thorow the worlde / and haue here an honorable
remembraunce for that she bestowed that precyouse oyntement
vpon his holy hed. Which thyng whan I consyder it maketh me
meruayle of the madnes of these heretyques that barke agaynste
the olde auneynt customes of crystys chyrche / mockynge the
45 settynge vp of candels / and with folyshe facecyes and
blasphemous mockery demaunde whyther god and his sayntys
lack lyght or whyther it be nyght with them that they can not se
without candle. They myght as well aske what good dyd that
oyntement to crystys hed. But the heretyques grudge at the cost

now / as theyr brother Iudas dyd than. And say it were better spent
in almes vppon pore folke / & this say many of them / whiche can
neyther fynde in theyr harte to spend vppon the one nor the other.
And some spend somtyme vppon the one for none other entent /
5 but to thende that they may the more boldely rebuke and rayle
agaynst the other. But let them all by that ensample of that holy
woman / and by these wordys of our sauour lerne that god
delyteth to se the feruent hete of the hartys deuocyon boyle out by
the body / and to do hym seruyce with all suche goodys of fortune
10 as god hath gyuen a man.

What ryches deuysed our lorde god hym selfe / in the makynge
and garnysshyng of the temple / and in the ornamentes of the auter
and the prestys apparayle / what was hym selfe the better for all
this? what for the bestys that hym selfe commaunded to be offred
15 hym in sacryfyce? what for the swete odours and frankensence?
why do these heretyques more mocke at the maner of crystys
chyrche / than they do at the maner of the iewes synagoge / but yf
they be better iewes than crysten men?

If men wyll say that the money were better spent among pore
20 folke (by whom he more setteth / beyng the quycke temples of the
holy goste made by his owne hande / than by the temples of stone
made by the hande of man) This wolde be percase very trew / yf
there were so lytell to do it with / that we shold be dryuen of
necessyte / to leue the one vndone. But god gyuyth Inough for both
25 / and gyueth dyuers men dyuers kyndys of deuocyon / and all to
his pleasure. In whyche as the apostell Poule sayth / let euery man
for his parte abounde and be plentuouse in the kynde of vertue /
that the spyryte of god guydeth hym to. And not to be of the
folysshe mynde that Luther is / whiche wyssheth in a sermon of
30 hys / that he had in his hande all the pecys of the holy crosse /
and sayth that yf he so had / he wolde throw them there as neuer
sonne shold shyne on them. And for what worshypfull reason wolde
the wretche do suche vylanye to the crosse of cryste? bycause as
he sayth that there is so moche golde nowe bestowed aboute the
35 garnysshyng of the pecys of the crosse / that there is none lefte
for pore folke. Is not this an hygh reason? as though all the golde
that is nowe bestowed aboute the pecys of the holy crosse / wolde
not haue fayled to haue ben gyuen to pore men / yf they had not
ben bestowed about the garnysshyng of the crosse. And as though
40 there were nothyng lost / but that is bestowed about crystys
crosse.

Take all the gold that is spent about all the pecys of crystys
crosse thorowe crystendome (albe it many a good crysten prynce /
& other godly people hath honourably garnysshed many pecys
45 thereof) yet yf all the golde were gathered togyder / it wolde appere
a pore porcyon in comparyson of the golde that is bestowed vpon
cuppes / what speke we of cuppes? in whiche the golde / albe it
that it be not yuen to pore men / yet is it saued / and may be
gyuen in almes whan men wyll / whiche they neuer wyll / howe

small a porcyon wene we were the golde aboute all the pecys of
crystes crosse / yf it were compared with the golde that is quyte
cast away / aboute the gyltyng of knyues / swordes / sporres /
arrace / & paynted clothes: and (as though these thynges coude
5 not consume golde fast ynoughe) the gyltyng of postes and hole
rofes / not onely in the palaces of prynces & great prelates /but
also many ryght meane mennes houses. And yet among all these
thynges coude Luther spye no golde / that greuously glyttered in
his blered eyes / but onely aboute the crosse of cryst. For the golde
10 / yf it were thens the wyse man weneth it wolde be streyght gyuen
to pore men / and that where he dayly seeth / the suche as haue
theyr purse full of golde / gyue to the pore not one pece therof /
but yf they gyue ought / they ransake the botome amonge all the
golde / to seke out here an halfe peny / or in his countrey a brasse
15 peny / wherof foure make a ferthyng / suche goodly causes fynde
they that pretende holynesse for the coloure of theyr cloked
heresy.

20

The thirde chapter

At this poynt your frende desyrynge me / that what so euer he
sholde say / I sholde not reken it as spoken of his owne oppynyon
/ but that he wolde partely shew me what he had herde some other
25 saye therin / to the ende that he myght the better answeere them /
with that he sholde here of me. This protestacyon and prefacyon
made / he sayd that albe it no good man wolde agre / that it were
well done / to do vnto sayntes or theyr ymages dyspyte or
dyshonour / yet to go in pylgrymages to them / or to pray to them
30 / not onely semed in vayne (consyderynge that all they (yf they can
any thyng do) can yet do no more for vs among them all / than
Cryst can hym selfe alone that can do all / nor be not so redy at
our hande / to here vs / yf they here vs at all / as Cryst that is
euery where / nor bere vs halfe the loue and longynge to helpe vs /
35 that doth our sauour that dyed for vs / whom as saynt Poule
sayth we haue for our aduocate afore the father) But ouer this it
semeth to smell of ydolatry / whan we go on pylgrymage to this
place and that place / As thoughe god were not lyke stronge or not
lyke present in euery place. But as the deuylls were of old / vnder
40 the false name of goddes / present and assystent in the ydolles and
mammettes of the paganes / so wolde we make it seme / that god
and his sayntes stode in this place / and that place / bounde to
this post & that post cut out & carued in ymages. For whan we
reken our selfe to be better herde with our lorde in kent than at
45 Cambrydge / at the north dore of Poules than at the south dore /
at one ymage of our Lady than at another / is it not an euydent
token / and in maner a playne profe / that we put our trust and
confydenge in the ymage selfe / and not in god or our lady? whiche

is as good in the one place as in the other / & the one ymage no
more lyke her than the other / nor cause why she shold fauour the
one before the other. But we blynde people in stede of god & his
holy sayntes them selfe / cast our affeccyons to the ymages selfe /
5 & therto make our prayers / therto make our offrynges / & wene
these ymages were the very sayntes selfe / of whom our helpe &
helth shold grow / puttynge our full trust in this place and that
place / as negromancers put theyr trust in theyr cercles / wythin
whyche they thynke them selfe sure agaynst all the deuyls in hell.
10 And wene yf they were one ynch without / that than the deuyll
wolde pull them in pecys / but as for the cercle he dare not for his
erys ones put ouer his nose.

And men reken that the clergie is glad to fauour this wayes /
and to norysshe this superstycyon vnder the name and colour of
15 deuocyon / to the parell of the peoples soules / for the lucre and
temporall aduauntage that them selfe receyue of the offryngys.

Whan I had hard hym say what hym lyked I demaunded yf he
mynded euer to be preste / wherunto he answered nay verely / for
me thynketh quod he that there be prestes to many all redy but yf
20 they were better. And therefore whan god shall sende tyme I purpose
he sayd to marry.

Well sayd I than syth I am all redy marryed twyse / & therefore
neuer can be preste / and ye be so set in mynde of marryage / that
ye neuer wyll be preste / we two be not the most metely to ponder
25 what myght be sayd in this matter for the prestys parte.

How be it whan I consyder it / me thynketh surely that yf the
thyng were such as ye say / so far from all frame of ryght relygyon/
and so perylous to mens soulys / I can not perceyue why that the
clergie wolde for the gayne they get thereby / suffer suche abusyon
30 to contynew. For fyrst yf it were trew that no pylgrymage ought to
be vsyd / none ymage offred vnto / nor worshyp done / nor
prayour made vnto any saynt / Than yf none of all these thynges
had euer ben in vre / or now were all vndone / If that were the
ryght way / as I wote well it were wrong / than were it to me lytell
35 questyon / but crysten people beyng in the trew fayth / and in the
ryght way to godwarde / wolde therby nothyng slake theyr good
myndes / toward the mynysters of his chyrche / but theyr
deuocyon shold towarde them more and more encrease. So that yf
they now get by this waye one peny / they sholde (yf this be wronge
40 and the other ryght) not feyle in stede of a peny nowe / than to
receyue a grote. And so sholde no lucre gyue them cause to fauour
this way and it be wronge / whyle they coulde not fayle to wyn
more by the ryght.

Moreouer loke me thorowe chrystendome / and I suppose ye
45 shall fynde the frute of those offeryngys a ryght small parte of the
lyuyng of the clergie. And suche as though some few placys wolde
be gladde to retayne / yet the hole body myght without any notable
losse easily forbere.

Let vs consyder oure owne cuntre here / and we shall fynde of



these pylgrymages far the most parte in the handes of suche
relygyous persones / or suche pore parysshys as bere no greate
rule in the conuocacyons. And besyde this ye shall not fynde I
suppose / that any bysshope in Englonde hath the profyte of one
5 grote of any suche offrynge within his dyocyse. Now standeth then
the contynuaunce or the brekyng of this maner & custome /
specyally in them / whiche take no profyte therby. Whiche yf they
byleued it to be (suche as ye call it) superstycyous / and wycked /
wolde neuer suffre it contynewe to the peryshynge of mennes
10 soules / wherby them selfe sholde dystroy theyr owne soules / and
neyther in body nor goodes take any commodyte. And ouer this we
se / that the bysshoppes and prelates them selues vysyte those
holy places and pylgrymages / with as large offrynges / and as
grete cost in commynge and goyng as other people do / so that
15 they not onely take no temporall aduauntage therof / but also
bestowe of theyr owne therin.

And surely I byleue this deuocyon so planted by goddes owne
hand in the hertes of the hole chyrche / that is to wyt / not the
clargye onely / but the hole congregacyon of all crysten people /
20 that yf the spyrytualtye were of the mynde to leue it / yet wolde not
the temporaltye suffre it.

Nor yf it so were tthat pylgrymages hanged onely vpon the
couytyse of euyll prestes / for euyll must they be that wold for
couytyse helpe the people forwarde to ydolatry / than wolde not
25 good prestes and good bysshops haue vsed them theyr selues. But
I am very sure that many an holy bysshop / and therewith
excellently well lerned in scrypture / and the law of god / haue had
hygh deuocyon therto.

For where as ye say / men reken / that it smelleth of ydolatrye
30 / to vysyte this place and that place / as thoughe that god were
more myghty / or more present in one place then in another / or
that god or his sayntes had bound en them selues to stande at this
ymage or that ymage / and that by mennes demeanour therby
sholde appere / that the pylgryms put theyr trust in the place or
35 the ymage it selfe / takynge that for very god / or for the very saynt
/ of whom they seke for helpe / and so fare lyke negromancers /
that put theyr trust in theyr cercle / Surely sir holy saynt Austyn
in an epystle of his (whiche he wrote to the clargy and the people)
taketh pylgrymages for a more earnest & a arre more godly thyng.
40 And sayth / that though the cause be to vs vnknown / why god
dothe in some place myracles / and in some place none / yet is it
no doubte but he so dothe. And therin had the good holy doctour
so great confydence / that as he sayth hym selfe / he sent two of
his prestes in pylgrymage for the tryall of the trouthe of a great
45 matter in contencion & debate bytwene them out of Hyppona in
affryke vnto saynt Stephens chyrche in Myllayne / where many
myracles were wonte to be shewed / to the ende that god myght
there / by some meanes / cause the truthe to be declared & made
open by his power / whiche by no meane knownen to man / he

could well fynde out.

Nor they that gone on pylgrymage do nothyng lyke to those
nygromancers / to whome ye resemble them that put their
confydence in the roundell and cercle on the grounde / for a
5 specyall byleue that they haue in the compace of that grounde / by
reason of folysshe caractes & fygures about it / with inuocacyons
of euyll spyrytys & famylyaryte with deuyls beyng enemyes to god
/ and the crafte and wayes of all that worke / by god hym selfe
prohibyted and forboden / and that vpon the payne of deth / what
10 lykenes hath that vnto the goynge of good men vnto holy places /
not by enchauntment dedicat to the deuyll / but by goddys holy
ordynaunce with his holy wordys consecratyd vnto hym selfe.
Whiche two thynges yf ye wolde resemble togyther / so myght ye
blaspheme and haue in dyrsyon all the deuout rytys and
15 cerymonyes of the chyrch / bothe in the deuine seruyce as
encensyng / halowyng of the lyre / of the funt / of the pascall
lambe / and ouer that the exorcysmys / benedyccyons / & holy
straunge gesturys vsyd in consecracyon or mynystracyon of the
blessyd sacramentys / all whiche holy thyngys greate parte wherof
20 was frome hande to hande left in the chyrche / from the tyme of
crystys apostels / and by them left vnto vs / as it was by god
taught vnto them / men myght now by the meanys folyly myslyken
vnto the superstycyous demeasure & fond fassyon of iuglery. Nor
the flocke of cryst is not so folysshe as those heretyques bere them
25 in hande / that where as there is no dogge so madde / but he
knoweth a very cony from a cony carued & paynted / crysten peple
that haue reason in theyr heddys / & therto the lyght of fayth in
theyr soulys / shold wene that the ymages of our lady were our
lady her selfe. Nay they be not I trust so madde / but they do
30 reuerence to thymage for the honour of the person whom it
representyth / as euery man delytyth in thymage and
remembraunce of his frende. And albe it that euery good crysten
man hath a remembryng of crystys passyon in his mynde / and
conceyuyth by deuout medytacyon a forme and fassyon therof in
35 his harte / yet is there no man I wene so good nor so well lerned /
nor in medytacyon so well accustomed / but that he fyndyth
hymselfe more mouyd to pyte and compassyon / vpon the
beholdyng of the holy crucyfyxe / than whan he lackyth it. And yf
there be any that for the mayntenaunce of his opynyon wyll
40 perauenture say that he fyndeth it other wyse in hym selfe / he
sholde gyue me cause to fere / that he hath of crystys passyon
neyther the one way nor the other / but a very faynt felyng / syth
that the holy fathers before vs dyd / and all deuout people about vs
do / fynde and fele in them selfe the contrary.

45 Now for the reason that you alege quod I / where ye saye that in
resortyng to this place and that place / this ymage and that
ymage / we seme to reken as though god were not in euery place
lyke myghty / or not lyke present / this reason procedeth no more
agaynst pylgrymagys / than agaynst all the chyrchys in

crystendom. For god is as myghty in the stable as in the temple.
And as he is not comprehensyble nor cyrcumscrybed no where / so
is he present euery where. But this letteth not heuen / be it a
corporall thyng or not / to be the place of a specyall maner &
5 kynde of his presence / in whiche it lyketh hym to shewe his
glorious maiesty / to his blessyd heuenly company / whiche he
sheweth not vnto dampned wretches in hell / and yet is he neuer
thens. So lyked it his goodnes to go with his chosen people thurgh
the deserte in the cloude by day / and the pyller of fyre by nyght /
10 yet was he not bounden as ye resemble it lyke the dampned
spyrytes to the olde ydols of the paynyms.

It lyked hym also to chose the arche that was caryed with his
people / at which arche specyally by myracle / he dyuers tymes
declared his especyall assystence / the arche beyng translated fro
15 place to place.

Was it not also his pleasure to be specyally present in his
temple of Ierusalem / tyll he suffered it to be dystroyed for theyr
synne? And in stede of that one place of prayer (to whiche he wolde
before that all his people sholde come) he hath vouchsauffed to
20 sprede hym selfe abrode in to many temples / and in more
acceptable wyse to be worshypped in many temples thurgh out his
crysten flocke.

Here sayd your frende / that the temple of Cryst is (as saynt
Poule sayth) mannes harte / and that god is not included nor shyt
25 in any place. And so hym selfe sayd to the woman of Samarye / the
very worshyppers sholde worshyp in spyryte / and in truthe / not
in the hyll or in Ierusalem / or any other temple of stone.

Wherunto I shewed hym / that I wolde well agre / that no
temple of stone was vnto god so pleasaunt / as the temple of
30 mannes harte / But yet that nothyng letteth or withstandeth /
but that god wyll / that his crysten people haue in sundry places /
sundry temples and chyrches / to whiche they sholde besyde theyr
pryuat prayers assemble solemply / and resorte in company to
worshyp hym togyder / such as dwell so nere togyder / that they
35 may conuenyently resorte to one place.

For all be it our sauour sayd quod I vnto the woman / of whom
ye spake / that the tyme sholde come / in whiche they sholde
neyther worshyp god in that hyll of Gezera / nor in Ierusalem
neyther / whiche places were after dystroyed and desolate / and
40 the Pagane maner of worshypynge of the one / and the Iewes
maner of worshyppyng in the other / tourned bothe in to the
maner of worshyppynge of crysten faythe and relygyon / yet sayd he
not to her / that they shold neuer after worshyp god in none other
temple / But he sayd that the tyme sholde come / & than was
45 comen all redy / whan the very trew worsshyppers shold worsshyp
god in spyryte and trewth. And that as god is a spyrytuall
substaunce / so lokyd he for worsshyppers / that sholde in suche
wyse worsshyp hym. In whiche wordys our sauour reprouyd all
false worsshyp / as was vsyd after paganysme in that hyll in

Samaria / and all such worssyp / as was dour in any place with
opinyon / that god myght not be worsshypyd els where. Those
that so byleue / they be suche as bynde god to a place / which our
lorde reprouyth / shewyngethat god may in harte truely and
5 spyrytually be worssypyd euery where. But this excludyth not /
that besydes that / he wyll be worsshypyd in his holy teinple / no
more than whan he gaue counsell that for auoydyng of vaynglory
a man shall not stande and pray in the strete to gather worldly
praysse / but rather secretly praye in his chamber. This counsell
10 forbade not the lewes to whom he gaue it / that they sholde neuer
after come into the temple / and pray.

And surely albe it that some good man here and there / one
among .x. thousand / as saynt Poule and saynt Antony / & a few
suche other lyke / do lyue all heuenly far out of all fleshly company
15 / as far from all occasyon of worldly wretchednes / as from the
comen temple or paryshe chyrche / yet yf chyrches and
congregacyons of crysten peple resortyng togyther to goddys
seruyce were ones abolessed & put away / we were lyke to haue
few good temples of god in mennys soules / but all wolde within a
20 whyle weare away clene and clerely fall to nought. And thys proue
we by experyence / that those whiche be the best temples of god in
theyr soules / they most vse to come to the temple of stone. And
those that leest come there / be well knowen for very rybaudes &
vnthryftys / and openly perceyued for temples of the deuyll. And
25 this not in our dayes onely / but so hath bene from crystys dayes
hyther. I trow no man doutyth / but that crystys apostles were
holy temples of god in theyr soules / and as well vnderstode the
wordys of theyr mayster / spoken to the woman of Samary / as the
thyng whiche theyr mayster after tolde them hym selfe / or els
30 how coude some of them haue wryten that communycacyon
whiche none of them herde as apperyth by the gospell. But they
not in theyr maysters dayes onely / but also after his resurrexyon
/ and after that they had receyued the holy gost / & were by hym
instructyd of euery trewth / longynge to the necessaryte of theyr
35 saluacyon / were not content onely to pray secretly by them selfe
in theyr chambers / but also resortyd to the temple to make theyr
prayers. And in that place as a place plesant to god dyd they pray
in spyryte & in truth / as well apperyth in the boke of saynt Luke
wryten of the actys of crystys holy apostles. So that no doute is
40 there / but that yet vnto this day & so forth to the worldys ende /
it is and shalbe pleasaunt vnto god / that his chosen peple pray to
hym and call vpon hym in temple and chyrche. Wherof hym selfe
witnessyth with the prophete. Domus mea domus orationis
vocabitur. My house shall be called a house of prayer.

45 Nowe maketh your reason as I sayd / no more agaynst
pylgrymages / than agaynst euery chyrche. For as god is not
bounden to the place / nor our confydence bounden to the place /
but vnto god (though we reken our prayer more pleasaunt to god in
the chyrche than without / bycause his hyghe goodnes accepteth it

so) in lyke wyse do not we reken our lorde bounden to the place or ymage where the Pylgrymage is / though we worshyp god there / bycause hym selfe lyketh so to haue it.

5

The fourte chapiter

With this your frende asked me what reason were there / that god wolde set more by one place than by another / or howe knowe we that he so doth / namely yf the one be a chyrche as well as the other.

Wherunto I answered that why god wolde do it I coulde make hym no answeere / no more than saynt Austyn saythe that he coulde. I was neuer so nere of his counsayle / nor dare not be so bolde to aske hym. But that he so dothe in dede / that I am sure ynoughe / yet not for that / he setteth more by that place / for the soyle and pauement of that place / but that his pleasure in some place is / to shewe more his assystence / and to be more specyally sought vnto / than in some other.

Than he asked me wherby was I so sure of that / wheruppon I demaunded hym / that yf it so were / that the thyng standynge in debate & questyon / it wolde lyke our lorde to shewe a myracle for the proffe of the one parte. Wolde ye not quod I reken than the questyon were decyded / and the doubte assoyled / and that parte suffyciently proued?

Yes mary quod he that wolde I.

Well quod I / than is this matter out of doubte longe a go / for god hath proued my parte in dyuers pylgrymages by the workyng of many mo than a thousande myracles / one tyme and other. In the gospell of Iohan the fyfte chapyter / where we rede that the aungell moued the water / and who so nexte wente in was cured of his dysease / was it not a suffycient proffe / that god wolde they sholde come thyther for theyr helthe / Albe it no man can tell why he dyd his myracles than in an other water? But whan so euer our lorde hath in any place wrought a myracle / all though he nothyng do it for the place / but for the honour of that saynt / whom he wyll haue honoured in that place / or for the fayth that he findeth with some that prayeth in that place / or for the encrease of fayth / which he fyndeth fallynge and decayed in that place / nedyng the shewe of some myracles for the reuyuyng / what so euer the cause be / yet I thynke the affeccyon is to be commended of men and women / that with good deuocyon ronne thyther / where they se or here that our lorde sheweth a demonstracyon of hys specyall assystence. And whan he sheweth many in one place / it is a good token / that he wolde be sought vpon / and worsshyped there. Many Iewes were there / that cam to Ierusalem to se the myracle that cryst had wrought vpon Lazare / as the gospell reherseth. And surely we were worse than iewes / yf we wold be so neglygent /

that where god worketh myracles / we lyste not ones go moue our
fote thytherwarde. We meruayle moche that god sheweth no mo
myracles nowe a dayes / whan it is moche more meruayle that he
doth vouchsaufe to shew any at all / among such vnkynde
5 slouthfull dedely people / as lyst not ones lyfte vp theyr heddys to
loke theron / or that our meredulyte can suffer hym nowe a dayes
to worke any.

10 The fifte chapter

Than sayd your frende / well I perceyue then / the force and
effecte of all the profe / standeth all in myracles / whiche I wyll
agre to be a stronge profe / yf I saw them done / and were sure
15 that god or good sayntes dyd them. But fyrst syth that men may
and happely do / of myracles make many a lye / we must not
proue this matter by the myracles / but yf we fyrste proue that the
myracles were trew. And ouer this yf they were done in dyde / yet
syth the angell of darknes may transforme & transfigure hym self/
20 into an angell of lyght / how shall we know / whyther the myracle
were done by god to the encrease of crysten deuocyon / or done by
the craft of the deuyll to the aduauncement of mysbyleue and
idolatrye / in settinge mennys hartys vppon stockys and stones in
stede of sayntys / or vppon sayntys them selfe that are but
25 creatures / in stede of god hym selfe?

I answered hym that the force of my tale was not the myracles /
but the thyng that I holde stronger than any myracles / whiche as
I sayd in the begynnyng I reken so sure and fast / and therwith so
playne and euydent vnto euery crysten man / that it nedeth none
30 other profe / & that thyng is as I sayd afore the fayth of Crystes
chyrche / by the common consent wherof these matters be decyded
& well knowen that the worshyp of sayntes and ymages ben allowed
/ approbate / and accustomed for good crysten and merytoryous
vertues / and the contrary oppynyon not onely reprobued by many
35 holy doctours / but also condempned for heresyas by sundry
generall counsayles.

And this in the begynnyng I tolde you quod I / was and sholde
be the force and strenthe of my tale / Albe it of trouthe I sayd vnto
you be syde / that me thought that the myracles wrought by god
40 were sufficyent profe and auctoryte therfore / all though there
were none other / whiche thyng syth ye seme to impugne / I shall
as I can / make you answeere therunto.

Nay syr sayd he / I pray you take me not so as thoughe that I
dyd impugne it / but as I shewed you before / I rehersed you what I
45 haue herde some other say.

In good tyme quod I. Than because they be not here / I pray you
defende and bere out theyr parte / with all that ye haue herde
them say / and set therto also all that euer your owne mynde

gyueth you / that they may more herafter say / lest you retourne
not fully furnysshed for your purpose.

5

The sixte chapter

And fyrst where ye say.

Nay quod he where they say.

Well quod I so be it where they say. For here euer my tonge
10 tryppeth. But nowe therfore fyrst where they say / that they neuer
sawe any of these myracles them selfe / and therfore the myracles
be no profe to them / whiche whyle they neuer sawe them are not
bounden to byleue them / they seme eyther very negligent yf they
15 nothyng enquere whan they mystrust and doubte of the trouth in
suche a weyghty matter / or yf they haue dilygently made enserche
/ than must it nedes be / that they haue herde of so many tolde &
rehered by the mouthes & the wrytynge of so good and credyble
persons / that they seme vnreasonably suspycyous / yf they
20 thynke all togyther lyes / that so many trewe men or men lyke to
be trewe so faythfully do reporte. If these men were iudges fewe
matters wolde take ende at theyr hande / or at the lest the
playntyfe sholde haue euyll spede yf they wolde byleue nothyng /
but that were proued / nor reken nothyng proued / but that they
se them selfe.

25 Thus may euery man reken hym selfe vnsure of his owne father
/ yf he byleue no man / or bycause all the profe therof standyth
but vpon one woman / and that vpon her / which though she can
tell best / yet yf yt be wrong hath gretest cause to lye. Let the
knowlege of the father alone therfore amonge our wyffys mysteryes.
30 And let vs se yf we byleue nothyng / but that we se our selfe /
who can reken hym selfe sure of his owne mother / for possyble it
were that he were chaunged in the cradell / and a ryche mannys
norce bryng home her owne chylde for her maysters / and kepe her
maysters for her owne to make her owne a gentylman good chepe.
35 And this were no great mastery / whyle the mother hath of her
owne chylde no ere marke.

Syr quod your frende yf I sholde answeere them thus / and by
these examples proue them / that they were of reason bounden to
byleue stiche myracles as were reportyd / bycause many credyble
40 men tell them / for as moche as ellys we sholde byleue nothyng /
but that we se our selfe / and than were all the worlde full of
confusyon / nor no iudgement coulde be gyuen / but vpon thynges
done in the iudgys syght / I sholde I fere me very febly satysfy
them. For they wolde sone saye / that the ensamples be nothyng
45 lyke the mater. But as it is reason that I sholde byleue honeste
men in all suche thynges as may be trew / and wherein I se no
cause why they shold lye / so were it agaynst all reason to byleue
men / be they neuer so many / seme they neuer so credyble /

where as reason and nature (of whiche twayne euery one ys alone
more credyble then they all) sheweth me playnly that theyr tale is
vntrew / as it must nedys / yf the matter be impossyble / as it is
in all these myracles. And in suche case though I can perceyue no
5 profyte / that they can receyue therby / yet whan I well se that it
coulede not be trewe / I must well se that it was not trewe. And
therby must I nedys know that yf they can take no profyte by
lyenge / they lye not for any couetyse / but euen onely for theyr
specyall pleasure.

10 Forsoth quod I this is ryght merely answered. And to say the
truthe as far as we be yet gone in the matter of these myracles not
moch amysse nor very far fro the poynt. But syth this thyng is
moche materyall / as wherupon many great thynges do depende /
we shall not so shortly shake it of / but we shall come one step or
15 twayne nerer to the matter / & fyrst I wyll say to them that yt were
hard for them & not very sure to byleue that euery man lyeth /
which telleth them a tale for trew the reason & nature semyth to
shew them to be fals & impossyble. For in this wyse shall they in
many thynges erre & clerly deceyue them self / & somtyme whyle
20 they make themself sure of the wrong syde if they wold with wagers
contende & stryue therin / they shold vpon the boldnes of nature &
reason lease all that euer they were able to ley theron. If there were
a man of Inde that neuer cam out of his countrey / nor neuer had
sene any whyte man or woman in his lyfe / & syth he seeth
25 innumerable peple blak / he myght wene that it were agaynst the
nature of man to be whyte. Nowe yf he shall bycause nature
semeth to shewe hym so / byleue therfore that all the worlde lyed
yf they wolde say the contrary / who were in the wronge / he that
byleueth his reason and nature / or they that agaynst his
30 perswasyon of reason and nature shall tell hym as it is of trouthe?

Your frende answered that reason and nature tolde not the man
of Inde that all men sholde be blacke / but he byleued so agaynst
reason & agaynst nature / for he had nothyng to lede hym to it
but bycause hym self sawe no whyte / whiche was no reason. And
35 he myght by nature perceyue yf he had lernynge that the hete
maketh his countrey blacke. And that of lyke reason / the colde of
other countreys muste make the people whyte.

Well quod I and yet he cometh to his perswasyon by a sylogysme
& reasonynge / almost as for mall as is the argument / by whiche
40 ye proue the kynd of man reasonable / wherof what other
colleccyon haue you that brought you fyrst to perceyue it than that
this man is reasonable / & this man / and this man / and this
man / and so forthe all whom ye se. By ensample wherof by them
whom ye knowe / presumynge thereby no man to be otherwyse /
45 ye conclude that euery man is reasonable. And he thynketh hym
selfe surer in his argument than he thynketh you in yours. For he
sawe neuer other but blacke people / where ye se many men foles.
As for that he hereth of other that there be whyte men els where /
this serueth nothyng for your purpose if ye byleue no wytnes

agaynst the thyng that your reason and experyence sheweth you.
And where as ye saye / yf the man of Inde had lernynge he sholde
perceyue that it is not agaynst nature / but rather consonant with
nature that some other men shold in other countreys be whyte /
5 though all his countrey men be blacke / so peradventure those
whose parte ye do susteyne / yf they had some lernynge that they
lacke / sholde well perceyue that of reason they sholde gyue
credence to credible persones / reportyng them thynges that seme
10 farre agaynst reason because they be farre aboue reason / wherof
we may peradventure haue more perceyuyng in our
communycacyon here after or euer we fynysse that we haue in
hande. But in the meane whyle to shewe ou further what necessyte
there is to byleue other men in thynges not onely vnknowen / but
15 also semyng impossyble / the man of Inde that we speke of can by
no lernynge knowe the course of the sonne whereby he sholde
perceyue the cause of his blackenes / but yf it be by astronomye /
whiche connyng who can lerne that nothyng wyll byleue that
semeth to hym selfe impossyble? Or who wolde not wene it
20 impossyble but yf experyence had proued it that the hole erthe
hangeth in the ayre / and men walke fote agaynst fote / & shyppes
sayle bottom agaynst bottom / a thyng so straunge & semyng so
far agaynst nature & reason / the Lactancyus a man ryght wyse
and well lerned in his worke whiche he wryteth de diuinis
25 institutionibus rekeneth it for impossible / and letteth not to laugh
at the phylosophers for affyrmyng of that poynt / whyche is yet
nowe founden trew by experyence of them that haue in lesse than
two yeres sayld the worlde rounde about. Who wold wene it
possyble that glasse were made of feme rotys? Now yf those that
30 wene it impossyble y reason / and neuer saw it done byleue no
man that tell it them / albe it that it be no peryll to theyr soule /
yet so moche haue they nowlege the lesse / and vnreasonably
stande in theyr errour thorow the mystrustyng of the trewth.

It is not yet fyfty yeres ago syns the fyrst man as far us men
haue herd / came to London that euer parted the gylte from the
35 syluer consumyng shortely the syluer into dust with a very fayre
water. In so far forth that whan the fyners and goldsmythes of
London hard fyrst therof / they nothyng wondred therof / but
laughed therat as at an impossyble lye / in which perswasions yf
they had contynued styll / they had yet at this day lacked all that
40 connyng.

Yet wyll I not say nay but that a man may be to lyght in byleue /
and be by suche ensamples brought into byleue to far. As a good
felow and frende of myne late in talkynge of this matter of
meruayls and myracles / entyndyng merely to make me byleue
45 for a trouth a thyng that coulde neuer be / fyrst brought in what
a force the fyre hath that wyll make two pecys of yron able to be
ioyned & cleue togyther / and with the helpe of the hamer be made
both one / whiche no hameryng could do without the fyre / which
thyng bycause I dayly se I assented. Than sayd he ferther / that

yet was more meruayle that the fyre shall make yren to ronne as
syluer or lead doth / and make it take a prynt. Whyche thyng I
tolde hym I had neuer sene / but bycause he sayd he had sene it /
I thought it to be trew. Sone after this / he wold haue me to byleue
5 that he had sene a pece of syluer of two or thre inchys about / and
in length lesse than a fote drawn by mannes hande thorowe
strayte holes made in an yron / tyll it was brought in thycknes not
halfe an inche about / & in length drawn out I can not tell how
many yardys. And when I hard hym say / that he saw this hym
10 selfe / than I wyst well he was merely dysposed.

Mary syr quod your frende / it was hye tyme to gyue hym ouer
whan he cam to that.

Well sayd I / what yf I sholde tell you now / that I had sene the
same?

15 By my fayth quod he merely I wold byleue it at lesour whan I
had sene the same / and in the meane whyle I coulde not let you to
say your pleasure in your owne house / but I wolde thynke that ye
were disposed merely to make me a fole.

20 Well sayd I / what yf there wold besydys me .x. or .xx. good
honest men tell you the same tale / and that they had all sene the
thyng done them selfe?

In fayth quod he / syth I am sent hyther to byleue you / I wolde
in that poynte byleue your selfe alone / as well as them all.

25 Well quod I / ye mene ye wolde byleue vs all alyke. But what
wolde you than say yf one or twayne of them wolde saye more?

Mary quod he than wold I byleue them lesse.

30 What yf they wold quod I shewe you / that they haue sene that
the pece of syluer was ouer gylte / & the same pece beyng styl
drawen thorow the holes / the gylte not rubbed of / but styll go
forth in length the holes with the syluer / so that all the length of
many yardes was gylted of the gyltyng of the fyrst pece not a fote
long?

35 Surely syr quod he / those twayne that wolde tell me so moche
more / I wolde say were not so connyng in the mayntenaunce of a
lye / as was the pylgrymes companyon / whiche whan his felowe
had tolde at yorke / that he had sene of late at London a byrde
that couered all Poules chyrche yarde with his wynges: commynge
to the same place on the morowe sayd / that he sawe not that
byrde / but he herde moche speche therof / but he sawe in Poules
40 chyrche yarde an egge so grete that .x. men coulde scante moue it
with leuers / this felowe coulde helpe it forth with a propre syde
way / But he were no propre vnderpropper of a lie / that wolde
mynysse his credence with affermyng all the fyrst and settinge a
lower lie therto.

45 Well sayd I than I haue espyed yf .x. shold tell you so ye wolde
not byleue them.

No quod he not yf .xx. shold.

What yf an hundred wold quod I / that semed good and
credyble?

If they were quod he .x. thousande / they were worn out of
credence with me / whan they sholde tell me that they sawe the
thyng that my selfe knoweth by nature and reason vnpossyble.
For whan I knowe it coulde not be done / I knowe well that they lye
5 all / be they neuer so many that say they sawe it done.

Well quod I / syth I se well ye wold not in this poynt byleue a
hole towne / ye haue put me to sylence / that I dare not nowe be
bolde to tell you that I haue sene it my selfe. But surely yf wytnes
wolde haue scrued me / I wene I myght haue brought you a great
10 many good men that wolde say and swere to / that they haue sene
it them selfe. But nowe shall I prouyde me to morowe peradventure
a cople of wytnes / of whom I wote well ye wyll mystrust neyther
nother.

Who be they quod he for it were harde to fynde / whom I coulde
15 better trust then your selfe / whom what so euer I haue merely
sayd / I could not in good fayth but byleue / in that you sholde tell
me earnestly vpon your owne knowlege. But ye vse (my mayster sayth)
to loke so sadly whan ye mene merely / the many tymes men
doubte whyther ye speke in sporte / whan ye mene good earnest.

20 In good fayth quod I / I mene good earnest nowe / and yet as well
as ye dare trust me I shall as I sayd yf ye wyll go with me prouyde a
couple of wytnes of whome ye wyll byleue any one better than
twayne of me / for they be your nere frendes / and ye haue bene
better acquaynted with them / and suche as I dare say for theym
25 be not often wont to lye.

Who be they quod he I pray you?

Mary quod I your owne two eyen / for I shall yf you wyll brynge
you where ye shall se it / no ferther hens than euyne here in
London. And as for yron & laten to be so drawen in length ye shall
30 se it done in .xx. shoppis almost in one strete.

Mary syr quod he these wytnes in dede wyll not lye. As the pore
man sayed by the preste / yf I may be so homely to tell you a mery
tale by the way.

A mery tale quod I / commyth neuer amysse to me.

35 The pore man quod he had founde the preste ouer famylyer with
his wyfe / and bycause he spake it a brode and coulde not proue it
/ the preste sued hym before the bysshoppys offycyall for
dyffamacyon / where the pore man vpon payne of cursynge / was
commaunded that in his parysshe chyrche / he sholde vpon the
40 sondaye / at hygh masse tyme / stande vp and say mouth thou
lyest. Wherupon for fulfyllinge of hys penaunce / vp was the pore
soule set in a pew / that the peple myght wonder on hym / and
here what he sayd. And there all a lowde (whan he had rehersed
what he had reportyd by the preste) than he set his handys on his
45 mouth / and sayd mouth mouth thou lyest. And by and by
thereupon he set his hande vpon bothe his eyen and sayd / but
eyen eyen quod he / by the masse ye lye not a whytte. And so syr
in dede / and ye brynge me those wytnes they wyll not ly a whyt.

How be it syr & though this be trewe / as in good fayth I byleue

and am sure that it is / yet am I neuer the more bounden by
reason to byleue them / that wolde tell me a myracle. For though
this thyng be incredible to hym that hereth it / & straunge and
merueylous to hym that seeth it / yet is it a thyng that may be
5 done. But he that telleth me a myracle / telleth me a thyng that
can not be done.

I shewed you quod I this ensample to put you in mynde / that
in beyng ouer harde of byleue / of thyngys that by reason and
nature seme and apere impossyble / where they be reportyd by
10 credyble wytnes / hauynge no cause to lye / there is as moche
peryll of errour / as where men be to lyght of credence. And thus
moche haue I proued you onwarde / that yf ye byleue no man in
suche thyngys as maye not be / than must it folow that ye ought to
byleue no man in many thyngys that may be / for all is one to you
15 / whyther they may be or may not be / yf it seme to you that they
may not be. And of trouth ye can not tell whyther they may be or
may not be / excepte they be two suche thyngys as imply
contradiccion / as one selfe thyng in one selfe parte to be both
whyte and blacke at ones. For ellys many thyngys shall seme to
20 you such as all reason wyll resyste / and nature wyll in no wyse
admytte. And yet they shall be done well Inough / And be in some
other place in comen vse and custome. But now because / all your
shyfte standeth in this that of a myracle told you / ye maye wyth
reason byleue / that all men lye / bycause reason and nature
25 beyng more to be byleued than all they / telleth you that they say
wronge / in that the thyng reported for a myracle can not be done
/ I haue shewed you that nature and reason dothe shewe you /
that many thynges may not be done / whiche yet in dede be done
so ferforth / that when ye se them done ye maye ryght well
30 accompte them as myracles / for any thyng that reason or
nature can shewe you by what naturall order & cause yt coude be
done / but that ye shall styll se reason stande quyte agaynst it / as
in the drawynge of the syluer or Iron.

35

The .vii. chapter

Sir sayth he / yet hytte we not the poynte / for albe it that
many thynges be well done / and by nature / in whiche neyther my
40 wytte / nor happely noo mannes ellys / can attayne so nere to
natures counsayle / that we can therin perceyue her crafte / But
lyke as some rude people muse vpon a clocke / that hath the
sprynge (whiche is the cause of his mouynge) secretly conueyed
and closed in the barrell / so meruayle we & wonder on her worke
45 / yet alway all those thynges dyffer and be vnlyke to myracles. In
that your selfe wyll agree with me / that whan I byleue / that
reason and nature techeth me surely / that myracles be thynges
that can not be done / I am not in this deceyued / though I maye

be in suche other thynges deceyued / as seme impossyble / and
 yet may be done. And therefore as concernynge myracles / in
 whiche your selfe wyll agree / that I am not (by any mysse takynge
 of reason & nature) deceyued / ye may not your selfe (me thynketh)
 5 saye nay / but that I maye well with reason byleue them twayne /
 agaynste all them that wyll tell me they haue sene suche thynges
 done / as your selfe doth agre / that they twayne (that is to wyt
 nature and reason) doth verely and truely shewe me / can not be
 done.

10 What maner of thynges be those quod I?
 Mary myracles quod he / suche as your selfe wyll agree to be
 done agaynst nature.
 Gyue vs therof quod I some ensample.
 As yf men quod he wold nowe come tell me that at our lady of
 15 Rounchyuale / there were a dede chylde restored agayne to lyfe.
 Let that quod I be one / and let another be / that a bysshop in
 the buyldyng of his chyrche / fyndynge one beame cut a great dele
 to shorte for his worke / drewe it forth bytwene another man and
 hym foure fote (and ye wyll) lenger than it was / & so made it
 20 serue.
 Be it by my trouthe quod he.
 Wyll we quod I take for the thyrde / that a man was by miracle
 in a Pater noster whyle / conueyed a myle of / from one place to a
 nother.

25 Be it so quod he. Nowe they that sholde tell me quod he / that
 they had sene these thre myracles / were I bounde to byleue them?
 Whyther ye were bounden quod I or no / we shall se further
 after. But now why sholde ye not of reason trust them / yf the men
 be credyble / and earnestly reporte it / and peraduenture on theyr
 30 othes depose it / hauyng no cause to fayne it / nor lykely to lye &
 be forsworne for nought?
 I wyll quod he not byleue them / bycause that nature and
 reason are two recordes / more to be byleued than all they / that
 bere wytnes agaynst them.

35 Why quod I what doth reason and nature tell you? They twayne
 tell me quod he / that those thre thynges can not be done whiche
 those men say / they saw done.
 Wote you well quod I / that reason & nature tell you so? Ye
 mary quod he / that I wote well they do / & I thynke your selfe wyll
 40 agre that they tell me so.
 Nay by saynt Mary syr quod I / that wyll I not. For I thynke that
 neyther reason nor nature telleth you so / but rather bothe two tell
 you clene the contrary / that is to whyt / that they both bere
 wytnes / that those thre thyngys and suche other lyke / be
 45 thyngys that may be well and easely done.
 Ye quod he? Mary this is an other waye. Then haue we walkyd
 wronge a whyle / yf ye proue that.
 Me thynketh quod I nothyng more easy to proue than that. For
 I pray you tell me quod I / doth reason and nature shewe you that

there is a god or not?

Fayth sheweth me that surely quod lie / but whyther nature
and reason shewe yt me or no that I doute / syth great reasoned
men and phylosophers haue dowted therof. And some of them haue
5 be playnly perswaded and in byleue / that there was none at all /
& the hole people of the worlde in effecte fallen from knowlege or
byleue of god / into Idolatry and worssyp of mammottys.

Nay quod I / there is lytell doute I trow / but that nature and
reason gyueth vs good knowlege / that there is a god. For albe it
10 the gentyls worssypped amonge them a thousand false goddys / yet
all that proueth that there was and is in all mennys heddys / a
secrete consent of nature / that god there is / or ellys they wold
haue worssypped none at all. Now as for the phylosophers though
a very fewe doutted / and one or twayne thought there was none /
15 yet as one swallow maketh not somer / so the foly of so few maketh
no chaunge of the matter / against all the hole number of the olde
phylosophers. Whiche as saynt Poule confessyth / founde out by
nature and reason / that there was a god / eyther maker or
gouernour or bothe / of all this hole engyne of the worlde. The
20 meruaylous beautye and constant course wherof / sheweth well
that it neyther was made nor gouerned by chaunce. But whan they
had by these vusyble thyngys knowlege of his inuysyble magestye /
than dyd they / as we do / fall from the wprsshyp of hym to the
worsshyp of Idolles / as now do crysten men / not as heretyques
25 lay to the charge of good people / in doynge reuerence to sayntes /
or honour to theyr ymages / but in doynge as do those heretyques
them selfe / makynge our bely or byneth our bely / or our goodes /
or oure owne blynde affeccyon towarde other creatures / or oure
owne prowde affeccyon and dotage towarde our selfe / our
30 mammottes and ydols / and very false goddes. But surely bothe
nature and reason wyll declare and teche vs that a god there is.

Well quod he / I wyll not stycke in this syth saynt Poule sayth
so. Than quod I / yf reason and nature shewe you that there is a
god / doth not reason and nature shewe you also / that he is
35 almyghtye & may do what he wyll?

Yes quod he / that is bothe naturall to his godhed / & by reason
it may well be perceyued.

Than foloweth it sayd I / that reason and nature dothe not
shewe as you that those thre myracles (that we were agreed sholde
40 stande for ensamples) precysely coulde not be done / but they
taught you onely that they coulde not be done by nature. But ye
may (as ye now se) perceyue that they them selfe teche that they
may be done by god / syth they teche you that there is a god / and
that he is almyghty. And therefore whan ye wyll in no wyse byleue
45 them / that tell you they haue sene suche myracles done / ye
refuse not to byleue such thynges as can not be done / but ye
mystrust causeles the credence & fayth of honest men / in the
reporte of suche thynges / as by hym that they sayd dyd it / may
well & easely be done.

The .viii. chapter

Sir quod he / ye come in dede somewhat nere me now. But yet
semeth me / that reason & nature teche me styll that I shall in no
5 wyse byleue them that tell me / they haue sene suche myracles
doone. For fyrst yf ye wyll graunt me / that they teche me / that yf
they sholde be done / they must be done by god agaynst the course
of nature / so is it than / that reason sheweth me that god hath
10 set all thynges all redy fro the fyrst creacyon to go forthe in a
certayne order and course / whiche order and course men call
nature / & that hath he of his infynyte wysdome done so well /
and prouyded the course to go forth in suche a maner and fassyon
/ that it can not be mended. And therefore semeth it / that reason
15 sheweth me that god neuer wyll any thyng do agaynst the course /
whiche his hygh wysdome / power / and goodnes hath made so
good / that it coulde neuer be broken to the better. For yf it myght
/ than had our lorde not made his order & course perfyte in the
begynnyng. And therefore doth as I say reason and nature yet
bere recorde agaynst them / that shall say they se suche myracles
20 / syth god wyll neuer worke agaynst the course of nature / which
hym selfe hath all redy set in so goodly an order / that it were not
possyble to be better / and the goodnes of god wyll make no
chaunge to the worse.

Surely quod I ye go now very far wyde / For neyther doth reason
25 proue you / that god (all though it can not other wyse be / but the
any thyng of the makyng of his goodnes must nedys be good) hath
made therefore euery thyng to be of souerayn perfeccyon / for than
must euery creature be egall / nor also that the hole worke of his
creacyon / though it haue in it selfe suffycient & ryght wonderfull
30 perfeccyon / that therefore it is wrought to the vtterest poynt of
souerayne goodnes / that his almyghty maiestye coulde haue made
it of. For sythe he wrought it not naturally but wyllingly / he
wrought it not to the vttermost of his power / but with suche
degrees of goodnes as his hys plesure lyked to lymyt. For els were
35 his worke of as infynite perfeccyon as hym self. And of such
infynyte egall perfeccion was there by god brought forth nothyng
but onely the two persons of the trynyte / that is to wyt the sonne
& the holy goost. Of whiche two the sonne was fyrst by the father
begotten / and after the holy gost by the father and the sonne /
40 after I say in order of begynnyng but not in tyme produced and
brought forth. And in this hys generacyon and produccyon dyd the
doers worke bothe wyllingly and naturally / and after the vtterest
perfeccyon of them selfe / whiche they dyd onely therin & in none
other thyng. And therefore god myght breke vp the hole worlde yf
45 he wold & make a better by & by and not onely chaunge in the
naturall course of this world some thynges to the better. Howe be it
god in workyng of myracles doth nothyng agaynst nature / but
some specyall benefyte aboue nature. And he doth not agaynst you

that doth an other a good tome whych ye be not able to do. And therefore syth god may do what he wyll beyng almyghty / & in doing of myracles he doth for the better / neyther reson nor nature sheweth you / that they whiche say they sawe suche myracles / do
5 tell you a thyng that can not be done / syth ye haue no reason to proue that god eyther can not do it / or wyll not do it. For syth he can do it & it may be that he wyll do it / why sholde we mystrust good and honest men that say they sawe hym do it?

10

The .ix. chapiter

Forsothe quod he / and yet as for myracles / I were not for all this bounden to byleue any. For I spake neuer yet with any man
15 that coulde tell me that euer he sawe any.

It may quod I fortune you / to lyue so long that ye shall fynde no man that was by at your crystenyng / nor when ye were bysshoppyd neyther.

Mary quod he for ought I wote I haue lyued so longe all redy.

20 Why doubte ye not than quod I whyther ye were euer crystened or not?

For euery man quod he presumeth and byleueth that I am crystened / as a thyng so commenly done / that we reken our selfe sure that no man leueth it vndone.

25 If the comen presumpcyon quod I suffycyently serue you / to set your mynde in suretye / than albe it myracles be nothyng commenly and customably done / nor that no presumpcyon can suffyciently serue for the profe of this myracle or that / yet hath there euer frome the begynnyng of the worlde in euery nacyon
30 crysten and hethen / & almost euery towne at sondry tymes so many myracles and meruayies ben wrought besyde the comen course of nature / that I thynke thorowe the worlde it is as well byleued vnyuersally the myracles and meruayls there be / as any thyng is byleued that men loke vpon. So that yf comen
35 presumpcyon serue you / ye maye as I sayd as well byleue that myracles be done / as that your selfe was euer crystened. For I dare well saye that there are a thousande that byleue there hath ben myracles done agaynst one that byleueth that ye were euer
40 crystened / or euer wyste whyther ye were borne or not.

Nor the doctours of Crystes chyrche dyd neuer mystrust the wonders and meruayies that the paynyms tell and wryte to haue bene done by theyr false goddes / but assygneth them to haue bene done by the deuyll thrughe goddes sufferaunce / for the yllusyon of theym that with ydolatry had deserued to be deluded.
45 And whyther they be myracles by whiche name we commenly call the wonders wrought by god / or meruayls done by the deuyll / yt forseth not for this purpose of ours. For yf ye graunt that the deuyll may do any by goddes sufferaunce / ye can not say nay but god

may moche more easely do them hym selfe.

And syth ye be a crysten man and receyue scrypture I myght in
this matter quod I / haue choked you longe a go / with the
manyfolde myracles and meruayls that be shewed there.

5

The .x. chapter

Nay quod he surely / though it hath done me good / to here
10 what ye wolde saye / yet I neyther doute nor I suppose no good
man ellys / but that god hath besyde the comen course of nature
wrought many myracles.

But yet of those that men tell of / as done in your tyme / by
15 whych ye wold it shold seme that it were well prouyd / that the
prayenge to sayntys / goynge on pylgrymagys / & worsshyppyng
of ymagys were well and suffycyently prouyd / all thoughe there
were none other profe therupon / of these myracles dyd I meane /
in the report of whiche me thynkyth I nede not byleue a comen
20 fame of this myracle and that / begon by some sely woman sekyng
saynt Sythe when she syghyth for myscastyng of her kayes. Of
these myracles I speke / and all suche as men say now adayes be
done at dyuers pylgrymagys by dyuers sayntys or dyuers ymagys /
in whyche me thynkyth that suche as be tolde to be done / whiche
nature and reason sayth be impossyble / I may well mystrust the
25 tellers. Or ellys how many of them shall make me a suffycyent
profe of an impossyble matter? One or two or thre eyther semyth
me to few to trust theyr credence in a thyng so incredyble. And yf
I shall not byleue them tyll I fynde many recordys / I wene I were
fayne to wander the worlde aboute or I prouyd many myracles
30 suffycyently / of such I say as ye proue your pylgrymages by.

Your few wordys quod I haue wrappyd in them many thynges /
that seme somewhat as they be couchyd togyther. Whiche whan we
se them vnfoldyd / and consyder eche part a sonder / than may we
better examyn them / and better se wherof they serue.

35 Fyrst ye speke of sekyng to sayntys for sleight causys / as for
the losse or mysse casting of kyttys kayes. Than ye wolde wyt /
how many ye must here say they saw a myracle / or ye sholde of
reason byleue it. Thyrdly ye thynke ye were lyke to go longe or ye
shold fynde any prouyd trew. Fynally whan ye say / that ye meane
40 onely those myracles that men tell of / as done at pylgrymages / ye
seme to put styll a dyfference betwene those myracles wrought in
pylgrymagys / and suche as are wrought by god otherwyse. The
cause wherof I must further aske you after. For I perceyue not well
what ye meane by that.

45 But fyrst where as ye speke styll / as though ye myght mystrust
them were they neuer so many: bycause they tell you a thyng /
that reason & nature sayeth is impossyble / me thynketh that ye
sholde nowe chaunge the worde. For I haue all redy prouyd the

reason & nature say not that a myracle is impossyble / but onely
that it is impossyble to nature. And they confesse bothe that
myracles be possyble to god / & they that report them do report
them for thynghys done by god. And therefore they do report you
5 none impossyble tale.

For the clerer consyderacyon wherof / let vs resorte to the
myracles whiche we were agreed sholde stande for examples. And
fyrst yf men sholde tell you that they sawe before an ymage of the
crucyfyxe a dede man raysted to lyfe / ye wolde moche meruayle
10 therof / and so myght ye well. Yet coulede I tell you somewhat that I
haue sene my selfe that me thynketh as great a meruayle / but I
haue no lust to tell you / bycause that ye be so cyrcumspecte and
ware in byleue of any myracles / that ye wolde not byleue it for me
/ but mystrust me for it.

15 Nay syr quod he in good fayth / yf a thyngse semed me neuer so
farre vnykely / yet yf ye wolde earnestly say that your selfe haue
sene it / I neyther wolde nor coulede mystrust it.

Well quod I / than ye make me the bolder to tell you. And yet
wyll I tell you nothyngse / but that I wolde yf nede were fynde you
20 good wytnes to proue it.

It shall not nede syr quod he / but I beseche you let me here it.

Forsoth quod I / bycause we speke of a man reysed from deth to
lyfe. There was in the parysshe of saynt Stephens in walbroke in
London where I dwelled before I came to Chelsyth / a man and a
25 woman / whiche are yet quycke and quethyng / & yong were they
both. The eldest I am sure passed not .xxiiii. It happed them as
doth amonge yonge folke / the one to cast the mynde to the other.
And after many lettes / for the maydens mother was moch against
it / at last they came togyder and were maryed in saynt Stephens
30 chyrch / which is not gretely famous for any myracles / but yet
yerely on saynt Stephens day it is somewhat sought vnto / and
vysyted with folkes deuocyon. But nowe shorte tale to make / this
yonge woman (as maner is in brydes ye wote well) was at nyght
brought to bed with honest women. And than after that wente the
35 bryde grome to bed / and euery body wente theyr wayes / and lefte
them twayne there alone. And the same nyght / yet abyde let me
not lye / nowe in faythe to say the trouthe I am not very sure of the
tyme / but surely as it appered afterwarde / it was of lyklyhod the
same nyght / or some other tyme sone after / excepte it happened
40 a lytell afore.

No force for the tyme quod he.

Trouthe quod I / & as for the matter all the parysshe wyll
testyfy for trewth the woman was knowen for so honest. But for
the conclusyon the seed of them twayne tourned in the womans
45 body / fyrst in to bloode / and after in to shappe of man chyld.
And than waxed quycke and she grete therwith. And was within the
yere delyuered of a fayre boy / and forsothe it was not than (for I
sawe it myselfe) passynge the lengthe of a fote. And I am sure he is
growen nowe an ynche lenger than I.

Howe long is it a go quod he?

By my fayth quod I / aboute .xxi. yeres.

Tusshe quod he this is a worthy myracle.

5 In good fayth quod I / neuer wyst I that any man coulede tell that
he had any other begynnyng. And me thynketh that this is as
great a myracle as the raysynge of a dede man.

If it seme so quod he to you / than haue you a meruaylous
semyng / for I wene it semyth so to no man els.

10 No quod I / can ye tell what is the cause? None other surely but
that the acquayntaunce and dayly beholdynge takyth away the
wonderynge / as we nothyng wonder at the ebbynge and flowynge
of the see / or the Thamys because we dayly se it. But he that had
neuer sene it / nor herd therof / wolde at the fyrst syght wonder
15 sore therat / to se that great water come walowynge vp agaynst the
wynde / kepyng a comen course to and fro / no cause perceyued
that dryueth hym. If a man borne blynde hadde sodenly his syght /
what wonder wolde he make to se the sonne / the mone / and the
starres / where as one that hath sene them syxtene yere to gyther
/ meruaylyth not so moche of them all / as he wolde wonder at the
20 fyrst syght of a pecockys taylor. And very cause can I se none / why
we sholde of reason more meruayle of the reuyuyng of a dede man
/ than of the bredynge / bryngynge forth and growynge of a chyld
vnto the state of a man. No more meruaylous is a koko than a
cocke / though the one be sene but in somer and the other all the
25 yere. And I am sure / yf ye saw dede men as comenly called
agayne by myracle / as ye se men brought forth by nature / ye
wolde reken it lesse meruayle to bryng the soule agayne into the
body / kepyng yet styll his shappe and his organys not moche
perysshyd / than of a lytell seede to make all that gere newe / and
30 make a new soule therto. Nowe yf ye neuer had sene any gonne in
your dayes nor herde of any before / yf two men shold tell you the
one that he had wyst a man in a pater noster whyle conuayed and
caryed a myle of / from one place to an other by myracle / and the
other shold tell you that he had sene a stone more than a mannys
35 weyght caryed more than a myle in as lytell space by crafte /
whiche of these wolde you by your fayth take for the more
incredyble?

Surely quod he both twayne were very straunge. But yet I could
not chose but thynke it were rather trew that god dyd the one /
40 than that any crafte of man coulede do the other.

Well quod I let vs than to our thyrde ensample. If it were shewed
you that saynt Erkenwalde or his syster / drewe out a pece of
tymber / that was cut to short / for the rofe in makynge barkynge
abbey / sholde this be so incredyble to you to byleue / that they
45 drewe in length a pece of wood by the power and helpe of goddys
hande / whan we se dayly a great pece of syluer / brasse / laten or
yron drawn a length into smale wyer / as wonderfully by mannys
hande?

The .xi. chapter

Nowe thoughe ye wolde peradventure (as ye seme to do) reken
this cause very sleyght for god to shew suche an hyghe myracle /
5 syth there myght haue ben without myracle a longer pece of tymber
gotten / & so ye wolde happely mystrust it / for the slender
occasyon / resemblyng it to the myscastyng of some good
huswyues kayes / God hathe I wene so moche wyt of hymselfe /
that he nedeth not our aduyce to enforme hym what thyng were
10 suffycient occasyon to worke his wonders for. But & yf ye rede in
the bokes of Cassyan / saynt Gregory / saynt Austyn / saynt
Hyerom / and many other holy vertuous men / ye shall (excepte ye
byleue them not) lerne and knowe / that god hathe for his
seruautes done many a great myracle / in very small matters.
15 And so moche the more are we bounden to his goodnes / in that he
vouchsafeth / so famylyerly in small thynges to shew vs so great
a token of his myghty godhed. And no reason were it / to
withdrawe his thanke and honoure bycause of his famylyer
goodnes. And yf ye peradventure wolde not byleue theyr wrytynges
20 / go to Crystes gospels and loke on his fyrst myracle / whyther he
myght not haue prouyded for wyne without myracle. But such was
his pleasure in a small matter / to do a great myracle / for some
shewe of his godhed among them whom he vouchsafed / where
on the other syde afore Herode that wolde fayne haue sene some
25 myracle / where it stode vpon his lyfe and myght haue delyuered
hym from the iewes / yet wolde he not vouchsaufe / eyther to
shewe the prowde curyous kyng one myracle / or speke one
worde. So the tymes / places / and occasyons / reason is that
we suffre to rest in his arbyterment / and not loke to prescrybe
30 and appoynt at our pleasure / where whan and wherfore god shal
worke his myracles / & ellys blaspheme them & say we wyll not
byleue them.

35

The .xii. chapter

Nowe where ye requyre howe many wytnes sholde be requysyte &
suffyce to make you thynke your selfe in reason / to haue good
cause to byleue so straunge a thyng / me thynketh that ryght
40 fewe were suffycient of them that wold say they sawe a great good
thyng done by the power and goodnes of god / excepte it be harde
for vs to byleue / eyther that god is so myghty that he may do it /
or so good that he wolde do it.

But bycause ye wolde wyt of me / howe many recordes were
45 requysyte / that thyng standeth not so moche in nombre as in

weyght. Some twayne be more credyble than some .x. And albe it
that I se not greatly why I sholde mystrust any one that semeth
honest & telleth a good tale of god / in whiche there apperyth no
specyall cause of lyenge / yet yf any wytnes wyll serue you / than
5 wolde I wyt of you / how many your self wolde agre. For I nowe put
case that there came .x. dyuers honest men of good substaunce
out of .x. dyuers partyes of the realme / eche of them with an
offerynge at one pylgrymage / as for ensample at our Lady of
Ipswiche / and eche one of them affyrmyng vpon theyr othe / a
10 myracle done vppon them selfe / in some great sodayn helpe / well
apperynge to passe the power of craft or nature / wolde ye not
byleue that among them all / at the lest wyse twayne of those .x.
sayd trewe?

No by our lady quod he / not and there were .x. & .xx.

15 Why so quod I?

Mary quod he / for were they neuer so many / hauynge none
other wytnes / but eche man tellyng his tale for hym selfe / they
be but syngle all and lesse than syngle. For euery myracle hath
but one record / and yet he not credyble in his owne cause. And
20 so neuer a myracle well prouyd.

Well sayd I / I lyke well your wysdome / that ye be so
cyrsumspect / that ye wyll nothyng byleue without good
suffycient and full proffe.

I put you than quod I / an other case / that .x. yonge women
25 not very specyally knowen for good / but taken out at auenture /
dwellyng all in one towne / wold report and tell that a freer of good
fame / heryng theyr confessyons at a pardon / wold haue gyuen
them all in a penaunce to let hym lye with them / on your fayth
wolde ye not byleue / that amonge so many some of them sayd
30 trew?

Yes that I wold quod he by the Mary mas byleue they sayd true
all .x. & durst well swere for them / & they were but .ii.

Why so quod I / they be as syngle wytnes as the other / of
whom I tolde you before. For none of them can tell what was sayd
35 to an other / and yet they be vnsworne also / and therwith be they
but women / which be more lyght and lesse to be regardyd /
dwellynge all in one towne also and therby myght they the more
easely conspyre a false tale.

They be quod he wytnes good ynough for suche a matter / that
40 thyng is so lykely of it selfe / that a freer wyll be womanshe /
loke the holy horeson neuer so sayntly.

Ye deny not quod I / but god may as easely do a good tourne by
myracle / as any man may do an euyll by nature.

That is trewe quod he and he lyst.

45 Well quod I / se nowe what a good way ye be in / that are of
your owne good godly mynde / more redy to byleue .ii. symple
women / that a man wyll do nought / than .x. or .xx. men that god
wyll do good.

The .xiii. chapter

5 **B**ut syth that this kynde of proffe wyll not suffyse you / I dare
say / yf ye wolde seke and enquere / ye sholde fynde many done
in your dayes / in the presence of moche people.

Where sholde I se that quod he?

10 Ye myght quod I vpon good frydaye euery yere this .ii.C. yere
tyll within this .v. yere / that the turkes haue taken the towne /
haue sene one of the thornes that was in Crystes crowne / bud
and brynge forth flowres in the seruyce tyme / yf ye wolde haue
gone to the Rodes:

So farre quod he? nay yet had I leuer haue goddes blessynge to
byleue that I se not / than go so farre therfore.

15 I am well apayed quod I therof / for yf ye had leuer byleue than
take the payne of a long pylgrymage / ye wyll neuer be so styffe in
any oppynyon / that ye wyll put your selfe in ieoperdye for
pertynacy & stoborne standynge by your parte.

20 Nay mary quod he I warraunt you that /I wyll neuer be so
madde / to holde tyll it waxe to hote. For I haue suche a fonde
fantasye of myne owne / that I had leuer shyuer & shake for colde
in the myddes of somer / than be burned in the myddes of wynter.

25 Merely sayd quod I / but yet in ernest / where suche a
solempne yerely myracle is wrought / so wondersly in the face of
the world before so greate a multytude / it is a great vntowardnes
in a thyng so hyly touchynge the honoure of god and helthe of
our owne soule / both to mystrust all them that say they haue
sene it / and eyther of slouthe or incredulyte / not vouchsaufe
hymselfe to proue it.

30 If I sholde haue gone quod he and founde it a lye / than had I
walked a wyse iourney / & on the other syde / yf I sholde haue
sene there suche a thyng my selfe / yet coulde I scantely reken
my selfe sure.

No quod I that were a straunge case.

35 Not very straunge quod he. For where ye speke of myracles
done before a multytude / a man may be dysceyued therein ryght
well.

The fourten chapter

40

Some preste to brynge vp a pylgrymage in his parysshe / may
deuyse some false felowe faynyng hym selfe to come seke a saynt
in his chyrche / and there sodeynly say / that he hathe gotten his
syght. Then shall ye haue the belles rong for a myracle. And the
45 fonde folke of that countrey soone made foles. Than women
commynge thyther with theyr candels. And the person byenge of

some lame begger .iii. or .iiii. payre of theyr olde crutches with .xii. pennes spent in men and women of wex / thrust thorowe dyuers placys some with arrowes / and some with rusty knyuyes / wyll make his offeryngys for one .vii. yere / worth twyse his tythes.

5 This is quod I very truth that such thyngys may be / and somtyme peraduenture so be in dede. As I remember me that I haue herde my father tell of a begger / that in kynge Henry his dayes the syxte / came wyth hys wyfe to saynt Albonys / And there was walkynge about the towne beggyng a fyue or syxe dayes
10 before the kyngys commynge thyther / saynge that he was borne blynde / and neuer saw in his lyfe. And was warned in his dreame / that he shold come out of Berwyke / where he sayd he had euer dwelled to seke saynt Albon / and that he had ben at his shryne / and had not bene holpen. And therefore he wold go seke hym at
15 some other place / for he had herde some say syns he came / that saynt Albonys body sholde be at Colon / and in dede suche a contencion hath there bene. But of trouthe as I am surely informed / he lyeth here at saynt albonys / sauynge some relyques of hym / whiche they there shew shryned. But to tell you forth whan the
20 kyng was comen & the towne full / sodaynly this blynde man / at saynt albonys shryne / had his syght agayne / and a myracle solemply rongen / and te deum songen / so that nothyng was talked of / in all the towne but this myracle. So happened it than / that duke Humfry of gloucester a great wyse man and very well
25 lerned / hauynge greate loy to se suche a myracle / called the pore man vnto hym. And fyrst shewynge hym selfe loyouse of goddys glory so shewed in the gettyng of his syght / and exortynge hym to mekenes / and to none ascrybyng of any parte the worssyp to hym selfe / nor to be proude of the peoples prayse / whiche
30 wolde call hym a good and a godly man therby / At last he loked well vpon his eyen / and asked whyther he coulede neuer se nothyng at all / in all his lyfe before. And whan as well his wyfe as hym selfe affermed fastely no / than he loked aduysedly vpon his eyen agayn / & sayd I byleue you very well / for me thynketh
35 that ye can not se well yet.

Yes syr quod he I thanke god and his holy marter / I can se nowe as well as any man.

Ye can quod the duke / what colour is my gowne? Than anone the begger tolde hym.

40 What colour quod he is this mannys gowne? He tolde hyin also / and so forth without any styckynge / he tolde hym the names of all the colours that could be shewed hym. And whan my lorde saw that / he bad hym walke faytoure / and made hym be set openly in the stockys. For though he coulede haue sene sodenly by
45 myracle the dyfference bytwene dyuers colours / yet coulede he not by the syght so sodenly tell the names of all these colours / but yf he hadde knowen them before / no more than the names of all the men that he shold sodenly se.

Lo therefore I say quod your frende / who may be sure of suche

thynges whan suche pageauntes be played before all the towne. I
remembre me nowe what a worke I haue herde of / that was at
Lempster in the kynges faders dayes / where the pryour brought
5 pryuely a straunge wenche in to the chyrche that sayd se was
sente thyther by god / and wolde not lye out of the chyrche / And
after she was grated within yron grates aboue in the rode lofte /
where yt was byleued she lyued withoute any mete or drynke /
only by aungels fode. And dyuers tymes she was houseled in syght
10 of the people with an hoste vnconsecrate / & all the people lokyng
vpon/ there was a deuyce with a small here tthat conueyed the
hoste from the paten of the chalyce / out of the pryours handes in
to her mouth / as though it came alone / so that all the people not
of the towne onely / but also of the countrey aboute toke her for a
15 very quycke saynt / and dayly sought so thycke to se her / that
many that coulde not come nere to her / cryed out alowde / Holy
mayden Elyzabeth helpe me / and were fayn to throwe theyr of
Tryng ouer theyr felowes heddes for prece. Now lay the pryour with
holy mayden Elyzabeth nyghtly in the rode lofte / tyll she was
20 after taken out & tryed in the kepyng by my lady the kynges moder
And by the longyng for mete with voydaunce of that she had eten
(which had no sayntly sauoure) she was perceyued for no saynt /
and confessed all the matter.

In fayth quod I it had ben grete almes the pryour & she had ben
burned togyder at one stake. What came of the pryour?

25 Quod he that can I not tell / but I wene he was put to suche
punyshment as the pore nonne was / that had gyuen her in
penaunce to say this verse. Miserere mei deus / quoniam
conculcauit me homo, with a great threte / that and she dyd so
any more she sholde say the hole psalme. But as for holy
30 Elyzabeth / I herde say she lyued and fared well / and was a
comon harlot at Calyce many a fayre daye after / where she
laughed at the matter full merely.

The more pyte quod I that she was so let passe. That is trouth
quod he. But now what say you / what trust can we haue / or at
35 lest way what suretye can we haue in suche thynges / whan we se
them fayned so shamefully in the face of the worlde / so openly
and so moche people abused so farre / that they wolde not haue
letted to swere / and some to ieoperde theyr lyues theron / that all
this worke was wrought by goddes owne hande / tyll the trouthe
40 came to lyght / and the drabbe dryuen out of the chyrche in the
deuyls name.

Verely sayd I there was abusyon in the one syde / and great
foly in the other syde. And as that noble duke Humfrey wysely
founde out the falshed of that blyson begger / so dyd that noble
45 lady the kynges mother prudently decypher and founde out that
beestly fylthe. And to saye the trouth there was cause ynough in
bothe these partyes / wherof the people myght resonably gather so
moche suspicyon / that yf they had made therupon suffycient
inquysicyon and serche / they could neuer haue bene so far

abusyd. For bothe myght they well mystruste a beggers worde /
whom they had but newly knowen / and well lykely to lye for to
wyn fyrst fauour and after money. And also men myght well
thynke that a yong she saynte / was not metely to be shrynyd
5 quycke / in a monastery amonge a meyny of monkes. And yet in
conclusyon bycause no suche faynyd wonders sholde enframe
goddys very myracles / hys goodnes shortly brought them bothe to
knowlege. And so doth his especyall cure and prouydence brynge
euer shortely suche falshed and faytery to lyght to theyr shame &
10 confusyon. And as he dyd in Berna a great Cyte in Almayne brynge
to knowlege the false myracles / wherby certayne freers abusyd
the people / for whiche they were openly burnyd. And so god alway
bryngyth suche false myracles to lyght.

15 Nay nay quod he / there be many such I warant you / that
neuer com to lyght / and are styll taken for very good.

Ye can not very well warant it quod I. For syth god brought to
lyght the false faynyd myracle of the prestys of the ydoll Bell in the
olde tyme / as apperyth in the .xiiii. chapyter of the profet Danyell
/ it is more lykely that amonge crysten men he wyll suffer no
20 suche thynges longe lye hyd. And also how can ye warant that
many of those myracles be false. For whyle there is no doute but
many be trew / and ye know not any whiche ye precisely know for
false / ye be not sure whyther any be suche or not.

25 Mary quod he / that reason holdeth as well on the other syde.
For syth I knowe not any whiche I precysely know for trew / I
know not whyther any be trew or not.

30 Nay quod I that argument wyll not serue you so. For though no
man byndyth you to byleue that euery thyng ys trewe / that is
tolde for a myracle / yet some there be of which ye must nedes
reken your selfe sure / & of which ye can not yf ye be a crysten
man haue any scruple or doute.

Ye quod he? Fayne wolde I wyt / whiche were one of those.

Mary quod I / all that are wryten in the gospels.

35 Mary quod he that wote I well / but them we speke not of / for
they were done by god hym selfe.

Why quod I be they not so all? If ye wyll not agre that ye be sure
of any whiche be tolde by sayntes / what say you by the myracles
of the apostles wryten by saynt Luke?

40 Nay quod he ye mysse take me yet / for I do not meane any
mystrust in the myracles done of olde tyme by god for his apostles
or holy marters / in coraboracyon and settinge forth of the fayth. I
meane onely these myracles that men tell and talke of now a days
/ to be done at those Imagys / where these pylgrymagys be / and
where we se some of them our selfe / proued playnly false / And
45 yet tolde for so trew / and so many false shrewes to affyrme it / so
many symple soules trust it / so moch folysshe folke byleue it /
that a man may well with reason mystrust all the remenaunt.

Ye haue quod I more oft then ones spoken of a dyfference
bytweene the myracles done by god in olde tyme / & these myracles

that are done or tolde to be done nowe a dayes at pylgrymages.
 But surely yf ye graunt the myracles done of olde tyme / we nede
 no more for the profe of all our matter. For I trowe that
 pylgrymages and myracles done at them be very olde thynges / &
 5 not thynges newly begon nowe a dayes / excepte ye call a
 thousande yere a go / or .xiiii. hundred yere a go / nowe a dayes.
 For I am very sure that so longe ago and yet longer to / dyd good
 crysten people praye to sayntes / and go in pylgrymage to theyr
 holy relyques / and had ymages in grete veneracyon / & many
 10 wonderfull myracles dyd our lorde worke for the comprobacyon of
 his hygh pleasure to the conseruacyon and encrease of the
 deuocyon of his crysten people therin / as we fynde largely wrytten
 and reported in the godly bokes of holy saynt Gregory / saynt
 Austyn / saynt Hyerom / saynt Eusebyus / saynt Basyle / saynt
 15 Crysostem / and many an other olde holy doctour of Crystes
 chyrche / whose bokes were not vnwrytten this thousande yere.
 And where ye saye that of myracles many be nowe a dayes fayned
 / so may it be that some were than also / but neyther than nor
 nowe neyther / were nor be all fayned. And any beyng trewe all
 20 were they ryght fewe / suffysed for our purpose / For yf god had
 but with one myracle declared that the thyng contenteth and
 pleaseth hym in his chyrche / it must nedes suffyse for the
 chyrche agaynst all the heretyques in the worlde / that euer wolde
 25 barke agaynst the chyrche therin. And therefore there can be no
 doubte in the matter where god hath declared his pleasure by so
 many a thousande / and that in euery tyme / not only now a
 dayes but also a thousande yere or fourtene hundred yere / & yet
 more to / before our dayes. And as for fayned myracles of whiche
 ye speke so moche / all be it that some suche hath ben / yet I
 30 verely thynke that neyther of olde tyme nor nowe Cryst amonge
 crysten people suffreth not suche thynges to happen ofte / nor
 suche delusyon to last longe / but shortely (to theyr shame as it
 hathe appered in some) dothe vtter and make open theyr falshed
 as hym self sayd of all suche. That ye whysper one in anothers ere
 35 shall be preched out a lowde vpon the rygge of the house rofe.

The .xv. chapter

40 **B**ut be it that amonge so many myracles as be dayly tolde and
 wryten done at diuers pylgrymagys / betwene which myracles and
 other / why ye put a dyfference / we shall as I sayd before /
 knowe further your mynde here after. And be it also that of such
 as longe haue be reputed and s.tyll taken for trew / your selfe
 45 vndoutedly knew some for very false / wolde ye therefore thynke
 that among all the remenaunt / there were neuer one trewe? what
 yf ye fynde some fayre woman paynted / whose colour ye had went
 were naturall / wyll ye neuer after byleue that any woman in the

worlde hath a fayre colour of her selfe? If ye fynde some false
flatterers that longe semed frendly / wyll ye take euer after all the
world for suche? If some proue starke ypocrytes / whom the world
wolde haue sworne for good and godly men / shall we therefore
5 mystrust all other for theyr sake / and wene there were none good
at all?

By my trouth quod he / I rode ones in good company / and to
say the trouth for good company to walsyngham in pylgrymage /
where a good fellowes horse so fell in haltynge / that he was fayne
10 to hyre an other / and let hym go lose / which was so lene and so
pore and halted so sore / that empty as he was he coulde scant
kepe fote with vs. And whan we had went we sholde haue lefte
hym behynde / sodenly he spyed a mare / and forth he lymped on
thre legges so lustely / that his maysters horse wyth foure fete /
15 coulde scant ouertake hym. But whan he caught hym and cam
agayne / he sware in great anger all the othes he myght swere /
that he wolde trust haltynge syr Thomas the worse whyle he lyuyd.

What was that haltynge syr Thomas quod I?

Mary quod he theyr paryshe preste as he tolde vs / as lene & as
20 pore and as haltynge as his horse / and as holy to. But syns he
wolde whyle he lyued mystrust the haltynge preste for his haltynge
horse / If I fynde an holy horeson halte in ypocrysye / I shall not
fayle whyle I lyue / to truste all his fellowes the worse.

Well quod I ye speke merely / but I wote well ye wyll do better
25 what so euer ye saye. Nor I am sure though ye se some whyte
safyre or byrall so well conterfete / and so set in a rynge / that a
ryght good iueller wyll take it for a dyamounde / yet wyll ye not
doute for all that / but that there be in many other rynges all redy
set ryght dyamountes in dede. Nor ye wyll not mystrust saynt
30 Peter for Iudas. Nor though the lewes were many so noughty / that
they put Cryste to dethe / yet ye be wyser I wote well / than the
gentylwoman was / whiche in talkynge ones with my father whan
she harde say that our lady was a lewe / fyrst could not byleue it
/ but sayd what ye mocke I wysse I pray you tell trouth. And whan
35 it was so fully affermed that she at laste byleued it / & was she a
lewe quod she / so helpe me god and halydom I shall loue her the
worse whyle I lyue. I am sure ye wyll not do so / nor mystrust all
for some / neyther men nor myracles.

40

The .xvi. chapter

And as for the poynte that we spake of / concernynge myracles
done in our dayes at dyuers ymages where these pylgrymages be /
45 yet coulde I tell you some suche done so openly / so farre from all
cause of suspycyon / and thereto testyfyed in suche suffycyent
wyse / that he myght seme almost madde that heryng the hole
matter / wyll mistrust the myracles. Among whiche I durst boldely

tell you for one / the wonderfull worke of god / that was within
these fewe yeres wrought / in the house of a ryght worshypfull
knyght syr Roger wentworth / vpon dyuers of his chyldren / and
specyally one of his doughters a very fayre yonge gentywoman of
5 .xii. yeres of age / in meruayllous maner vexed & tourmented by
our gostly enemye the deuyll / her mynd alyenated & rauyng with
dyspysyng & blasphemy of god / & hatred of all halowed thynges /
with knowlege and perceyuyng of the halowed from the
vnhalowed / all were she no thyng warned therof. And after that
10 moued in her owne mynde and monysshed by the wyll of god / to
goo to our lady of Ippyswytche. In the waye of whiche pylgrymage /
she prophesyed and tolde many thynges done and sayd at the
same tyme in other places / whiche were proued trewe / and many
thynges sayd / lyenge in her traunce of suche wysdome & lernyng
15 / that ryght connyng men hyghly meruayled to here of so yonge an
vnlerned mayden / whan her selfe wyst not what she sayd / suche
thynges vttered and spoken / as well lerned menne myght haue
myssed with a longe study / and fynally beyng brought and layde
before the ymage of our blessyd lady / was there in the syght of
20 many worshypfull people so greuously tourmented / and in face
/ eyen / loke / and countenance so grysely chaunged / with her
mouthe drawen asyde / and her eyen layde out vpon her chekes /
that it was a terrible syght to beholde.

And after many merueyllous thynges / at the same tyme
25 shewed / vpon dyuers persones by the deuyll thorowe goddes
sufferaunce / as well all the remenaunt as the mayden her selfe in
the presence of all the company restored to theyr good state
perfytely cured and sodeynly.

And in this matter no pretexte of beggyng / no suspycyon of
30 faynnynge / no possybyltye of counterfettyng / no symplenesse in
the seers / her father and mother ryght honourable and ryche sore
abashed / to se suche chaunces in theyr chyldren / the
wyttnesses / great nombre / and many of great worshyppe /
wysdome / and good experyence / the mayde her selfe to yonge to
35 fayne / and the fassyon it selfe to straunge for any man to faync.
And the ende of the matter vertuouse / the vyrgyne soo mouyd in
her mynde wyth the myracle / that she forthwith for ought her
father coulde do / forsoke the worlde and professed relygyon in a
very good and godly company at the mynoresse / where she hath
40 lyued well & graciously euer syns.

45

The .xvii. chapter

But nowe albe it as I sayd that I myght allege you this myracle
/ and proue it you in suche wyse / that I wote well ye wolde be as

farre out of all doute therof / as ye wolde be depe in the meruayle
of the myracle. And peraduenture dyuerse other coulede I shew you
done of late at dyuerse pylgrymagys / and proue theym well to /
yet wolde I fayne fyrst here of you / what dystynccyon and
5 dyfference is that / that ye make / and wherfore ye make it
bytwene the myracles done of olde tyme / and these that be now
adayes done at these pylgrymagys.

Syr quod he some what a lytell I towched it in the begynnyng /
and made in maner a glaunce therat. But lothe were I to hyt it
10 wyth a full shotte and a sharpe / as I haue sene some wyth suche
reasons cleue the prycke in twayne / that they semyd to bere ouer
the butt and all. Whyche reasons I wolde be lothe in so sore maner
to allege / lest I myght happely gyue you some occasyon / to
thynke that eyther I set to somewhat of myne owne / or elles at the
15 leest wyse / lyked well that syde and were a faouurer of that
faccyon.

Nay nay quod I / fere not that hardely / for neyther am I so
suspecyouse / to mystrust that one thynkyth euyll / bycause he
defendeth the worse parte well by way of argument and
20 reasonyng. And also I trust that all theyr shottes shall be so far
to feble to bere ouer the butt / the few of them shall touche the
marke / many to faynte to perce the paper. And some to hygh /
and some to shorte. And some walke to wyde of that but by a
bowe. And therefore I requyre you spare not to brynge forthe all
25 that euer ye haue herde / or that ye thynke may be sayd in the
matter.

Syr quod he / syth ye can here it so indyfferently / I shall not
spare to speke it. And surely to begynne with all that I thynke
trewe / I wyll not fayle to confesse. For all be it that I haue longe
30 stycked with you / to withstande any credence to be gyuen to
myracles done nowe a dayes / in whiche I haue moche the lenger
stycked bycause of some / whome I haue knowen or this so farre
frome the byleue of any myracles at all / that in good faythe they
put me halfe in doubte whyther they byleue that there were any
35 god at all / yf they durste for drede and shame haue sayd all that
they semed to thynke / yet to say the trouth I neuer herde any
thyng sayd so sore therin / that euer moued me to thynke that
any reason wolde bere the importune mystrust of them / that
among so many an open myracle as is dayly in dyuers places done
40 / wolde wene that none at all were trewe. But verely as I begonne a
lytell to touche in the begynnyng / whyther these myracles be
made by god and for good sayntes / or by the deuyll for our
deceyte and delusyon (all be it I byleue and euer yll as the chyrche
dothe) yet some men amonge some suche thynges saye therin /
45 that I am dryuen to do as I do in other artycles of the as fayth /
lene fast vnto bylefe for any reason that I fynde to make them
answere with. For fyrste they take for a grounde that the deuyll
maye doo myracles / Or yf we lyst not to suffre them called by that
name /the matter shall be therby nothyng amended / for yf we

wyll haue onely called by the name of myracles thynges by god
done aboue nature / yet wyll we not deny but that god suffereth
the deuyll to worke wonders / whiche the people can not dyscerne
frome myracles. And therefore whan they se them / myracles shall
5 they call them / and for myracles shall they take them. Nowe syth
it soo is / that the dyuyll may do suche thynges / wherby shall we
be sure that god dothe them? And syth the deuyll may do them /
and we be not sure that god dothe them / why maye not we as well
byleue that the deuyll doth them?

10 Mary sayd I / ye tolde me that ye sette nought by logycke / but
now ye playe the Logycyen out ryght. Howe be it that argument
men may tourne on the other syde & say / that syth god may do
them moche better than the deuyll / and we be not sure that the
deuyll dothe them / why sholde we not rather byleue that god
15 doth them / whiche may do them better. And moche more reason
yt ys where a wonderfull worke is wrought / there to ascrybe it to
god the mayster of all maystryes / rather than the deuyll / that
can do nothyng but by sufferaunce / excepte we se some cause
that can not suffre that worke to be rekened goddes.

20 Well quod he / than is it reason that we shewe you some suche
cause. It is quod he cause ynough / in that we se that god hath in
scripture forboden suche ymagery / and that vnder great
maledyccyon / as in the lawe whiche your selfe spake of byfore.
Non facies tibi sculptile. And in the psalme. In exitu Israeli de
25 egipto / where he fyrst by the mouth of the Prophete / dyscrybeth
the foly of suche as worshyppyth those ymagys / that hath erys
and can not here / handys and can not fele / fete and can not go /
mouth and can not speke. All which absurdytees and vnresonable
folyes apperyth as well in the worshyp of our ymagys / as in the
30 panymys idollys. And after he shewyth the maledyccyons that shall
fall therupon. Seynge lyke mote they be to them all / suche as
make them / and all suche as puttyth theyr trust in them. And
forthwith he declareth in whom good men haue theyr trust / and
the profyte that procedyth therupon sayng. Domus israel sperauit
35 in domino adiutor eorum et protector eorum est. The house of
Israeli hath put theyr truste in our lorde the helper and defender
of them is he. Nowe when the wordes of god be clere / open and
playne vpon this syde / what reason is it to byleue the commentys
& glosys of men suche as ye brought forth ryght now / wherwith
40 ye wolde wynde out agaynst the trew textes of god? what sholde we
gyue credens to the ensample of mennys doynge agaynst the
playne commaundement of goddys wrytynges? And whan that
onely cryste is our sauour and our medyatour to brynge our
nature agayne to god / and our onely proctour and aduocat afore
45 his father / and may helpe vs best and wyll helpe vs most / what
shall we make eyther our lady or any other creature our aduocat /
or pray to them / whiche of lykelyhod here vs not? For there can
none of them be present at so many places at ones / as they be
called vpon. And yf they were / yet are they no nere vs than god

hym selfe / nor so fayne wolde that we dyd well as he that dyed for
vs. And therefore whan we not onely do them reuerence (which I
were content were done them / for goddys sake as ye sayd before)
but also pray to them / we do Cryst and god grete iniury. For yf we
5 pray to them as medyatours and aduocatys for vs / we take fro
cryst his offyce and gyue it them. Yf we aske helpe and helth of
them / than make we them playne goddys and betake to them the
power of the godhed. For onely god is it / that gyueth all good as
wyttenessyth saynt Iamys. Euery good and very perfyte gyfte
10 commeth frome aboue descendynge from the father of lyghtys. And
surely yf we consyder howe we behaue vs to them though ye say
that all the honoure gyuen to sayntys redoundeth vnto god / syth
it is done as ye say not for theyr owne sakys but for his / yet
wolde not I wene / god be well content that we sholde for his sake
15 do to any creature lyke honoure as to hym selfe. For scrypture
sayeth that he wyll not gyue hys glory frome hym nor as to any
other creature lyke honoure as to hym selfe / And therefore the
scoles as I here saye deuysel a treble dyfference in worshyppyng /
callyng the one dulya the reuerence or worshyp that man doth to
20 man / as the bonde man to the lorde. The seconde yperdulya that
a man doth to a more excellent creature as to aungels or sayntes.
The thyrde latria the veneracyon honoure and adoracyon that
creatures dothe onely to god. In whiche of these partyes ye put the
worshyppyng of ymages / I am neyther so well sene therin to tell /
25 nor so curyous gretely to care. But this I se well yf any of all these
.iii. kyndes of worshyp be better than other / the ymages hath it.
For they haue all that euer we can do. For what doo we to god
when we do worshyp hym in that fassyon that they call latria / but
we do the same to sayntes and ymages bothe? yf it stande in
30 knelyng / we knele to sayntes and theyr ymages / yf in prayenge /
we pray as bytterly to them as to god. If in sensynge and settinge
vp of candels / we cense them also and set some saynt .vii.
candelles agaynst god one. So that what so euer fassyon of
worshyppyng latria be / the same is as largely done to sayntes
35 and ymages as to god. And this not vnto ymages onely (whiche
thoughe they haue no lyfe haue yet some shappe & fassyon after
man) but as men wene vnto pygges bones also somtyme. For what
reuerent honoure is there dayly done vnder the name and
oppynyon of a sayntes relyke / to some olde rotten bone that was
40 happely some tyme as Chaucer sayth a bone of some holy Iewes
shepe. Se we not that some one sayntes hed is shewed in .iii.
places. And some one hole sayntes body lyeth in dyuers countreys
/ yf we byleue the lyes of the people. And in bothe the places is the
one body worshypped where the one or the other is false / and one
45 body mystaken for another / an euyll man happely for a good. And
yet wyll the prestes of bothe places take offerynges and toll men
thyther with myracles to. In whiche case eyther must ye say that
the myracles of the one place be false & fayned / or els that
myracles make not your matter good nor proue your pylgrymages

trewe / and yet myght all this gere be moche the better borne yf it
were trewe that ye defende the thynges withall / when ye saye that
in worshyppynge of sayntes & ymages men worshyp neyther the
one nor the other as goddes / but the ymages for the sayntes and
5 the sayntes for god. But nowe as it semeth the matter is in dede
farre otherwyse / For the people praye to the sayntes for their
necessytes / puttyng therto trust for their petycyons in the
sayntes themselfe as though god gaue it not but they. And in the
ymages put the people their trust in stede of the sayntes selfe /
10 For albeit that it myght stande with reason as ye haue answered
me that presupposed the myracles in these pylgrymages to be done
by god / the people myght then with reason go seke and vysyte
suche places as god by myracle declared that he wolde haue hym
selfe or his holy sayntes sought and honored in / yet nowe this
15 answeere towcheth the poynt but in parte and matcheth not the
hole matter. For the people do not onely vysyte these placys and
there do all the worshyp to the sayntes that they can possyble do
to god (with hope of theyr helpe from the sayntes self / which they
sholde well wyt onely to be gyuen by god / and thus by this
20 demenour make the sayntys goddys fellowes / that is to saye the
seruauntys matches with theyr mayster and the creatures matys
to the maker) but also vse them selfe in as religyous fassyon / and
as feruent affeccyon to the ymagys of stone or tre / as eyther to
saynt or god. And playnly take these ymagys for the sayntys selfe
25 and for god hym selfe. And put in these ymagys of theyr
pylgrymagys theyr full hope and hole trust that they sholde put in
god.

Whiche besydes that I haue sayd byfore apperyth well in this /
that they wyll make comparysons betwene our lady of Ipswyche
30 and our lady of Walsyngam. As wenyng that one ymage more of
power then the other / whiche they wolde neuer do / but yf in
stede of our lady they put theyr truste in the ymage selfe. And the
people in spekyng of our lady. Of all our ladyes sayth one / I loue
best our lady of Walsyngam. And I sayth the other our lady of
35 Ipswyche. In whiche wordys what menyth she but her loue and her
affeccyon to the stocke that standyth in the chapell of walsyngam
or Ipswyche.

What say you whan the people speke of this fassyon in theyr
paynys and parellys. Helpe holy crosse of Bradman. Helpe our dere
40 lady of walsyngham. Doth it not playnly appere that eyther they
trust in the ymagys in Crystys stede and our ladyes / lettyng Cryst
and our lady go / or take at the lest wyse those ymages so / that
they wene they were verely the one Cryste the other our lady her
selfe? And so euery waye the fayth and deuocyon withdrawen
45 frome god that sholde haue yt and our hartys by these ymagys
blynded and set vpon the deed stockys and stonys. Now se the
good frute also that foloweth therupon. I let passe ouer the faytery
and falshed that is therin vsed among / somtyme by the prestys /
somtyme by beggers in faynyng of false myracles. Loke what

deuocyon men come thyther with. With the moste come they that
moste abuse them selfe / suche I mene as moste trust haue and
blynde fayth in these blynde ymagys. But the most parte that
commeth / commyth for no deuocyon at all / but onely for good
5 company to bable thytherwarde and drynke dronke there / and
daunce and rele homewarde. And yet here is not all. For I tell you
nothyng now of many a noughty packe / many a flecke and his
make that maketh theyr ymagys metyngys at these holsom
hallowes. And many that semeth an honest huswyfe at home /
10 hath helpe of a bawde to brynge her to myschefe as she walketh
abrode aboute her pylgrymages. I herde ones when I was a chyld
the good scotysshe freer father Donolde whome I reken surely for a
saynt / yf there be any in heuen. I herde hym preche at Poules
crosse that our lady was a vyrgyn / and yet at her pylgrymages be
15 made many a foule metynge. And lowde he cryed out / ye men of
London gange on your selfe with your wyues to wyllesdon in the
deuyls name / or ellys kepe them at heme with you with sorowe.
And surely so many good men wene it were best / consyderynge
that those vyages ben but wandrynge aboute vanyte or
20 superstycyous deuocyon / and the nexte dore to ydolatry when
men haue theyr affeccyons in stede of god bounden to blockes and
stones. And nowe syth that this gere is suche / what meruayle is it
thoughe (as I sayd before) the deuyll be glad to gyue attendaunce
theron / and do for his parte what he may to helpe his owne
25 deuycys forwarde? Or what meruayle is it though god in this
cursed worlde when we fall from hym to other / and from the
honoure of hym selfe to his sayntes / when we doo as the paynymys
dyd in stede of god worshyp mammottes / and all this by fallynge
to folowe mennes gloses before his owne textes / what wonder is it
30 thoughe god agayne serue vs as he serued them / and suffre the
deuyll delude vs as he dyd them / and make vs lene to false
myracles as we fall wylfully to false goddes? Thus say they quod he
that speke on that syde / And yet moche more than I can call to
mynde. But surely syth ye wylled me to forbere nothyng / moste
35 come they that moste abuse them selfe / suche I mene as moste
trust haue and blynde fayth in these blynde ymagys. But the most
parte that commeth / commyth for no deuocyon at all / but onely
for good company to bable thytherwarde and drynke dronke there
/ and daunce and rele homewarde. And yet here is not all. For I
40 tell you nothyng now of many a noughty packe / many a flecke
and his make that maketh theyr ymagys metyngys at these holsom
hallowes. And many that semeth an honest huswyfe at home /
hath helpe of a bawde to brynge her to myschefe as she walketh
abrode aboute her pylgrymages. I herde ones when I was a chyld
45 the good scotysshe freer father Donolde whome I reken surely for a
saynt / yf there be any in heuen. I herde hym preche at Poules
crosse that our lady was a vyrgyn / and yet at her pylgrymages be
made many a foule metynge. And lowde he cryed out / ye men of
London gange on your selfe with your wyues to wyllesdon in the

deuyls name / or ellys kepe them at heme with you with sorowe.
And surely so many good men wene it were best / consyderynge
that those vyages ben but wandrynge aboute vanyte or
superstycyous deuocyon / and the nexte dore to ydolatry when
5 men haue theyr affeccyons in stede of god bounden to blockes and
stones. And nowe syth that this gere is suche / what meruayle is it
thoughe (as I sayd before) the deuyll be glad to gyue attendaunce
theron / and do for his parte what he may to helpe his owne
deuycys forward? Or what meruayle is it though god in this
10 cursed worlde when we fall from hym to other / and from the
honoure of hym selfe to his sayntes / when we doo as the paynymys
dyd in stede of god worshyp mammottes / and all this by fallynge
to folowe mennes gloses before his owne textes / what wonder is it
thoughe god agayne serue vs as he serued them / and suffre the
15 deuyll delude vs as he dyd them / and make vs lene to false myracles
as we fall wylfully to false goddes? Thus say they quod he that speke on
that syde / And yet moche more than I can call to mynde. But surely
syth ye wylled me to forbere nothyng / I haue as I coulde rather set to
somwhat / not of myne owne oppynyon / but of myne owne
20 inuencyon / then any thyng lefte out that coulde remembre whiche I
had euer herde any man ley / to proue the myracles done at
pylgrymages to be vncertayne by whom they be wrought / or rather to
proue that they sholde not be goddes myracles but the deuyls wonders.

25

The .xviii. chapter

Surely quod I for my parte I can you very good thanke / for ye haue
not fayntly defended your parte / as thoughe it were a corrupted
30 aduocate / that wold by colusyon handell his clyentes matter febly for
the pleasure of his aduersary / but ye haue sayd therin / I can not tell
whyther as moche as any man maye say / but certaynly I suppose as
moche as ye eyther haue herde any man say or can your selfe say. And
at the lest wyse / moche more than I haue herde of any man els / or
35 coulde haue sayd of my selfe. And vndowtyd as ye spake of shotynge in
the begynnynge / this gere how nere it goeth to the prycke we shall se
after. But this I promyse you / it wolde fayne bere ouer the but and all.
For yf it myght hold & be bydden by / and were as well able to be
prouyd trewe / as I trust to proue it false / the but we shote at were
40 quyte gone / for any surty that we could reken of our fayth and
crystendome. But now to come to the poynte / Syth it is agreed all redy
betwene vs / that at these ymagys and pylgrymages myracles bene
there / eyther shewyd by god for the comprobacyon of his pleasure
therin / or wonders wrought by the deuyll for our delusyon and
45 dampnacyon. If it may eyther appere to vs / that they be not done by
the deuyll / than wyll it well folow that they be done by god. Or if it be
prouyd to be done by god for the good of his chyrche / than wyll it be
clere ynough / that they be no wonders wrought by the deuyll / to the

dysceyt of crysten people. And syth that eyther other of these partyes
prouyd / implyeth the reprove of your purpose / I wyll assay to shewe /
& trust ryght well to proue you the trouth of our syde / by some one of
these wayes or peradventure by bothe / that is to wete aswell in
5 prouynge that god doth these myracles / as in reprouynge and
confutyng that they sholde be done by the deuyll. And fyrst wold I
fayne mete with your obieccyons and answeere them forthwyth whyle
they be freshe / sauynge that me semyth better for the whyle to dyffer
them / for as moch as some thyngys there be / wherupon it wyll be
10 requysyte / that we fyrst be bothe agreed: without whyche we were lyke
to walke wyde in wordys & ronne all at ryot so lose / that our matter
could neyther haue grounde / order / nor ende.

Now yf I were in this matter to dyspute with a paynym / that wold
make the questyon betwene theyr myracles and ours / albe it I sholde
15 haue a clere matter in thende / yet must it nedes be a longe matter &
moch entryked or it shold com at the ende. And hole bokys wolde it
holde / bothe the confutyng of theyrs / and vnto them the assertacyon
of our owne / specyally for that they receyue not our scrypture / and
betwene them and vs nothyng commune to grounde vpon but reason.
20 And yf we shold dyspute with a lewe lesse labour sholde we haue / syth
that we sholde haue with hym (though he deny the new testament) yet
reason and the olde testament agreed vpon / wherin we shold not vary
for the text / but for the sentence & vnderstandyng. For therin we shold
haue hym styfly withstande vs.

25 But now syth we shall in our matter dyspute and reason with those
that agre them selfe for crysten menne / our dyspicyons are so moche
the shorter / in that we muste nedys agre togyther in mo thyngys. For
we must agre in reason where fayth refusyth it not. And ouer that we
shall agre vpon the hole corpus of scrypture / as well the new testament
30 as the olde. But in the interpretacion we may peradventure stycke / Is
it not so?

Yes quod he.

Well quod I / is there any other thyng wherin ye thynke that we shall
vary / but the interpretacyon of the scrypture?

35 Not that I remembre quod he / excepte the conclusyon it selfe where
vpon we talke / as of the worshyppyng of ymages or prayeng to sayntes
/ in which men thynke there can be no grete questyon / yf the
scrypture be well interpreted.

40 Ye do quod I agre / that suche thynges as are mencyoned in the
gospell / spoken by Cryst vnto saynt Peter & other his apostles &
disciples / were not only sayd to them selfe / nor onely for them selfe /
but to them for theyr successours in Crystes floke / & by them to vs all
/ that is to wyt euery man as shall apperteyne to his parte.

Wherby mene you that quod he?

45 I mene quod I as for ensample whan he sayd / Nisi abundauerit
iusticia vestra plusquam scribarum & pharisiorum / non intrabitis in
regnum celorum. Excepte your iustyce abounde & excede the iustyce of
the scrybes & pharysyes / ye shall neuer come in heuen. And where he
sayth / yf thou wylt entre in to the kyngdome of heuen / kepe the

commaundements / dyd not he say such thynges to them for all
crysten men that sholde come after?

I thynke yes quod he for the seconde worde concernyng the
commaundementes. But as for the fyrst / that theyr iustyce shold be
5 better than the iustyce of the scribes & pharysyes / peradventure he
spake specyally to his appostles them selfe / that they sholde not be
lyke the scribes and pharysyes / which commaunded other many
thynges / and dyd nothyng them selfe.

That is in my mynde quod I well taken / and so dothe holy saynt
10 Austyn expoune it. But syth ye thynke he sayd that worde to his
appostles specyally rather than to all his hole flocke / whyther thynke
you that he sayd it onely to them / or els to all other also that sholde
after come in theyr places & succede them in offyce?

Nay for god quod he to all the bysshops he sayd it / & prelates &
15 spyrytuall rulers of his chyrch / that euer shalbe in the chyrch /
forbyddyng them to bynde & lay vpon other pore mennes backes
importunable burdeyns / to the berynge wherof them selfe wyll not ones
put forth a fynger.

Very well sayd quod I / what thynke you than of that he sayd / Do
20 ye such thynges as they byd you do / but do not as ye se them do?

In the wold our lord quod he that all the people shold do all that the
prelates shold commaunde / as far as was commaunded in the law by
god / but he ment no further. And therefore he sayd that they sat vpon
the chayre of Moyses / & he wyllid that they shold for that cause be
25 obeyed. And therin he ment in such thynges only as they shold
commaund / that were by god commaunded the peple / in the law
gyuen to Moyses. And that crysten men in lyke wyse obey the bysshops
& prelates / commaundyng only suche thynges as hym selfe hath
commaunded his peple in his gospels & his own law.

And in nothyng els quod I? what meneth it than that our lord in the
parable of the Samarytane / beryng the wounded man into the In of his
chyrche / & delyuerynge hym to the hoste after that hymselfe had
dressed his woundes with wyne and oyle / and left with the hoste the
35 .ii. grottes of the two testamentys / promysed the host besyde / that
what so euer the hoste wolde bestow vpon hym more / he wolde whan
he came agayne recompence hym therfore? And also in that place that
we spake of / our sauour sayd that the Scrybis and Pharesyes besyde
the law of Moyses on whose sete they sat / dyd lay great fardelles &
faste bounde them on other mennys backes / to the berynge wherof
40 they wolde not moue a fynger them selfe. And yet for all that he bad the
peple do what theyr prelatys wolde byd them / though the burden were
heuy / And let not to do it though they sholde se the bydders do clene
the contrary. For whiche he addyd / but as they do / do not you.

By our lady quod he I lyke not this glose. For it makyth all for the
45 bondys / by which the lawes of the chyrche bynde vs to more a do /
than the iewes were almost with Moyses law. And I wote well Cryste
sayd come to me / ye that be ouer charged / and I shall refresshe you.
And his apostles sayd that the bare lawe of Moyses besyde the
ceremonyes that were set to / by the Scrybys and the Pharesyes / were

more than euer they were able to bere and fulfill. And therefore cryst
came to call vs into a lawe of lyberte. And that was in takynge away the
bande of those wery ceremonyall lawes. And therefore sayth our sauour
of the law that he callyth vs vnto / My yoke (sayth he) is fyt and easy /
5 and my burden but lyght. Wherby it apperyth that he ment to take
away the strayte yoke & put on a more easy. And to take of the heuy
burden & lay on a lyghter. Whiche he had not done yf he wold lade vs
with a fardell full of mennys lawes / mo than a carte can cary away.

The lawes of Chrystys chyrch quod I be made by hym selfe & his
10 holy spyryte / for the gouernaunce of his people / and be not in
hardnes and dyffyculte of kepyng any thyng lyke to the lawes of
Moyses. And therof durst I for nede make your selfe iudge. For yf ye
bethynke you well / I wene yf ye were at this age now to chose / you
wolde rather be bounden to many of the lawes of Crystes chyrche /
15 than to the cyrcumsycyon alone. Nor to as moche ease as we wene that
Cryste callyd vs / yet be not the lawes that haue bene made by his
chyrch of halfe the payne nor halfe the dyffyculte that his owne be /
whiche hym selfe puttyth in the gospell / though we set asyde the
councelles. It is I trow more harde not to swere at all / than not to
20 forswere / to forbere eche angry worde than not to kyll / contynuall
watche and prayer then a few dayes appoyntyd. Than what an anxyete
and solycytude is there in the forbering of euery ydyll worde? what an
harde thret after the worldly compt for a small matter? Neuer was there
almost so sore a worde sayd vnto the Iewes by Moyses / as is to vs by
25 Cryst in that worde alone / where he sayeth that we shall of euery ydyll
worde gyue accompte at the day of iudgement. What say ye than by
deuorsys restraynyd / & lybertye of dyuerse wyuys withdrawen / where
they had lyberte to wed for theyr plesure / if they cast a fantasye to any
that they toke in that warre.

30 One of the ware is ynough quod he to make any one man warre.

Now that is meryly sayd quod I / but though one eye were ynough
for a fletcher / yet is he for store contente to kepe twayne / and wolde
though they were somtyme sore bothe / & sholde put hym to some
payne. What ease also call you this / that we be bounden to abyde all
35 sorow & shamfull dethe & all martyrdome vpon payne of perpetuall
damnacyon for the professyon of our fayth? Trowe ye that these easy
wordes of his easy yoke & lyght burden were not as well spoken to his
apostles as to you / & yet what ease called he them to? Called he not
them to watchynge / fastyng / prayeng / prechyng / walkyng / hunger
40 / thirst / colde / & hete / betyng / scourgyng / prysonement /
paynfull & shamfull deth? The ease of his yoke standeth not in bodyly
ease / nor the lyghtnes of his burdeyne standeth not in the slackenes of
any bodyly payne (excepte we be so wanton / that where hym selfe had
not heuen without payne / we loke to come thyther with play) but it
45 standeth in the swetnes of hope / wherby we fele in our payne a
plesaunt taste of heuen. This is the thyng as holy saynt Gregory
Nazaneno declareth that refressheth men that are laden and maketh
oure yoke easy & our burdeyn lyght / not any delyuerynge from the
lawes of the chyrch / or from any good temporall lawes eyther / in to a

lewde lyberte of slouthfull rest. For that were not an easy yoke / but a
pullyng of the hed out of the yoke. Nor it were not a lyght burdeyn / but
all the burdeyn dyscharged contrary to the wordes of saynt Poule &
saynt Peter bothe / whiche as well vnderstode the wordes of theyr
5 mayster as these men do. And as a thyng consonant & well agreable
therwith do commaunde vs obedyence to our superyours & rulers one &
other in thynges by god not forboden / all thoughe they ben harde and
sore.

But se for goddes sake howe we be ronne a great way further then I
10 thought to go when I began / and haue lefte that we sholde go forth
with all.

It is no losse quod he / for there is a good thyng well touched by the
way.

Well quod I let vs go backe agayne where we lefte. Syth ye agree hat
15 Cryst spake his wordes not to his appostles onely for theyr owne tyme /
but suche thynges as he sayd to them he ment to all that sholde folowe
them / And therof somewhat he spake to them for the prestes and
bysshops onely. As when he sayd / vos estis sal terre / ye be the salte
of the erthe / and somewhat to the hole flocke as when he sayd /
20 Mandatum nouum do vobis vt diligatis inuicem sicut ego dilexi vos. I
gyue you a newe commaundement that you loue togyder as I haue
loued you. Tell me then I requyre you / whan Cryst sayd to saynt Peter
/ sathanas hath desyred to syfte ye as men syfte corne / but I haue
prayed for thee that thy fayth shall not fayle / sayd he this to hym as a
25 promyse of the fayth to be by goddes helpe perpetually kepte &
preserued in saynt Peter onely / or elles in the hole chyrch / that is to
wete the hole congregacyon of crysten people professyng his name and
his fayth / and abydyng in the body of the same / not beyng precyded
and cut of / meanyng that his fayth sholde neuer so vtterly fayle in his
30 chyrche / but that it shold hole & entyer abyde & remayne therin?

Mary quod he this is good to be aduysed of. For though Cryst for the
more parte suche thynges as he spake to one spake to all / accordyng
to his owne wordes / quod vni dico omnibus dico / that I say to one I
say to all / yet some thyngys he sayd and ment pertyculerly as he spake
35 it. As when he bad saynt Peter come vpon the water to hym / he bad
not the remenaunt come so. And so may it peraduenture be that this
worde was spoken & ment towarde Peter alone.

That wyll be quod I very harde to holde. For his fayth after fayled.
But syth that vpon his fyrst confessyon of the ryght fayth that Cryste
40 was goddys sonne / our lorde made hym his vniuersall vicare / & vnder
hym hed of his chyrche. And that for his successour he sholde be the
fyrst vpon whom and whose ferine confessed fayth he wolde bylde his
chyrch / and of any that was onely man make hym the fyrst and chefe
hed and ruler therof / therefore he shewyd hym that his fayth / that is to
45 wete the fayth by him confessed / sholde neuer fayle in his chyrch / io
nor neuer dyd it / not with standyng his denyng. For yet stode styll the
lyght of fayth in our lady / of whom we rede in the gospell contynewall
assystence to her swetest son without fleyng or flytting. And in all other
we fynde eyther fleyng from hym one tyme or other / or ellys doute of his

resurreccyon after his deth (his dere mother, onely excepte) For the
sygnyfycacion & remembraunce wherof the chyrche yerely in the
tenebre lessons leuyth her candell burnyng styll / when all the
remenaunt that s/gnyfyeth his apostles & dysciples be one by one put
5 out. And syth his fayth in effect fayled / & yet the fayth that he
professyd abode styll in our lady / the promise that god made was (as it
semyth) ment not to hym / but as hed of the chyrche. And therefore our
lorde added therto. And thou beyng one of these dayes conuertyd /
conferme & strength thy bretherne. In whiche by these wordes our
10 sauour ment & promysed that the fayth sholde stande for euer. So
that the gates of hell shold not preuayle there agaynst. Or ellys myght
ye say / that these wordes spoken to saynt Peter / fede my shepe / was
ment but for hym selfe / & no commaundement to any successour of
his or any bysshop or prelate. And by that mean myght ye say also /
15 that these wordys of Crystys promyse made vnto his dysciples / that
the holy goste shold enstruchte them of all thynges / were onely ment for
them selfe in theyr owne persons. And not that euer he sholde enstruchte
his chyrch after theyr dayes. And when he sayd where so euer be .ii. or
.iii. gathered togyther in my name there am I my self among them / we
20 shall say by this meanys / that he ment but of hys owne dysciples in
hys owne tyme whyle he was here with them / and not that he wolde be
lykewyse present with suche other congregacyons in his chyrche after.
And fynally then were these wordes frustrate where he sayd. Lo I am
with you all the dayes to the worldes ende / yf he shold mene it but
25 with them that herde hym speke it / then sholde it appere / that he had
intended a chyrche onely of them & for theyr tyme. And then from theyr
dethe hyther all were done.

Verely syr quod he I can well agre / that all suche thynges was
spoken by Cryst to make them sure / that the fayth sholde neuer fayle
30 in his chyrche. How beit yf I durst doubte in that poynt / one thyng is
there / that somewhat stycketh in my mynde.

Doute on quod I bytwene vs twayne & spare not / nor let not to tell
me what moueth you.

Syr quod he I thynke that god setteth no more by fayth then he doth
35 by charyte. But as for charyte and good workes with vertuous lyuyng
shall coole & deokay in the chyrche as our sauour sayth in the .xxiiii.
chapyter of Mathew. Bycause iniquite shall abounde / the charyte of
many men shall coole. And surely me thynketh it is well nere all gone
all redy.

40 God forbede quod I. For albeit that it greatly day by day deokayeth /
& moche people nought / yet be there many good men aboute / & shal
be alway thoughe they be fewe in comparyson of the multytude. And yet
is it not all one of other vertues & of fayth / that is to wyt of knowlege &
byleue of the artycles of our fayth. I mene of suche artycles as we be of
45 necessaryte bounden to byleue. For albe it that the flocke of Cryst shall
neuer lacke good and deuoute vertuous people / yet shall bothe the
best be synners / & also moche more the multytude shall euer haue the
fayth that I speke of / than shall haue the goodnes of lyuyng.

Why so quod he?

For two causes quod I. One the malyce of the people wherby they
wyll not be so redy to lyue well as to byleue well. For the people them
selfe wyll better kepe the fayth then other vertues / syth it is a thyng of
lesse laboure to knowe what they sholde byleue / and to byleue it also
5 when they knowe it / then it is to worke well. For though the
knowledge & byleue brynge many men to the laboure of good workes /
yet ytheworld commenty and the fraylte of our flesshe with the
entycement of our gostly enemyes / make vs wyllingly and wyttyngly
well knowynge and byleuyng the good / yet to walke in the worse / as
10 dothe somtyme the seke man that byleuyng his physycyan / and
hauynge had also ryght often good profe by his owne experyence to his
payne before / that some certayne mete or drynke shall do hym harme
/ doth yet of an inportune appetyte fall for his lytell pleasure to his
great payne & hurte.

15 Another cause is quod I the goodnes of god / whiche how farre so
euer his people fall from the vse of vertue / shall not yet as hym selfe
hath promysed suffer them to fall from the knowlege of vertu / not only
for the manyfestacyon of his iustyce / that theyr own conscyence may
condempne them in doing the thynges that themselfe know to be
20 nought / but also to the entent they may styll haue among them a
perpetuall occasyon of amendment. For if the fayth were ones gone / &
the chyrch of cryst fallen in the errour / that they byleued vyce to be
vertu / & ydolatry to be the ryght way of goddes worshyp / then had
they no rule to guyde them to better. And therefore whyle we be not in
25 errour of vnderstandyng & fayth / howe so euer we fall or howe often so
euer we synne / we se the way to tourne agayne by grace to goddes
mercy. But yf fayth were gone all were gone / and then had god here no
chyrche at all.

30

The .xix. chapter

Surely syr quod he / that god made not his chyrche for a whyle /
but to endure tyll the worldes ende / that is there no crysten man but
35 he wyll well agre. And syth his chyrche can not stande without fayth /
whiche is the entre into crystendom (for as saynt Poule sayth /
accidentem ad deum oportet credere / who so wyll come to god must
nedys byleue) no man wyll denye but the fayth is & alway shalbe in his
chyrche. And that his chyrche not in fayth onely and the knowlege of
40 the trutthes necessary to be knowen for our soule helth / but also to the
doyng of good workys & auoydyng of euyls / is / hath ben and euer
shall be specyally gyded and gouerned by god and the secrete
inspyracyon of his holy spyryte.

Well quod I then / yf the chyrche haue fayth it erreth not in byleue.
45 That is trouth quod he.

It sholde arre quod I / yf it byleuyd not all the trutthes that we be
bounde to byleue.

What elles quod he.

What & we byleuyd quod I all that is trew / and ouer that some other thyng not onely false / but also dyspleasaunt to god / dyd we not then arre in our necessary byleue?

Wherby meane you that quod he?

5 As thus quod I / yf that one byleuyd in all the thre parsons of the trynitye / the father the son and the holy goste / & therwith were perswaded that there were a fourth person besyde / equall and one god with them.

10 He must quod he nedys arre in his necessary byleue / by whiche he is bounden to byleue in the trynitye. And that felowe byleuyth in a quaternitye.

That is quod I the hole trynitye and one mo.

But we be not onely not bounden quod he to byleue in any mo / but also bounden not to byleue in any mo.

15 Very well quod I / then arreth he as moche and as far lacketh his ryght byleue that byleuyth to moch / as he that byleueth to lytell / & he that byleueth som thyng that he shold not / as he that byleueth not some thyng that he sholde.

What els quod he & what then.

20 Mary this quod I / yf we byleue that it were lawfull & well done to pray to sayntys / and to reuerence theyr ymages / and do honour to theyr relyques & vysyt pylgrymages. And than where we do these thynges they were in dede not well done / but were dyspleasaunt to god / and by hym reputed as a mynyshment & a withdrawynge of the
25 honoure dewe to hym selfe / & therefore afore his magestye reproued & odyous and taken as Idolatry / were not this oppynyon a dedly pestylent error in vs / & a playne lacke of ryght fayth?

Yes for god quod he.

30 But ye graunt quod I / that the chyrche can not erre in the ryght fayth necessary to be byleued / whiche is gyuen and alway kepte in the chyrche by god.

Trouth quod he.

35 Than foloweth it quod I / that the chyrche in that it byleueth sayntes to be prayed vnto / relyques and ymages to be worshypped / & pylgrymages to be vysyted & sought / is not dysceyued nor dothe not erre / but that the byleue of the chyrche is trewe therin. And therupon also foloweth that the wonderfull workes done aboue nature / at suche ymages & pylgrymages / at holy relyques by prayers made vnto sayntes / be not done by the deuyll to delude the chyrche of Cryst therwith /
40 syth the thyng that the chyrche doth / is well done & not Idolatry. But by the great honour done vnto sayntes / god hymselfe the more hyghly honoured / in that his seruauntes haue so moche honoure for his sake. And therof foloweth it / that hym selfe maketh the myracles in comprobacyon therof.

45 Also yf it be trewe that ye haue graunted / that god kepeth & euer shall kepe in his chyrche the ryght fayth & ryght byleue by the helpe of his owne hande that hath planted it / then can it not be that he shall suffre the deuyll to worke wonders lyke vnto his owne myracles to brynge his hole chyrche in to a wronge fayth. And then yf those thynges

be not done by the deuyll / I trowe ye wyll not then denye / but they be
done by god. And so is yet agayne our purpose double proued. Fyrst in
that ye graunt that god wyll not suffre his chyrche to erre in his ryght
fayth / secondely (whiche pursueth therpon) by that he hath by many a
5 vysable myracle declared / that this fayth & maner of obseruaunce is
very pleasaunt and acceptable vnto hym / which myracles syth they
ben proued to be done vpon good grounde & cause / appere well to be
done by god and not by our gostely enemy.

10

The .xx. chapiter

How thynke you quod I / is there any thyng in this mater amisse?

15 I can not well tell quod he / what I myght answeere therto. But yet me
thynke that I come to this poynt by som ouersyght in grauntyng.

Well quod I men say somtyme when they wolde saye or doo a thyng
and can not well come theron / but mysse and ouer se them selfe in the
assaye / it makyth no matter they saye / ye may begyn agayne and
mende it / for it is nother masse nor mattyns. And albe it in this matter
20 / ye haue nothyng graunted but that is in my mynde / as trewe as the
mattyns or the masse eyther / yet yf ye reken your selfe ouer swyfte in
grauntyng / I gyue you leue to go backe and call agayne what ye wyll.

In good fayth quod he full hard were it in myne owne mynde / other
wyse to thynke / but that god shall alway kepe the ryght byleue in his
25 chyrche. But yet syth we come to this conclusyon by the grauntyng
therof / let vs loke ones agayne thereupon. And what yf men wolde say
/ as I herde ones one saye my selfe / that god doth peraduenture not
kepe alway fayth in his chyrche / to gyue them warnyng with / when
they do well / and when the contrary. But syth he hath gyuen them and
30 lefte with them the scrypture / in whiche they may suffycyently se /
both what they sholde byleue / and what they sholde do / he letteth
them alone therwith / without any other specyall cure of his / vpon
theyr fayth and byleue. For therin they may se all that them nedyth yf
they wyll loke and labour therin. And yf they wyll not / the faulte is
35 theyr owne slouth and foly. And who so be wyllynge to mende and be
better / may alway haue lyght to se how / by recours to the redyng
of holy scrypture / whiche shall stande hym in lyke stede as ye sayd
byfore / that god kepte the fayth for / by his specyall meanys in his
chyrche.

40 If this quod I were thus / wherof sholde Crystys promyse serue? Ego
vobiscum sum omnibus diebus vsque ad nmem seculi. I am with you all
the dayes tyll the ende of the worlde? wherfore sholde he be here with
his chyrche / yf his beyng here sholde not kepe his ryght fayth and
byleue in his chyrche?

45 Mary quod he these wordys well agreeth withall. For god is and shall
be vntyll the worldes ende with his chyrche in his holy scrypture.

As Abraham answered the ryche man in hell sayenge they haue
Moyses and the prophetes / not meanyng that they had them all at that

tyme present with them / but onely that they had theyr bokys. And so
Cryste for as moche as the scrypture hath his fayth comprehendyd
therin accordyng to his owne wordys. Scrutamini scripturas / quia
scrypture sunt que testimonium perhibent de me. Serche you the
5 scryptures for they bere wytnes of me. Therefore he sayd / Ego vobiscum
sum vsque ad finem seculi / I am with you to the ende of the worlde /
bycause his holy scrypture shall neuer fayle / as longe as the worlde
endureth. Heuen and erth sayeth he shall pass awaye / but my wordys
shall neuer passe awaye.

10 And therefore in hys holy wrytynge is he wyth vs styll / and therein
he keypyth and techeth vs hys ryght fayth yf we lyst to loke for it / and
ellys as I sayd our owne faute and foly it is.

If god quod I be none otherwyse with vs but in holy scrypture / then
be those wordes of Cryst / I am with you to the worldes ende /
15 somewhat straungely spoken / and vnlyke the wordes of Abraham
wherunto ye resemble them. For Cryst lefte neuer a booke behynde hym
of his owne makyng / as Moyses dyd and the prophetes. And in theyr
bokes was he spoken of / as he was in the gospels. Wherefore yf he had
spoken and mente of scrypture / he wolde haue sayd that they sholde
20 haue with them styll his euangelystes and wryters of his gospels as
Abraham sayd they haue Moyses and the prophetes / whiche were the
wryters of the bokes that the lewes had. Cryst also sayd / I am with you
tyll the ende of the worlde / not I shall be / but I am / whiche is the
worde appropyed to his godhed. And therefore that worde am / is the
25 name by whiche our lorde wolde as he tolde Moyses / be named vnto
Pharao / as a name whiche from all creatures (syth they be all subiecte
to tyme) clerely dyscerneth his godhed / whiche is euer beyng and
present with out dyfierence of tyme past or to come. In whiche wyse /
he was not in his holy scrypture / for that had begynnyng. And at
30 those wordes spoken / was not yet all wrytten. For of the chefe parte
whiche is the newe testament / there was yet at the tyme neuer one
worde wrytten. And also we be not sure by any promyse made that the
scrypture shall endure to the worldes ende / albeit I thynke verely the
substaunce shall. But yet as I say / promyse haue we none therof. For
35 where our lorde sayth that his wordes shall not passe away / nor one
iote therof be lost / he spake of his promyses made in dede / as his
fayth and doctryne taught by mouth and inspyracyon. He mente not
that of his holy scrypture in wrytynge there sholde neuer a iote be lost /
of whiche some partes be all redy lost / more peraduenture then we can
40 tell of. And of that we haue the bokes in some parte corrupted with
mysse wrytynge. And yet the substaunce of those wordes that he mente
ben knowen / where some parte of the wrytynge is vnknowen. He sayth
also that his father and he sholde sende the holy gost / and also that he
wolde come hymselfe / wherto all this yf he ment no more but to leue
45 the bokes behynde them and go theyr waye? Cryst is also present
amonge vs bodyly in the holy sacrament / And is he there present with
vs for nothyng? The holy goost taught many thynges / I thynke
vnwrytten / and wherof some parte was neuer comprysed in the
scrypture / yet vnto this day / as the artycle whiche no good crysten

man wyll doubte of / that our blessyd ladywas a perpetuall vyrgyn as well after the byrthe of Cryst as afore.

Our sauyoure also sayd vnto his appostles / that when they sholde be accused and brought in judgement / they sholde not node to care for
5 answeare / it sholde euen then be put in theyr myndes. And that he ment not onely the remembraunce of holy scrypture / whiche before the paynym iudgys were but a colde and bare allegynge / but suche wordys new gyuen them by god inspyred in theyr hartys so effectuall / and confyrmyd with myracles / that theyr aduersaryes though they were
10 angry therat / yet sholde not be able to resyste it. And thus with secreet helpe and inspyracyon is Cryst with his chyrche / and wyll be to the worldes ende present and assystent.

Not onely spoken of in wrytynge.

15

The .xxi. chapiter

But now wolde I wyt / syth ye reken hym none other wyse present then in holy scrypture / whyther then doth he gyue his chyrche the
20 ryght vnderstandyng of holy scrypture or not?

What yf he do not quod he?

Mary quod I than your self seeth well / that they were as well without. And so sholde the scrypture stand them in as good stede / as a payre of spectacles shold stande a blynde freer.

25 That is very truthe quod he. But therefore hath his wysdome and goodnes prouyded it so to be wryten / that it maye be well vnderstanden / by the collacyon and consyderacion of one texte wyth an other.

30 May it not also be quod I / that some of them whiche do rede it dylygently / and dylygently compare and consyder euery texte / how it may stande with other / may yet for all that / mystake and mysse vnderstande it?

Yes quod he it may be so. For ellys had there not ben so many heretyques / as there hath ben.

35 Very truth quod I. But now yf all the fayth be in holy scrypture / & no parte therof any where ellys / but that it muste be therin all togyther lernyd / were it than suffycient to vnderstand som parte a ryght / and some other parte wronge / in the necessary poyntys of our fayth / or must we as farforth as concernyth the necessarye therof mysunderstande
40 no parte?

We must quod he mystake no parte / as far as necessarye concernyth our fayth. But we must haue so the ryght vnderstandyng of all togyther / that we conceyue no damnable errour.

45 Well sayd quod I / then yf we must / we may. For yf we may not / we must not. For our lorde byndeth no man to an impossybylyte.

We may quod he.

If we may quod I / then may we eyther by good hap fall in to the ryght vnderstandyng / or els by naturall reason come to it / or els by

supernaturall grace be led in to it.

That is trouthe quod he / nedes must it be one of these wayes.

Well quod I / we wyll not yet enserche whiche. But I wolde fyrst wyt/
whyter Cryst haue a chyrche in the worlde contynually / and so shall
5 haue to the worldes ende / or els hath one somtyme / and somtyme
none at all. As we myght thynke / that he had one / whyle he was here
hym selfe / and peraduenture a whyle after / and happely none at all
neuer syth / nor shall not agayne we wot nere when.

Naye quod he / that can not be in no wyse / but that he must nedes
10 haue his chyrche contynewe styll some where / for els how coulde he be
with them contynually to the worldes ende / in scrypture or other, wyse
/ yf they (with whom he promysed to be / and contynewe to the worldes
ende) sholde not contynually so longe endure? Or howe coulde those
wordes of Cryst be trewe. Lo I am with you all the dayes to the worldes
15 ende / yf before the worldes ende he were awaye some dayes / as he
were in dede fro the chyrche some dayes / yf in some dayes he had no
chyrche.

Well quod I / yet wolde I wytte one thyng more. Can he haue a
chyrche without fayth?

20 Nay quod he / that were impossyble.

Forsothe quod I / so were it. For his chyrche is a congregacyon of
people gathered in to his fayth. And fayth is the fyrst substancyall
dyfference / dyscernynge crysten men from hethen / as reason is the
dyfference deuydyng man from all the kyndis of brute bestes. Nowe
25 then yf his chyrche be and euer shall be contynuall without any tymes
bytweene (in which there shall be none) & without fayth it maye neuer be
/ and no parte of the faythe is as ye say els where had / but in holy
scrypture / and all it must be had / and also as we were agreed a lytell
whyle afore / there must be none erreure adioyned therto / and
30 therefore as far as toucheth the necessaryte of fayth / no parte of scrypture
maye be mysse taken / but all must be vnderstanden ryght / & may be
ryght vnderstanden eyther by hap / reason / or helpe of grace / it
necessarily foloweth that by one or other of these wayes / the chyrch of
Cryst hath alway and neuer fayleth / the ryght vnderstanding of
35 scrypture / as farre as longeth for our necessaryte.

That foloweth in dede quod he.

Well quod I / let passe for the whyle / what foloweth further?

And syth the chyrche so hath / let vs fyrst agre by whiche of these
.iii. wayes the chyrche hath it / whyther by happe / reason / or grace.

40 By happe quod he were a pore hauyng. For so myght it hap to haue
& hap to fayle.

Then quod I / syth it hath it euer / it can not be by hap / what
thynke you then of reason?

As lytell quod he as any man thynketh. For I take reason for playne
45 enmye to fayth.

Ye take peraduenture wronge quod I. But thereof shall we se further
aftere. But now syth ye so thynke / ye leue but the thyrde way / whiche
is the helpe of grace.

No surely quod he.

Verely quod I / where reason may bytwene dyuers textys stande in
great doute / which way to lene / I thynke that god with his holy
spyryte ledyth his chyrche into the consent of the trouthe / As hym
selfe sayd that the holy goste (whom he wolde sende) shold lede them
5 into all trouthe. He sayd not that the holy goste sholde at his commyng
wryte them all trouthe / nor tell them all the hole trouthe by mouth / but
that he shold by secret inspyracion lede them into all trouthe. And
therefore surely for a trew conclusyon in suche meanys by god hym selfe
/ by the helpe of his grace (as your selfe graunteth) the ryght
10 vnderstandyng of scrypture / is euer preserued in his chyrche from all
suche mystakyng / wherof myght folow any damnable error
concernyng the fayth. And therof doth there fyrst folow / that besyde
the scrypture selfe / there is an other present assystence / and specyall
cure of god / perpetuall with his chyrche / to kepe it in the ryght fayth
15 / that it arre not by mysse vnderstandyng of holy scrypture / contrary
to the oppynyon that ye purposyd / when ye sayd / that Crystys beynge
with his chyrch / was onely the leuyng of his holy scrypture to vs. And
ouer this / yf god were no other wyse present then ye speke of / yet
syth it is proued that his chyrche for all that / euer hath the ryght
20 vnderstandyng of scrypture / we be comen to the same poynt agayne
/ that ye wolde so fayne flyt from. For yf the scrypture (and nothyng but
the scrypture) doth conteyne all thyng that we be bounden to byleue /
and to do / and to forbere / and that god also therefore prouydeth for his
chyrche / the ryght vnderstandyng therof / concernyng euey thyng
25 necessary for vs / that is conteynyd in scrypture / then must there
nedes folow theruppon / the thyng that ye feryd / lest ye had wronge /
and vnaduysydly grauntyd / that is to wit / that god alway kepyth the
ryght fayth in his chyrche. And therupon foloweth further / the
remenaunt of all that is in questyon bytwene vs / that the fayth of the
30 chyrch in the worshyp / that it byleuyth to be well gyuen vnto sayntes /
relyques and ymagys / is not erronyous but ryght. And therupon
foloweth also that the myracles done at suche placys ben none illusyons
of dampned spyrytys / but the mighty hande of god / to shew his
pleasure in the corroboracyon therof / and in the excytacyon of our
35 deuocion therto.

In dede quod he / we be come backe here with goyng forwarde / as
men walke in a mase.

Ye haue not yet quod I lost all that labour. For though ye haue half a
checke in this point / yet haue ye (yf ye perceyue it) matyd me in an
40 other poynt / by one thyng / that is agreed bytwene vs nowe.

What is that quod he?

This quod I / that I haue agreed as well as you / that god hath
gyuen his chyrche the ryght vnderstandyng of scrypture in as ferforthe
as longeth to the necessaryte of saluacyon.

45 In what poynte quod he / hath that matyd you?

Why quod I se you not that? Nay then wyll I not tell you / but yf ye
hyer me / or yf I tell you / yet shall ye not wynne the game therby. For
syth ye se it not yourselfe / it is but a blynde mate.

Let me knowe it yet quod he / and I am agreed to take none

aduauntage therof.

On that bargeyne be it quod I.

Ye wote well quod I that agaynst the worshyppyng of ymages / and prayenge to sayntes / ye layde certayne textes of scrypture / to proue it
5 forboden / and reputed of god for ydolatry. For answer wherof / when I layde that men must lene to the sentence that the chyrche & holy doctours of the chyrche gyue to those textes / ye sayd they were but mennes false gloses agaynst goddes trewe textes. And nowe syth ye graunt and I also / that the chyrch can not mysse vnderstande the
10 scrypture to the hynderaunce of the ryght fayth / in thynges of necessitye / and that ye also knowledge this matter to be suche / that it muste eyther be the ryght byleue and acceptable seruyce to god / or ellys a wronge and erronyous oppynyon and playne ydolatry / it foloweth of necessitye / that the chyrche dothe not mysse vnderstande
15 those textes / that ye or any other canne allege / and brynge forthe for that purpose / But that all these textes be soo to be taken and vnderstanden / as they nothyng make agaynste the chyrche / but all agaynste youre owne oppynyon in this matter.

And thus haue ye sodeynly answered your selfe / to all those texts
20 out of hande / with a glose of your owne / as trewe as any texte in the byble / & whiche all the worlde wyll neuer auoye / excepte they wold make the scrypture serue the chyrche of nought / or rather to theyr hynderaunce then fortheraunce in the faythe. For so were it / yf it myght be / that god gyueth them not the good vnderstandyng therof / but suffreth them to be deceyued and deluded in errours / by the
25 mysse takyng of the letter.

Mary quod he / this is a blynde mate in dede.

Surely quod I these two thynges seme to me two as trewe poyntes / and as playne to a crysten man / as any petycyon of Euclidis geometry
30 / is to a reasonable man. For as trewe as it is / that euery hole thyng is more then his owne halfe / as trewe is it in dede / and to euery crysten man / faythe maketh it as certayne.

Fyrst that Crystes chyrche can not erre in any such artycle / as god vppon payne of losse of heuen wyll that we byleue And thereuppon
35 necessarily foloweth / that there is no texte of scrypture Well vnderstanden / by whiche crysten people are commaunded to do the thyng / whiche the chyrche byleueth that they may lefully leue vndone / nor any texte wherby we be forboden any thyng / whiche the chyrche byleueth that they may lafully do.

40

The .xxii. chapiter

And for bycause we speke of scrypture now / and that the chyrche
45 in thynges nedely requysyte to saluacyon hath the ryght vnderstandyng of holy scrypture / wherin I perceyue ye be studyouse of the texte alone / with out great force of the olde fathers interpretacyons or any other scyence / of which ye reken all .vii. (saue gramer) almost to serue for

nought. I haue of you so good oppynyon / that I trust all your study
shall tourne you to good. But surely I haue sene to some folke so moche
harne to grow therof / that I neuer wolde aduyse any man elles / in the
study of scrypture to take that way. Why so quod he? For I haue
5 knowen quod I ryght good wyttes / that hath set all other lernynge
asyde / partely for slouth / refusynge the labour and payne to be
susteyned in that lernynge / partely for pryde / by whiche they coude
not endure the redargucyon that sholde somtyme fall to theyr parte in
dyspycyons. Whyche affeccyons / theyr inwarde secret fauour towarde
10 them seluys / coueryd and clokyd vnder the pretexte of symplycyte /
and good crysten deuocyon / borne to the loue of holy scrypture alone.
But in lytell whyle after the dampnable spyryte of pryde that vnware to
them self lurked in theyr hartys / hath begonne to put out his hornis
and shew hym selfe. For then haue they longed / vnder the prayse of
15 holy scrypture / to set out to shew theyr owne study. Which bycause
they wold haue seme the more to be set by / they haue fyrst fallen to
the dysprays & derysyon of all other dyscyplynes. And bycause in
spekyng or prechyng of suche commune thynges / as all crysten men
know / they coude not seme excellent / nor make it appere and seme
20 /that in theyr study they had done any grete maystry / to shewe them
selfe therfore merueylous / they set out paradoxis and straunge
oppynyons / agaynst the commen fayth of Crystes hole chyrche. And
bycause they haue therin the olde holy doctours agaynst them / they
fall to the contempte and dyspraise of them / eyther prechyng theyr
25 owne fonde gloses agaynste the olde connyng and blessyd fathers
interpretacyons / or ellys lene to some wordes of holy scrypture / that
seme to say for them / agaynst many mo textes / that playnly make
agaynst them / without receyuyng or ere gyuyng to any reason or
authoryte of any man quycke or dede / or of the hole chyrche of Cryst
30 to the contrary. And thus ones prowde perswaded a wronge waye /
they take the brydyl in the tethe / and renne forthe lyke an hed stronge
horse / that all the worlde can not plucke them backe. But with sowyng
settycyon / settinge forth of errours and heresyas / and spycyng theyr
prechyng with rebukyng of preesthode and prelacye / for the peoples
35 pleasure / they tourne many a man to ruyne & them selfe also. And
then the deuyll dysceyueth them in theyr blynde affeccyons.

They take for good zele to the people theyr malycyous enuy. And for
a great vertue theyr ardent appetyte to preche / wherin they haue so
great pryde for the peoples prayse / that preche I wene they wolde /
40 thoughe god wold his owne mouth commaunde them the contrary.

Why sholde ye wene so quod he / or whereby can ye be sure that ye
do not nowe mysse conster theyr good mynde? Hard is it oftymes to
iudge an other mannes dede that hathe some apparence of euyll /
bycause the purpose and entent may make it good. And what parell is it
45 then where the dede appereth good / there to iudge the mynde and
entent for nought / whiche who can se but god? As the scrypture sayth
/ Dominus autem intuetur cor. Onely god beholdeth the harte. And
therefore sayth our sauour / iudge not before the tyme.

I iudge not quod I / but vpon open thinges and well apparant. For I

speke but of those / whose erronyous oppynyons in theyr prechyng /
and theyr obstynate pryde in the defence of theyr worldly worshyp well
declareth theyr myndes. And some haue I sene / which when they haue
for theyr paryllous prechyng ben by theyr prelates prohybyted to
5 preche / haue (that notwithstandinge) proceded on styll. And for the
mayntenaunce of theyr dysobedyence / haue amended the matter with
an heresy / boldely and stubburnly defendyng / that syth they had
connynge to preche they were by god bounden to preche. And that no
10 man nor no lawe that was made or coude be made / had any authoryte
to forbede them. And this they thought suffycyently proued by the
wordes of the appostle / Oportet magis obedire deo quam hominibus.
As thoughe these men were appostles nowe specyally sente by god to
preche heresydes & sow sedycyon amonge crysten men / as the very
15 appostles were in dede sente and commaundyd by god / to preche his
very faythe to the Iewes. One of this sorte of this new kynde of prechers
beyng demaundyd / why that he vsyd to saye in his sermons about /
that nowe a dayes men prechyd not well the gospell / answered that he
thought so / bycause he saw not the prechers persecutyd / nor no
20 stryfe nor busynes aryse vpon theyr prechyng. Whiche thynges he sayd
and wrote was the fruyte of the gospell / bycause Cryste sayd. Non veni
pacein mittere sed gladium. I am not come to sende peace into the
world but the sworde. Was not this a worshypfull vnderstandyng / that
bycause Cryst wolde make a deuysyon amonge infydels / from the
25 remenaunt of them to wynne some / therfore these apostels wolde sowe
some code of dyssensyon amonge the crysten peple / wherby Cryst
myght lese some of them? For the frute of stryfe amonge the herers and
persecucion of the precher can not lyghtly growe amonge crysten men /
but by the prechyng of some straunge neweltyes / and bryngyng vp of
some new fangell heresydes / to the infecyon of our olde fayth.

30 One wyst I that was for his partynacye in that oppynyon / that he
wolde and myght & was bounden to preche (any prohybycyon not
withstandyng) when he was after dyuers bolde and open defence therof
/ at last before folke honourable and few / reasoned withall / and not
onely the law shewed hym to the contrary of his oppynyon / whiche law
35 was made at a general councell / but also by playne authoryte of holy
scripture prouyd that his oppynyon was erronyous / he so perceyued
hym self satysfyed / that he mekely knowlegyd his errour / and offryd
to abiure it and to submyt hym selfe to penaunce. But on the morow
when he came forth in open presence of the peple / & there saw many
40 that had oft herde hym preche / of his secrete pryde / he fell in suche
an open passion of shame that those sholde here hym go backe with his
worde / whiche had before had his sermons in great estymacyon / that
at the fyrst syght of the peple / he reuokyd his reuocacyon / and sayd
out alowde that he myght well be herde / that his oppynyon was trew /
45 and that he was the day before deceyuyd / in that he had confessyd it
for false. And thus he helde his owne stubburnly without reason / tyll
the bokes were shewyd hym agayne / & hym selfe rede them before all
the peple / so that he perceyuyd the audyence that stode about hym /
to feele and vnderstande his proude foly / in thye defence of his

indefensyble errour. And therupon at the last / yelded hym self agayne.
Suche secrete pryde had our gostely enemy conueyd into the harte of
hym / whiche I ensure you semyd in all his other outward maner / as
meke a simple soule / as a man shold haue sene in a somers day. And
5 some of them let not with lyes and periury to defende them selfe / and
some to stande in defence of theyr errours or false denyeng of theyr
owne dede / to theyr groat parell of the fyre / yf theyr iudges were not
more mercyfull then theyr malyce deserueth. And al this done bycause
(as them selfe doth at last confesse) they thynke yf they abiure / they
10 shall after be suffred to preche agayn. Such a scabbed ytche of
vaynglory catche they in theyr prechyng / that though all the worlde
were the worse for it / and theyr owne lyfe lye thereon / yet wolde they
longe to be pulpetyd. And this I saye hath comen or some that haue
with contempte of all other lernynge gyuen them to scrypture alone.
15 Whose affeccyons of pryde and slouth hath not in the begynnyng ben
perceyued to them selfe / but haue accompted theyr vyces for
deuocyon.

Wolde ye then quod he condempne that maner of study / by whiche
a man hath so grete affeccyon to the scrypture alone / that he for the
20 delyte therof / feleth lytell sauoure in any thyng ellys / but that we
sholde lese tyme in phylosophy the mother of heresydes and let scrypture
alone?

Naye quod I that mynde am I not of. There was neuer thyng wrytten
in this worlde that canne in any wyse be comparable with any parte of
25 holy scrypture. And yet I thynke other lyberall scyence a gyft of god also
/ and not to be cast away / but worthy to wayte and as hande maydes
to gyue attendaunce vpon dyuynyte. And in this poynt I thynke not
thus alone. For ye shall fynde saynt Hyerom / saynt Austyne / saynt
Basyle & many of the olde holy doctours open & playne of the same
30 oppynyon. And of dyuynyte reken I the best parte to be conteyned in
holy scrypture. And this I saye for hym that shall haue tyme thereto /
and from youth entendeth to the chyrch warde / and to make hym selfe
with goddes helpe mete for the offyce of a precher. Howe be it yf any
man eyther happen to begyn so late / that he shall peraduenture haue
35 no tyme thereto / or ellys any man of youth to haue that feruent
appetyte vnto scrypture / that he canne not fynde in his harte to rede
any thyng ellys (whiche affeccyon who so happeth to haue gyuen hym
/ is very fortunate / yf he with grace and mekenes gyde it well) then
wolde I counsayle hym / specyally to study for the vertuous framyng of
40 his owne affeccyons / and vsynge grete moderacyon and temperaunce
in the prechyng to other men. And in all thyng to flee the desyre of
praysse and shewe of connyng / euer mystrustyng his owne
inclynacyons / and lyue in drede and fere of the deuylls subtell
sleyght and inuencyons. Who though he lye in contynuall awayte
45 vpon euery prechour to catch hym in to pryde yf he can / yet his
huest enterpryse and prowdest tryumphe standeth in the
bryngyng of a man to the most abuse of that thyng / that is of his
owne nature the best. And therefore great laboure maketh he and
grete boste / yf he bryng it aboute / that a good wytte may abuse his

laboure / bestowed vppon the study of holy scrypture.

For the sure auoydyng wherof / my pore aduyce were in the study
therof / to haue a specyall regarde to the wrytyngys and commentys of
5 olde holy fathers. And yet or he fall in hande with the one or the other /
nexte grace and helpe of god to be gotten with abstynence and prayour
& clenness of lyuyng / afore all thyng were it necessary / to come well
and surely enstructyd / in all suche poyntes and artycles as the
chyrche byleuyth. Whiche thynges ones fymely had / and fastely for
10 vndowtyd trouthes presupposyd / then shall reason and they be two
good rulys to examyne and expowne all doutfull textys by / syth the
reder shall be sure that no texte is so to be vnderstanden / as it
standeth agaynst them both / or agaynst any poynt of the catholyke
fayth of Crystys chyrche. And therefore yf it seme to stande agaynst any
15 of them / eyther shall the lyght of naturall reason with the collacyon of
other textys / helpe to fynde out the truthe / or els (whiche is the surest
way) he shall perceyue the trouthe in the commentys of the good holy
doctours of olde / to whom god hath gyuen the grace of
vnderstandyng. Or fynally yf all that he can eyther fynde in other
20 mennys workys / or inuent by goddys ayde of his owne study / can not
suffyce to satysfye / but that any texte yet seme vnto hym contrary to
any poynt of the chyrches faythe and byleue / let hym then as saynt
Augustyne saythe / make hym selfe very sure that there is some fawte
eyther in the translatur / or in the wryter / or nowe a dayes in the
25 prynter / or fynally that for some one let or other he vnderstandeth it
not a ryght. And so let hym reueretly knowlege his ignoraunce / lene
and cleue to the fayth of the chyrche as to an vndoutyd trouthe /
leuyng that texte to be better perceyuyd whan it shall please our lorde
wyth hys lyght to reuele and dysclose it. And in this wyse shall he take
30 a sure way / by whyche he shall be sure or one of two thyngys / that
is to wyt / eyther to perceyue and vnderstande the scrypture ryght / or
els at the leste wyse neuer in suche wyse to take it wronge / that euer
may tourne his soule to parell.

35

The .xxiii. chapiter

Sir quod he I wyll not say nay but this way wyll do well. Howbeit I
fere me that we were lykly to bylde vp many errorrs / yf we square our
tymber and stonys by these .iii. rulys / mennys glosys / reason / and
40 fayth / not that we fynde in scrypture / but that we bryng with vs to
scrypture. For fyrst as for the commentours that ye speke of / eyther
theyr commentys tell vs the same tale that the texte doth / or els an
other. If they tell me the same / I byleue them onely because the texte
sayth the same. And yf they tell me an other / than byleue I them not at
45 all / nor nought I sholde / excepte I sholde byleue men better than god.
And as for reason / what greter enemy can ye fynde to fayth than
reason is / whiche counterpledyth fayth in euery poynt. And wolde ye
then sende them twayne forth to scole togyther that can neuer agre

together / but be redy to fyght together / & eyther scratche out others
eyes by the way? It semyth also somewhat strange / that when god hath
left vs in his holy scrypture well and suffycyently his doctryne / wherby
he wolde we sholde haue warnynge of all suche thynges as he wolde we
5 sholde byleue and do or leue vndone / and hath left vs the scrypture for
none other cause but lor that it shold stande vnto vs for the wytnes of
his wyll / declared vs by wrytyng / that we shold not say nay but we
were warned / & none other cause why the scrypture shold be gyuen vs
/ but to tell vs his plesure & styr vs to fulfyll it / we shal now not shape
10 our fayth after the scrypture / but fyrst frame vs a fayth our selfe / &
then shape the scrypture of god therby / & make it agre therto. This
were in dede a good easy waye for a slouthfull mason that were an euyll
worke man / to make hym a squyer & a ruler of lede / that when he
lyst not to take the labour to hew the stone to the squyer / he may
15 bende the squyer to the stone / and so shall he yet brynge them
together at the lest wayes.

As for the olde commentours quod I / they tell you the same tale
that the texte doth / but they tell it you more playn / as we shall more
talke of after. But surely ye begylde me now in that ye set reason so
20 shorte / for verely I wolde neuer haue went / that ye wold in scrypture
lyke worse a wyse man / then an vnresonable reder. Nor I can not se
why ye sholde reken reason for an enemy to fayth / except ye reken
euery man for your enemy / that is your better & hurteth you not. Thus
were one of your .v. wyttes enemy to an other. And our felyng sholde
25 abhorre our syght / because we may se further by .iiii. myle then we
may fele. How can reason (but yf reason be vnresonable) haue more
dysdayne to here the trouthe / of any poynt of fayth / then to se the
profe of many thynges naturall / wherof reason can no more attayne to
the cause than it can in the artycles of the fayth. But styll for any power
30 that reason hath to perceyue the cause / she shall iudge it impossyble
after she proue it trew / but yf she bylyue her eye better then her wyt.

When ye se the adamant stone drawe yron to it / it greueth not
reason to loke theron / but reason hath a pleasure to beholde the thyng
/ that passeth her power to perceyue. For it is as playne agaynst the
35 rule of reason that an heuy body sholde moue alone any other mocyon
then downward / or that any bodely thyng sholde drawe an other
without touchynge / as is any artycle of the fayth. Nor neuer was there
yet cause by reason assygned that men may perceyue for probable /
but only that it is a secrete proprete of the stone / whiche is as moche
40 to say as I wote nere what. And yet as I say reason can byleue that
thyng well ynough / and be not angry therwith nor stryue agaynst it.
And yet all the rules that euer she lernyd tell her styll that it may not
be.

Ye quod he / but a mannys owne eyen tell him that it may be. And
45 that must nedys content hym.

May a man then better trust his eyes quod I then his wyt?

Ye mary quod he / what may he better truste then his eyen? His
eyen may quod I be deceyuyd and wene they se that they se not yf
reason gyue ouer his hold / excepte ye thynke the iugler blow his galles

through the goblettes bottom / or cut your gerdell afore your face in .xx.
pecys & make it hole agayne / and put a knyfe into his eye and se
neuer the worse / And tourne a plum into a doggys torde in a boyes
mouthe.

5 Nowe happenyd yt madly that euyng with this worde came one of my
folke & asked whyther they sholde make redy for dyner.

 Abyde quod I / let vs haue better meate fyrst. And therwith your
frende and I began to laugh.

10 Well quod I make none haste yet for a lytell whyle. And so wente he
his way halfe out of countenaunce / wenyng that he had done or sayd
somewhat lyke a fole / as he was one that was not very wyse in dede /
and wonte so to do. And then sayd I to your frende. Nowe ye se that
reason is not so proude a dame as ye take her for. She seeth done in
15 dede by nature that she can not perceyue how / and is well contentyd
therwith. She seeth a fonde felowe deceyue her syght and her wyt
therwith and takyth it well and meryly / and is not angry that the
iugeler wyll not teche euery man his craft. And wene ye then that she
wyll take it so hyely that god hym selfe her mayster and maker sholde
20 do what hym lyst / & than tell her what and tell her not how? I pray
you quod I / that our lord was borne of a vyrgyn how know you?

 Mary quod he by scrypture.

 Howe know you quod I that ye sholde byleue the scrypture?

 Mary quod he by fayth.

 Why quod I / what doth fayth tell you therin?

25 Fayth quod he telleth me that holy scrypture is thynges of trouthe
wryten by the secrete techyng of god.

 And wherby know you quod I that ye sholde byleue god?

 Wherby quod he? this is a strange questyon. Euery man quod he
may well wete that.

30 That is trouthe quod I. But is there any horse or any asse that
wottyth that?

 None quod he that I wot of / but yf Balams asse any thyng
vnderstode therof. For he spake lyke a good reasonable asse.

35 If no brute beest can wyt that quod I / and euery man may / what is
the cause why that man may and other bestes may not?

 Mary quod he / for man hath reason and they haue none.

40 A well then quod I / reason must he nedes haue then that shall
perceyue what he sholde byleue. And so must reason not resyst fayth
but walke with her / & as her handmayde so wayte vpon her / that as
contrary as ye take her / yet of a trouthe fayth goth neuer without her.
But lykewyse as yf a mayde be suffred to ronne on the brydle / be cup
shotten / or waxe to prowde / she wyll then waxe copyous and chop
logycke with her maystres / and fare somtyme as she were frantyke /
so yf reason be suffred to renne out at ryot / & wax ouer hye herted and
45 prowde / she wyll not fayle to fall in rebellyon towarde her maystres
fayth. But on the other syde / yf she be well brought vp and well gyded
and kepte in good temper / she shall neuer dysobey fayth beyng in her
ryght mynde. And therefore let reason be well gyded for surely fayth goth
neuer without her.

Nowe in the study of scrypture / in deuysynge vpon the sentence /
in consydeyng what ye rede / in ponderyng the purpose of dyuers
commentes / in comparynge togyder dyuers textys that seme contrary
and be not / albeit I denye not but that grace & goddes especyall helpe
5 is the grete thyng therin / yet vseth he for an instrument mannes
reason therto. God helpeth vs to ete also / but yet not without our
mouth. Now as the hande is the more nymble by the vse of some feates
/ and the legges and fete more swyfte and sure by custome of goynge
and rennyng / and the hole body the more wyldye & lusty / by some
10 kynde of exercyse / so is it no doubtte / but that reason is by study /
labour and exercyse of Logyk / Phylosophy and other lyberall artes
corroborate and quyckened / and the iudgement bothe in them and
also in oratours / lawes & storyes moche ryped. And albeit poetes ben
with many men taken but for paynted wordes / yet do they moche helpe
15 the iudgement / and make a man amonge other thynges well furnyshed
of one specyall thyng / without whiche all lernynge is halfe lame.

What is that quod he?

Mary quod I / a good mother wyt. And therefore are in myne
oppynyon these Lutherans in a madde mynde / that wolde now haue
20 all lernyng saue scrypture onely dene cast away / whiche thynges (yf
the tyme wyll serue) be as me thynketh to be taken & had / & with
reason brought as I sayd before in to the seruyce of dyuynyte. And as
holy saynt Iherom sayth / The Ebrues welle dyspoyle the Egypcyens /
when Crystes lerned men take out of the pagane wryters the ryches and
25 lernynge & wysdome that god gaue vnto them / and employ the same in
the seruyce of dyuynyte aboute the profyte of goddes chosen chyldren of
Israeli te chyrche of Cryste / whiche he hath of the harde stony
paynyms made the chyldren of Abraham.

30

The .xxiiii. chapter

Wyth thys your frende helde as he sayd hym selfe somewhat
content that reason was not so great an enemy to fayth as she semyd.
35 But yet he thought that she sholde haue nede rather to be well brydelyd
/ than to bere moch rule in the interpretacyon of scrypture. But as for
the other poynt that we sholde nedes brynge the fayth wyth vs all redy /
as a rule to lerne the scrypture by / when we come to the scrypture to
lerne the fayth by / that thing he thought in no wyse conuenyent / but
40 a thyng he sayd mych lyke as yf we wolde go make the carte to drawe
the horse.

Well quod I we shall se anone whyther the carte draw the horse or
the horse the carte. Or whyther we be yet happely so blynde / that we
se not well whiche is the carte / whiche is the horse.

45 Fyrst quod I tell me how olde wolde ye that one were ere he come to
the study of scrypture?

By my fayth quod he /I wold haue a crysten mannys chylde begyn
therin very yonge / and therin contynew all his lyfe.

In good fayth quod I / that lyke I not amysse / so that ye do not
mean that ye wolde haue hym all his lyfe lerne nothyng els. And yet
that could I suffer to & allow ryght well in some. But yet yf he dyd neuer
in his lyfe lerne ought elles / how olde thynke ye that he shold be / or
5 he lernyd the artycles of his byleue in the byble? I can not redely tell
quod he / for I haue not sene it assayed. Well quod I syth we be not
sure howe longe it wolde be in lernynge there / were it not best then
that for that whyle he were taught hys crede before in his owne mother
tonge?

10 I deny not that quod he / that he sholde conne his crede byfore /
bycause euery crysten mannys chylde by the lawe sholde knowe his
faythe as sone as he coude / but I say he sholde not therwith take vpon
hym to iudge and examyne holy scrypture therby.

15 Well quod I let this crysten chylde of ours alone for a whyle. And let
vs consyder if there were a good olde ydolater that neuer had herde in
all his lyfe any thyng of our byleue or of other god then onely the man
in the mone / whom he had watched and worshypped euery frosty
nyght. If this man myght sodeynly haue the hole byble tourned in to his
owne tonge and rede it ouer / thynke ye that he sholde therby lerne all
20 the artycles of the fayth?

I thynke quod he that he myght.

Thynke ye so quod I? I put case that he byleued that all the boke
were lyes?

25 Mary quod he / that may he by the boke hym selfe lerne the
contrary. For the boke in tellynge his tale affyrmeth his tale and techeth
it to be trewe.

30 Ye say very trouth quod I yf it were all one to rede a thyng & lerne a
thyng. But nowe myght there be another boke made also with lesse
wonders and fewer and therby lesse vnlykely / and yet all vntrewe. And
howe sholde his mynde gyue hym than that this boke tellynge so
incredyble wonders sholde be trewe?

Nay quod he that thyng must he nedes byleue or els he can perceyue
nothyng.

35 Well quod I then is there one poynt of fayth one great lesson to be
lerned without the boke / that must be lerned some where eyther by
god or man / or els the hole boke wyll do vs lytell seruyce. And of whom
we shall lerne that / we shall se hereafter. But now suppose that this
olde ydolater were thorowly perswaded in his mynde that all the boke
were trew / thynke you than that he sholde fynde out therin all the
40 artycles of our faythe?

I thynke quod he that he sholde.

Thynke ye so quod I? be it so than. But thynke ye that he shall fynde
them out all in a weke?

Nay quod he / that can he not do.

45 Well quod I than / syth he shall not at the leste wyse fynde them out
all on a day / let vs leue hym a lytell whyle in sekyng / and we shall
retourne agayne after to hym & loke what he shall hauefounden. And in
the meane season we shall go loke agayne vpon our good lytell godson
the boy parde that we crystened ryght now and taught hym his

crede and set hym to scrypture. Were it nede that this chylde
knewe no more of his fayth / but his crede before he go to
scrypture?

Me thynketh quod he that it were ynoughe.

5 Be it so than quod I.

What yf it sholde fortune hym to fynde some texte of scrypture that
sholde seme to hym to be contrary to his crede. As for ensample yf he
happened vpon the redynge of these wordes / Dii estis et filii excelsi
omnes. Goddes be ye all and the chyl dren of the hye god / what yf he
10 wold wene that syth in these wordes it is sayd all good men be the
chyl dren of god / our sauour Cryst were not goddes onely begoten
sonne / but his sonne in suche wyse / as god by the prophet calleth all
good men?

That coulde he not thynke quod he. For he shold in other partes of
15 scrypture fynde many places / that sholde shewe hym well the
contrary.

Well sayd quod I and very truth. But now in the meane tyme / wyll
ye that he shall byleue as that texte shall seme to sounde to hym
agaynst his crede / tyll he haue founde an other texte in scrypture /
20 that answeyryth it / and semyth to hym to say more playnely the
contrary?

Nay quod he not one houre. For he seeth / that though other good
men be callyd goddys chyl dren and goddys / yet as they be not very
goddys / so be they not goddys very naturall chyl dren by generacyon
25 but by acceptacyon / where as the crede sayeth of our sauour / that
he is goddes onely bygotten sonne / that sygnyfyeth hym to be hys
sonne by generacyon.

That is quod I very trew / and well and resonably consyderyd / and
accordyng vnto the very ryght fayth. But now consyder / that ye make
30 hym by & by fall to the squaryng of his ston es / lyke that slouthfull
mason that ye spake of with his leden rule. For now ye make hym to
examyne the trouthe of this texte of the psalme / by the artycle of the
fayth / which he brought with hym / and by a colleccyon and
discourse of reason. And so forthwith ye fynde both these rules
35 necessary to the dyscussyon of scrypture. Of whiche twayne ye wolde in
the bygynnyng admyt neyther nother.

But now go further. What yf he wolde vpon this texte / Homines et
iumenta saluabis deus (God thou shalt saue bothe man & bestys) wene
that bestys had immortall soulys as men haue / and the man & beste
40 sholde be bothe saued at laste / and so that no dedely synne sholde be
punyshed with euerlastyng payne / tyll he came to other textys that
sholde proue well the contrary / were that best? or els were it better
that besyde his crede he had knowlege byfore of these artycles of our
fayth / that onely our soulys be immortall / & not bestys also / And
45 that the payne of hell shalbe for synners euer lastyng / And that he
may therby with reason ioyned therto / perceyue that this texte / thou
shalt saue bothe men and bestes / is ment by some other kynde of
sauyng & preseruyng here in this world and not of bryngyng bothe to
heuen?

All this may he know quod he by scrypture selfe well ynough. That wote I well quod I. And yet as playne as Cryst speketh of hell in the gospell / Origene for all that / whiche neyther was a naughty man nor vnlearned in scrypture / coulde not so clerely se it / but that he sayd the
5 contrary. And toke the wordes of Cryst in a wronge sense. And wold peraduenture with one that wold stycke onely vpon the wordes of scrypture (leuyng the ryght sense therof / whiche god & his holy spyryte hath taught his chyrche) brynge hym to a baye therin / that he sholde be fayne not our chylde onely / but also a well elderly man and in
10 scrypture well forwarde / to take hym in conclusyon to the faythe of Crystys chyrche.

Nowe yf our chylde sholde rede on the texte of scrypture / without care of the commentes / and wythout any further enstruccyon of the poyntes of our faythe / than be specyfyed in our common crede / made
15 in the begynnyng as a brefe remembraunce by the appostles / not settinge oute in soo shorte a thyng and clerely declaryng all that we be bounden to byleue / all be it that he sholde well fynde in scrypture many playne and open textys / whereby the godhedde of our sauour and his egalyte with his father maye well and suffycyently be proued /
20 yet were he not vnlykely by suche other textys as seme to shewe hym to be lesse then his father / to fall in to the secte and heresy of the Arryanys. And agaynst those other textys prouyng his egall godhed / to deuyse suche false gloses as they dyd. Where as beyng before taught and confirmed by the faythe of the chyrche / that oure sauoure is one
25 god and one egall substaunce with his father / he shall well perceyue and vnderstande thereby / that all the textys that seme to make hym lesse / be nothyng to be vnderstanden of his godhedde / but of his manhode onely. As when we commonly speke of oure selfe and of oure owne nature / and saye we shall dye and wormes ete vs vp / and
30 tourne all to duste / we mene all this by oure body onely / and nothyng entende thereby to denye the immortalyte of oure soule.

We maye not dyne to day yf I shold reken you the tenthe parte of suche thynges as we muste nedes (vppon losse of heuen) byleue / whiche neyther oure chylde with his onely crede (and moche lesse our
35 olde ydolater withoute crede) sholde soo fynde oute by scrypture / but that they were bothe well lykely to take the scrypture to the wronge parte / excepte we take with vs for a rule of interpretacyon / the artycles of oure faythe.

40

The .xxv. chapter

Why than quod he / this were as moche to saye / as that god had not well wryten his holy scrypture / yf he haue caused it to be wry ten
45 so / as men may be so sone deceyued therin / that they were as lykely and (as it semyth by you) more lykely to fall into a false way / than fynde out the trewe. And better were it than that god had not gyuen vs the scrypture at all / than to gyue vs a waye to walke / wherein we were

more lykely to synke than saue our selfe.

Holy scripture quod I / bothe is suche as I haue sayed / and yet no
thyng foloweth it therupon / that god hath not caused it to be wryten
well / or that it had bene better to haue kept it from vs. And albe it that
5 in this poynt were a great occasyon of a longe tale / in declaryng and
makyng open / that god hath in the wrytynge of holy scripture vsed so
hyghe wysedom / and shewed such a wonderfull temperaunce / that
the very straunge famylyar fassyon therof / may to good men and wyse
well declare / that as it was wryten by men / so was it indyted by god /
10 yet passyng ouer the prayse / I wyll speke one worde or twayne for the
answere of suche blame as ye lay therto. For it is almoste a comen
thyng amonge men so to speke somtyme / as though they coude
amende the workys of god. And few men be there I wene / but they
thynke that yf they had bene of goddys counsell / in the makyng of the
15 worlde / though they dare not be so bold to say / that they coude haue
made it better / yet yf they myght haue ruled it / he shold haue made
many thynges of an other fassyon. And for all that / yf he wolde yet call
vs all to counsell / and chaunge nothyng tyll we were vpon euery
thyng all agreed / the worlde were well lykely tyll domys day to go forth
20 on / as it goth all redy / sauynge that I wote nere whyther we wolde all
agre to be wynged.

But as for the scripture shortly / god hath so deuysed it / that he
hath gyuen the worlde therin an inestymable treasure as the case
standeth. And yet we sholde happely nothyng haue neded therof / yf
25 the woundes of our owne foly had not of our great necessyte and goddys
greate goodnes requyred it. For at our creacyon he gaue but two
preceptys or thre / by his owne holy mouth to our fyrste parentes. And
as for all that was for theym to do besyde / the reason whyche he had
planted in theyr soulys / gaue them suffycient warnynge / wherof the
30 hole some stode in effecte / in the honoure of god and goddys frendys /
wyth loue of eche to the other / and to theyr ofsprynge and lynage. But
the preceptys that he gaue by mouthe was thre. Twayne
commaundyng generacyon and etynge. The thyrde forbeyng the tre
of knowlege. And that was for theym continuall / where the other
35 twayne albe it they were therto bounden by the precepte / yet were not
they and theyr posteryte bounden thereto at all houres and all places.
But nede was it in the begynnyng to gyue theym knowledge thereof /
for as moche as they had no hunger to warne theym of the one / nor
sensuall rebellyous appetyte to warne them of the other. But after that
40 they were by god ones admonysshed thereof / than dyd reason
interprete the remenaunt / wherby they wyst that they sholde ete for
conseruacyon of theyr bodyes / and ingendre for propagacyon of theyr
kynde. And syth they perceyued that these two thynges was the ende
and entent of those commaundementes / they thereby consequently
45 knewe whan it was tyme and place and occasyon conuenient to fulfill
theym. But whan they had ones at the subtyll suasyon of the deuyll /
broken the thyrde commaundement in tastynge the forboden fruyte /
beyng than expelled out of paradyce / than concernynge theyr foode &
engenderyng / not onely reason ofte shewed them / what was honest

and profytable / but also sensualyte / what was bestly and pleasaunte
/ whiche sensualyte laboured soo busyly to cause man to set by delyte
about good and conuentyente / that for the resystence thereof / it then
bycame to be the spyrytuall busynesse and occupacyon of man / so to
5 preserue and brynge vp the body / that it were not suffered to mayster
the soule / & so to rule & brydyll sensualyte / that it were subiecte &
obedyent vnto reason / as god wylled the woman to be subiecte and
obedyencer of man. Wherein god wolde that we were lerned rather to
suffer oure sensuall partyes playne and morne / thanne to folowe theyr
10 owne hurte and oures to. As it hadde bene better for our father Adam
and vs all / that he hadde suffered his wyfe oure mother Eue / to be
sad and angry bothe / and lyke a woman to wepe to / thanne to haue
eten the apple for felyshyp to please her withall.

Nowe dyd all the synne anone sprynge vp for the more parte vpon
15 the occasyon of fedyng and engenderyng / whereof spronge /
Couetyse / Glotonye / Slouthe / Wrothe / and Lechery. And many
tymej pryde and enuye as one / perceyunge hym selfe in these thynges
in better condycyon or worse than another / so beganne to conceyue a
setting by hym selfe / with contempte of other / or enuye & hatred to
20 some other (sauynge that pryde sometyme also sprange out of the soule)
and so lyked it selfe that it enuyed the better as Cayme dyd Abell / and
for to be the more set by / pryde longed superfluously to gete by
couetyse and gredynes many folkes lyuynge in his owne handes / to
make other folkes serue hym and honoure and hange vppon hym for
25 necessaryte.

And of all these myscheues was alwaye sensualyte redy to mynyster
matter / and by all the dores and wyndowes of the body by felyng /
tastyng / smellyng / syght and heryng / ceased neuer to sende in
occasyons to the soule / nor the deuyll neuer ceased for his parte
30 dylygently to put forward. Agaynste whome dyd reason resyste / with
good counsaile gyuen to the soule / and good spyrytes appoynted by
god / gaue theyr helpe also / and god assysted with his ayde and grace
/ where he founde the person wyllynge to worke therewith. And in this
maner contynued man longe tyme / not wythout reuelacyon of Cryste
35 ones to come. Whiche faythe delyuered to the father / wente by the
mouthe to the sonne / And soo frome chylde to chylde / herde and
byleued amonge theym. And what soo were goddes pleasure besyde
(that nature and reason coulde not playnely shewe theym) god of his
goodnes by specyall message gaue theym vndoubted knowledge / as he
40 dydde to Noe / Loth and Abraham / and dyuers other / whereof some
be synce wrytten and comprysed in scrypture / and of lykelyhodde not
all. For well probable is it / that the patryarkes in dyuers thynges that
they dyd / as in theyr dyue maryages / and some suche other thynges
(as thanne were by theym well done for the tyme) were to theym
45 appoynted specyally by god / for causes well knowen to hym selfe / and
vnknowen to vs / and the thynges nowe forbeden vs / and therefore to
vs vnlefull / excepte goddes lyke ordenaunce or dyspensacyon sholde
here after in generall or pertyculer be reueled to the contrary.

But soo was it after that the worlde waxynge worse / ryght good and

vertuous lygnages declyned and decayed. And by the lewde
conuersacyon of euyll people / fell by dysorder in suche a blyndnes /
that all be it some were there alwaye that perceyued well theyr dutye /
yet were the commen people of the chyldren of Israeli by custome of
5 synne soo darked in theyr naturall knowledge / that they lacked in
many thynges the ryght perceyuyng / that reason (had it not bene by
euyll custome corrupted) myght verely well haue shewed them.

For the remedy wherof god of his endlesse mercy / by the lawe
wrytten with his owne fynger vnto Moyses in the tables of stone / by the
10 .x. commaundementes / put in remembraunce agayne certayne
conclusyons of the lawe of nature / whiche theyr reason (ouerwhelmed
wyth sensualyte) hadde than forgotten. And to the ende that they sholde
kepe his byhestes the better / he gaue them a great hepe of the lawes
/ and ceremonyes mo / to kepe them in strytely for strayenge abrode
15 in ryot. And wrought great wonders that they sholde well se / that those
thynges were his owne dede / whereby they myght haue the more drede
to transgresse them. And there in wrytynge he gaue a warnynge also of
Cryste / that god wolde ones sende them one spryngynge of theym
selfe / to whome they sholde gyue herynge in stede of Moyses. Of
20 whome also as well before as after by Patriarkes and prophetes / by
fygures and prophesyes / god ceased not in suche wyse to foreshewe
his commyng / his cause / his luyng / his dyenge / his resurreccyon
/ and his holy actes / that yf pryde and enuy hadde not letted it / the
fygures and prophesyes set and compared with his commynge /
25 conuersacyon and doynge myght well haue made all the Iewes to
knowe hym. And for the perceyuyng and good vnderstandynge of the
lawe wrytten / he sent alwaye some good men / whose wordes / well
luyng / and sometyme also manyfeste myracles shewed therewith /
neuer lefte them dystytute of suffycyent knowledge that longed to lerne
30 the lawe. Not to plete it and for glory to dyspute it / but to teche it
agayne mekely. And as mannes frayltye coulde suffre it / specyally to
fulfyll and kepe it.

Yet after all this / when the worlde was in a more decaye and ruyne
of all vertue / than came oure sauoure Criste to redeme vs with his
35 dethe / and leue vs his newe lawe / whereof was longe before
prophecyed by the prophete Hyeromy. Lo the dayes be commynge sayd
our lorde / whan I shall ordre and dyspose to the house of Israeli and
the house of Iuda / a newe couenaunt or testament. I shall gyue my
lawe in theyr myndes. And I shal wryte it in theyr harte. And I wyll be
40 theyr lorde and they shall be my people. This lawe wryten in mennys so
hartys / was accordynge to the wordys of the prophete fyrste brought by
our sauour to the house of Israeli and the house of Iuda / to whome as
hym selfe sayth he was specyally sent. I am not sent sayth our lord /
but vnto the shcpe that are perysshed of the house of Israeli. And also
45 he sayd / it is not good to take the brede fro the borde of the chyldren
and caste it to dogges. But yet not onely the redy towardnes of some
paynyms / caused them to be parte takers of that brede / but also sone
after the stubburnes and obstynate infydelyte of the Iewes / caused
saynt Poule and the apostles to say vnto theyr face / The gospell of

cryst was ordeyned by god to be fyrst preched vnto you. But syth that
ye refuse it / Lo we departe frome you to the gentylys. And so was in
theyr stede / the chyrche gathered of all the worlde abrode. All whiche
notwithstandynge / bothe were there at that tyme out of the Iewes
5 conuerted and made many a good crysten man / and many of the same
people tourned vnto Cryste synce / and in conclusyon the tyme shall
come / when the remenaunt that shall be than lefte / shall saue them
selfe by the same faythe.

This is called the lawe of Crystes faythe / the lawe of hys holy
10 gossell. I mene not onely the wordes wrytten in the bookes of hys
euangelystes / But moche more specyally the substaunce of our fayth it
selfe / whiche oure lorde sayd he wolde wryte in mennes hartes / not
onely bycause of the secrete operacyon of god and his holy spyryte / in
iustifyenge the good crysten / eyther by the workynge with mannes
15 good wyll / to the perfeccyon of faythe in his soule / or with the good
intente of the offerers / to the secret infusyon of that vertue in to the
soule of an innocent infant / but also for that he fyrste without
wrytynge reueled those heuenly mysteryes by hys blessyd mouth /
thorowe the eres of his appostles and dyscyples in to theyr holy hartes /
20 or rather as it semeth it was inwardely infused in to saynt Peter his
harte / by the secrete inspyracyon of god / without eyther wrytynge or
any outwarde worde.

For whiche cause when he hadde vppon Crystes questyon
demaundyng / of whome saye you that I am / answered and sayd.
25 Thou arte Cryst the sonne of the Iuyng god / whiche arte commen in
to this worlde.

Our sauoure sayd agayne vnto hym. Thou arte blessyd Symon the
sonne of Iohan / for neyther flesshe nor blode hathe reueled and
shewed this to the / but my father that is in heuen. And thus it
30 appereth that the fayth came in to saynt Peter his harte as to the prynce
of the appostles without herynge by secrete inspyracyon / & in to the
remenaunt by his confessyon and Crystes holy mouthe. And by them
in lyke maner / fyrst without wrytynge by onely wordes and prechyng
/ so was it spredde abrode in the worlde / that his fayth was by the
35 mouthes of his holy messengers put in to mennes eres / & by his holy
hande wrytten in mennes hartes or euer any worde therof almost was
wrytten in the boke. And so was it conuenyent for the lawe of lyfe /
rather to be wrytten in the Iuely myndes of men / than in the dede
skynnes of bestes. And I nothyng doubte / but all had it so ben / that
40 neuer gossell hadde ben wrytten / yet sholde the substaunce of this
fayth neuer haue fallen out of crysten folkes hartes / but the same
spyryte that planted it / the same sholde haue watered it / the same
shold haue kepte it / that same shold haue encreased it.

But so hathe it lyked our lorde / after his hye wysdome to proude /
45 that some of his dyscyples haue wrytten many thynges of his holy lyfe /
doctryne and faythe / and yet farre frome all / whiche (as saynt Iohan
sayth) the worlde coulde not haue comprehended.

These bokes are tempred by the secrete counsaile of the holy goost
so playne and symple / that euery man may fynde in them that he

maye perceyue. And yet so hyghe agayne and so harde / that no man is
there so connyng / but he may fynde in them thynges farre aboute his
reche / farre to profounde to perce vnto. Nowe were to the crysten
people the poyntes of Crystes fayth (with whiche poyntes our lorde
5 wolde haue them charged) knowen / as I saye and planted before / and
by reason therof they farre the better vnderstode those bokes. And all
though there myghte happely be some textys / whiche were not yet of
necessyte for them to perceyue / yet by the poyntys of theyr faythe were
they warnyd / that no texte myghte there be constrewyd contrary to
10 theyr fayth.

And none Euangelyst was there nor none Appostle / that by
wrytynge euer sente the faythe to any nacyon / but yf they were furste
enformyd by worde / and that god had begon his chyrche in that place.

And for my parte I wolde lytell doubt / but that the euangelystys and
15 appostles bothe / of many great and secrete mysteryes spake moche
more openly / and moche more playnely by mouth amonge the people /
than euer they put it in wrytynge / for as moche as theyr wrytynge
were lykly ynoughe at that tyme / to come into the handys of paganys
and paynymys / suche hoggys and doggys as were not metely to haue
20 those precyous perlys put vppon theyr nose / nor that holy foode to be
dashyd in theyr teeth. For whiche cause saynt Peter in his furste
sermon vnto the Iewes / abstaynyd frome the declaracyon of Crystys
godhed and egalytee wyth his father / as oure sauoure hym self (when
the Iewes that were vnworthy to here it / were offendyd wyth that he
25 tolde them playnly that he was the sonne of god) wythdrew the
doctryne frome them agayn / and coueryd it with the verse of the
prophete / I haue sayd ye be goddys and sonnys of the hye god all / as
though he wolde saye / what greuyth it you that name in me / whiche
name god by the prophete hath gyuen to all good men. In whiche
30 demeanoure he denyed not the trouthe that he hadde sayde of hym selfe
/ but he blyndyd theyr wylfully wynkyng eyes / in hydyng and
puttyng vp agayne the iewell / that he began to bryng forthe and
shewe them / the bryght lustre where of theyr bleryd eyes myght not
endure to beholde.

And what maruell though the appostles thus dyd in theyr speche
afore infydels / or wrytynge that myghte come into pagans handys /
whan it apperyth vppon the epystles of saynt Poule / that among the
crysten flocke where he taught them by mouthe / he told them not all
the trouthis at one tale / Not onely for that it were to longe / but also
40 for that in the begynnyng / they coulde not happely well haue abyden
it. And therefore as Cryste sayde to his dyscyples / I haue more to say to
you / but ye be not able to bere it yet / whiche onys apperyd / what
tyme that vppon the dysclosyng of the grete mystery of the holy
sacramente the holy fleshe of hys body / the herers sayde / who canne
45 abyde thys harde worde / and there wyth wente almoste all theyre waye
/ so dydd saynte Poule I saye by the Corynthyans / not teche them all
at onys.

And therefore he saythe in hys Epystle to them / I haue gyuen you
hytherto but mylke and not stronge meate. And wysdome speke we

(saythe he) among folke that be parfyt. Nor I mene not this that there were any poyntys of the substaunce of the fayth / which he shewyd to the clargy that he kepte from the lay people / or shewyd vnto one man / that he kept from a nother / but that to no man lyghtly he shewed all at
5 onys. But bycause some cam from the Iewes and some cam of the gentylys / therfore as they were / so were they handelyd / not onely by grace but also by wysdom / and not onely in the poyntys of the fayth / but also in the ryghtes and ceremonyes / eyther of the chyrche or of Moyses lawe: wherof some ceremonyes were forthwith abolyshed / some
10 not by and by / and some taken in to the chyrche of Cryst and obseruyd styll. But in conclusyon when they were mete therefore / they were all taught / all that god wold haue them bounden to byleue. And than doubtte I nothyng / but that many thyngys that nowe be very darke in holy scrypture / were by the appostles (to whome our lorde
15 openyd theyr wyttys / that they myghte vnderstande scrypture) so playnly declaryd / that they were by the people well and clerely vnderstanden. I say not all the hole scrypture / in whyche it maye be that many a secrete mystery lyeth yet coueryd / concernynge the comynge of Antecryste / and the daye / maner and fassyon / of the
20 fynall iudgement / whyche shall neuer be fully dysclosyd / tyll the tymys appoyntyd by goddys hye prouydence mete and conuenient for them. And from tyme to tyme as it lykyth his maiestye to haue thyngys knowen or done in his chyrche / so is it no doubt / but he temperyth his reuelacyons / and in suche wyse dothe insinuate and inspyre them
25 into the brestys of his crysten people / that by the secrete instyncte of the holy gost / they consent and agre togyther in one / except heretykys that rebell and refuse to be obeydent to god and his chyrche.

Who be therby cut of from the lyuely tre of that vyne / and waxynge wythered braunches / be kepte but for the fyre fyrste here and after in
30 hell / excepte they repent and call for grace / that may graft them into the stocke agayne. But as it may be that many thyngys be there not all at onys reuelyd and vnderstanden in the scrypture / but by sondry tymys and agys mo thyngys and mo by god vnto his chyrche dysclosyd / and that as it shall lyke his hygh goodnes and wysdome to dyspence
35 and dyspose / & as it may be also in thyngys to be done maye fall in his chyrche varyete mutacyon and chaunge / so am I very sure that the holy goste that god sente into his chyrche / And Cryste hym selfe that hathe promysyd vnto the ende of the worlde to perseuer and abyde in his chyrche / shall neuer suffer his catholyke chyrche neyther to agree
40 to the makynge of any lawe that shall be to god dampnably dyspleasaunte / nor of any trewth that god wolde were beleuyd to determyne or byleue the contrary. For than hadde Cryste whiche is all trouthe broken his promyse / and (whyche were blasphemy and abhomynable to thynke) were waxen vntrewe. And therefore ouer this as
45 it may be that as I sayd before / some thynges in holy scrypture be not yet fully perceyued & vnderstanden / so am I very sure / that the chyrch neyther doth nor can do dampnably conster it wronge / whiche it sholde yf they sholde conster it so as it sholde make an artycle of mysse byleue and of a false erronyous faythe. As if they sholde by

mysse construccyon of the scrypture brynge vp and byleue that Cryst
were one god & egall with his father and with the holy goost / yf the
trouth were otherwise in dede. And therefore syth the chyrche (in whiche
Cryst is assystent and his holy spyryte) can not to goddes dyspleasure
5 and theyr dampnacyon fall in any false byleue / in any suche
substancyall poynte of the faythe / it muste nedes be therfore / that
Arrius & all other heretyques be drowned in dampnable errors. The
contrary oppynyon of whose excecrable heresyys / the chyrche was in
the begynnynge taught / by the mouthe of Cryst hym selfe. And after of
10 his blessyd appostles / whiche redde & declared the scryptures amonge
the people in theyr tyme / shewyng them in what wyse the wordes of
holy scrypture proued the trouth of suche artycles of the fayth / as they
taught them by mouth. And how such textes as semyd the contrary /
were not contrary in dede. And therewith declared them of those textys
15 the ryght vnderstandynge.

And albe it that our sauour shewed and playnly proued that in the
scrypture was gyuen good tokens and sufficyent knowlege of hym / yet
to the entent we sholde well knowe that his owne worde and
ordenaunce nedeth none other authoryte but hym selfe / but is to be
20 byleued and obeyed / be it wrytten or not wrytten / some thynges dyd
he therfore byd to be done / and some thynges also to be byleued /
whereof we haue in holy scrypture no wrytynge in the worlde. Saynt
Poule commaundeth the people of Thessalonica in his epystle to kepe
the tradycyons that he toke them eyther by his wrytynge or by his bare
25 worde. For the wordes that he sayd amonge them / our lorde had tolde
them hym for them. And therefore he wryteth vnto the Corynthyes / that
of the holy howsyll the sacrament of the awter he had shewed them the
matter and the maner by mouth / as our lorde had hymselfe taught it
to hym. And therefore no doubt is there / but that by the appostles was
30 the chyrch more fully taught of that matter / than euer was wrytten in
all the scrypture. There was lerned the maner and forme of
consecracyon. There was lerned moche of the mystycall gestures and
seremonyes vsed in the masse. And yf any man doubte therof / let hym
consyder / where sholde we els haue the begynnynge of the water put
35 with the wyne into the chalyce. For well we wote that the scrypture
byddeth it not. And euery wyse man maye well wytte / than whan the
gospell speketh onely of wyne / there durste no man in this worlde
haue bene so bolde to put any thyng els therto. For when the gospell
spekyth of wyne onely tournyd into his precyous blode / what man
40 wolde aduenture to make any myxture of water? And now is the
chyrche so well acertenyd of goddys pleasure therin wythout any
scrypture / that they not onely dare put in water / but also dare not
leue it out. And wherby knewe that chyrche this thyng / but by god
and his holy appostles / whyche taught yt in theyr tyme? And so wente
45 it forth from age to age / contynued in the chyrch vntyll this day /
begonne by god in the begynnynge / without any mencyon made in holy
scrypture.

How be it Luther sayth because it is not commaundyd by scrypture
/ we maye chose therefore whyther we wyll do it or leue it. For this one

poynt is the very fond foundacyon and grounde of all his greate heresydes / that a man is not bounden to byleue any thyng but yf it may be prouyd euydently by scrypture. And there vppon goth he so farforth / that no scrypture can be euydent to proue any thyng that he
5 lyst to deny. For he wyll not agre it for euydent be it neuer so playn. And he wyll call euydent for hym that texte / that is euydent agaynst hym. And somtyme yf it be to playne agaynste hym / than wyll he call it no scrypture / as he playth with the pystle of saynt Iamys. And because the olde holy doctours be full and hole agaynst hym / he settyth them
10 all at nought. And with these worshypfull wyse ways he proclamyth hym self a conquerour / where besydes all the remenaunt / wherin euery chylde may se his proud frantyke foly / he is shamfully put to flyght in the fyrst poynt / that is to wyt that no thyng is to be byleued for a sure trouth / but yf it appere proued and euydent in holy wryt.
15 And yet had that poynt at the furste face some vysage of probabylyte. How be it / to say the trouth / he were a lewde lorell that wolde nothyng do that his mayster wolde byd hym / nor no thyng byleue that his mayster wolde tell hym / but yf he take it hym in wrytyng / as Luther playth with Cryst. Of whose wordis or actys he wyll byleue
20 nothyng / excepte he fynde it in scrypture / and that playne and euydente. Nowe must he by that meanys condemne the chyrche of Cryste / for that they sayntyfye not the saturdaye / whyche was the sabbaothe daye instytute by god amonge the Iewes / commaundyng the sabbaothe daye to be kepte holy. And albeit the matter of the
25 precepte is morall and the daye legall / so that it maye be chaunged / yet wyll there I wene no manne thynke / that euer the chyrche wolde take vppon them to chaunge it without specyall ordenaunce of god. Wherof we fynde no remembraunce at all in holy scripture. By what
30 scripture is euydently knowen that euery man & woman hath power to mynyster the sacrament of baptyse? Let it be shewed / eyther by commaundement / consayle / lycence or example expressyd in scrypture.

Many thynges are there lyke / whiche as holy doctours agree / were taught the appostles by Cryst / and the chyrche by the appostles / and
35 so cornen downe to our dayes by contynuall successyon fro theyrs. But I wyll let all other passe ouer and speke but of one.

Euery good crysten man I doubte not byleueth that our blessyd lady was a perpetuall vyrgyn / as well after the byrthe of Cryst as before. For it were a straunge thyng that she sholde after that blessyd byrthe / be
40 lesse mynded to clennes and puryte / and set lesse by her holy purpose and promyse of chastyte / vowed and dedycate vnto god / then she dyd before. For surely who so consydereth the wordes of the gospell in saynt Luke shall well perceyue that she had vowed vyrgynyte. For when the aungell had sayd vnto her / Lo thou shalte conceyue in thy wombe and
45 brynge forth a chylde / and thou shalte call his name Iesus / she answered hym / how may this be? for as for man I know none / which though it be spoken but for the tyme than present / yet must it nedes sygnyfye that she neuer wolde knowe none after the maner of spekyng. By whiche a nonne myght say / as for man there medeleth none with

me / sygnyfyenge that neuer there shall. And in common speche is that
fygure moch in vse. By whiche a woman sayth of one / whom she is
determynd neuer to mary / we maye well talke togyder / but we wedde
not togyder / meanyng that they neuer shall wedde togyder. And in
5 suche wyse ment our lady when she sayd / howe may this be for I
knowe no man / meanyng that she neuer wolde medle with man. Or
ellys had her answeere nothyng ben to purpose. For the auigell sayd
not / Lo thou arte conceyued / whiche yf he had sayd / she myght well
haue meruayled onely for that she knew no man all redy. But when he
10 sayd thou shalte conceyue / this coulde be no meruayle vnto her / for
that she knew no man all redy. And therefore syth she meruayled howe it
myght be that euer she sholde conceyue and haue a chylde / it muste
nedys be that her answeere ment that she neuer wolde medle with man.
And therefore she meruayled because he sayd it sholde be and she
15 knewe not howe it coulde be / but the wayes by whiche she was at full
poynt with her selfe that it sholde neuer be / so that then he shewed
her howe it sholde come aboute / by the holy gost commynge in to her
/ and the power of god on hyghe shadowynge her. And then she
assented and sayd / Lo here the hande mayde of god / be it done to me
20 after thy worde as thou tellest me. And thus appereth it euydently /
that she had than a full determynd purpose of vyrginite. And that as it
semeth suche as she thought not lawfull to chaunge. For els whan the
aungell dyd the message / she myght haue enclynd therto though she
had before ben in another mynde. Nowe whan she had then so full and
25 fast a purpose of perpetuall vyrgynyte before the byrthe of her blessyd
chylde / whiche came amonge his other heuenly doctryne to call and
exorte the worlde frome all pleasure of the flesshe to the purytye and
clennes of the body and soule / and frome the desyre of carnall
generacyon to a gostly regeneracyon in grace / more were it then
30 wonder yf she sholde haue then more regarde of fleshly delyte / or
cure of worldly procreacyon / than euer she had before her celestyall
concepcon of her maker / made man in her blessyd wombe? Or what
man coulde thynke it that euer god wolde suffre any erthly man after /
to be conceyued in that holy closet taken vp and consecrate so specyally
35 to god? This reuerent artycle of our ladyes perpetuall vyrgynyte / the
chyrch of Cryst beyng taught the trouthe by Cryst / perpetually hath
byleued synce the tyme of Cryst. And yet is there no worde thereof in
Crystes gospell wrytten / but rather dyuers textes so sownyng to the
contrary / that by the wronge vnderstandynge of them / the heretyke
40 Eluydyus toke the occasyon of his heresy / by whiche he wolde that our
lady alter the byrth of Cryst had other chyldren by Ioseph. Howe can we
than say that we coulde without the lernynge of the fayth before / fynde
out all the poyntes in the scrypture / when there be some that all
cristendome byleue / and beleue them self bounden to beleue / wherof
45 the scrypture gyueth no playne doctryne / but rather semeth to say the
contrary.

But as I began to saye / the holy appostles beyng taught by theyr
grete mayster Cryst / dyd teche vnto the chyrch as well the artycles of
the fayth / as the vnderstandynge of suche textes of scrypture as Was

mete and conuenient for the matter. Wherby it is not vnlykely that the
gospell of saynt Iohan / and the epystles of saynt Poule / were than
better vnderstanden amonge the common people / than they be
Peradventure nowe with some / that take themselfe for grete clerkes.
5 And as the appostles at that tyme taught the people / so dyd euer some
of them that herde them teche forth / and leue theyr doctryne and
tradycyons to other that came after. By reason wherof / not onely cam
the rytys & sacramentes and the artycles of our fay the from hande to
hande / from Cryst & his appostles vnto our dayes / but also the grete
10 parte of the ryght vnderstandynge of holy scrypture by good and godly
wryters of sundry tymes. By whose good and holesome doctryne set
forth by theyr vertue with goddes good inspyracyon grace and helpe of
the holy gost / we haue also the knowledge and perceyunge what was
the faythe of Crystes chyrche in euery tyme synce. And therby perceyue
15 we that these heretyques be not onely barkers agaynst the fayth that
nowe is / but also that hath ben euer synce Cryst dyed.

And therefore is holy scrypture as I sayd the hiest and the best
lernynge that any man can haue / yf one take the ryght way in the
lernynge.

20 It is (as a good holy saynt sayth) so meruaylously tempered / that a
mouse may wade therin / & an olyphaunt be drowned therin. For there
is no man so lowe / but yf he wyll seke his way with the staffe of his
fayth in his hande / and holde that fast and serche the way therwith /
and haue the olde holy fathers also for his gydes / goyng on with a good
25 purpose and a lowly harte / vsynge reason & refusynge no good
lernynge / with callynge of god for wysdome grace and helpe that he
maye well kepe his way and folowe his good gydes / than shall he neuer
fall in parel / but well and surely wade thorowe / and come to suche
ende of his iourney as hym selfe wolde well wysshe. But surely yf he be
30 as longe as Longyus / and haue an hie harte and trust vpon his owne
wytte (as he dothe (loke he neuer so lowly) that setteth all the olde holy
fathers at nought) that felowe shall not fayle to synke ouer the eres and
drowne. And of all wrechis worst shall he walke / that forsynge lytell of
the fayth of Crystes chyrche / commeth to the scrypture of god to loke
35 and trye therin whyther the chyrche byleue a ryght or not. For eyther
doubteth he whyther Cryst teche his chyrche trewe / or ellys whyther
Cryste techeth it at all or not. And than he doubteth whyther Cryst in
his wordes dyd say trewe / whan he sayd he wolde be with his chyrche
tyll the ende of the worlde. And surely the thyng that made Arrius /
40 Pelagius / Faustus / Manicheus / Donatus / Eluidius and all the rable
of the olde heretyques to drowne them selfe in those dampnable
heresyas / was nothyng but hyghe pryde of theyr lernynge in scrypture
/ wherin they folowed theyr owne wyttes and Icft the common fayth of
the catholyke chyrche / preferrynge theyr owne gay gloses before the
45 ryght catholyke fayth of all Crystes chyrche / whiche can neuer arre in
any substancyall poynt that god wolde haue vs bounden to byleue. And
therefore to ende where we began / who so wyll not vnto the study of
scrypture take the poyntes of the catholyke faythe as a rule of
interpretacyon / but of dyffydens and mystrust study to seke in

scrypture whyther the fayth of the chyrche be trewe or not / he can not
fayle to fall in worse errours and farre more ieoperdous than any man
can do by phylosophy / wherof the reasons & argumentes in matters of
our fayth haue nothyng in lyke authoryte.

5

The .xxvi. chapter

Truely syr quod he / me thinketh it is well sayd that ye haue sayd.
10 And in good faythe to say the truthe I se not what I shold answeere it
withall. And yet whan I loke backe agayne vpon holy scrypture / and
consyder / that it is goddes owne wordes / whiche I wote well ye wyll
graunte / I fynde it harde in myne hart to byleue all the men in the hole
15 worlde / yfthey wold say any thyng / wherof I sholde se that the holy
scrypture sayth the contrary / syth it is reason that I byleue god alone
far better than them all.

In that quod I / ye say very trouthe. But nowe I put case that god
wolde tell you two thynges whyther of them wolde ye bylyue best?
Neyther other quod he / but I wolde byleue theym bothe fymely and
20 bothe a lyke.

What yf neyther other quod I were lykely to be trewe / but semed
bothe twayne impossyble?

That sholde quod he make lytell force to me. For that ones knowen /
that god telleth them / semed they neuer so far vnlykely nor neuer so
25 far impossyble / I neyther sholde nor could haue any doute / but that
they were bothe twayne trewe.

That is well sayd quod I. But now and it so were / that those two
thynges semed the one to the other clene contrary / what wolde ye than
thynke / and whiche wolde ye than byleue?

30 Yet coulde I not quod he doute any thyng / but that they were very
trew both / but I wold verely thynke / that I dyd not well vnderstande
the one of them.

What wold ye than do quod I / yf he bad you byleue them bothe?

15 Mary quod he / than wold I pray hym tell me fyrst how he
vnderstandeth them bothe. For though I byleue that they be bothe trew
/ in that sense and purpose that he takyth his owne wordes / and may
in that maner vnderstanden / well stande and agree togyther / yet can I
not byleue them bothe in that sense and vnderstandynge / wherein
they repugne and be dyrectly contrary eche to other.

40 That is quod I so well sayd / that in my mynde no man can amende
it.

But now wold I wyt quod I / whyther that the fayth of the chyrch be
the worde of god / and by god spoken to the chyrch or not?

Yes quod he / god speketh to his chyrche in the scrypture.

45 And is nothyng goddes wordys quod I but scrypture? The wordes
that god spake to Moyses were they not goddes wordys all / tyll they
were wryten? And the wordes of Cryst to his apostles were they not his
wordys tyll they were wryten?

Yes than quod he. But nowe syth he hath perfyted and fynyshed the
corpus of holy scrypture / all thyng that he wolde crysten people shold
byleue / and all that he wolde the chyrche sholde do / and all that he
wold the chyrche sholde eschewe / all this hath he lefte them his
5 mynde suffycyently in holy scrypture.

And none otherwyse quod I besyde? I had wente we had ben at
another poynte / in that ye se the sabbot daye chaunged in to sonday
without any worde of scrypture / gyuyng any commaundement of the
change in the newe testament / from the commaundement gyuen for
10 the satyrday in the olde. And also for the poynte that we spake of /
touchyng the perpetuall vyrgynyte of our lady wherof is no worde
wrytten in scrypture. But syth I perceyue that the grete affeccyon and
reuerence that ye bere to the scrypture of god / not without grete cause
but without any measure / maketh you in the case that ye take all
15 authoryte and credence from euery worde of god spoken besyde the
scrypture / I wolde aske you therfore this questyon. If god in holy
scrypture tell you two thynges that seme the one contrary to the other /
as for ensample yf he tell you in one place that he is lesse than his fader
/ and in another place that he & his fader be all one / whiche of these
20 wyll you byleue?

Mary quod he bothe twayne. For they maye stande togyther well
ynoughe. For he was lesse as man / and was all one and egall as god.

Very truthe it is quod I that ye saye. But nowe yf ye hadde bene
borne in the dayes of Arryus the heretyque / he wolde not haue
receyued nor holde hym selfe contente with this answeere / But he wolde
25 haue agreed you the fyrste parte and put you further to proue the
seconde parte. And vnto that texte he wolde haue made you a glose that
his father and he were one not in substaunce but in wyll. And that glose
he wolde haue fortyfyed and made somewhat semely with an other
30 worde of Cryst in whiche he prayed his father sayenge / as thou and I
be bothe one so make thou that they and we may be made one /
menyng by his crysten people whiche shall neuer be one with hym in
substaunce. So that for the inequalyte of Cryst by reason of his
manhode / ye must agree with hym. But for vnyte of godhedde / he wyll
35 not agree with you but put you alwaye to proue it.

Well quod he and thoughe he so dyd / yet yf I were prouyded
therefore / there be textes ynowe that playnly proue it.

That is quod I very truthe. But yet is there none but he shall alwaye
set you another agaynste it / and a glose as faste for yours as ye shall
40 haue an answeere for his in suche wyse as he maye abuse a ryghte wyse
and well lerned manne / as he dyd in his owne dayes / and many dayes
after many a thousande. Than yf it so were / that in that dyspycyon ye
coude not make your audyence to dyscerne the truthe / nor
peraduenture persuade them to byleue the truth / bycause the false
45 parte myght happe to haue to the myndes of many a more face of truthe
/ as it had at that tyme to many that than were of that secte / what
way wolde ye wynde out?

Mary quod he I wolde byleue well my selfe the truthe and go to god
and let them that wolde byleue the false parte go to the deuyll.

Ye sholde quod I haue taken therin a good sure way. But nowe yf ye had bene in that tyme (albe it ye be now fast and sure in the truthe) ye myght haue happed whyle the matter was in questyon / and many grete clerkes and well scryptured men / and some semyng ryght holy/
5 set on the wronge syde / ye myght haue happed I say so to haue bene mouyd with the reasons on bothe the sydes / that ye sholde not haue wyste on whyche parte to determyne your byleue. And what wold ye than haue done?

Quod he ye put me now to a pynche / and I shall answeere you as I
10 haue herd say that doctor Mayo somtyrne almyogner to kyng Henry the seuynth answered ones the kyng at his table. It happed that there was fallen in comunycacyon the story of Ioseph how his maysters Putyphers wyfe a greate man with the kyng of Egypte / wolde haue pullyd hym to bedde / and he fled away.

15 Now mayster Mayo (quod the kynges grace) ye be a tall stronge man on the one syde / and a connyng doctor on the other syde / what wolde ye haue done yf ye had bene not Ioseph / but in Iosephes stede?

By my trouthe syr quod he and it lyke your grace / I can not tell you what I wold haue done / but I can tell you well what I sholde haue
20 done.

By my trouthe quod the kyng that was very well answered. And sythe that answeere serued hym well there / I shall make the same serue me here. For surely yf I had bene in Arrius dayes in the poynt that ye spake of / what I wolde haue done that wote I nere. But what I
25 sholde haue done that can I well tell you and surely trust I wolde haue done so to.

What is that quod I?

Mary I wolde haue byleuyd the best quod he.

The best quod I? That were beste in dede / yf ye wyst whiche it were.
30 But the case is put / that the reasons grounded vpon scrypture semyd vnto you in such wyse / eche to impugne and answeere other / that ye stode in suche a doute / that ye coulde in no wyse dyscerne whyther syde sayd best.

By god quod he I had forgotten that / well than were it best quod he
35 and so wolde I haue done I thynke / knele me downe and make my specyall prayour to god that it myght please hys goodnes in so greate a parell not to leue me perplexed / but vouchesafe to enclyne myne assent vnto that syde that he knewe were trewe / and wolde I sholde byleue to be trewe. And then wolde I boldely byleue the one whiche god
40 sholde haue put in my mynde. Had not this bene the best waye?

If it were not quod I the best / it myght peraduenture serue for a seconde.

A seconde quod he / than ye take it for nought.

Nay quod I / there be two secondes after two maner countynges.
45 One nexte vnto the worst / another nexte vnto the best. And your way is surely farre fro the worst. But yet dare I not assent that it were the best tyll I vnderstand it better. And therefore I pray you tell me this. If after your specyall prayours made / ye wrote the one parte in one paper and the other parte in an other and layde theym bothe on the grounde /

and then set vp a staffe bytwene them bothe / wolde ye be then indyfferent to take the one syde or the other after / as it sholde happe your staffe to fall?

Why not quod he. Or ellys put it vppon two lottes / and than at
5 aduenture drawe the one and take it. For when I haue done as moche
as myne owne wytte wyll seme / and haue herde thereto all that I can of
other men / and yet by neyther can perceyue the better oppynyon /
what sholde I do or what coulde I do further than praye for grace to
gyde my choyce / and so at aduenture boldely take the one and holde it
10 faste / doubtyng nothyng but god assysted my choyce / yf I haue a
ferme fayth in his promyse / by whiche he promyseth that if we aske we
shall haue askyng as saynt lames sayth without any doubt. And why
sholde not I in suche perplexed case after helpe called for of god / take
the one parte at aduenture by lot as dyd the appostles in the chosyng of
15 a new / to fulfyll the place of the traytoure Iudas?

Lottes quod I be well lawfull in the choyce of suche two thynges as be
bothe so good that we be lykely to chose well ynoughe whyther so euer
we take. But nowe yf ye were in the case that I haue herde my father
meryly say euery man is at the choyce of his wyfe / that ye shold put
20 your hande in to a blynde bagge full of snakes and eles togyther .vii.
snakes for one ele / ye wolde I wene reken it a peryllous choyce to take
vp one at aduenture thoughe ye had made your specyall prayour to
spede well. Nor ye ought not in suche case to aduenture it vpon your
prayour and trust in god without necessaryte.

That is peraduenture trouthe quod he. But in our case there is
25 necessaryte. For there were none other waye to auoyde the perplexyte /
but euyne take the one by prayour and ferme truste in god / whiche
neuer deceyued them that truste in hym.

If there were quod I none other waye somewhat were it than that ye
30 say. But nowe consyder your case agayne. And whan it soo were / that
ye coulde not vppon that ye herde the Arryanys and the catholyke parte
argue togyther / perceyue whyther parte were the better. And therefore
of those two tales tolde you by god in many textys of holy scrypture /
some semyng playnely to say that Cryst was not egall with his father /
35 some semyng as playnely to say the contrary / ye coude in no wyse
fynde any reason / wherby ye coulde fynde your selfe moued to take the
one parte for more probable than the other. I put case than that god
wolde hym selfe say to you I haue shewed the trouthe of thys matter to
suche a man / and how my scrypture is to be vnderstanden concernyng
40 the same. Go thy wayes therefore to hym. And that thyng that he shall
tell the that thyng byleue thou. Wolde ye say nay good lorde I wyll aske
no man but thy selfe / and therefore tell me thyne owne mouth / or els I
wyll take the one parte at all aduentures / and thynke that thou wolde
haue it so / or els wolde ye thynke that god were your good lorde and
45 had done moche for you in that it lykyd hym so graciously for your
surty to bryng you out of suche a great perplexyte / wherby ye shold for
your owne mynde haue remayned in an insoluble doute in a matter of
the fayth / wherin it is damnable to dwell in doute / or (whiche yet
moche worse were) haue declined peraduenture into an inuyncible

errour?

Verely quod he great cause shold I haue had hyghly to thanke god.

Ye wolde not than quod I fyrste make your prayour & than wyth
good hope (that grace shall guyde your fortune) take the one parte at
5 aduenture by lot / but ye wolde in your prayour thanke god for that
prouysyon. And then wolde ye get you to that man as fast as ye coude.

Very trouthe quod he.

Than yf that man shold tell you that Arrius and his company were
heretyques all / & toke textys of scrypture wronge ye wolde byleue
10 hym?

Ye verely quod he that wolde I.

I put case quod I that ye hadde not douted byfore / but had bene in
your selfe at clere poynte / that the Arryans oppynyon were the trouthe
/ yet ye wolde agaynst Arrius and all his / and agaynst your owne
15 mynde also lene vnto his worde whom god had beden you byleue.

What els quod he?

What yf ye asked hym quod I whyther god haue suffycyently shewed
that poynte in scrypture / so that it may by the wordes of holy wrytte
well and euydently be proued / and that he tolde you: yea. And that
20 therupon he wolde brynge in all the textys that ye had well in
remembraunce all redy / and that ye layed agaynst them all that you
coude lay for the contrary / so ferforth that whan eche of you had layed
all your textys and all your glosys / that eyther of you bothe coude
brynge forthe / tyll ye bothe confessyd / that neyther of ye bothe coude
25 any further thyng fynde therein / he sayenge styll that hys waye were
the truthe / and that he had by scrypture well proued yt vnto you / and
youre selfe on the other syde for all that euer ye hadde herde hym saye
/ perceuyunge in your owne mynde none other / but that ye had by
scrypture better prouyd the other parte / whiche wolde ye now byleue /
30 the way that as far as ye se god sayth hym selfe in holy scrypture / or
els that man whome god sent you to and badde you byleue?

Nay verely quod he I wolde byleue hym.

Well sayd quod I. But whyther wolde ye onely byleue hym that the
trouth of the matter were agaynst the Arryans / or els wolde you byleue
35 hym further / in that he sayd he hadde soo proued it vnto you by
scrypture.

I wolde quod he byleue hym therin also. For syth god so had
commaunded me / and hadde shewed me that he hadde hymselfe

40 instructed that man / in what sence the scrypture were to be
vnderstanden / I coude none otherwyse thynke / but that were trewe /
and thoughe it appered to myne owne reason the contrary.

Very well sayd quod I. Nowe yf god had sayd vnto you that ye sholde
byleue that man concernynge the matter selfe / and of scrypture had
nothyng spoken / than wolde ye haue byleued hym yet in the matter?
45 Wolde ye not all thoughe he sholde haue tolde you that he vnderstode
no scrypture at all?

That is trewe quod he.

Nowe yf he sholde then haue tolde you that the Arryanys were
heretyques in that poynte / and theyr oppynyon erronyous and false /

ye wolde haue byleued hym?

What els quod he.

What yf he had tolde you therwith quod I / that he wyst nere
whyther it myght be well proued by scrypture or not?

5 Yet wolde I quod he neuerthelesse byleue to be trewe the matter selfe
that he had tolde me.

What wolde you than thynke quod I of those textes / that ye dyd
reken before well and playnly to proue the contrary?

10 I wolde quod he than reken / that they were mente some other
ways than I coulde vnderstande. For I coulde not doubtte but beyng
truely vnderstanden / they coulde neuer wytne agaynst the trouthe.

In good faith quod I ye say meruaylously well. Do ye not quod I take
it for all one / whyther god byd you do a thyng by his owne mouthe or
by holy scrypture?

15 Yes quod he sauynge that I take the byddyng by scrypture for the
more sure. For there wot I well god speketh and I can not be illuded.

Nowe quod I this man that god byddeth you go to / and in all thyng
byleue hym / wyll it make any chaunge in the matter whyther it be man
or woman? No chaunge at all quod he.

20 What yf it were a certayne knowen company of men and women
togyder quod I / wold that make any dyfference?

Neuer a whyt quod he.

25 Than quod I in case it appere vnto you / as I suppose it dothe / to
you and to euery crysten man els / that in all poyntes of fayth / bothe
in thynges to be byleued aboue nature / and in thynges also that are of
necessyte to be knowen and byleued / which may be perceyued by
reason gyuen vs with nature / God gyueth vs in commaundement that
we shall byleue his chyrche / than are ye full answered. For than haue
ye the man that ye must nedes resorte vnto / for your fynall answe
30 and solucyon of all poyntes and doubttes / in any wyse concernynge the
saluacyon of your soule. Of whiche poyntys no man can deny / but one
of the most especyall poyntes is to take in holy scrypture alway the
ryght sense. Or ellys yf we can not attayne the ryght vnderstandynge /
yet than at the leste wyse to be sure / that we shall auoyde and
35 eschewe all suche mysse takynge / as myght brynge vs into any
damnable errour.

40

The .xxvii. chapter

45 **T**hat is trouthe quod he yf this may appere. But where shall it appere
that god commaundyth vs in all suche thynges to byleue the chyrche?
For fyrst me thynkyth that were a very straunge maner of
commaundyng. For of the chyrche be all we that sholde (as ye say) be
by god commaunded to byleue the chyrche / and all we togither make
the hole chyrche. And what reason were it than to commaunde vs to

byleue the chyrche. Whyche were no more in effecte / but to byd vs all
byleue vs all / or eche of vs to byleue other. And then yf we fell at
dyuers oppynyons / why sholde the one parte more byleue the other /
5 than be byleued of the other / sythe bothe the partys be of the chyrche
and make the chyrche amonge them? sauynge that alway that parte
semeth to be byleuyd whiche best and most clerely can alledge the
scripture for theyr oppynyon. For the wordes of god muste breke the
stryfe. He is onely to be byleued & his onely sonne of whom hym selfe
10 commaunded. Ipsum audite / here hym sayd the father at the tyme of
his baptyisme. And therefore the man that ye speke of whom god sendeth
me to / and whom he byddeth me here and byleue / is our sauour
Cryst onely / and not any congregacyon of men. Whose wordys yf we
byleue byfore the wordes of god / and in the stede of the scripture of
15 god put our truste and confydence in the doctryne and ordenaunce of
the chyrche / it were happely to be fered / lest we fall in the reprove that
is touched in the gospell where is sayd / in vayne worshyp they me with
the doctryne of men / and where our sauour also repropoueth the
scribes and the pharesyes saynge vnto them / wherfore do you breke
and transgresse the commaundement of god for your tradycyons.

20 I trust quod I yet at last we shall agre. But moche a do me thynketh
it is to come to it. But syth we muste as ye say and truthe it is / here
our sauour Cryste and byleue hym / is it ynough to here hym and
byleue hym / or be we besydes that also bounden to obay hym?

To obay hym also quod he. For elles were he better vnherde.

25 Well sayd quod I. But whyther are we bounden to here hym and
obay hym in some thynges or in all thynges?

In all thynges quod he without excepcyon that he commaundeth vs
to do.

30 Than yf Cryst quod I bydde vs byleue and obay his chyrche / be we
not bounden so to do?

Yes quod he.

35 Than may we quod I no more doubtte to be trewe / what so the
chyrche byddeth vs byleue / than the thyng that our sauour hym
selfe byddeth vs byleue / yf he bydde vs here his chyrche as his father
bad vs here hym. That is trouthe quod he yf he so do / but me thynketh
it were a straunge byddyng as I sayd to bydde eche of vs byleue other.
It semeth not quod I so straunge a thyng to saynt Poule. For he
meruaylous effectually besecheth Crysten people to agre togyder all in
40 one mynde / and in the fayth to tell one tale / sufferynge no sectes or
sysmes amonge them. Whiche agrement and consent can neuer be
where no man gyue credence to other. But amonge crysten people it
wylly sone be / if euery man gyue credence to the chyrche. But yet quod
he syth all be of the chyrch / of dyuers partyes / which shall byleue
which?

45 Ye take that quod I for a grete doubtte and a thyng very perplex /
whiche semeth me very playne. For eyther fyrste the chyrche hathe the
truthe and byleue all one way tyll some one or some fewe begynne the
chaunge / and than thoughe all be yet of the chyrche / tyll some by
theyr obstynacy be gone out or put out / yet is it no doubtte but yf I wylly

byleue the chyrche I must byleue them that styll byleue that waye /
whiche all the hole byleued before.

Or els yf there were any thyng that was peraduenture such / that in
the chyrche somtyme was doubted and reputed for vnreueled and
5 vnknownen / yf after that the hole chyrche fall in one consent vpon the
one syde / eyther by common determynacyon at a generall counsayle /
or by a perfyte perswasyon and byleue so receyued thurgh
crystendome / that the crysten people thynke it a dampnable erreure to
byleue the contrary / than yf any wolde after that take the contrary
10 waye / were it one or mo / were it fewe or many / were they lerned or
vnlerned / were they ley people or of the clergye / yet can I nothyng
doubte whiche parte to byleue yf I wyll byleue the chyrche.

That is trouthe quod he / but ye proue me not yet that god hath
boden me byleue the chyrche.

15 Ye somewhat interrupted me quod I with your other subteltie / by
whiche ye wolde it sholde seme an absurdytye to bydde vs byleue the
chyrche. For as moche as therby ye sayd it shold seme that we were
commaunded nothyng els / but eche to byleue other / and than in
dyuers oppynyons taken / we coulede not wyt whiche parte sholde
20 byleue whiche. Wherof syth I haue shewed you the contrary / and
remoued that blocke oute of the waye for stomblyng / we shall I
thynke sone se the other poynte / that Cryste commaundeth vs to
byleue his chyrche. For as his father sayd of hymselfe here hym / so
sayd he of his chyrche whan he sent it abrode to be spred forthe.

25 For whan he had gathered his chyrch of his appostles and his
dyscyples / and therupon sent them forth to preche / sayd he not vnto
them / he that hereth you hereth me? Dyd he not also commaunde that
who so wolde not here the chyrche sholde be reputed and taken as
paynyms and publycans?

30 That was quod he / where men wolde not amende theyr lyuyng.

Was it not quod I generall where a man wold not amende any
dampnable fawte?

Yes quod he.

Is mysbyleue quod I none suche?

35 Yes mary quod he.

Than is quod I the chyrche his Iudge vpon his byleue / to shewe
hym whyther it be trewe or false?

So it semeth quod he.

Hath his lyuyng quod I nothyng a do with fayth?

40 How mene you that quod he?

Thus quod I / as yf Luther late a frere & hauyng nowe wedded a
Nonne / were commaunded to amende his lewde lyuyng and put away
that harlot / whom he abuseth in contynuall incest and sacrylege vnder
the name of a wyfe / and he wolde say that he dyd well ynoughe / and
45 that theyr vowes coulede not bynde them / were he not bounden to
byleue the chyrche and obey therto as well concernyng his byleue as
his lyuyng?

Yes verely quod he.

Than appereth it quod I that we be by Cryst commaunded to here /

byleue and obey the chyrche / as well in matters of fayth as of maners.
Whiche thyng well appereth also by that our lorde wolde that who so
were dysobedyent sholde be taken as a paynyme or a publycane. Of
whiche two the one offended in mysbyleue the other in lewde lyuyng.
5 And thus it appereth that not onely Cryst is the man that ye be sent
vnto and commaunded by god to byleue and obay / but also the
chyrche is the person whom ye be by Cryst commaunded to here and
byleue and obay. And therefore yf ye wyll in fayth or lyuyng or
auoydyng of all dampnable arrour (that ye myght fall in by mysse
10 vnderstandyng of scrypture) take a sure and vnfallible way / ye must
m all these thynges here / byleue & obay the chyrche / whiche is as I
say the person whom Cryst sendeth you to for the sure solucyon of all
suche doubles / as to the man in whose mouth he speketh hym selfe /
and the holy spyryte of his father in heuen.

15 And surely this is moch to be marked. For it is the perpetuall order
whiche our lorde hath contynued in the gouernaunce of good men from
the begynnyng / that lyke as our nature fyrst fell by pryde to the
dysobedyence of god with inordynate desyre of knowledge lyke vnto god
/ so hath god euer kepte man in humylyte / straynyng hym with the
20 knowledge & confessyon of his ygnoraunce / & byndyng hym to the
obedyence of byleue of certayne thynges / whereof his owne wyt wolde
verely wene the contrary. And therefore are we bounden not onefy to
byleue agaynste oure owne reason / the poyntes that god sheweth vs in
scrypture / but also that god techeth his chyrche without scrypture &
25 agaynst our owne mynde also / to gyue dylygent heryng / ferme
credence / and faythfull obedyence to the chyrche of Cryst /
concernyng the sence and vnderstandyng of holy scrypture. Not
doubtyng but syth he hath commaunded his shepe to be fedde / he
hathe prouyded for them holesome mete and trewe doctryne. And that
30 he hathe therefore so farre inspyred the olde holy doctours of his chyrch
with that lyght of his grace for our instruccyon / that the doctryne
wherin they haue agreed / & by many ages consented / is the very
trewe fayth and ryght way to heuen / bryng put in theyr myndes by
the holy hande of hym / qui facit vnanimes in domo / that maketh the
35 chyrche of Cryst all of one mynde.

40

The .xxviii. chapiter

It semeth me quod he that all this gothe well that we sholde byleue
the chyrche as Cryst / as longe as they say as Cryst saythe / for so me
45 thynketh ment our lorde.

But nowe yf they tell me tales of theyr owne / wherof Cryste neuer
spake worde nor mencyon made therof in holy scrypture / I may than
say with the prophete Hieromie / non mittebam prophetas et ipsi



currebant. Non loquebar ad eos et ipsi prophetabant / those prophetes
(quod our lorde) ranne forth of theyr owne hed and I sent them not /
and prophecyed of theyr owne heddes whan I spake nothyng to them.
And than howe moche may I more say so / yf they saye me a thyng /
5 wherof Cryst or holy scrypture sayth the contrary / shall I byleue the
chyrche aboue Cryste? Were that a good humylyte to be obedyent more
to men than to god? More ought I me thynketh to byleue god alone
spekyng in his holy scrypture hym selfe / than all the olde fathers yf
they make a glose agaynst the texte. Nor they doo not them selfe for
10 theyr oppynyons saye and wryte / that they haue them by inspyracyon
/ or by reuelacyon / or by myracle. But by wysedom / study /
dyligence / and collacyon of one texte with an other. By all whiche
meanys men may nowe perceyue the sentence of scrypture as well as
they myght than. And yf ye wyll peradventure say that grace holpe
15 theym whiche I wyll well agre / than wyll I say agayne that goddys grace
is not so farre worne out yet / but that it may as well helpe vs as it
holpe them / & so may we be for the ryght vnderstandyng of scrypture
equall with them / and peradventure one ace aboue theym. Whereby
when we perceyue that they went wronge and other after them / shall
20 we than call it humylyte so to captyue and subdue our vnderstandyng
/ wherby god hath happely gyuen vs lyght to perceyue theyr errours /
that wythout thanke gyuen hym therefore / we shall so set his gyfte at
nought / that we shall byleue them byfore hym selfe / and tell hym that
hym selfe bad so? And therefore me thynke where the olde doctours or
25 the hole chyrche telleth me the tale that god doth / there he byddeth me
byleue them. But where god sayeth one thyng in scrypture and they
tell me an other / yt thinketh me that I shold in no wyse byleue them.

Well quod I than in somewhat ye say / ye wyll byleue the chyrch / but
not in all. In any thyng besyde scrypture ye wyll not / nor in the
30 interpretacyon of scrypture ye wyll not / and so where ye sayd that ye
byleue the chyrche in somewhat / in very dede ye byleue the chyrch in
ryght nought. For wherin wyll ye byleue it yf ye byleue it not in the
interpretacyon of scrypture? For as touchyng the texte ye byleue the
scrypture selfe and not the chyrche.

35 Me thynketh quod he the texte is good ynough and playne ynoughe
nedynge no glose yf it be well consydered & euery parte compared with
other.

Harde it were quod I to fynde any thyng so playne that it shold nede
no glose at all.

40 In fayth quod he they make a glose to som textys / that be as playne
as it is / that twyse two make four.

Why quod I / nedeth that no glose at all?

I trow so quod he. Or els the deuyll is on it.

45 I wysse quod I / and yet though ye wolde byleue one that wolde tell
you / that twyse two ganders made alway four gese / yet ye wolde be
aduysed ere ye byleued hym / that wolde tell you that twyse two gese
made alway foure ganders. For there in myght ye be deceyued. And hym
wolde ye not byleue at all / that wolde tell you / that twyse two gese
wolde alway make foure horse.

Tut quod he / this is a mery matter. They must be all the twyse
twayne alway of one kynde. But gese and horse be of dyuerse.

Well quod I / than euery man that is neyther gese nor horse seeth
well that there is one glose yet.

5 But now quod I the gese and the ganders be bothe of one kynde /
and yet twyse two gese make not alway foure ganders.

A swete matter quod he / ye wote what I meane well ynough.

I thynke I do quod I. But I thynke yf ye brynge it forth / it wyll make
an other glose to your texte / as playne as youre texte is / and ye wyll in
10 all holy scripture haue no glose at all. And yet wyll ye haue collacyon
made of one texte with another / and shewe howe they may be agreed to
gyther as thoughe all that were no glose.

Ye quod he but wolde you that we sholde byleue the chyrche yf it set
a glose that wyll in noo wyse agree with the texte / but that it appereth
15 playnely that the texte well consydered saythe clene the contrary?

To whome dothe that appere quod I so playnly / whan it appereth
one to you / and to the hole chyrche another?

Yet yf I se it so quod he / thoughe holy doctours and all the hole
chyrche wolde tell me the contrary / me thynketh I were no more
20 bounden to byleue theym all that the scripture meaneth as they take it
/ than yf they wolde all tell me that a thyng were whyte whiche I se my
selfe is blacke.

Of late quod I / ye wolde byleue the chyrche in some thyng. And
nowe not onely ye wolde byleue it in nothyng / but also where as god
25 wolde the chyrche sholde be your iudge / ye wolde nowe be iudge ouer
the chyrche. And ye wyll by your wyt be iudge whyther the chyrche in
the vnderstandyng of holy scripture that god hath wrytten to his
chyrche / do iudge a ryght or erre. As for your whyte and blacke / neuer
shall it be that ye shall se the thyng blacke that all other shall se whyte.
30 But ye may be sure that if all other se it whyte and ye take it for blacke /
your eyen be sore deceyued. For the chyrche wyll not I thynke agree to
call it other than it semeth to them. And moche meruayle were it yf ye
shold in holy scripture se better than the olde holy doctours and
Crystes hole chyrche.

35 But fyrst quod I ye must consyder that ye and I do not talke of one
doctour or twayne / but of the consent and comen agreement of the olde
holy fathers. Nor that we speke not of the doctryne of one man or two in
the chyrche / but of the comen consent of the chyrche. We speke not
also of any sentence taken in any texte of holy scripture / wherby
40 rysyth no doute or questyon of any necessary artycle of our faythe or
rule of our luyng (For in other bye matters may there be taken of one
texte .x. sensys peradventure and all good ynoughe without warantysse
of the best) But we speke of suche two dyuers and contrary sensys taken
/ as yf the one be trewe the other must nedys be false / and that as I
45 say concernyng some necessary poynte of our faythe or rule of oure
luyng / whiche is also dependyng vppon faythe and reducible therto.
As yf one wolde boldely breke hys vowe for that he thought that no man
were bounden to kepe any. Suche poyntys / I say let vs consyder / they
be that we speke of. And this remembryd betwene vs / than wyll we

somewhat se what your sayeng doth prone.

I shall not moche nede quod I to stycke with you in dysputynge / by
what meanys the scripture is vnderstanden / syth ye be agreed with
nature and dylygence the grace of god muste nedys go / or els no
5 dylygence or helpe of nature can preuayle. Nor I wyll nothyng denye
you / but that god may and, wyll also / gyue his grace nowe to vs as he
gawe of olde to his holy doctours / yf there be as moche towardnes and
no more let or impedymnt in our selfe than was in them. I wyll also
graunte you that we maye nowe by the same meanes by whiche they
10 myght than / vnderstande the scripture as well as they dyd than / and
I wyll not moche stycke with you for one ace better. And were it not for
the synnes that we synke in / we myght percase vnderstande it better by
quater tre deuce / hauynge theyr labours therin and our owne
therewith. But syth I am so gentyll to graunt you so many thynges / I
15 trust ye wyll graunt me this one / that yf in any suche poynt of our
faythe / as god wolde haue men bounden to byleue / they dyd
vnderstande the scripture one way & we another / beyng the one to
the other so clene contrary / that yf the one were trewe the other must
nedes be false / ye wyll than graunt I saye / that eyther they arre or we.
20 That must nedes be quod he. Ye wyll also graunte quod I / that in suche
poyntes as we speke of/ the errour were dampnable. For we speke of
those poyntes onely / to the byleue wherof god wyll haue vs bounden.

I graunt quod he. For dampnable were it in suche case to byleue
wronge. And wronge sholde they or we byleue yf they or we byleued a
25 wronge artycle / bycause they or we thought that the scripture alfyrmeth
it. And as dampnable were it and yet moche more / yf we byleued a
thyng wherof we byleued that the scripture affyrmeth the contrary. For
then byleued we that the scripture were false.

This is quod I very well sayd. But for the more playnnesse let vs put
30 one example or twayne. And what poynte rather than the artycle
touchyng the equalyte in godhed of our sauour Cryst with his father?
For yf the contrary byleue were trewe / than were this alway dampnable
and playne ydolatri.

Very trouth quod he.

35 Maye not quod I the other example be the matter that we haue in
haunde / concernynge sayntes relyques / ymages / and pylgrymages /
whiche thynges yf it be (as ye saye many reken it) ydolatri / than is it
yet worse to do therein as we do / than yf our byleue were wronge in the
other poynte. And that as moche worse / as the sayntes or the ymages
40 eyther / be worse than the holy manhode of Cryst.

That is quod he very trewe.

Than quod I let the fyrst poynt alone bycause therein we be all agreed
/ and speke of the seconde / yf the olde fathers toke the scriptures one
45 waye and we the contrary. Thoughe it myght be that we were able to
vnderstande the scriptures as well as they / yet yf they so vnderstode
theym that they thought this kynde of worshyp not forbeden but
commaunded and pleasaunt to god / and we newe men on the other
syde thought it vtterly forbeden and holden for ydolatri / the one parte
dyd not in dede vnderstande the scripture ryghte / but were in a

dampnable erreure.

That wyll no man deny quod he.

I doubte not nowe quod I but that your selfe seeth very well howe
many thynges I myght here laye for theym to proue you that they erred
5 not so. Fyrst theyr wyttes as moche as our newe mennes / theyr
dyligence as grete / theyr erudycyon gretter / theyr study as feruent /
theyr deuocyon hoter / theyr nombre farre gretter / theyr tyme
contynued lenger by many ages perseuerynge / the contrary oppynyons
10 in fewe and those alwaye sone faded / they taken alway for catholyke /
the contrary parte for heretyques. Here myght I lay you the holynes of
theyr lyfe and the plentye of theyr grace well apperynge therby. And that
our lorde therefore opened theyr eyen and suffered and caused them to se
the trouthe. And all be it he vsed therin none open myrade nor sencyble
15 reuelacyon / wherof as ye say they none allege or pretende for the profe
of theyr oppynyons in theyr interpretacyons of holy scrypture / yet vsed
he the secrete super naturall meane / by whiche his grace assystente
with good men that laboure therefore / by mocyons incensyble to theym
selfe / inclyneth theyr assente vnto the trewe syde / and that thus the
20 olde holy fathers dyd in the poynte that we speke of and in suche other /
perceyue the ryght sence of holy scrypture so ferforth at the leste wyse /
as they well knewe that it was not contrary to theyr byleue. And here
myght I laye you also that yf it had bene otherwyse and that they had
therin dampnably bene deceyued / than lyuyng and dyenge in
25 dampnable erreure they coulde not haue bene sayntes / as god hath
shewed them to be by many a thousande myracle bothe in theyr lyues
and after theyr dethes. With this myght I also laye and very well
conclude / that syth those holy doctours and the chyrche / be (as by
theyr bokes playnly appereth) all of one fayth in this poynte and suche
30 other / that therby well appereth that the chyrche is in the treuth / and
is not in the vnderstandynge of the scrypture that speketh of the matter
any thyng deceyued / but they clerely deceyued that do vnderstande
those textes of holy scrypture to the contrary. These thynges as I saye
and yet many other mo myght I laye. But syth ye dyd your selfe put the
35 chyrche and them bothe in one case / and so they be in dede / I wyll
rather proue you the truth of them by the truth of the chyrch / than the
truth of the chyrche by the truth of them. And so semeth me good
reason. For surely syth they were but membres of his chyrch / god had
his specyall cure vpon them moost especyall for the profyte of his chyrch
40 / by whose hole corps he more setteth than by any membre therof /
saynt / appostle / euangelyst / or other. And therefore must I yet aske
you agayne whyther the chyrch may haue any dampnable erreur in the
fayth by mysse takynge of scrypture or otherwyse.

That is quod he somewhat harde to tell.

Now quod I somewhat I meruayle that ye remembre not that your selfe
45 hath agreed all redy / that these wordes of Cryste spoken vnto Peter I
haue prayed that thy fayth shall neuer fayle / were not onely ment by
the faythe in Peter his owne person / but also by the fayth of the
chyrche. For to hym was it spoken as hed of the chyrche.

Yes I remember quod he ryght well that I agreed it. But I remember

also that not withstandynge myne agreement ye were content that we sholde enserch agayne and agayne the matter otherwyse besyde / wherin myne agreement sholde not bynde me.

Lo quod I that had I forgotten agayne. But let it than alone for the
5 whyle and tell me this. Dyde not Cryste entende to gather a flocke and congregacyon of people that shold serue god and be his specyall peple? Yes quod he that is very trouth. For so sayth playne scrypture of Cryst in sondry placys. As where the father of heuen sayth vnto Cryste in the psalme. Postula a me et dabo tibi gentes hereditatem tuam / aske of me
10 and I shall gyue the paynym people for thyne enherytaunce / and many other placys. And els vndowtedly his hole commynge had bene in maner frustrate and in vayne.

That people quod I whiche sholde be an enherytaunce dyd he entende sholde endure for his owne dayes onely whyle he lyued here / or
15 els that it sholde go forth and contynue longe after.

Nay quod he that shall contynue whyle the worlde lasteth here tyll domys day / and after in heuen eternally.

Shall this people quod I haue amonge them the knowlege and vnderstandyng what he wold they sholde do to playse god with all?

20 Ye quod he.

Whyther shall they quod I haue this knowlege for a whyle in the begynnynge and than lese it / or shall they haue it styll as longe as they contynue? Here he began a lytell to stagger.

Why quod I can ye call them his people any lenger yf they lese the
25 knowlege howe to serue hym and please hym? yf they forsloth to do theyr duty as slacke seruauntes somtyme do / yet may they mende and do better another tyme. But yf they lese the knowlege of theyr dutye / than wote they nere whyche waye to amende as he that knoweth fornycacyon for synne / may fall by fraylte to fornycacyon.

30 But syth he knoweth it for nought / though he synned more in the doynge / than yf he had not knowen the prohybycyon / yet doth the knowledge gyue hym warnynge and occasyon of repentaunce and amendement / whiche must nedys lacke yf he had lost the knowlege. Vpon this he graunted that it must nedys be that this people must
35 nedys haue alway the knowlege howe to serue and please our lorde / or els they ceaced to be his people.

Is not this people quod I called the chyrche?

Yes quod he.

40 Than the chyrche quod I alway hath and alway shall by your reason haue the knowlege and vnderstandynge / how god may be seruyd and pleasyd.

Trouthe quod he.

Is quod I that knowlege fully h'ad without the knowlege of suche thyngys as god byndeth vs to byleue?

45 Nay quod he.

What yf we knew them in suche wyse quod I as we coulde reherce them on our fynghers endes / and yet byleued them not to be trew / wolde this knowledge serue?

In no wyse quod he / for yf ye byleued them to be false / though ye

so knewe them that ye coulde reherce them by rowe / ye coulde take no warnynge by them to please and serue god with them / whiche is the cause wherfore the chyrche sholde of necessyte know them.

5 This is quod I very well sayd. Than syth ye graunt that the chyrche shall euer endure / and that it coulde not endure without the knowledge of suche thynges as may please god / nor those thynges can be all knowen yf knowledge lacked of those thynges that god byndeth vs to byleue / nor the knowledge of theym any thyng serue to the knowledge and warnyng gyuen vs of goddes pleasure but yf we not onely can tell 10 them but also byleue theym / whiche byleue ye graunt is called fayth / of this it consequently foloweth that the chyrche alwayes hath and alwayes shall haue the knowledge and byleue of suche thynges as god wyll haue it bounden to byleue.

15 That is trouth quod he bycause god hath lefte holy scrypture to the chyrche / and therein is all / and the chyrche byleueth that to be trewe. And therefore therin and therby hath the chyrche all that warnynge and lernyng of goddes pleasure that ye speke of / without whiche it can not endure.

20 Are ye there yet agayne quod I? We haue sondry wayes proued and agreed bytwene vs / that this knowledge and fayth was before scrypture & wrytynge / and many thynges of necessyte / to be bothe byleued & done that are not in holy scrypture. And yet after all this to long to be repeted ye retourne agayne to the fyrst poynt so often confuted / that nothyng is lerned nor knowen but by holy scrypture. But now go to and 25 suppose it were so / what sholde ye wyne therby? For what yf god quod I had lefte the scrypture to the chyrche locked vp in a close chest / and that no man sholde loke therin / wolde that haue serued? Nay perde quod he.

30 What if he had lefte it open and wrytten in suche wyse that no man coulde rede it?

That were all one quod he.

What if euery man quod I coulde rede it and no man vnderstande it?

As lytell wolde it serue quod he as the other.

35 Than quod I syth it serueth the chyrche to lerne goddes pleasure therin / and that can it not as ye graunt your selfe but if the chyrche vnderstande it / it foloweth of this that the chyrche vnderstandeth it. And thus euery waye for the faythe and knowledge of goddes pleasure if it be as ye say all knowen by the scrypture & no parte otherwyse / yet 40 alway to this poynte ye brynge it in the ende / that the chyrche hathe the sure knowledge thereof. And than yf that be so / ye shall not as ye lately sayd ye sholde / in any dyuerse textes of scrypture semyng to make a doubtous artycle of oure faythe / and to brynge in questyon what we be bounden to byleue / after ye haue redde in scrypture all that can be redde / and herde on bothe sydes all that can be sayd / thanne 45 take whiche parte semeth to youre selfe moste probable. Nor yf ye stande styll for all that in a doute / than after your bytter prayers made to god for his grace and gyde in the choyce / go take you the one parte at aduenture and cleue therto / as though ye were sure by your confydence in god / that his grace had inclyned your assent to the surer

syde. But syth I haue shewed you playnely by reason that he hath gyuen
his chyrch in all such thynges knowlege of the trouthe / ye shall take the
sure way & put your selfe out of all perplexyte / yf in the poynt it selfe &
the scryptures that touche it / ye take for the truth the way that the
5 chyrch techyth you therin / howe so euer the matter seme besyde vnto
your selfe or to any man els.

The .xxix. chapter

10

Truely quod he ye wynde it well aboute. But yet ye made as though
ye wolde haue shewed that god had in scrypture tolde me / that he had
and euer wolde tell his chyrche the trouthe in all suche matters. And
now ye brynge it to the poynte / not the holy scrypture tellyth me the
15 tale but mannys reason. And surely as I shewed you before / I dare not
well trust reason in matters of faythe and of holy scrypture.

I began quod I to proue it you by scrypture / and ye than put me out
in the begynnyng. Howe be it this reason hath scrypture for his
foundacyon and grounde. And though it some what bylde further
20 thereon / yet is not reason alway to be mystrusted where fayth standeth
not agaynst it / nor god sayeth not the contrary. Excepte reason be so
farre out of credence with you that ye wyll not nowe byleue hym yf he tell
you that twyse twayne make foure. I wene ye wyll fare by reason as one
dyd ones by a false shrew. He sware that he wold not for .xx. li. here
25 hym say his crede. For he knewe hym for suche a lyer that he thought
he shold neuer byleue his crede after / yf he herde it ones of his mouthe.

Howe be it quod I let vs yet se whyther god hym selfe in scrypture tell
you the same tale or no. God telleth you in scrypture that he wolde be
with his chyrche to the ende of the worlde. I thynke ye doute not therof /
30 but those wordys he spake to the hole chyrche that than was and euer
shalbe frome the appostles dayes contynued tyll the ende of the worlde.

That in good faythe quod he must nedys be so.

Than were thys in good faythe ynough quod I for oure purpose / syth
no man douteth / wherfore he wyll be with his chyrche / excepte we
35 sholde thynke that he wolde be therwith for nothyng / wherfore sholde
he be wyth it but to kepe it and preserue it wyth the assystence of his
gracyous presence from spyrytuall myschefe specyally / & of all other
specyally frome infydelyte and frome ydolatrye? whiche was the specyall
thyng frome whiche he called his chyrche out of the gentyllys / whiche
40 ellys as for morall vertues and polytycall yf they had not lacked the
ryghte cause and ende of referring theyr actes to god / were many of
them not farre vnder many of vs. Let vs go further. Doth he not in the
.xiiii. xv. and .xvi. chapyter of saynt Iohan agayne and agayne repete /
that after his goynge he wyll come agayne to them / And saythe he wyll
45 not leue them orphanes as fatherles chyl dren / but wyll come agayne to
theym hymselfe? Let vs adde now therunto the wordes before reherced /
that he wyll be with them tyll the worldes ende / & it appereth playne
ythathe ment all this by his hole chyrch that sholde be to the worldes

ende.

Whan he sayd vnto them I call you frendes / for all that I haue herde
of my father I haue made knowen to you / he spake as to his perpetuall
chyrch & not to the appostles alone / but yf he sayd to them alone these
5 wordes also / I commaunde that ye loue eche other / so that none
sholde loue eche other after but onely they. Now lest the thynges that he
taught them sholde by the chyrche after be forgotten / whiche was more
to be doubted than of themselfe that herde it / he sayd vnto them also /
These thynges quod he haue I spoken to you abydyng here with you.
10 But the conforter whiche is the holy goost (whome my father shall sende
in my name) he shall teche you all thyng / and he shall put you in
mynde and remembraunce of all thyng that I shall haue sayd vnto you.
So that here ye se that he shall agayne alwaye teche the chyrche of newe
/ the olde lesson of Cryst. And he sayd also to them / that this
15 conforter this holy goost the spyryte of trouthe / shoulde be sent to
abyde with them for euer / which can not be mente but of the hole
chyrche. For the the holy gost was not sent hyther into the erthe here to
dwell with the appostles for euer / for they dwelled not so longe here.
Nowe yf the spyryte of the trouthe shall dwell in the chyrche for euer /
20 howe can the chyrche erre in perceyuyng of the trouthe / in suche
thynges I mene as god wyll bynde them to knowe or shall be necessary
for them to knowe? For onely of suche thynges ment our lorde / whan
he sayd that the holy goost shall teche them all thyng. For as saynt
Poule sayth / the manyfestacyon and shewyng of the spyryte / is to the
25 vtilyte and profyte. This holy spyryte also was not promysed by our
sauour Cryst / that he sholde onely tell his chyrch agayn his wordes /
but he sayd further / I haue quod he besydes all this many thynges to
say to you / but ye be not able to bere them nowe. But whan he shall
come that is the spyryte of trouthe / he shall lede you in to all trouthe.
30 Loo oure lorde sayd not that the holy goost sholde wryte vnto his
chyrche all trouthe / but thay he sholde lede them by secrete
inspyracyon and inclynacyon of theyr hartes in to all trouthe / in whiche
muste nedes be conceyued bothe informacyon and ryghte byleue of
euery necessary artycle / and of the ryght and trew sense of holy
35 scrypture / as far as shall be requysyte to conserue the chyrch from any
dampnable errour.

Nowe whan the holy goste shall by goddys promyse / be for this
purpose abydyng in the chyrche for euer / and Cryste hym selfe hath
also sayd that he wyll not leue his chyrche as orphanys / but wyll come
40 hym selfe / and be with it vnto the ende of the worlde / and sayth also
that hys father is in hym and he is in hys father / and that his father &
he be bothe one rhyng / not bothe one person / but both one
substaunce / and with the holy goste bothe one god / than must it
nedys folowe that to the worldys ende / there is with the chyrche
45 resydent the hole trynyte. Whose assystence beyng to the chyrche
perpetuall / howe can it at any tyme fall frome trewe fayth to false
errours and heresydes?

The .xxx. chapter

Nowe is it I suppose well and clerely proued by scrypture the thyng
that I promysed / that is to wyt that the chyrche can not arre in any
5 suche substauncyall artycle as god wyll haue vs bounden to byleue.

But yet for as moche as ye regarde nothyng but scrypture onely /
this wold I fayne wyt of you / whyther ye byleue that Cryste was borne of
a vyrgyn.

What ellys quod he.

10 Why byleue you that quod I?

The gospel sheweth me so quod he.

What yf it dyd not quod I / were than your crede out of credence /
but yf he brynge wytnesse with hym?

The crede quod he is a thyng by it selfe.

15 Yet is it quod I no parte of the gopell as the pater noster is. And yet I
thynke / yf gopell had neuer bene wryten / ye wolde haue byleued your
crede.

So thynke I to quod he.

20 And wherfore quod I / but for bycause the chyrche shold haue
shewed you so? But let our crede alone a whyle and go we to the gopell
selfe. Whyche gopell telleth you that Cryste was borne of a vyrgyn?

The gopell of saynt Luke quod he.

How knowe you that quod I?

For I rede it so quod he in the boke.

25 Ye rede quod I suche a boke. But howe knowe you that saynt Luke
made it?

Howe knowe I quod he other bokys / but by that they bere the names
of theyr authors wrytten vpon them?

30 Knowe you it well therby quod I? Many bokes be there that haue false
inscrypcyons / and are not the bokes of theym that they be named by.

35 That is trouth quod he. But yet though men dyd peraduenture erre
and fayle in the name / as yf he sholde repute a booke of storyes to be
made by Tytus Lyuyus whiche he neuer made / but some other honest
connyng man / yet were the bokes neyther lesse clygaunt nor lesse
trewe therefore. Nor in lyke wyse if the chyrche dyd mysse take the very
name of some euangelyst and gopell / yet were the gopell neuer the
lesse trewe.

That is quod I well sayd. But howe be ye sure that the matter of the
boke is trewe?

40 Mary quod he for I am.

That is quod I the reason that a mayde layeth for her owne knowledge
of her maydenhed. But she coulde tell another howe she knoweth she
hath it / sauynge that she is lothe to come so nere as to be a knowen that
she coulde tell howe she myght lese it. But here is no suche fere. Tell me
45 therefore wherby wot ye that the matter of that boke is trewe?

I thynke quod he that god showeth me so.

That is well thought quod I. But he tolde it you not mouthe to
mouthe.

No quod he. But he hathe tolde it to other in the begynnyng or els it was well knowen in the begynnyng whan he wrote it. And he was knowen and byleued by his lyuyng / and the myracles that god dyd for hym. And after that it was ones knowen / the knowledge wente forthe
5 fro man to man. And god hath so wrought with vs that we byleue it bycause the hole chyrche hath alway done so before our dayes.

Nowe come you quod I to the very poynte. For many thynges hath bene trewe / that in processe after hathe lefte to be byleued. And many a thyng hath in the begynnyng bene knowen for false / and yet hath after
10 happed to be byleued. But the gospels and holy scrypture / god prouydeth that thoughe percasse some of it may perysshe and be lost / whereby they myght haue harme / but not fall in erreure (for the faythe sholde stande thoughe the scryptures were all gone) yet shall he neuer suffre his chyrch to be deceyued in that poynte / that they shall take for
15 holy scrypture any booke that is not. And therefore sayth holy saynt Austyne / I sholde not byleue the gopell / but yf it were for the chyrche. And he sayth good reason. For were it not for the spyryte of god kepyng the trouthe therof in his chyrche / who coulde be sure whiche were the very gospels? There were many that wrote the gopell. And yet hath the
20 chyrche by secrete instinct of god / rejected the remenaunt & chosen out these foure / for the sure vndoubted trewe.

That is quod he sure so.

This is quod I so sure so / that Luther hym selfe is dryuen of necessity to graunte this / or els he perceyueth that there were none
25 holde nor surety in scrypture it selfe / yf the chyrch myght be suffred by god to be deceyued in that poynte / and to take for holy scrypture that wrytyng that in dede were not. And therefore he confessyth that this must nedys be a sure infallyble grounde / that god hathe gyuen thys gyfte vnto hys chyrche / that hys chyrche can alway dyscerne the worde
30 of god frome the worde of men.

In good fayth quod he / that muste nedys be so / or els all wolde fayle. Quod I than ye that wolde byleue the chyrche in no thyng / nor gyue sure credence to the tradycyon of the chyrche / but yf it were
35 proued by scrypture / now se it prouyd to you / that ye coulde not byleue the scrypture / but yf it were prouyd to be scrypture by the iudgemente and tradycyon of the chyrche.

No quod he but when I haue lerned ones of the chyrche / that it is holy scrypture and the worde of god / than I byleue it better than I byleue all the chyrche. I myght by a lyght person somtyme knowe a
40 moche more substancyall man. And yet whan I know hym / I wyll byleue hym moche better than hym / by whom I know hym / yf they varied in a tale and were contrary.

Good reason quod I. But the chyrch byddeth you not byleue the contrary of that the scrypture sayeth. But hr telleth you that in suche
45 placys as ye wolde byleue the scripture than the chyrche / there ye vnderstande not the scripture. For what so euer wordes it spekyth / yet it meaneth not the contrary of that the chyrch techeth you. And the chyrche can not be deceyued in any suche weyghte poynt.

Wherby shall I knowe quod he?

Why be we at that poynte yet quod I? haue we so sone forgotten the
perpetuall assystence of the trynitye in his chyrche / and the prayour of
Cryst to kepe the fayth of hys chyrche fro faylynge / and the holy gost
sente of purpose to kepe in the chyrche the remembraunce of Crystys
5 wordys and to lede them into all trouthe? What wolde it haue profyted to
haue put you in the remembraunce of the assystence of god with the
chyldeyn of Israell / walking wyth them in the cloude by day / and in
the pyler of fyre by night in theyr erthly vyage / and therby to haue
prouyd you the moche more specyall assystence of god wyth hys crysten
10 chyrche in theyr spyrytuall vyage / wherin hys especyall goodnes well
declaryth his tender dylygence / by that he doth vouchesafe to assyste
and comforte vs with the contynuall presence of his precyouse body in
the holy sacramente? All thys wolde not helpe / yf manyfeste reason
that I made youi / and euydent scrypture that I rehersed you / can not
15 yet prynte in your harte a perceuyunge that the assystence of god in his
chyrche must nedys preserue his chyrche frome all damnable errorrs in
the fayth / and gyue hys chyrche so ferforth the vnderstandynge of
scrypture / that they may well perceyue that no parte therof well
vnderstande / standyth agaynst any artycle that the chyrche byleuyth /
20 as parcell of theyr crysten fayth.

Nay quod he I perceyue yt well whan I remember it / but yt was not
redy in remembraunce.

25 The .xxx. chapter

Yet wolde I quod I aske you one thyng / wherfore thynke you / wyll
not Cryst suffre his chyrch to be deceyued in the descernynge of holy
scripture from other wrytynge / and suffre them to take a booke of holy
30 scripture / that were none in dede?

Leste men myght quod he of some false boke reputed of holy
scripture / haue grete occasyon gyuen them to conceyue the wrong
doctryne and wronge oppynyons of the fayth / yf god wolde suffre his
chyrche to take a false deuysed boke for holy scripture and for his owne
35 holy wordes.

Ye saye quod I very trouthe. Nowe what yf in the very scrypture he
sholde suffre his chyrche mysse take the very sentence in a matter
substancyall of our faythe / were they not in lyke parell to fall by false
vnderstandynge in to lyke errorrs / as they myght by false wrytynge?
40

Yes that they were quod he.

Forsothe quod I so were they and in moche more. For in a false boke
mysse taken for scripture / thoughe they had it in neuer so hyghe
reuerence for some good thynges that they founde in it / and therby
sholde haue grete occasyon to byleue the false errorrs wrytten in the
45 same / yet hauynge as the chyrche alwaye shall haue / the trewe faythe
/ fyrst in harte / they sholde fynde many shyftes to kepe out the
errorrs. But nowe yf they falsely sholde vnderstande the trewe scrypture
/ there were no waye to scape from dampnable errorrs. And therefore

may I say to you / as the kynges hyghnes most prudently layed vnto
Luther / syth god wyll not suffre his chyrche to mysse take a booke of
scripture for parell of dampnable errorrs that myght ensue theron / and
lyke parell may there ensue by the mysse construyng of the sentence as
5 by the mysse takynge of the boke / it must nedes folowe the god wyll in
thynges of our fayth no more suffre them to take a false sentence for
trewe / than to take a false boke for scrypture. And with this reason his
hyghnes concluded hym so clerely / that he durst neuer synce for
shame touche that poynt agayn / nor any colour coulde lay / but that
10 vpon his owne confessyon in all substancyall poyntes concernynge the
faythe or knowledge of vertue pleasaunt to god / the chyrche hathe so
ryght vnderstandynge of scrypture / that it well & trewely perceyueth /
that no texte therein can be ryght vnderstanden / agaynst any artycle
that the chyrche byleueth for thyng to be byleued of necessitye. And this
15 poynt durst he neuer synnys touche nor make answer therto / albe it
that the kynges hyghnesse with this one poynt alone playnely tourneth
vp and dystroyeth the grounde and foundacyon of all the heresydes that
Luther wolde haue byleued. And therefore of all thynges had Luther
grestest cause to answer this poynt earnestly / and wolde vndowtedly yf
20 he had wyst howe.

Surely quod your frende I meruayle not thoughe he dyd not. For this
poynt is so clere he coulde not / and I am herein fully satysfyed.

Than be you quod I satysfyed in this also / that the fayth of the
chyrche is a ryght rule to carry wyth you to the study of scrypture / to
25 shape you the vnderstandynge of the textys by / and so to take them as
they may alwayes agre there withall.

Be it quod he.

Than are ye quod I also fully answered in this that where ye sayd ye
shold not byleue the chyrche tellynge a tale of theyr owne / but onely
30 tellyng you scrypture / ye now perceyue that in suche thynges as we
speke of / that is to wytte necessary poyntes of our fayth / yf they tell
you a tale whiche yf it were false were dampnable / ye muste byleue and
maye be sure that sythe the chyrche can not in suche thynges arre / it
is very trew all that the chyrche in suche thynges telleth you. And that it
35 is not theyr owne worde / but the worde of god though it be not in
scrypture.

That appereth well quod he.

Than are ye quod I as fully satysfyed that where ye lately sayd that it
were a dysobedyence to god and preferryng of the chyrch before hym
40 selfe / yf ye shall byleue the chyrche in suche thynges as god in his holy
scrypture sayth hym selfe the contrary / ye nowe perceyue it can in no
wyse be so. But syth his chyrche in suche thyngys as we speke of can
not arre / it is impossyble that the scrypture of god can be contrary to
the fayth of the chyrche.

45 That is very trew quod he.

Than it is as trewe quod I that ye be further fully answered in the
pryncypall poynte / that the scryptures layed agaynst ymagys and
pylgrymagys & worshyp of sayntys / make nothyng agaynst them.
And also that those thynges / ymagys I mene and pylgrymagys and

prayeng to sayntes / are thyngys good and to be had in honour in
Crystys chyrche / syth the chyrche byleueth so. Whiche as ye graunt
and se cause why ye so sholde graunte / can in suche poyntes not be
suffred for the specyall assystence of god and instruccyon of the holy
5 goste to fall in errour. And so be we for this matter at laste with moche
worke comen to an ende. And therefore wyll we now to dyner. And your
other obieccyons that ye haue layed / by whiche ye wolde proue those
thyngys reprouable and make them seme ydolatry / whiche we deferred
afore / those wyll we talke of after dyner.

10 By my trouthe quod he I haue another tale to tell you that all thys
gere graunted / tournyth vs yet in to as moche vncertayntye as we were
in before.

15 Ye quod I than haue we well walked after the balade / The further I
go the more behynde. I pray you what thyng is that? For that longe I to
here yet ere we go.

Nay quod he it were better ye dyne fyrste. My lady wyll I wene be
angry with me / that I kepe you so longe therfro. For I holde it nowe well
toward twelue. And yet more angry wolde waxe with me / yf I sholde
make you syt & muse at your mete / as ye wolde I wote well muse on
20 the matter yf ye wyste what it were.

If I were quod I lyke my wyfe I sholde muse more theron nowe and ete
no mete for longyng to knowe. But come on than and let vs dyne fyrst /
and ye shall tell vs after.

25

The ende of the furst boke

30

The seconde boke.

The furst chapiter

35 **A**fter dyner we walked in to the gardyne. And there shortely syttyng
in an arber / began to go forth in our matter / desyryng hym to shewe
what thyng myght that be / that made our long forenone processe
frustrat / and lefte vs as vncertayne as we beganne.

40 Syr quod he that shall I shortely shewe you. Where as there was
pryncypally in questyon whyther worshyppyng of ymages and relyques
/ and prayenge to sayntes / and goyng on pylgrymages / were lawfull
or not. And that I put you in mynd that men layde agaynst them
certayne textes of holy scripture / and also sayd vnto you / that it
45 semed the textes selfe whiche be the wordes of god were of more
authoryte agaynst theym than the gloses of men / that in suche wyse
expowne the textys as they may seme to make for them / ye layed on the
other syde the consent and agrement and comen catholyke fayth of the
chyrche / whiche ye sayd / and in dede to say that trouthe bothe by

reason and by scrypture ye proued / that it could not be erronyous /
and that the chyrche coulede not arre in the fayth that god wold haue
knownen and byleued. Ye proued the matter also by myracles. In whiche
whan I layd dyuers thynges mouyng men to doute / partely leste they
5 were not trew / but specyally leste they were not done by god for
corroboracyon of the faythe / but were percase by goddys sufferauce
done by the deuyll for our delusyon / deseruyng so to be serued by our
fallynge from the worshyp of god hym selfe to the worshyp ot his
creatures / ye proued me yet agayne that the myracles were trew / and
10 that they must nedys be done by god. And that ye proued me by this
that it sholde els folowe / that the chyrch had a wronge byleue and a
dampnable. Whiche eftesonys ye proued well and substancyally to be
impossyble. And for as moche as there fell in the way / occasyon to
speke of the contraryety that semed somtyme to fall bytwene the textys
15 of holy scrypture selfe and the comen persuacyon and fayth of the
chyrche / where I sayd that it was thought reasonable to byleue the
scrypture beyng goddys owne wordys rather than the wordys of men /
ye therin proued that the comen fayth of the chyrche was as well goddys
owne wordys as was holy scrypture selfe and of as greate authoryte /
20 and that no student in scrypture sholde presume to trye / examyn /
and iudge the catholyque faythe of Crystys chyrche by the scrypture /
but by the catholyque fayth of crystys chyrche shold examyn and
expowne the textys of scrypture. And that in the study of scrypture this
were the sure way / wherein sholde gyue ye sayd great lyght the
25 wrytyng of the olde holy doctours / wherby we be acertayned that the
fayth that the chyrche hath nowe / is the same fayth and the same
poyntes that they had than of olde in euery age and euery tyme. And in
this parte ye proued yet agayne by reason and holy scrypture / that the
chyrche has by the techyng of god and the holy goste the ryght
30 vnderstandyng of scrypture / in all poyntys that are of necessaryte to be
knownen. And there vpon eftesonys ye deduced and proued / that no
texte of the scrypture well vnderstanden coulede stande agaynst the
worshyppyng of ymagys and relyques and the sekyng of pylgrymages /
but that all these thynges be well proued good and pleasaunte to god /
35 and the myracles done in suche placys done by god / syth his specyall
assystence so informeth & enstructeth his chyrche in so great and so
substancyall an artycle so hyghly towchyng the honour or dyshonour of
god / that it can not be suffred to fall to superstycyon and ydolatry in
stede of faythe and honour done to god.

40 And this is quod he as far as I remember the hole some and effecte of
all that hath hytherto bene proued bytwene vs.

Very trewe quod I. And this is of you very well remembered / and well
and sommaryly rehersed.

But nowe quod he all this gere graunted we be neuer the nere.

45 Why so quod I?

Mary quod he / for a man that byleued the worshyp of ymages to be
wronge and vnlawfull / myght graunt that / that the chyrche dothe not
erre / and that the chyrche hathe the ryght faythe / and that the
chyrche dothe not mysse take the scrypture. And whan all this were

agreed / he myght say / that the chyrche peraduenture dothe not
byleue as ye say it dothe. For he myght happely denyethe chyrche to be
that people that ye take it for / and say that it is the people that
byleueth as he byleueth / that is to wytte / all these kyndes of
5 worshyppe to be wronge / and that byleueth theym whome ye take for
the chyrche to byleue wronge.

If he and his company quod I be the chyrche / he muste tell where
his felawes be?

Why so quod he / yf men sholde aske you and me where the chyrche
10 is / we coulde tell no one place but many dyuers countrees.

Let hym quod I in lyke wyse assygne some companyes / that be
knownen for congregacyons togyther in dyuers countrees.

Why quod he in the begynnyng and a good whyle after / the chyrche
of Cryste in euery place hydde it selfe / that men coulde not tell in any
15 countre where they were / nor durst not come out and shewe them
selfe.

That was in the begynnyng quod I / whyle the persecucion lasted.
But whan the persecucion ceaced ones / it was sone knownen in euery
countre where the chyrche was.

Mary quod he / yf I sholde take that parte / I wolde happely saye
that in that case it is styll / and that the chyrche is that company
peraduenture that ye (whiche call your selfe the chyrche) do vse to call
heretyques / whiche nowe doo knowe one another well ynoughe / and
call them selfe and theyr felawes aboute the worlde the very chyrch /
25 thoughte they dare not professe it openly / bycause that ye (that call
yourselfe the chyrche and them heretyques) do persecute theym as the
chyrche of the paynymys dyd in the begynnyng. And therefore they do
hyde them selfe as the chyrche dyd in the begynnyng. But and yf ye
30 wolde ceace your persecucion ones / and lette theym lyue in reste / ye
sholde se them flocke togyther soo Paste / that they sholde soone shewe
you the chyrche with a wete fynger.

They myght quod I peraduenture shewe a shrowde sorte within a
whyle / yf they were suffered / and the chyrche that the prophete Dauyd
speketh of / Odi ecclesiam malignantium / I hate the chyrche of
35 malycyous men. But they shall neuer shewe them selfe the chyrche of
Cryste.

The chyrche of Cryste where so euer it was in all the persecucion /
vused to come togyther to the prechyng and prayer / thoughte it were
preuely in wodys or secrete housys. They vused also the sacramentes
40 among them selfe / as baptysme / confymacyon / matrymony / holy
order / prestes and byshoppes amonge them / fastyngys / vygylys kepte
/ the sondayes halowed / the masse sayd / holy seruyce songe / and
theyr people howselyd / as well appereth not onely by the storyes of the
chyrche / but also of the paynyms. And partely well appereth by a pystle
45 of Plinie wryten to the Emperour Traiane. And suche thyngys must there
be therin / yf it be any chyrche or congregacyon of Cryste. Now these
people that ye speke of / vse no suche thyngys amonge theym selfe / and
therefore they can not be the chyrch of Cryst.

They preche quod he preuely among them selfe / & all the

remanaunt they do in our chyrches.

This quod I playnly proueth that they can not be the chyrche of Cryste. For the chyrche of Cryst euer fledde and forbare the temple in whiche Idollys & mammettes were. And it was a playne renayng of
5 Crystys fayth / to do any obseruauce thereto / though they dyd it onely with theyr body for fere / and thought the contrary with theyr harte. For our lorde saythe / he that denyeth me before the worlde I wyll denye hym before my father in heuyn. And holy scrypture sayth Spiritus sanctus effugiet fictum. The holy goste fleeth from faynyng. But these
10 men whom you call the chyrche / come to the chyrches where the ymagys be / whiche they take for ydollys / and there they come to seruyce with vs / whome they take for ydolaters. And where they teche among them selfe that we do nought / they come to our chyrch as I say / and in face of the worlde they do the same / knele to ymagys as we do
15 / set vp candellys as we do / pray to sayntys as we do / and happely more lowde with theyr mouthes whyle they mocke them with theyr hartys. And ouer this many mocke also the sacramentes whiche they receyue.

And thys putteth me in mynde also that besydes all thys / ye can not
20 say that these be the chyrche whom we call heretyques / but ye must tell whiche kynde of them is the chyrche. For all can not be / sythe the chyrche is and must be all of one byleue / and haue all one faythe. And as it was wryten in the actys of the apostles. Erat multitudo credencium anima vna et cor vnum.

25 The multytude of faythfull byleuyng men were all of one mynde and of one harte. And in the chyrche is the holy goste / qui facit vnanimes in domo / whyche maketh all of one mynde in the house of god / that is in the chyrche. But as for amonge heretyques / there be as many dyuers myndys almoste as there be men.

30 The chyrche of cryste also is a thyng that alway hathe stande and as contynued. But the sectys of heretyques and theyr chyrches neuer contynued but euer shortely decayed and vanysshed quyte awaye / so ferforthe that of all the olde heretyques the bookes also be gone and loste / whan there was no lawe made yet to brenne theym / so that it is eth to
35 se / that god hym selfe dystroyed them / and the worlde dene gaue them vp at some tyme / thoughe newe heretyques nowe longe after take theym vp agayne. For yf theyr oppynyons had any where contynually endured / there wolde theyr bokes haue bene contynually reserued / whiche be nowe quyte gone many yeres ago. And thus maye
40 ye well se / that there can no suche folke be the chyrche / that in so many yeres haue no chyrche nor come to none / but to theyrs in whiche they saye theym selfe that they worshyppe ydols.

Well quod he peradventure they wyll not stycke moche to assygne
45 you a place and shewe you a company and congregacyon / whiche they wyll saye is the very chyrche. For what yf they wyll shewe you Boheme and nowe in Saxony where Luther is / & peradventure in a good parte of Germany?

Mary quod I yf they saye so / than lepe they lyke a flounder out of a fryenge panne in to the fyre. For in Saxony fyrst and amonge all the

Lutheranes there be as many heddes as many wyttes. And all as wyse as
wylde gees. And as late as they began / yet be there not onely as many
sectes almost as men / but also the maysters them selfe chaunge theyr
myndes and theyr oppynyons euey day / and wote nere where to holde
5 them. Boheme is also in the same case. One fayth in the towne /
another in the felde. One in prage / another in the nexte towne. And yet
in prage it selfe one faythe in one strete / an other in the nexte. So that
yf ye assygne it in Boheme / ye muste tell in what towne. And yf ye
name a towne / yet must ye tell in what strete. And yet all they
10 knowledge that they can not haue the sacramentes mynystred / but by
suche prestys as be made by authoryte deryued and conuayed frome the
pope whiche is vnder Cryste vycary and the hedde of our chyrche.

15 The .ii. chapter

That none of all these can be the chyrche / shall well appere also by
another meane. Whyther wyll ye saye that the very chyrche and
congregacyon of Cryste was before all the chyrches and congregacyons
20 of heretyques / or some chyrch of heretyques before the chyrche of
Cryste?

Mary quod he there myght be some chyrch of heretyques before the
chyrche of Cryste. For there myght be some amonge the Iewes before the
byrthe of Cryste. And suche I suppose were the Saduces that byleued
25 not the resurreccyon nor the immortalyte of the soule.

If we sholde go quod I to that rekenynge / we myght fetch the
chyrche of Cryst far aboue / and begynne it at Adam. For frome the
fyrste good man to the last / all shall in conclusyon be his chyrche
tryumphant in heuyn. But I speke of Crystys chyrche nowe / as of that
30 congregacyon that berynge his name / and hauynge his ryght fayth /
and beyng begon to be gathered by hym selfe & sprede abrode by his
apostles / hath and doth and shall tyll his comyng to the dredefull dome
/ contynue styll in this worlde / whyther was this chyrche before all the
chyrches and congregacyons of heretyques / or some one of theym
35 before it?

Nay quod he I thynke it was before theym all.

Wherby may we quod I be sure of that?

Mary quod he / for alwayes the heretyques came out of it.

That is quod I trewe. For they coulde be none heretyques / but by
40 beyng fyrste therin / and after comyng out. And it appereth by the
gospell / in whiche the good housbonde man went forth to sowe his seed
/ and whan he had sowed good seed / than the enemy sowed hys euyll
after / and they grewe vp togyther. It appereth also by the wordes of the
apostle & holy euangelyst saynt Iohan / where he sayd of heretiques. E
45 nobis profecti sunt / sed non erant ex nobis. They be gone he sayd out
of vs / but they were none of vs / meanyng that or euer they professed
them self openly for heretyques / yet beyng suche in dede / syth the
chyrch of Cryst is a people of one faythe / these folke that haue another

specyall faythe by them selfe varyeng and gaynsaynge the other / be not
perfytly of the chyrche though they be for the whyle in it. So it is nowe
that any member of that body tyll it be cut of for fere of corrupcyon of
the remenaunt / hangeth on it in a maner / and some lytell lyght or lyfe
5 hath by the spyryte of god / that vpholdeth the body of his chyrche /
beynge euer in case to take occasyon of arnendement by some vayne of
that holsome moysture of goddys grace / that specyally spredeth thorow
out that holy body. But those that by the professyon of heresydes and
infydelyte / fall of from that body or for feare of corruptyng the
10 remenaunt be by curse cast out of the body / they playnly drye vp and
wyther away. Our sauour sayth hym selfe / I am sayth he a very vyne /
and my father is a gardyner. I am the vyne and ye be the braunches.
And euery braunche that bereth in me no frute / my father taketh it
away. And euery braunche that bereth frute / he purgeth it to make it
15 brynge the more frute. And as the braunche can do no good beynge
taken from the tree / ryght so can ye do no good nor serue for nought
but for the fyre / excepte ye abyde in me. By these wordys of our
sauour & many mo there spoken at length / though it appereth that
who so kepe the fayth / yet excepte he worke well therwith / god wyll
20 plucke hym out / & who so by fayth abydyng in the stocke / doth worke
good workes / the more he dothe the more grace and helpe shall haue of
god to growe the better and to do the more / yet appereth it also / that
all the good workys that may be done / wyll not serue yf we be out of the
stocke. And out of the stocke of the vyne be all / that be not graffed in by
25 fayth / or fallen of by open professyon of heresyde / or cut of and caste
out for infydelyte. For faythe is the gate into goddys chyrche / as
mysbyleue is the gate into the deuyls chyrche. For as the apostle saythe.
Accedentem ad deum oportet credere / a man can not come to god
without fayth. And therefore who so professeth a false byleue / let hym be
30 sure that he is gone out of the gate of goddys chyrche before actuall
excommunycacyon / and fallen of the body of the vyneiarde. And yf they
be secrete / neyther professyng theyr heresydes nor actually beynge
accursed and caste out / they be in the chyrch but not perfytlly of it. But
in suche wyse in maner therof be they / as a ded hande is rather a
35 burden in the body / than verely any member organe or instrument
therof. And therefore sayth saynt Iohan as I sayd before / that the
heretyques be gone out of vs / but they were not of vs / For yf they had
bene of vs they wolde haue taryed with vs. Meanyng therby not as some
wolde haue it seme / that a good man is not of the chyrch nor in goddes
40 fauour whyle he is good / bycause he happeth to wax worse afterwarde.
But he meaneth that in that they wente theyr way from vs / they shewed
that they were nought in dede whyle they were wyth vs. And so thoughe
they were with vs / yet were they not of vs. For though heretyques and
infydelys be .amonge faythfull and well byleuyng people / yet be they
45 perde none of them. And so it appereth as ye sayd before / that the
chyrche of Cryste is before all the chyrches of heretyques / and that all
congregacyons of heretyques haue comen out of the chyrche of Cryste.

That is very true quod he.

Well quod I yf that be true as it is in dede / than can no secte in

Boheme be the ryght chyrche. For the chyrche whiche we call the
chyrche that byleueth as we byleue / was there before them all. And
neuer a chyrch had any chyrche of heretyques yet / but it was buylded
by our chyrche to theyr handys. So that it is euydent that none of all
5 them can be Crystys chyrche / but Crystys chyrche must nedys be that
chyrch that was before all them / & out of whiche all they haue
sprongen / and synse seueryd theym selfe / whiche is the chyrche that
all they deny not / to byleue agaynst theym / the poyntys whiche we
byleue and they reprove.
10

The .iii. chapiter

Peradventure quod he there myght be sayd / that it nedeth not to
15 assygne any place / where the very chyrche and true crysten
congregacyon is. But syth euery place is indyfferent there vnto / it may
be that all the good men and chosen people of god / that be
predestynate to be saued / in what parte so euer they be / & how so
euer they be scateryd / here one and there one / here two and there two
20 / that these be the very chyrche of Cryste. And be in this worlde
vnknownen as yet / whyle the chyrch doth but wander in the pylgrymage
of this shorte lyfe.

Mary quod I this gere groweth fro worse to worse. And in very Dede /
yetus this poynt / theyr shote ancre. For fyrst they se playnly that they
25 must nedys graunt / that the very chyrche can neyther be deceyued in
the ryght fayth / nor mystake holy scrypture or mysunderstande it / to
the introduccyon of infydelyte and false byleue. And this grounde fynde
all the heretyques theym selfe so sure and fast / that they perceyue well
excepte they wolde openly and vtterly deny Cryste all togyther / it can
30 not be vndermynd. And syth they manifestly se that / and as
euydently se therwith that the chyrche (whiche is the very chyrch in
dede) dampneth all theyr wayes / wherof sythe the chyrche can not arre
in dyscernynge the trouthe / it must nedys folow that they mystake
them selfe all the hole matter / and be quyte in a wronge way / therfore
35 be they dreuyn to deny for the chyrche the people that be knowen for the
chyrche. And go seke another they neyther know what nor where / bylde
vp in the ayre a chyrch all so spyrytuall / that they leue therin at length
neyther god nor good man. And fyrst where they say that there be none
therin / but they that be predestynate to be saued / yf the questyon
40 were of the chyrche tryumphaut in heuyn / than sayd they well. But
we speke of the chyrch of Cryst mylytaunt here in erthe / & therfore
goth theyr frame as far wyde fro the place they shold set it on / as heuyn
and erthe stande a sonder. For fyrst wolde I wyt if the chyrche be none
but those that be predestynate / whyther all that bene predestynate be
45 membres therof?

Why not quod he.

Than quod I he that is predestynate to be saued / whyther may lie or
not be dyuers tymes a synner in his days?

What yf he may quod he?

May he not quod I be also dyuers tymes in his days in a wronge
byleue & a false heresy / & after tourne / repent / & amend / and so be
saued at last as god hath predestynate hym to be?

5 What than quod he?

Mary quod I / for than shall it folow / that he shall be a member of
the very chyrche and so styll contynue / and neuer can be cast out
beynge a starke heretyque.

10 Yet quod he / is he all that whyle a quycke member of the chyrche /
by reason of goddys predestynacyon / syth though he be not sure / yet
it is in dede sure / that he is and euer shalbe one of the very chyrche.

It is quod I sure in dede and well knowen to god that he so shall be.
But as sure is it that for the whyle he is not / excepte that all thyng that
euer shall be / is all redy present in dede / as it is present to goddes
15 knowlege. And then were saynt Poule as good whyle he was a
persecutoure / as whan he was apostle. And as verily a membre of
Crystes chyrche or he was borne / as he is nowe in heuyn.

Well quod he / thoughe that peraduenture all those that be lyuyng
and predestynate to be saued be not in it / yet may it be that there be
20 none other in it than predestynates.

But it may be quod I that as men be chaungeable / he that is
predestynate may be many tymes in his lyfe nought. And he that wyll at
last fall to synne and wretchydnes and so fynally cast hymselfe away /
shall in some tyme of his lyfe be good / and therefore for the tyme in
25 goddes faouere. For god blameth nor hateth no man for that he shall
wyll / but for that malycyous wyll that he hathe or hath had all redy.
And thus shall there by this reason be good men out of Crystes chyrche
and noughty men therin / faythfull men out of it and heretyques in it /
and bothe the one and the other without reason or good cause why.

30

The .iiii. chapter

Well quod he yet may it be / that the very chyrche of Cryst / is all
35 suche as byleue a ryght and lyue well where so euer they be / though
the worlde knowe them not / and thoughe fewe of them knowe eche
other. For god as saynt Poule saythe / knoweth who be his. And Cryst
sayth / that agaynst his chyrche the gates of hell shall not preuayle /
but the gates of hell do preuayle agaynst synners. And therefore it
40 appereth well that there can be no synners in his chyrche / nor that
there be none of his chyrche but good folke. And vnto them our lorde is
present & kepeth them from errours / and gyueth theym ryght
vnderstandynge of his holy scryptures. And where they be forceth not /
howe fewe they be togyther maketh no matter. For our sauour sayth /
45 where so euer be two or thre gathered togyther in my name / there am I
also amonge them. And so is his very chyrche here and there of onely
good men to the worlde vnknowen / and to hym selfe well knowen. And
thoughe they be fewe in comparyson / yet make they about in all the

worlde a good many amonge them. As god sayd whan the chyldren of
Israeli were fallen to ydolatry and worshypped the ydoll Baall so ferforth
that it semed all were in the case / and men knewe not who were
otherwyse / yet sayed oure lorde as appereth in the .xix. chapyter the
5 thyrd boke of the kynges / I shall reserue for my selfe .vii. M. that haue
not bended theyr kne before Baall. So that where the synagoge and
chyrch was than / it was vnknownen to man but it was well knownen to
god. And they were not his chyrch that semed to be / but a company
vngathered that no man was ware of / nor wolde haue went. And so may
10 it be peraduenture nowe / that the very chyrche of Cryste is not nor
many dayes hath not bene the people that semeth to be the chyrche /
but some good men scatered here and there vnknownen / tyll god gather
theym togyther and make theym knownen / and happely those that
byleue agaynste ymagys and whome we nowe call heretyques.

15 This is quod I a reason that Luther maketh hym selfe. By which he
wolde brynge the very chyrche of Cryst out of knowlege / and wold put it
in doute whyther the sayntes that the chyrche honoureth / were good
men or not. And wolde that it myght seme peraduenture nay / but that
they were happely not good. But the good men and sayntys in dede /
20 were some other whome the worlde for theyr open lewde lyuyng reputed
for nought. But where he sayeth that the chyrche or synagoge of the
ryght byleue was than vnknownen / that is not trewe. For it was well
knownen in Hyerusalem and Iudea / though it hadde ben vnknownen who
were faythfull in Samaria. And the scrypture also sayeth not that these
25 .vii. M. Whom he wolde leue yet in Israeli that had not bowed theyr
knees before Baall / were secrete and vnknownen / but he sayth onely
that such a number of suche folke he wolde leue. But now for our
purpose sythe ye wyll haue the very chyrche a secrete vnknownen / not
company and congregacyon / but a dysperclcd number of onely good
30 men / wyll you that those good men whiche after your rekenynge make
the very chyrche / shall haue the same fayth and none other than we
haue / whiche be nowe reputed for the chyrche / or els a fayth and
byleue dyfferent?

What yf they haue the same quod he?

35 Mary quod I than wyll your new bylded chyrche nothyng helpe your
purpose. But they shall as faste conferme the worshyp of ymagys /
prayeng to sayntys / and sekyng to pylgrymagys as we. And as depely
condempne for heresy your oppynyon to the contrary.

40 That is very trouthe quod he. But it may be that of that very chyrche
/ the fayth and byleue shalbe / that all this gere is erronyous& as playn
ydolatry as was the worshypyng of Baall.

If that were so quod I / than had Cryst not kept hym .vii. M. from the
worshyp of Baall in all the regyons that bere the name of crystendom /
excepte these newe folke of Saxony & Bohem whiche your selfe graunte
45 to be the heretyke as sectys comen out of the chyrche. And more than
wonder were it / yf all the chyrche of Cryste sholde be clene amonge
infydels and heretyques and no parte at all therof amonge the grete
vnchaungeable crysten countrees / whiche haue kepte theyr faythe in
one constant fassyon deryued fro the begynnyng. For this am I sure /

that in all those regyons as I saye / yf any haue any suche oppynyon
agaynst ymages and sayntes / yet cometh he to the chyrche amonge his
neyghbours / & there boweth his knees to Baall (yf the ymages be Baall)
as his neyghbours do / but go to / let vs forth on a lytell further. And
5 supposyng that there were some suche secrete good folke / as ye speke
of / that had the ryghte byleue / and were the ryght chyrche / and that
they were so dyspersed a sondre / that they were to the worlde
vnknowen / hath not god set an ordre in his chyrche that some shall
preche to the remenaunt for exortacyon of good lyuyng / and
10 informacyon / wherin good lyuyng standeth / as in fayth and good
workes?

Yes quod he.

Bad not Cryst quod I sacramentes also to be mynystred in his
chyrche by the preestes of the same? Yes quod he. Nowe quod I / yf
15 some infydels as Turkes or Sarasyns hauyng herde of Crystes name /
dyd longe to knowe his scrypture and his fayth / and heryng that there
were many people that professed theym selfe for crysten men / hole
nacyons / but they were all open ydolatres and in a mysse byleue / and
clerely deceyued and begyled / and that specyally by the clergy that
20 techeth them / how be it / there were yet a fewe good folke and ryght
byleuyng / whiche were not deceyued / whiche amonge them be the
very trewe chyrche / but who they be / or where they be / or howe to
aske for them / or yf he happen on them / yet wherby to knowe them /
that can no man tell hym / how sholde these infydels come to the fayth
25 / and of whom sholde they here it? For they beyng warned before that
there were many sectes of heretyques / and but one trewe chyrche /
wolde neuer be so madde to lerne of them that they myght wene were
wronge. And howe sholde they nowe come to the ryght / whan the trewe
chyrche is vnknowen?

30 They myght quod he take the scrypture.

They sholde quod I be therein lyke to Eunuchus that coulde not
vnderstande without a reder. And than yf they toke a wronge reder of a
wrong chyrche / all were marred. And also they wolde not trust the
scryptures nor reken that they had the ryght bokes of scrypture amonge
35 false sectys / but wolde loke to receyue the trewe scrypture of the ryght
and trewe chyrch. And thus here it appereth yf it were thus / god had
left none ordynary waye for his gospell and fayth to be taught. But let
go these infydels and speke of our selfe / whiche are (yf this waye were
trewe) as false as they. Where be than prechers of this very chyrche that
40 sholde preche & teche vs better? For it is no chyrche yf it haue no
prechours.

It hath quod he some that preche some tyme / but ye wyll not suffer
theym. Ye punyshe them and burne them.

45 Nay quod I / they be wyser than so / they wyll not be burned for vs /
for they wyll rather swere on a boke that they neuer sayd so / or ellys
that they wyll no more say so. And in this appereth that there is no
suche secrete vnknowen chyrche of Cryst / that hauyng suche
opynyons is the very chyrche. For the very chyrche hath euer had some
that hath abyden by theyr faythe and theyr prechyng / and wolde

neuer go backe with goddes worde to dye therefore. And this chyrche that
we be of / that take your chyrche for heretyques haue hadde many
suche martyrys therein / that byleued as we do agaynst your oppynyons
/ as appereth by the hystories and by many of theyr bokys / where as
5 of your secrete chyrche I neuer yet founde or herde of any one in all my
lyfe / but he wolde forswere your fayth to saue his lyfe. Where be also
your prestes and your bysshoppys? For suche must they haue yf they be
the chyrche of Cryste. Now suche can your chyrche haue notie / ye be
eche to other vnknowen. And though some of such chyrches haue a
10 false oppynion that euery man is a prest & euery woman to / yet this
heresy false as it is / wyll not serue this vnknowen chyrche. For the
holders of that oppynion do put / that no man may for all that take
vpon hym to preche or medle as preest / tyll he be chosen by the
congregacyon. And where can that be in this ymagynary chyrch / of
15 whiche no man knoweth other? And where as our lorde sayth / where
soeuer be two or thre gathered togyther in my name there am I wyth
them / he spake not as though euery two or thre what so euer they were
sholde make his chyrche / but that where so euer there came togyther
two or thre in his name that be of his chyrche there is he with them. And
20 so dothe the one texte of the scripture in the gospell playnly declare / as
it is well set out and opened by the holy doctour & gloryous martyr saynt
Cypryan / in his epystle agaynst Nouacyan.

Whan our sauour sayth also that he whiche wolde not amende by
his faute shewed hym before two or thre wytnes / sholde be complayned
25 vpon vnto the chyrche / dyd he meane a secrete chyrche / whiche no
man wyst where to fynde? Nowe whan the apostle wryteth vnto the
Corynthyens / that rather than they shold pleate and stryue in the lawe
before the infydelys / they sholde set suche as were in the chyrche lytell
set by / to be iudges in theyr temporall suytes / of what chyrch dyde he
30 speke / of suche one as no man wyst where to seke it? This vnknowen
chyrch whiche they be dryuen to seke that be lothe to know the chyrche
/ wyll neuer serue. But the chyrche of Cryste is a chyrche well knowen.
And his pleasure was to haue it knowen and not hyd. And it is bylded
vpon so hygh an hyll of the holy stone / I meane vpon cryste hym selfe /
35 that it can not be hyd. Non potest abscondi ciuitas supra montem
posita. The cyte can not be hyd that is set on an hyll. And he wolde haue
his fayth dyuulged & spredde abrode openly / not alway whyspered in
hukermoker. And therefore he bounde his prechers to stande thereby &
not to reuoke his worde for no payne. For he sayd that he dyd not lyght
40 thel candell to put it & hyde it vnder a busshell / for so wolde no man do
/ but he had kyndeled a lyre which he wolde not sholde lye & smolder as
coles dothe in quenche / but he wold it shold burne & gyue lyght. And
therefore foly were it to say that Cryst which wolde haue his chyrch spred
thorowe the worlde / & euery where gathered in company / wolde haue
45 it turned to a secret vnknowen syngle sorte / seuered a sunder &
scatered about in corners / vnknowen to all the worlde & to them selfe
to. Now where they say that there is none of the chyrche but onely those
that be good folke / this wolde make the chyrch clerely vnknowen / were
the. people neuer so many & the place neuer so large. For who can know

of the multitude who be good in dede & who be nought / syth the bad
maye sodaynly be mended vnware to the worlde / & the good as
sodaynly waxen worse. Nowe lay they for the profe of the oppynyon the
wordes of Cryst / which Luther allegeth also for the same entent in his
5 boke that he made agaynste Ambrosius Catherina / that is to wyt the
wordes wherin our lorde sayd vnto saynt Peter / that agaynste his
chyrche the gates of hell sholde not preuayle / by which wordes Luther
doth (as he thynketh & sayth hym selfe) meruaylous gayly proue / that
there can be no man of the chyrch but he that synneth not. For this
10 argument he maketh. Cryst sayth that the gates of hell shall not
preuayle agaynste the chyrche/ but the gates of hell is nothyng but the
deuyll / & he preuayleth agaynste all folke that syn / ergo no folke that
syn be the chyrch. And by this worshypfull argument it is a worlde to se
what bost the mad man maketh / that he hath clerely proued that the
15 chyrch is not these people whom we take for the chyrch / bycause they
be synners / which argument hath so many folyes & fautes therin / &
so moch inconuenyence & absurdyte folowyng thervpon / that it is more
than meruayle that a chyld of one Wekes study in sophystry coulde for
shame fynd in his harte to bryng it in place for any earnest argument. For
20 fyrst if men deny hym that the gates of hell do in that place sygnyfy the
deuyll / then he can neuer proue it / & than is all his reason wyped
quyte away. Now do there in dede dyuers olde commentors & doctors of
the chyrch take in that place for the gates of hell / the grete tyrauntes &
heretykes by whose persecucyons & heresies (as it were by .ii. gates)
25 many a man hath gone in to hel. And our sauor promyseth in that
place / that neyther of those .ii. gales / that is to wyt neyther paynym
tyraunt nor crystened heretyke shold preuayle agaynste the chyrch. For
though they haue dystroyed & shal dystroy many of the chyrch / yet
shall they not be able to dystroy the chyrch / but the chyrch shall stand
30 & be by god preserued in despyte of all theyr teth. And thus ye se howe
sone Luthers specyall argumentes were ouerthrowen with trowth. But yf
a man wold graunt hym that the gates of hell dyd here sygnyfy the
deuyll / yet sholde we not nede to graunt hym that the deuyll / as he is
called of god / by the name of the gates (whiche is not done for nought)
35 doth preuayle agaynste euery man that synneth. For he that synneth &
ryseth agayn out of syn (& so cometh within the gates / as yet the gates
can not hold hym / but that he breketh, out of the gates) the gates do
not preuayle agaynste hym / but he preuayleth agaynste the gates. And
thus is Luthers wyse argument whiche he groundeth vpon the texte /
40 auoyded agayne. It appereth also that it is a very frantyke argument. For
where he sayth / that agaynste the chyrche of Cryste / the gates of hell
preuayle not / but they preuayle agaynste our chyrche / that is to wyt /
all the crysten people whom we call the chyrche / vnder obedyence of
the Pope / ergo they be not the chyrche / this argument proueth that
45 there is in erthe no chyrche at all. For what chyrch can he fynde or
ymagyn in erth that doth not synne / and specyally yf that were true
that hym selfe sayth among his other heresyas / where he holdeth styfly
that all the good workes of good men be synnes / and that men synne in
that they do good? And thus he wolde bothe haue the chyrch to be onely

a secrete vnknowne sorte of folke that do not synne / and yet he
confesseth that there be none suche. And so as he goth about to take
away the very chyrche that is well knowen / makynge as though he wold
fynde out a better / he leueth in conclusyon no chyrche at all. And to
5 such a fonde and false ende must they nedys brynge it all / that wyll
make it a number of onely suche as be good men and do not synne. For
yf he shold be in it alway whan he is out of synne / and out of it whan
he is in synne / than sholde a man peraduenture be in it in the
mornynge and out of it at none / and in agayne at nyght. So that who
10 wore in it / or whan / or where it were / who coulde tell? And of that
vncertaynty must nedys growe all suche inconuenyences and
contradyccyon vnto scrypture / as is before rehersed. The chyrche
therefore must nedys be the comen knowen multytude of crysten men
good and bad togyther / whyle the chyrche is here in erth. For this nette
15 of Cryste hath for the whyle good fysshes and bad. And this felde of
Cryste bereth for the whyle good corne and code / tyll it shall at the day
of dome be puryfyed / and all the bad caste out / and the onely good
remayne. And therefore whan the apostle wrote vnto the Corynthyes of
hym that had lyen with his mother in law / he commaunded that he
20 sholde be seperate out of the chyrche. Whiche he neuer was after that
dede done / tyll the excommunycacion denounced / but was styll for all
his synne one of the chyrch / though he was nought / & out of goddys
fauour. Cryst hym selfe sayd to his apostles / now be you clene but not
all / and yet were they all of his chyrche. Albe it that one of them was as
25 our sauour sayd hym selfe / a deuyll. Dyd I not sayd he chese twelue of
you / & one of you is a deuyll? And yf there were none of the chyrch but
good men as longe as they were good / than had saynt Peter bene ones
no parte of the chyrch after that cryste had appoynted hym for chyef.

But our lorde in this his mystycall body of his chyrche / caryeth his
30 membres / some seke / some hole / & all sekely. Nor they be not for
euery syn clene caste of from the body / but yf they be for fere of
infeccon cut of / or els wyllngly do departe & seperate them selfe as do
these heretykes / that eyther refuse the chyrch wyllfully them selfe / or
els for theyr obstynacy be put out. For tyll theyr stuburne hartes do
35 shew them incurable / the body bereth them yet about syke & noughty
& cay colde as they be / to proue whyther the warmnes of grace goyng
thorowe this hole mystycall body of Crystes chyrch myght gete yet &
kepe some lyfe in them. But whan the tyme shall come that this chyrche
shall hole chaunge her place & haue heuyn for her dwellynge in stede of
40 erth / after the fynall iudgement pronounced & gyuen whan god shall
with his spouse this chyrch of cryst entre in to the plesaunt weddyng
chambre to the bed of eternall rest / than shall all these scalde &
scabbed peces scale clone of / & the hole body of Crystes holy chyrch
remayne pure / clene & glorious / without wem / wrinkle or spot /
45 which is (& for the whyle I wene wyl be / as long as she is here) as
scabed as euer was Iob / & yet her louyng spouse leueth her not / but
contynually goth about by many maner medycynes / some bytter some
swete / some easy some greuouse / some plesaunt / some paynfull to
cure her.

The .v. chapter

And fynally to put out of questyon which is crystes very chyrche /
syth it is agreed bytwene vs & graunted thorow crystendom / & a
5 conclusyon very true / that by the chyrch we know the scrypture / so
which chyrch is that by which ye know the scrypture? Is it not this
company & congregacyon of all these nacyns / that without faccyons
taken / & precysyon from the remenaunt / professe the name & fayth of
Cryst? By this chyrch know we the scrypture / & this is the very chyrch
10 / & this hath begon at cryst / & hath had hym for theyr hed & saynt
Peter his vycar after hym the hed vnder hym / & alway synce the
successours of hym contynually / & haue had his holy fayth & his
blessyd sacramentes & his holy scryptures delyuered / kept &
conserued therin by god & his holy spyryte. And all be it some nacyns
15 fall away / yet lykewyse as how many bowes so euer fall from the tre /
though they fall more than be left theron / yet they make no doute
which is the very tre / all though eche of them were planted agayn in
another place & grew to a gretter than the stok he came fyrst of / ryght
so whyle we se & wel know that all the companyes & sectes of heretykes
20 & scysmatykes how grete so euer they grow / cam out of this chyrch
that I spake of / we knowe euermore that the heretykes be they that be
seuered / & the chyrch the stok that all they cam out of. And syth that
only the chyrch of cryst is the vyne that cryst spake of in the gospell /
which he taketh for his body mystycall / & that euery braunche seuered
25 from that tre / leseth his lyfly nouryshyng / we must nedes wel know
that all these braunches of heretykes fallen from the chyrch / the vyne
of crystes mystycal body / seme they neuer so freshe & grene / be yet in
dede but witherlinges that wyther / & shall drye vp / able to serue for
nothyng / but for the fyre.
30

The .vi. chapter

Whan I had sayd.
35 Syr quod he ye haue in good fayth fully satysfyed me concernyng the
sure and vndowted knowlege of the very chyrche here in erthe. But yet
thynketh me that one lytell dowte remayneth for our pryncypall matter.
What is that quod I?
40 Mary syr quod he it is this / that though the very fayth be in the
chyrche / and the chyrche can not arre therein / nor the chyrch can not
be deceyued agaynst the faythe / in any texte of scrypture / nor no
scrypture is there (that beyng well vnderstanden) doth or can do stande
agaynst the fayth of the chyrche / and that also the chyrche is none
other / but as ye say / & as I se it is in dede / but this hole comen
45 congregacyon of crysten peple good and bad / not seperatyng them selfe
for frowardnes / nor beyng put out for theyr obstynate fautys / yet syth

it appereth well / that though the ryght fayth be in the chyrch / it is not
in euery man of the chyrche. And though the chyrche can not arre in
suche thyngys / yet some of the chyrche may. Nowe semeth it to some
men / that it may well peradventure happen / that the good men well
5 byleuyng and vndeceyued / be those that byleue the worshyp of ymagys
and prayeng to sayntys to be ydolatry. And on the other syde / that
those whiche byleue the contrary be that parte of the chyrche / that be
the naughty men / mysbyleuers and foule deceyued.

That were a very strange worke quod I. Ye wolde ryght now quod I /
10 that in the chyrche we sholde thynke that there were none other but
good men. Wyll ye now agre that there be therin some good men?

Ye quod he that must nedes be.

Well quod I whyther be they good men that do nought?

Nay quod he.

15 Do they well quod I that do ydolatry in dede / though it be agaynst
theyr hartes?

Nay quod he.

But all quod I come to chyrche and worshyp ymagys / & all pray to
sayntys. Wherefore yf that be ydolatry / than the chyrche of Cryste is all
20 nought. For thus do they that be of the contrary syde / for fere of beyng
perceyued. Also yf one do well or preche well / is he a good man yf he
deny it for fere?

Nay quod he.

But nowe quod I all that are of that sorte yf they happen to
25 aduventure somewhat & be spyed / they wyll fyrst periure them selfe / &
after abiure theyr opynyon / so yhat yf theyr opynyon were good / yet
were them self nought.

But yet quod he yf theyr opynyons be good / than be not they so
euyll in hydyng theyr ententes for fere / as they that agaynst theyr true
30 opynyons do & preche openly & pursue them for saynge trouth. As some
that faynted & lied fro martyrdom / were not so euyll as they that
pursued them.

Very trouth quod I / yf these mennes opynyons were true. But yet
thoughe they were true / yet were these men nought.

35 And the other worse quod he.

That is well sayd quod I / but they & the other be the hole chyrch.
And yf yours be nought as ye graunt & must nedes graunt they be / yf
the other were nought to / than were in the chyrch none good. But your
selfe deny not but in that chyrch it must nedes be / that there be some
40 good. And there can be none / but eyther your parte or the other. Ergo
syth yours be nought / those that be good must nedes be the other. But
none of those that be of the other coulde be good men / if they were
ydolaters & pursued your parte for sayng the trouth / & compelled them
to deny the trouth / ergo the other parte be not ydolaters / nor the
45 opynyon of your parte / for which they persue your parte be not trewe.
And thus it appereth as me semeth / that good men of the chyrch be
agaynst you / and the noughty with you.

The .vii. chapter

And yet speke I nothyng of all the good men / & well knowen for
good men / & holy men / & now sayntes in heuyn that haue
5 condempned your parte / & wryten agaynst you. And your parte
therefore be so sore agaynst sayntes agayne / bycause they se theyr
heresy es impugned & condempned by theyr holy wrytynges. Nor besydes
this haue I nothyng spoken of the generall counsayls condempnyng your
10 parte by good & substancyall authoryte comprobate & corroborate by
the hole body of crystendom / led therunto bothe long before & euer
synce / thorow the secret operacyon of the holy gost / who coule neuer
suffre (as your selfe agreeth) the chyrch of Cryst to contynue so hole &
so long in so damnable ydolatri / as this were / if it were supersticyon /
& not a parte of very fay th & true deuout relygyon. Wherefore syth I haue
15 proued you / that the chyrch can not erre in so grete a poynt / nor
agaynst the ryght fayth mystake the sentence of holy scrypture / & also
that these people that byleue ymages to be worshypped be the very
chyrch of cryst / & that of his chyrche the good & bad bothe doth vse it
/ & the good men doth it truely / & the bad falsly / and that all the good
20 men of olde hath alowed & vsed this way & condempned the contrary /
which hath also ben declared for false heresy by the hole general
counsayle of crystendom / approued by the fayth & custome of all the
people / besyde growyng in to such consent by goddes holy spyryte the
gouerneth his chyrch / I neuer nede to go further or touch your textes or
25 argumentes to the contrary. For this syde thus proued good / it must
nedes folowe that the other syde is nought / excepte ye haue agaynst
this any further thyng to say. Whiche yf ye haue / neuer let to brynge it
forth. For I wyll for none hast leue any corner of the matter vnransaked
/ as far as we can any doute fynde therein.

30 In good fayth syr quod he I am in this matter euen at the harde wall /
& se not how to go further.

Now I assure you quod I / yf I coulede my selfe fynde any further
obieccyon / I wold not fayle to bryng it in. But in good fayth I suppose
we be waded in this matter as farre / as we can bothe fynde. And I am
35 sure as far as euer Luther founde or any that euer I haue sene / that
any thyng haue sayd / or wrytten on that syde.

The .viii. chapter

40

Now therefore as I say further ned I not to go. But yet wyll I somewhat
touche the thynges which as ye say do moue many men to take the
worshyp of ymages for ydolatri. And it so taken & theyr opynyon so
reputed / they reken it a grounde to thynke the miracles done at the
45 ymages / or by inuocacyons of sayntys to be illusyons of the deuyl. And
fyrst wyll we begyn at the sayntes them selfe. And by the way shall we

speke of theyr relykes ymages & pylgrymagys / as there shall occasyon
ryse in our matter. And for the fyrst in good fayth sauynge that the bokes
& wrytynges of holy doctours condempne these mennys heresyces / the
dysplesure & anger wherof setteth them on a fyre to study for the
5 mynyshyng of theyr estimacion that so stande in theyr lyght / els wold I
moch wonder / what these heretikes mene to impugne the worshyp of
sayntes / & forbyd vs to pray to them. And albe it I now se the cause of
theyr malyce / yet can I not moch the lesse meruayle of theyr madnes /
that shew theyr euyl wyll so openly / that they neyther haue reason nor
10 good colour to cloke or couer it with. Fyrst they put in doute whyther
sayntys can here vs. And yf they do / yet whyther they can helpe vs. And
fynally yf they coulde / yet wolde they we shold thynke it foly to desyre
them / bycause god can do it better and wyll do it soner hym selfe than
they all. Now where they doute whyther sayntes here vs / I meruayll
15 wherof the doute ariseth / but if they thynke them dede / as well in
soule as body. For yf theyr holy soules lyue / there wyll no wyse man
wene them worse and of lesse loue & charyte to men that nede theyr
helpe / whan they be now in heuen / than they had whan they were
here in erthe. For all the whyle were they neuer so good / yet the best
20 was worse / than the worst is now. As our sauour sayd by saynt Iohan
the baptyste / that there was no womans sone gretter than he / yet the
lest that was all redy in heuyn / was his better. We se that the nerer the
folke drawe thytherwarde / the more good mynde here they to men here.
And therefore saynt Stephen whan he saw heuen open for hym / he
25 began to pray for them that malyciously kyled hym. And thynke we
than that beyng in heuyn / he wyll not vouchsaufe to pray for them
that deuoutely honoure hym / but hath lesse loue and charyte beyng
there / than he had goynge thytherwarde? yf the ryche man that lay in
hell / had yet not onely for fere of encrease of his owne punysshment /
30 by his brothers dampnacyon growyng of his euyl ensample in synne /
but also of carnall loue & fleshly fauour towardes his kynne (whiche
fleshly affeccyon beyng without grace or vertue may peraduenture
stande with the state of dampnacyon) had a cure & care of his fyue
bretherne / were it lykely that sayntes than beyng so full of blessyd
35 charyte in heuyn / wyll nothyng care for theyr bretherne in Cryst /
whom they se here in this wretched worlde? Nowe yf there be no doubt
(as I trowe none there is) but theyr holy soules be alyue / they wold we
dyd well. And as lytell doubt / but that they be alyue if god be theyr god
/ as he is in dede / and he not the god of ded men but of lyuyng / as
40 our sauour sayth in the gospell / for all men lyue styll and euer shall /
that he hath taken to hym & ones gyuen lyfe vnto / there resteth than
no further to se but whyther they can do vs any good or no eyther for
that they can not here vs / or for that they can not helpe vs. And fyrst I
meruayle moche if they thynke they can not helpe vs. For whyle they
45 were here they coulde / as appereth in the actes of the appostles. And
syth imbecylyte & lacke of power is here parte of our mysery / and
strength and plentye of power / is one grete parte of welthe / they were
well forthered in that poynte / yf they were nowe lesse able to doo good
to them whom they fayne wolde were holpen / than they were before.

For whyther they be able there / to do it them selfe / or onely by theyr
intercessyon / made vnto god / this maketh no force for our matter / so
that by theyr meanes / the one way or the other / we take helpe by our
deuocyon towarde them / and prayer made vnto them.

5 I thynke quod he they may do in dede moche more than they myght
bothe by power & prayer. But it is harde somewhat to thynke / that they
sholde here vs and se vs / and specyally in so many places at ones. For
though they be not cyrcumscribed in place / for lacke of bodyly
dymencyon and measuryng / yet are they and aungels also
10 dyffynytyuely so placed where they be for the tyme / that they be not at
one tyme in dyuers places at ones / as sayntes be in sundry countrees /
and very farree a sundre called vpon at ones.

Ye meruayle quod I / & thynke it harde to be byleued / that sayntes
here vs. And I (whyle we se / that the thynges we pray for / we obtayne)
15 meruayle moche more / how men can doubt whyther the prayers be
herde or not. Whan sayntes were in this worlde at lyberte & myght walke
the worlde aboute / wene we the in heuen they stande tyed to a post?
But the wonder is how they may se and here in sondry placys at ones. If
we .ii. coulde no more but fele and neyther se nor here / we wolde as
20 well wonder. Or yf we coulde not wonder therof / bycause we coulde not
here therof / yet sholde be far from any conceyuyng in our mynde / that
it were possyble for man to se or here further than he can fele. For we
that prone it / and do se and here in dede / can not yet se the cause /
nor in no wyse ceace to wonder by what reason & meane it may be /
25 that I shold se two chyrchers or two townes / eche of them two a myle a
sonder / and bothe twayne as far fro me as eche of them from other /
and measure so great quantityes with so small a measure / as is the
lytle apple of myne eye. And of heryng many mennys voycys or any
mannys wordes / comyng at ones in to many mennys erys / standyng
30 far a sonder / hath lyke dyffyculte to conceyue. And whan all the
reasons be made eyther of bemys sent out from our eyen to the thyngys
that we beholde / or the fygure of the thyngys sene / multiplyed in the
ayre from the thyng to our eye / or of the ayre stryken with the breth of
the speker / and equally rollyng forth in rondles to the eares of the
35 herers / whan all the reasons be herd / yet shall we rather delyte to
serch than be able to fynd any thyng in these matters / that were able to
make vs perceyue it. Now whan we may with our fleshly eye and ere in
this groce body se & here thynges far dystaunt from vs / & from sondry
places far dystaunt a sonder / maruayle we so moche / the blessyd
40 aungels & holy soules / beyng mere spirytual substauncys / vncharged
of all bourdynous fleshe & bonys / may in doyng the same / as far
passe & excede vs and our powers naturall / as the lyuely soule selfe
excedeth our deedly body / nor can not byleue they here vs / though we
fynd they helpe vs / but yf we perceyued by what meanes they do it (as
45 whyther they se and here vs comyng hyther to vs / or our voyce comyng
hens to them / or whyther god here and se all / and shew it them / or
whyther they beholde it in hym / as one doth in a boke the thyng that
he redeth / or whither god by som other way doth vtter it vnto them / as
one doth in spekyng) excepte we may know the meanes / we wyll not els

byleue the matter? As wyse as were he that wolde not byleue he can se /
bycause he can not perceyue by what meane he may se.

Yet se I quod he no cause or nede why we sholde pray to theym /
syth god can as well and wyll as gladly / both here vs and helpe vs / as
5 any saynt in heuen.

What nede you quod I to pray any physycian to helpe your feuer / or
pray and pay any surgean to hele your sore legge / syth god can here
you and helpe you both / as wel as the best / and loueth you better and
can do it soner / and may aforthe his plasters better chepe / and gyue
10 you more for your worde than they for your mony?

But this is his pleasure quod he / that I shall be holpen by the
meane of theym as his instrumentys / though in dede all this he dothe
hym selfe / syth he gyueth the nature to the thyngys that they do it
with.

15 So hath it quod I pleased god in lyke wyse / that we shall aske helpe
of his holy sayntes / and praye for helpe to them. Nor that is not a
makyng of them equall vnto god hym selfe / though they do it by his
wyll and power / or he at theyr intercessyon. Though god wyll (as reason
is) be chyef and haue no matche / yet forbedeth he not one man to
20 praye for helpe of another. And though the father hathe gyuen all the
Iudgement to his sonne / yet doth he delyte to haue his holy sayntes
parteners of that honoure / and at the daye of Iudgement to haue theym
syt with hym. Was Helyseus made egall to god bycause the wydowe
prayed hym to reuyue her dede sonne? Were the appostles egall to
25 Cryste bycause that they were prayed vnto for helpe after his dethe & in
his lyfe also? And many thynges dyd they at folkes prayer. And somtyme
they were prayed vnto and assayed it also / and yet coulde not doo it /
but the partyes were fayne to go fro them to theyr mayster therefore.
And yet was he contente that they were prayed vnto. And for profe therof
30 suffred them at mennes deuoute instaunce and prayer / to do many
myracles. And somtyme were they prayed to be intercessours to theyr
mayster. As where they came to Cryste and sayd / Dimitte illam quia
clamat post nos / dyspache this woman for she cryeth vpon vs. And
thynke you than / that he beyng content and gyuyng men occasyon to
35 pray to theym whyle they were wyth hym in erthe / he wyll be angry yf
we doo them as moche worshyp whan they be with hym in heuyn? Nay
/ but I thynke on the other syde syth his pleasure is to haue his sayntes
had in honoure and prayed vnto / that they may be for vs intercessours
to hys hyghe maiestye / wherevnto ere we presume to approche / it
40 becometh vs & well behoueth vs to make frendes of suche as he hath in
fauoure. He wyll dysdayne ones to loke on vs / yf we be so
presumptuous & malapert felowes / that vpon boldnes of famylyartye
with hym selfe / we dysdayne to make our intercessours his especyall
byloued frendes. And where saynt Poule exhorteth vs eche to pray for
45 other / and we be gladde to thynke it well done to praye euery poore
man to pray for vs / sholde we thynke it euyll done to pray holy sayntes
in heuyn to the same?

Why quod he by that reason I myght pray not onely to sayntes / but
also to euery other dede man.

So may ye quod I with good reason / yf ye se none other lykelyhed
but that he dyed a good man. And so fynd we (as I remembre) in the
dyaloges of saynt Gregory / that one had helpe by prayer made vnto an
5 it our lorde / to let the worlde knowe / that he was in his specyall
fauour / thoughte he were yet in payne of his purgacyon.

For our lorde loued hym neuer the lesse / though he lefte not for hym
the order of his mercyfull Iustyce. And therefore let no man take his
trouble or sykenes as a token of goddes hatered / but yf he fele hym
10 selfe grudge and be impacient and euyll content with it. For than is it a
token of wrath and vengeance / and is to the sufferer as frutelesse as
paynfull. And in effecte nothyng els but the begynnyng of his hell euyn
here. But on the other syde yf he take it paciently it purgeth / yf gladly
it greatly mereteth / and glad may he be that is with mekenes / glad of
15 goddys punyshment. Saynt Austyne as is wrytten by possydonius lyeng
sore seke hym selfe of an axes / cured another with his prayour / & yet
he dyed of his sykenesse hym selfe. Wherein there was to hym more
mercy & fauour shewed / than yf hym selfe had bene cured to. For nowe
in stede of helth he had heuen / where he shold neuer more be seke
20 agayn.

Mary quod he but I haue euer herde it sayd / that we sholde not pray
to any dede man but with this condycyon / yf thou be a saynt / than
pray for me.

Why so quod I more than praeyng to a quycke man / where I am not
25 bounde to say yf thou be a good man pray for me. But syth I may
resonably thynke hym good / whyle I know hym not the contrary / so
may I thynke hym that is dede.

Why quod he wherof serueth canonysyng than? If this be trew I am
neuer auysed to be canonised whyle I lyue.

30 Ye do the better quod I / nor seuen yere after neyther. For it wolde be
but a busyns for you.

But why be they canonised than quod he?

Those quod I that be not canonised / ye may for the more parte
bothe pray for them & pray to them. As ye may for & to them that bene
35 yet alyue. But one that is canonised / ye may pray to hym to praye for
you / but ye may not pray for hym. For as I remember saynt Austyne
sayth / that he that prayeth for a martyr doth the martyr iniury. And of
euery man ye may trust well and be seldome certayne / but of the
canonised ye may reken you sure.

40

The .ix. chapter

45 **H**owe can I quod he be sure therof? May the takyng vp of a mannys
bones / & setting his carcass in a gay shryne / and than kyssyng his
bare scalpe / make a man a saynt? And yet are there som vnshryned /
for no man woteth where they lye. And some that men doute whyther
euer they had any body at all or not. But mary / to recompence that

withall / there be some agayne ythat haue two bodyes / to lende one to
some good felowe that lacketh. For as I sayd before / some one body
lyeth hole in two placys far a sonder / or els the monkys of the one be
begyled. For bothe the placys playnly afferme that it lyeth there. And at
5 eyther place they shewe the shryne. And in the shryne they shew a body
/ which they say is the body / & boldly byde therby that it is it /
alledgyng olde wrytyng & myracles also for the profe. Now muste we
confesse / that eyther the myracles at the one place be false or done by
the deuyll / or ellys that the same saynt had two bodyes in dede. And
10 than were that in my mynde as grete a myracle as the gretest of them
all. And therefore is it lykely some where a bone worshypped for a relyke
of some holy saynt / that was peraduenture a bone as Chaucer saythe
of some holy Iewes shepe. Our sauoure also semeth in the gospell to
blame and reprove the pharysyes / for makynge fresshe the sepulcres of
15 holy prophetes / and makynge shrynes of theyr graues. Wherby it
appereth that he wolde not haue the dede bodyes worshypped & set in
gaye golden shrynes. And yet besydes this ye shall fynde many mo
worshypped I wene than shryned / many shryned that ye fynde not
canonysed / thoughe ye seke vp all the regystres in Rome. And whan
20 they be shryned and canonysed to / yet syth the chyrche in the
canonysacyon vseth a meane that maye begyle them / for they stande to
the recorde of men bothe of theyr lyucs and of theyr myracles / whiche
men maye Peraduenture lye / why may it not than be / that the chyrche
be deceyved in the canonysacion. And that they maye for lacke of trewe
25 knowledge byleuyng vntrewe men / canonyse for sayntes such folke
sometyme as be full farre there from. I dare not say so moche as sayth
saynt Austyn. For he letteth not to say playnly that many bodyes be
worshypped for sayntes here in erthe / whose soules be buried in hell.

Ye haue quod I sayd many thynges very stoutely. But yet let vs fyrst
30 consyder whervnto all togyther wayeth. For it stretcheth no further yf it
were all trewe / but that we myght be deceyued in some / that we
sholde take for sayntes. And it neyther proueth that there be no sayntes
whiche I woye well no wyse man qyll say / nor that yf any be / they
sholde not be worshypped nor prayed vnto. Excepte ye wolde say / that
35 yf we might be possybylyte mysse take some / therefore we sholde
worshyp none. And than sholde you by that reason neuer take any
physycyan / syth ye myght happen vpon a dogge leche / for lacke of
knowledge of the connyng. For in recordes of men ye myght be as well
deceyued there / as here. Nowe suppose than fyrst / that of sayntes and
40 of relykes / some were trewe and some were false / yet the worshyppe
that ye wolde we sholde doo to them all / sholde be bycause (that
standynge as they do vnknowen and vndyscerned) ye rekened them all
trewe and all for goddes well byloued seruauntes. For yf ye knewe of
them whiche were trewe and which false / than wolde ye worshyppe the
45 trewe / and trede the false vnder foote.

That is no doubt quod he.

Thanne quod I yf we were begyled in some / I se no grete parell growe
toward vs thereby. For yf there came a grete many of the kinges frendes
in to your countree / and ye for his sake made them all grete chere / yf

there came amonge them vnware to you some spyes that were his
mortall enemyes / werynge his badge / and semyng to you / and so
reported / as his famylyer frendes / whyther wolde he blame for the
good chere ye made his enemys / or thanke you for the good chere ye
5 made his frendys?

He wolde I thynke quod he thanke me for the good intreatyng of
them both / syth bothe semed good to me / and bothe had of me theyr
chere / but for they semed his frendes and for his sake.

Ye say quod I good reason. But I put case nowe that ye had an
10 inkelyng or els a playne warnyng / that some of them were his enemyes
that semed his best frendys / but whiche they were no man can tell you
/ what wolde you nowe do / make them all chere / and honorably
entreate theym all / or els shewyng them that ye here say playnly that
some of them be nought / therfore byd theym be walkyng all with
15 sorowe?

Nay quod he no doute were it / but that I sholde loke for thanke yf I
cheryshed his enemyes for his frendys / rather then despytfully to
handell hys frendes for his enemyes.

Very well quod I. And this were trewe all though ye had warnyng
20 that some of them were his enemyes. But what thanke wolde ye than
deserue yf ye sholde shake of bothe / where ye had no such warnyng at
all / but wolde say that ye durst not make any of them chere / bycause
ye thought that peraduenture it myght be / that some were worse than
they were taken for? For in suche case be you here / ye knowe not that
25 any man worshypped for a saynt is none / but onely ye thynke that ye
be not sure whether all be or some not.

Yes quod he saynt Austyne as I tolde you gyveth me warnyng / that
many be none.

Ye be quod I deceyued therin as I shall tell you after. But in the
30 meane whyle / marke me well this / and let it stande for a sure grounde
/ that all your obieccion yf it were trewe / serueth not agaynst
worshyppyng of sayntys or sayntes relykes / but agaynst the
worshyppyng of suche as were no sayntys / nor no sayntys relykes. And
that after it were proued / and now thys thyng that is in questyon
35 beyng fyrst confessed and agreed betwene vs for a thyng nothyng
able to hurt our pryncypall matter / let vs go further therin / and serche
whether we fynde any suche cause of doute in any / or haue good cause
to reken our selfe sure that all be sayntes in dede / whom the chyrche of
Cryste hath in honour and veneracyon for sayntys. Fyrst as for the
40 authoryte that ye alledge of saynt Austyne / I haue herde it often
alledged in lyke wyse for the same purpose. But surely they that so take
saynt Austyne bene foule deceyued. I durst be bolde to say that saynt
Austyne dyd never wryte such wordys / but it is a worde ronne in many
mennys mouthes / bygone by mystakyng / and byleued wythout
45 examynacyon. For surely the wordys wherof they toke the occasyon
whyche he wryteth in the fyrst boke de ciuitate dei / and repeteth
agayne in his boke of that cure and care that men sholde haue for theym
that be dede / those wordys I saye go farre wyde from all suche purpose.
For there he speketh onely of costely buryeng / and makyng of

sumptuous sepulchres / and doynge the dede corps of ryche men
worldly worshyp in the caryenge forth and enteeryng of the body / as it
playnly & euydently appereth by the matter that he wryteth of.

5 And surely syth our lorde neuer wolde amonge his chosen people
gyue the glory of his name to a nother / nor neuer so suffre ydolatry
among the Iewes / but that eyther he forthwith punysshed and poured
it / or so seuered the flocke of ydolaters / that it myght well appere
where his faythfull flocke remayned / as it dyd when that Samary
10 fallynge to ydolatry / the ryght synagoge of the Iewes re mayned in
Iherusalem and in Iudea / this were full vnlykely / that this holy spyryte
beynge sent vnto his chyrche here to remayne and instructe it / and
hymselfe also therwith beynge and gyyng his specyall assystence vnto
the ende of the worlde / sholde eyther suffre his chyrch to be vnknownen
15 or in suche wyse to erre and be deceyued / as to gyue honoure to the
deuyll in stede of hym selfe / or to his enemyes in stede of his frendes.
And therefore when the chyrche by dylygent enserche / fyndeth the lyfe of
a man holy / and that therto it is well wytnessed that god by his
myracles testyfyeth the mannes blessydnes and the fauour in whiche he
20 standeth with hym in heuyn / declarynge by the boote and profyte
whiche he doth to many men for his sake / that he wyll haue hym
honoured and had for halowed in his chyrche here in erthe / & this
thyng eyther by them that hath the cure of his chyrche after suche
dylygence vsed / beynge by the canonysacyon declared vnto the people /
25 or peraduenture without canonysacyon growynge therof (by the holynes
well knowen / and myracles many sene) so sure a common persuasyon
thruge the hole people of crystendom / that the person is accepted and
reputed for an vndoubted saynt / be the bones translated or not / his
body founden or not / all be it by possybylyte of nature it mought be /
30 that men were in suche thynges deceyued as ye haue sayd / yet we
boldely may and well we ought in this case to truste / that the grace and
ayde of god and his holy spyryte assystynge his chyrche / hath
gouerned the iudgement of his mynysters / and enclyned the myndes of
his people to suche consent. And that he hath not suffered them to erre
35 in a thyng so nerely touchynge his honour & worshyp / eyther truely to
be applyed where his wyll were it shold / vpon hymselfe or his holy
sayntes for his sake / or to be withdrawen thens and by erronyous
mystakynge of trouth / necessary mete and conuenyent to be perceyued
of the chyrche for goddes honour (which kynde of trouth god sent the
40 holy gost to teche his chyrch) the same worshyp to be bestowed vpon
them / whom he wolde in no wyse shold haue it / but whom he
reserueth for eternall shame. For the body shryned or not maketh no
doute of the saynt. No man douteth of our lady. No man douteth of saynt
Iohan the euangelyst / though theyr bodyes be not founden. And yet if
45 they were / then were there I thynke no good crysten man but he wolde
be contented they were shryned and had in honoure.

For where as ye wold take the reuerence from all relyques bycause
that some be doubtfull / in that some sayntys hed is as ye say & of some
the holy body shewed at two sondry placys / it may fortune for all thys
that of one hed there may be sondry partys / and eyther parte in the

comen speche of people called the hed. For at Amyas is saynt Iohans
hed the baptyste as men call it in talkynge / euen they that haue bene
there and sene it. But then yf they be askyd further questyon therof /
they tell that the nether iowe lacketh. This may well happen also & so
5 doth it happe in dede / by some saynt of whom in two dyuers countrees
be dyuers shrynes / And there be rekened and reported that in eyther of
theym be layd the hole body / & the pylgryms at neyther placys do loke
into the cofyn of that shryne to se whether it be all or parte. In some
place peradventure lay the body / and by some occasyon the body
10 translated thense of olde / and yet the shryne shewed styll with some of
the relyques remaynyng therein. It may well happe also that there were
two good holy men in dyuerse countrees bothe of one name. And percace
in some place may there be some very relyques vnknownen and
mysnamed. For in olde tyme when men at the incursyon of infydelys dyd
15 hyde holy sayntys relykes / at the fyndyng agayne the names happely
decayed / some relyques myght reste vnknownen / or some peradventure
lost or mystaken. As my selfe sawe at the abbay of Barkynge besydes
London to my remembraunce about .xxx. yeres past in the setting an
olde ymage in a newe tabernacle / the backe of the ymage beyng all
20 paynted ouer and of longe tyme before layde with beten golde happenyd
to erase in one place / and out there fell a praty lytell dore / at whiche
fell out also many relyques that had lyen vnknownen in that ymage god
wote howe longe. And as longe had bene lykely to lye agayne / if god by
that chaunce had not brought them to lyght. The byshop of London cam
25 then thyder to se there were no deceyte therin. And I amonge other was
present there whyle he loked theron and examyned the matter. And in
good fayth it was to me a meruayle to beholde the maner of it. I haue
forgotten moche thereof / but I remember a lytell pece of wood there was
rudely shapen in crosse with threde wrapped about it. Wrytyng had it
30 none & what it was we coulde not tell / but it semed as newe cut as yf it
had bene done within one daye before. And dyuers relyques had olde
wrytyngys on theym and some had none / but among other were there
certayne small kercheors which were named there our ladyes / and of
here owne workynge. Course were they not / nor they were not large /
35 but seruyd as it semed to cast in a playne and symple maner vpon here
hed. But surely they were as clene semys to my semyng as euer I sawe
in my lyfe / and were therwyth as whyte for all the longe lyenge / as yf
they hadde bene wasshed and layd vp within one houre. And howe longe
that ymage had stande in that olde tabernacle that coulde no man tell /
40 but there had in all the chyrche none as they thought standen lenger
vntouched. And they gessyd that .iiii. or .v. C. yere ago / that ymage was
hyden whan the abbey was burned by infydels / and those relyques
hyden therin. And after the ymage founden and set vp many yeres after
/ when they were gone that had hyden it. And so the relyques remayned
45 vnknownen therein tyll nowe that god gaued that chaunce that opened it.
And thus as I say maye it peradventure happen / some names to be
forgoten or haply to be mysse taken / and yet god well contente that the
relyques be had in reuerence / syth he specyally fauoureth theyr
persons / and nedeth nothyng theyr names to knowe them by. As he

shall ones so fully restore agayne many a gloryous body / that they shall
not lose the leste here of theyr hedde / that may serue to theyr bewtye /
of whom the names haply the hole worlde hathe longe ago forgotten. And
the name is not so very requysyte / but that we may mysse take it
5 without parell / so that we neuer the lesse haue the relyques of holy
men in reuerence / but as for pygges bones for holy relyques / or
dampned wretches to be worshypped for sayntes / all be it that yf it
happened / yet it nothyng hurted the soules of them that mysse take it
/ no more than yf we worship an hoste in the masse whiche percase the
10 neglygence or malyce of some lewde preste hathe left vnconsecrate / yet
is it neuer to be thought though suche a thyng myghte happen
sodeynly / that euer god wyll suffre suche a thyng to laste and endure
in his chyrche.

For all be it that his chyrch vseth one meane that myght as ye say
15 begyle theym / whiche is the recorde and wytnesse of men / yet hath it
in suche thynges as saynt Thomas & other holy doctours wryte /
another meane besyde / whiche neuer can begyle theym. And that is the
assystence of god and the holy gost. For els myght the chyrche be moost
easily begyled in the receuyunge of the very scrypture / vwherin they
20 take outwardely but the testymonis of men from mouth to mouth &
hande to hande / without other examynacyon. But the secret meane
that enclyneth theyr credulyte to consent in the byleuyng all in one
poynt whiche is the secrete instyncte of god / thys is the sure meane
that neuer can in any necessary poynte fayle here in Crystys chyrche.
25 For yf it myght / all were quyte at large. And that poynt ones taken away
/ scrypture and all walketh with it. And in this mynde as it semyth /
was very sure and fastely confermyd the holy appostle saynt Poule /
Whyche in his fyrste epystle to the Corynthyes wryteth in thys wyse.
30 *Obsecro vos fratres per nomen domini nostri Iesu Cristi vt idipsum
dicatis omnes / et non sint in vobis scismata / sed sitis integrum corpus
eadem mente et eadem sententia.* I beseche you my brotherne by the
name of our lorde Iesu cryst / that you say all one thyng / and let there
be no scysmes or seuerall sectes amonge you / but be ye one hole
35 entyere body of one mynde and one sentence. Trouth is it that he taught
theym and other the ryght way so ferforth / that he boldely forbode an
aungell of heuen to be byleuyd / yf any wolde come and preche another
gospell. But yet in this place I note moche / that he called vpon them
onely for agreement / byddyng theym onely to agre all vpon one thyng /
40 and maketh no mencyon of agreement vpon the best & vpon the trouth /
but onely to auoyde all dyscorde & dyuysyon & by comen consent
exhortyth them to agree all in one / meanyng thereby as me thynketh /
that yf the chyrche of Cryste entyng well / do all agree vpon any one
thyng concernyng goddes honour or mannys soule / it can not be but
45 that thyng must nedys be true. For goddes holy spyryte that anymateh
his chyrche and gyueth it lyfe / wyll neuer suffer it all consent and agre
together vpon any dampnable errour. And therefore wold he neuer suffer
the chyrche so fully to consent in the worship of sayntys and reuerence
of relyques / yf it were a thyng suche as some men wold haue it seme
that is to wyt a thyng dampnable false and fayned.

Wherin as moche as ye lay to mynyshe theyr credence / that it myght
seme as ye say well ynough that some of them were fayned / yet wyst I
neuer prouyd that any suche so taken and by the chyrche approued /
was euer yet hytherto reprovued / eyther here in Crystys chyrche or
5 amonge the Iewes in theyr synagoge before Crystys days / and yet
sayntes they had in honour as patryarches and prophetys and theyr
bodies and relyques in reuerence. Nowe yf of suche as semyd good men
we neuer had founden any for ypochrytes / albe it yt myght be that
some were suche / yet wold we not I thynke suppose that there were any
10 so in dede / yf we neuer had knowen it tryed & prouyd so. And why
shall we then of sayntes or relyques haue doute and mystrust? Of whom
beyng receyued by the chyrche for trewe / we neuer that I coulde wyt
synce god wrought the worlde tryed and prouyd any of bothe sortys
vntrue / neyther as I saye in the chyrche of Cryste nor synagoge of the
15 Iewes / whiche two sortys onele were goddes chosen people. And yet had
as well the Iewes as we bothe sayntys as I sayd in honour / and theyr
relyques in greate reuerence / as appereth as well by the gospell as by
the olde testament.

Iacob that holy patryarche commaunded his chyldren in his deth bed
20 to cary hys body to the beryall out of that countrey of Egypte / and so
they dyd. And Joseph also requyred his bretherne that when they shold
after departe out of Egypte / they sholde cary hys bonys with theym.
The ded bonys of the prophete Heliseus as the byble mencyoneth reysed
a ded body to lyfe. And thynke you then that those bonys were not there
25 honoured for holy relyques?

Nor our sauour Cryste blameth not the Iewes in the gospell for that
they garnysed the sepulchres of the olde prophetys / wyth whose
honour he was well content / but for that they condempned them selfe
in folowyng the condycyon of them that slewe them / entendyng to kyll
30 Cryst as theyr fore fathers dyd his holy prophetes. For as for the ded
bodies of the holy prophetes that god wold haue them had in honour &
reuerence he declared well by that he reysed a ded body by the touche of
the ded bones of the prophete Heliseus as I sayd to you before.

Dyd not our lorde in the fyndyng of the holy relyke his holy crosse
35 declare by myracle & make his owne crosse knowen from the crosses of
the .ii. theues by the reysynge of a ded man with the touche therof?
Wherin is to be noted by the waye / that there was bytwene his & theirs
no notable dyfference / but they nayled as he was / or els had it be no
doubte vpon the fyrste syght whiche of them was his. Was not the body
40 of saynt Steuyn founde out by myracle & the hed of saynt Iohan baptyst
also? yes of suretye & many a nother holy martyr mo / that els had lyen
vnknowen. Wherby well appered that god wolde haue not theyr soules
only / but also theyr bodies / & in a maner the very soles of theyr shone
set by for theyr sakes / & them selfe for his. Was not the woman heled
45 by the touche of our lordes garmentes? Hath there not bothe among the
Iewes & crysten people also many men meruaylously ben holpen by the
onely touche of holy sayntes vestures .And doubtte we then whyther god
wold we shold worshyp them when he so well & aboue nature rewardeth
vs for the worshyp we do them?

The .x. chapter

Sir quod he ye haue in my mynde very well touched the matter /
concernyng that it is not in vayne to pray to sayntes nor to worshyp
5 them and to haue theyr relykes in some reuerence. But syr all this is
farre from the grete sore / for though sayntes may here vs and helpe vs
to / and are glad and wyllynge so to do / and god also contented that
they and theyr relykes & ymages also be had in honoure / yet can
neyther he nor they be contente with the maner of the worshyp. Fyrst
10 takynge away his owne worshyp in that we do them the same worshyp
in euery poynte that we do to god. And secondely takynge theyr worshyp
from them / then also in that we do to theyr ymages the same that we
do to theym selfe / takynge theyr ymages for them selfe / & so make not
them selfe only / but also theyr ymages felowes and matches to god /
15 wherewith as I haue sayd before / neyther god nor good saynt can / nor
good man ought to be contente and pleased.

In faythe quod I therin yf it so be / ye saye very trewe. What say we
then quod he of the harme that goth by goynge of pylgrymagys /
roylynge about in ydlenes / with the ryot / reuelynge / and rybawdry /
20 glotony / wantonnes / waste / and lechery? Trowe ye that god and his
holy sayntys had not leuer they sytte styll at home / then thus to come
seke them / with suche worshypfull seruyce?

Yes surely quod I.

What say we then quod he to that I spake not of yet / in whiche we
25 do theym lytell worshyp / whyle we set euery saynt to his offyce and
assygne hym a crafte suche as pleaseth vs? Saynt Loy we make an
horsleche / and muste let our horse rather renne vnshod and marre his
hoofe / than to sho hym on his daye / Whiche we muste for that poynt
more relygyously kepe hygh and holy then Ester daye. And bycause one
30 smyth is to few at a forge / we set saynt Ipolitus to helpe him. And on
saynt Steuyns day we must let all our horses blode with a knyfe /
bycause saynt Stephen was kylled with stones. Saynt Appolyne we make
a tothe drawer / and may speke to her of nothyng but of sore tethe.
Saynt Sythe women set to seke theyr keyes. Saynt Roke we set to se to
35 the great sykenes / bycause he had a sore. And with hym they ioyned
saynt Sebastyan / bycause he was martyred with arowes. Some serue
for the eye onely. And some for a sore brest. Saynt Germayne onely for
chyl dren. And yet wyll he not ones loke at them / but if the mothers
brynge with them a whyte lofe and a pot of good ale. And yet is he wyser
40 then saynt wylgeforte / for she good soule is as they saye seruyd and
content with otys. Whereof I can not perceyue the reason / but yf it be
bycause she shold prouyde an horse for an euyll housbonde to ryde to
the deuyll vpon. For that is the thyng that she is so sought for as they
say. In so moch that women hath therefore chaunged her name / and in
45 stede of saynt wylgeforte call her saynt Vncumber / bycause they reken
that for a pecke of otys she wyll not fayle to vncomber theym of theyr
housbondys. Longe worke were it to reherse you the dyuers maner of
many praty pylgrymagys / but one or two wyll I tell you / The one

Pontanus spekyth of in his dyaloges / how saynt Martyn is worshypped.
I haue forgot the towne / but the maner I can not forget it is so
straunge. His ymage is on his day borne in processyon about all the
stretys. And yf it be a fayre day then vse they as he cometh by / to cast
5 rose water and all thyngys of pleasaunt sauour vpon his ymage. But and
it happen to rayne / out poure they pypspottys vpon his hed / at euery
dore and euery wyndowe. Is not this a swete seruyce and a worshypfull
worshyp? And this as I say Pontanus wryteth and telleth where it is. But
10 this that I shall nowe tell you /I dare as boldely make you sure of / as yf
I hadde sene it my selfe. At saynt waleryes here in Pycardy / there is a
fayre abbey / where saynt walery was monke. And vpon a furlonge of or
two / vp in a wood / is there a chapell / in whiche the saynt is specyally
sought vnto for the stone / not only in those partyes / but also out of
15 Englonde. Now was there a yonge gentylman whiche had maryed a
marchauntes wyfe. And hauyng a lytell wanton money / whiche hym
thought brenned out the botom of his purs / in the fyrst yere of his
weddyng toke his wyfe with hym and wente ouer the see for none other
erande / but to se Flaunders and Fraunce and ryde out one somer in
20 those countrees. And hauynge one in his company that tolde by the
waye many straunge thynges of that pylgrymage / he thought he wolde
go somewhat out of his waye eyther to se it yf it were trewe / or laughe
at his man yf he founde it false / ashe veryly thought he sholde haue
done in dede. But when they came in to the chapell they founde it all
25 trewe. And to beholde they founde it fonder then he had tolde. For lyke
as in other pylgrymages ye se hanged vp legges of waxe or armes or
suche other partes / so was in that chapell all theyr offrynges that honge
aboute the walles / none other thyng but mennes gere & womens gere
made in waxe. Then was there besydes these two rounde rynges of
30 syluer / the one moche larger than the other. Thrughe whiche euery
man dyd put his preuy membres at the aulters ende. Not euery man
thrughe bothe / but some thrughe the one and some thrughe the other.
For they were not bothe of a bygnes / but the one larger than the
other. Then was there yet a monke standynge at the altar that halowed
35 certayne thredes of venyce golde. And them he delyuered to the
pylgrymes / techynge theym in what wyse theym selfe / or theyr frendes
sholde vse those thredes agaynst the stone. That they sholde knytte it
aboute theyr gere / and say I can not tell you what prayers. And when
the monke had declared the maner / the gentylman had a seruaunt that
40 was a maryed man and yet a mery felawe / and he thankyng the
monke for the threde / desyred hym to teche hym howe he sholde knytte
it aboute his wyues gere. Whiche (except the monke had some specyall
crafte in knyttyng) he thought wolde be comberous / bycause her gere
was somewhat shorte. It nede not to tell you that euery man laughed
45 than / saue the monke that caste vp his rynges and thredes in a grete
angre and went his way / was no this? Abyde by god I had almost
forgoten one thyng / that wolde not be lefte for a grote. As this
gentylman and his wyfe were knelyng in the chapell / there came a good
sadde woman to hym / shewynge hym that one specyall poynte vsed in
that pylgrymage and the surest agaynste the stone / she wyst nere

whyther he were yet aduertysed of. Whiche yt were done / she durst laye
her lyfe he sholde neuer haue the stone in hys lyfe. And that was / she
wolde haue the length of his gere / & that sholde she make in a waxe
candell / which sholde bren vp in the chapell / & certayne prayers
5 sholde there be sayd the whyle. And this was agaynst the stone the very
shote anker. When he had herd her (& he was one that in earnest fered
that stone) he went & askyd his wyfe counsel. But she lyke a good
faythfull crysten woman loued no such superstycyons. She could abyde
that remenaunt well ynough. But when she herde ones of brennyng vp
10 the candell / she knyht that browes & earnestly blessing her. Beware in
the vertue of god what ye do quod she. Burne vp quod A? mary god
forbede. It wold wast vp your gere vpon payne of my lyfe. I pray you
beware of such wycheecraft. Is this kynd of seruyce & worshyp
acceptable & pleasaunt vnto god & his sayntes? Now when peple
15 worshyp sayntes in such wyse that they make them felowes to god / &
ymages in such wyse that they take them for the sayntes selfe / & then
agayn on the other syde honour them with such superstycyous ways
that the paynym goddys were worshypped with no worse / fynally the
worst is of all / praye to them for vnlefull thynges as theues pray to that
20 thefe the honge on the ryght syde of cryst to spede them well in theyr
robery / & haue founde hym a name also callyng hym dysmas I wene &
his fellow gysmas to ryme withall / thynke you not that this gere is such
among the peple as rather were lykely so to prouoke god & his sayntes
to dysplesure / that the deuyll shold haue lycence & lyberty therfore to
25 worke his wonders in delusyon of our supersticious ydolatry / then so to
lyke and content our lorde that he sholde shew myracles for the
comprobacyon of that maner of worshyping which we may well perceyue
all reson / relygyon and vertue reproueth?

30

The .xi. chapter

Your hole tale in effecte quod I conteyneth .iii. thynges. One that the
peple worshyp the sayntes & theyr ymages also with lyke honour as they
35 do god hym self. Another that they take the ymages for the thynges self /
which poyntes do sowne to ydolatry. The .iii. is the superstycyous
fassyon of worshyp with desyre of vnlefull thynges. And syth that
worshyp that the people do to the sayntes & the ymages be such / ye
conclude the thyng dysplesaunt to god & to all halowes / & that it may
40 therby well appere that the myracles also be not the workes of god but
the delusyon of the deuyll. The fyrst poynt which ye haue now twyse
touched is at ones sone & shortly answeyrd for it is not true. For though
men knele to sayntes & ymages & incense them also / yet it is not trewe
that therfore they worshyp theym in euery poynt lyke vnto god.

45 What poynt lacke they quod he?

Mary the chefe of all quod I. That is that they worshyp god with the
mynde that he is god / whyche mynde in worshyp is the only thyng that
maketh it latria & no certayne gesture nor bodyly obseruaunce. Not &

we wolde wallow vpon the grounde vnto Cryst / hauynge therwith a
mynde that he were the best man that we coulde deuise & thynkyng
hym not god. For yf the lowly maner of bodyly obseruaunce were the
thyng that wolde make latria / then were we moch in parell of ydolatry
5 in our curtesy vsyd to prynces prelates & popys / to whom we knele as
low as to god almyghty / and kysse some theyr handes and some our
owne / or euer we presume to touche them / and in the pope his fote.
And as for encensyng / the pore prestes in euery quere be as well
encensyd as the sacrament. So that yf latria that is the specyall honoure
10 due to god stode in suche thynges / than were we grete ydolaters / not
in our worship done to sayntes onely and theyr ymages / but also to
men / one to another among our selfe. But all be it that god ought of
duty to haue with our body the most humble and lowly reuerence that
we can possyble deuise / yet is not that bodyly worship latria / but if
15 we so do it / that in our mynde we consyder and knowledge hym for god
/ and with inconsideracyon and intente do hym that worship. And so
doth as thynke no crysten man to ymage or saynt eyther. And so is
auoyde the parell of ydolatrye for the fyrste poynt ye spake of.

Now as touchynge the seconde that the people take the ymages for
20 the sayntes selfe / I trust there be no man so mad nor woman neyther /
but that they knowe quycke men from ded stones / and tre from flesshe
and bone. And when they preferre as ye spake of oure lady at one
pylgrymage before our lady at another / or one roode before another / or
make theyr inuocacyons & vowes some to the one & some to the other /
25 I wene it eth to perceyue / that they mene none other but that our lorde
& our lady / or our lorde for our lady sheweth mo myracles at the one
than at the other. And that they intende in theyr pylgrymage to vysyte
some of them one place / and some another / as theyr deuocyon ledyth
them / or partely sometyme as the place lyeth for them / and yet not for
30 the place / but for that it lyketh our lorde by manyfest myracles to
prouoke men to seke vpon hym or his blessyd mother / or some other
holy saynt of his / in those places / more specyally then in some other.

The thyng selfe also sheweth that they take not the ymages for our
lady herselfe. For yf they so dyd / how coulde they possyble in any
35 maner wyse haue more mynde to the one then to the other? For they
can haue no more mynde to oure lady then to oure lady. More ouer yf
they thought that the ymage at Walsyngham were our lady her selfe /
then muste they nedes thynke that our lady her selfe were that ymage.
Then yf in lyke wyse they thought that the ymage at Ipyswyche were our
40 lady herselfe / and (as they must therwith nedes thynke) that our lady
her selfe were that ymage at Ipyswyche / then must they nedes thynke
therwithall / that all those .iii. were one thyng. And then euery .ii. of
them were one thyng. And so must they by that reason suppose / that
the ymage of Ipyswyche were the selfe same ymage that is at
45 walsyngham. Whiche yf ye aske any of them whom ye take for the
symplest excepte a naturall foole / I dare holde you a wager she wyll tell
you nay. Besydes this take the symplest foole that ye can chose / & she
wyll tell you that our lady her selfe is in heuyn. She wyll also call an
ymage an ymage / & she wyll tell you a dyfference bytwene an ymage of

an horse and an horse in dede. And then appereth it well what so euer
her wordys be of her pylgrymage by a commune maner of speche to call
the ymage of our lady our lady / as men say go to the kynges hed for
wyne / not meanynge his hed in dede but the sygne / so meaneth she
5 none other in that ymage but our ladyes ymage howe so euer she call it.
And yf ye wyll well proue that she neyther taketh our lady for the ymage
nor that ymage for our lady (as both must she take yf she take the one)
talke wyth her of oure lady and she wyll tell you that our lady was
salutyd with Gabryell. And that our lady fledde vnto Egypte with Ioseph.
10 And yet wyll she not in the tellynge / say that our lady of Walsyngham
or of Ipeswyche was saluted of Gabryell or fledde into Egypte. Nor yf ye
wolde aske her whether it were oure lady of Ipeswyche or our lady of
Walsyngham that stode by the crosse at Crystys passyon / she wyll I
warant you make answeere that neyther of bothe. And yf ye demaunde
15 her further whiche lady then / she wyll name you none ymage but oure
lady that is in heuen. And this haue I proued often and ye may when ye
wyll and shall fynde it true / excepte it be in one so very a fole / that god
wyll gyue her leue to byleue what she lyste. And surely for this poynte I
thynke in my mynde that all those heretyques that make as though
20 they founde so moche parell of ydolatry amonge the people for
mystakynge of ymagys / do but deuyse that fere / to haue some cloke to
couer theyr heresy / wherein they barke agaynst the sayntys selfe. And
when they be markyd / then say they meane but the mysbyleue that
women haue in ymagys. Nowe as touchynge the thyrde poynt of
25 superstycyous maner of worshyppyng / or vnlaufull petycyons desyred
of sayntys / as one sample may serue bothe / yf women offer otys to
saynt Wylgefert to haue her vncomber them of theyr housbandys /
somwhat is it in dede that ye say / and yet not all thyng to be blamyd
that ye seme to blame. For as to pray to saynt Appolyne for the helpe of
30 our tethe is no wytchecraft / consydering that she had her tethe pulled
out for Crystys sake. Nor there is no superstycyon in suche other
thyngys lyke. And peradventure syth saynt Loy was a ferroure / it is no
great faute to pray to hym for the helpe of our horse.

Well then quod he. Syth saynt Crispyne and saynt Crispynyan were
35 shomakers / it were well done in lyke wyse to pray them syt downe and
mende our shone. And pray to saynt Dorathe for some floures / because
she beryth alway a basket full.

Nay quod I the thyngys be nothyng lyke. For the one thyng
perteyneth nothyng to our necessyte / the other we may do our selfe or
40 sone fynde who shall. But as for your horse is a thyng wherein as well
as in our owne bodyes / a ryght good leche may fayle of hys craft / and
is to many a man a gretter losse / then he may well recouer. And albeit
that god commaunded that we sholde chyefly seke for heuyn / and
promyseth that yf we so do / all other thynges that we nede shall be cast
45 vnto vs / and wolde that we sholde in ho wyse lyue in anxiete and
trouble of mynde for any fere of lacke / consyderynge that our father in
heuyn prouydeth meate for the very byrdes of the ayre / by whom he
setteth nothyng so moche as he doth by vs / yet wyll not he the
contrary / but we sholde with our bodyes labour therefore / hauyng our

hertes all the whyle in heuyn. And wylled also that we sholde aske it of
hym / without whose helpe our laboure wyll not serue. And therefore is
our dayly fode one of the petycyons of the Pater noster / the prayer that
hym self taught his dyscyples. And the horse he set not so lytell by / but
5 that rather than it sholde perysshe / he rekened it no breche of the
Saboth daye to pull hym out of a pyt. And therefore in dede me semeth
the deuocyon to ronne somewhat to farre / yf the smythes wyll not for
any necessyte set on a sho vpon saynt Loyes day / and yet lefull
ynoughe to pray for the helpe of a poore mannes horse. But as for your
10 tethe I wene if they aked well / ye wolde your selfe thynke it a thyng
worthy and not to symple to aske helpe of saynt Appolyn and of god to.

Ye mary quod he / & of the deuyll to rather than fayle / as the
Lumbarde dyd for the gowte. That when he had longe called vpon god
and our lady and all the holy company of heuyn and yet felte hymselfe
15 neuer the better / he began at last to call as fast for helpe vnto the
deuyll. And when his wyfe and his frendes sore ahashshed and astonyed
/ rebuked hym for callynge on the deuyll / whiche lie wyst well was
nought / and yf that he holpe hym it shold be for no good / he cryed out
as lowde as he coulde agayne / hogni aiuto e bono / all is good that
20 helpeth.

And so I wene wolde I quod he call on the deuyll and all / rather than
abyde in payne.

Nay quod I what so euer ye say I can not thynke ye wolde byleue in
the deuyll as that Lumbarde dyd. Ye wolde rather fare lyke another /
25 that whan the frere apposed hym in confessyon whyther he medled any
thyng with wytchcrafte or necromancy / or had any byleue in the deuyll
/ he answered hym / Credere en le dyable my syr no / Io ground fatyge
a credere in dio. Byleue in the deuyll quod he / naye naye syr I haue
worke ynoughe to byleue in god I. And so wolde I wene that ye were Tar
30 from all byleuyng in the deuyll / ye haue so moche worke to byleue in
god hym selfe / that ye be lothe me thynke to medle moche with his
sayntes.

When we had laughed a whyle at our mery tales / In good faythe
quod I as I was aboute to tell you / somewhat in dede it is that ye say.
35 For euyll it is / and euyll it is suffered that superstycyous maner of
worshyp. And as for that ye tolde of saynt Martyn / if it be trewe / it
hath none excuse / but that it nothyng toucheth our matter. For it is
not worshyppyng / but dyspytynge and dysworshyppyng of sayntes.
Touchynge the offryng of brede & ale to saynt Germyn / I se nothyng
40 moche amysse therin / where ye haue sene it vsed I can not tell. But I
haue my selfe sene yt often tymes / and yet am I not remembred that
euer I saw preste or clerke fare the better therefore or ones drynke thereof
/ but it is gyuen to chylde or pore folke to praye for the syke chylde.
And I wolde wene it were none offence in suche fassyon / to offer vp an
45 hole oxe and dystribute it amonge pore people. But nowe as for our
mery matters of saynt wallery bycause the place is in Fraunce we shall
leue the matter to the vnyuersyte of Parys to defende. And we wyll come
home here to Poules and put one ensample of both / that is to say the
superstycyous maner and vnlefull petycyons / yf women there offer otys

vnto saynt wylgefert / in trust that she shall vncomber them of theyr housboundys. Yet can neyther the prestes perceyue tyll they fynde it there that the folysh women brynge otys thyther / nor it is not I thynke so often done nor so moche money of it aboute the fyndyng of the
5 chanons horses.

Nay quod he all the otys of an hole yeres offryng wyll not fynde .iii. gees and a gander a weke togyther.

Well quod I then the prestes mayntayne not the matter for any great couetyse / & also what the peuishe women pray they can not here. How
10 be it if they pray but to be vncombred / me semeth no great harme / nor vnlefulnes therin. For it may they by mo wayes than one. They may be vncombred yf theyr housbondys chaunge theyr comberous condycyons. Or yf them selfe peradventure chaunge theyr comberous tongues / whiche is happely the cause of all theyr combraunca. And fynally yf they
15 can not be vncombred but by deth / yet it may be by theyr owne / and so theyr housbondys saufe ynough.

Nay nay quod he ye fynd them not such foles I warrant you. They make theyr couenauntes in theyr bytter prayers as surely as they were pennyd / and wyll not cast away theyr otys gor nought.

Well quod I to all these matters is one euydent easy answeere / that they nothyng touche that effecte of our matter / whiche standeth in this / whether that thyng that we speke of as prayeng to sayntes / goyng in pylgrymage / & worshyppyng relykes & ymages may be done well. Not whether it may be done euyll. For if it may be well done / then though
25 many wold mysse vse it / yet doth all that nothyng mynyshe the goodnes of the thyng selfe. For yf we sholde for the mysse vse of a good thyng and for the euylles that grow somtyme in the abuse therof / not amende the mysse vse / but vtterly put the hole vse away / we sholde then make merueylous chaunges in the world. In some contrees they go
30 on huntyng comonly on good fryday in the mornyng for a common custume. Wyll ye breke that euyll custume or cast away good fryday? There be cathedral chyrches into which the countre cometh with processyon at why.tsonyde / & the women folowyng the crosse with many an vnwomanly songe / & that such honest wyues as out of the processyon ye could not hyre to speke one such foule rybaudry worde as
35 they there syng for goddes sake hole rebaudous songes as lowde as theyr throte can cry. Wyll you mende that lewde maner or put away Whytsonyde? ye speke of lewdnes vsed at pylgrymages. Is there trowe ye none vsed on holy dayes? And why do you not then aduyse vs to put
40 theym elene away sondayes & all? Some waxe dronke in lent of wygges and craknels / & yet ye wolde not I trust that lent were fordone. Crystmas yf we consyder how commonly men abuse it / we may thynke that they take it for a tyme of lyberty for all maner of lewdnes. And yet is not Crystmas to be cast away amonge crysten men / but men rather
45 monysshed to amende theyr maners / & vse them selfe in Crystmas more crystenly. Go me to Crystes owne comyng and gyuyng vs our fayth & his holy goppell & sacramentes. Be there not .x. the worse therefore agaynst one the better? Be not all the paynyms / all the Icwes / all the turkes / all the sarasyns / all the heretykes / all the euyll

lyuynge people in crystendom the worse by theyr owne faute for the
comynge of Cryst? I trowe they be. And yet wolde no wyse man wysshe
that Cryst had not comen here. Nor it had be no ryght that god sholde
haue lefte the occasyon of veryte & rewarde that good folke wolde with
5 his helpe deserue by his comyng / for the harme that wretches wolde
take therof by theyr owne slouth & malyce. Nor in lyke wyse ryght were
it none that all worshyp of sayntes & reuerence of holy which good
deuoute folke do moche meryte) we sholde abolysshe & put away /
bycause some folke do abuse it. Now touchyng the euyll petycyons /
10 though they that aske them were as I trust they be not a grete people /
they be not yet so many that aske euyll petycyons of sayntes / as there
be that aske the same of god hym selfe. For what so euer they wyll aske
of any good saynt / they wyll aske of god also. And comenly in the wylde
yrysshe and some in Wales to / as men say / whan they go forth in
15 robberyng / they blysse them & pray god sende them good spede that they
may mete with a good purse & do harme & take none. Shall we
therforefynde a faute with euery marines prayer bycause theues pray for
spede in robbery? This hath as I say no reason all though they were a
grete peple that abused a good thyng. And where as the worst that ye
20 assygne in our matter is that as ye say that people do ydolatry / in that
ye say they take the ymages for the sayntes selfe or the rood for cryst
hym selfe / which as I sayd I thynke none doth (for some rood hath no
crucifyxe theron / & they byleue not that the crosse which they se was
euer at Ierusalem / nor that it was the holy crosse it selfe / & moche
25 lesse thynke they then that the ymage that hangeth theron is the body of
Cryst hym selfe) and all thoughe some were so made so to thynke / yet
were it not as ye call it the people. For a fewe dotynges dames make not
the people. And ouer this yf it were as ye wolde haue it seme an hole
people in dede / yet were not a good thyng to be put away for the
30 mysse vse of bad folke.

The .xii. chapter

35 **A**nd we be very sure that the thyng is good / & our way good therin
/ & our byleue therin ryght / not onely by resons & authortye by whiche
I haue proued it you more then ones all redy / but also by that all the
olde holy sayntys and doctours of Crystes chyrche as saynt Ierome /
saynt Austyn / saynt Basyle / saynt Chrysosteme / saynt Gregory /
40 wyth all suche other as playnely we rede in theyr bokys / dyd as we do
therin / & bylyued therof as we byleue. And syth we se what they
byleued / we nede not to doubte what is best that we byleue. For yf any
secte byleued better then other / we be sure of the best were they / that
so well byleued & lyued therwith / that god hathe accepted them for
45 sayntys / & by myracles openly declared that theyr fayth & lyuing lyked
hym. Where as on the other syde of such as byleued other wyse / as
were these manifold sectes of obstynate heretykes / we se not one a
saynt amonge them / nor one myracle shewed for them.

I wote nere quod he whether this reason that ye make wold surely
satisfy the other syde or no. For men may peradventure answere you
that there is many a glorious saynt in heuen / of whom we se no
myracles in erth / nor happily neuer herd of theyr name.

5 That may well be quod I / and I suppose it very true.

May it not also be quod he / that though it were hard to thynke / but
that of myracles some among so many must nedys be true / yet syth
some also may be fayned / may it not be that those bene fayned whiche
bene told to haue be done by them whom ye rehersed? them I mene that
10 of olde haue wry ten for your parte / I mene those whom ye call the olde
doctours of the chyrch / and whom the chyrche taketh for sayntys.

This quod I were worse then any thing that we spake of yet tofore.
The worst was before / that we shold pray to no sayntys. And now ye
wold eyther that we shold haue none / or at the leest that we shold
15 know none.

Yes quod he ye may haue sayntes & know for sayntes and many one
syth the appostles tyme / thoughe those be none whose wrytyng ye
wolde authoryse by theyr sanctyfyng.

20 Then fall you quod I to that poynt agayne / that ye thynke it may be
that the chyrche may take for sayntes and worshyp as sayntes them
that be none.

Surely quod he the profe that ye haue layde vnto me contrary though
yt be somewhat probable / yet semeth me not very stronge nor able and
suffycient to strayne a man to consent therto. For though the
25 assystence of god and his holy spyryte wyll not suffre his hole chyrch to
agree and consent togyther in any dampnable errour / yet may he suffre
them well to erre in the knowlege and worshyp of a saynt / & mysse
take for a saynt one that were a dampnable wretche. For therin were no
more daunger to mannes soule / nor no more honoure taken from god /
30 then whan the people do worshyp an host vnconsecrate / mistakyng it
through the defaute of an euyll preest for the sacred body of our lorde
hym selfe. And this ye doubtte not but it is sometyme done.

Forget not nowe by the way quod I that ye styll agree that god wyll
not suffre his hole chyrche to agree in any dampnable errour and fall in
35 a false faythe. And therwith remember that thoughe it were no
dampnable errour to take one for a saynt that were none / or a bone for
a relyke that were none / yet were it a dampnable erreure to worshyp
any yf we sholde worshyp none at all. And therefore syth the chyrche
byleueth that we sholde worshyp them / that kynde of byleue can be
40 none errour / but must nedes be trewe. Nor that kynde of worshyp can
be none ydolatry / but must nedes be good and acceptable to god. And
so our pryncypall matter standyng styll sure and fast / we shall se
somwhat further wherto your wordes wyll way & amount. Ye deny not
quod I but there be some sayntes and some myracles.

45 No quod he.

To what purpose quod I were myracles specyally wrought by god /
was it not to the entente to make his messengers knowen and the
trouthe of his message? As when he sent Moyses to Pharao / were not
the myracles done by god to make Pharao to perceyue therby the trouthe

of his worde?

Yes quod he.

When Cryst quod I scut his dyscyples to preche / the power that he
gaue theym to do myracles / was it not for the profe of the doctryne that
5 they taught / as is well wytnessed in the gspell?

Yes quod he.

If this be thus quod I as in dede it is / ye haue most cause to byleue
of all myracles / those that are tolde & reported as done for the doctours
of Crystes chyrche / syth myracles were specyally deuysed by god for a
10 knowlege of his trewe messengers / and a profe of theyr message. So
that where ye wolde we sholde not vtterly be deceyued in sayntes and
myracles / but yet we myght be deceyued in doctours whome we take
for sayntes and in theyr myracles / nowe it semeth on the other syde
that of all other we be of them and of theyrs most sure.

15 This is well sayd quod he. But yet alwaye it renneth in mennys
myndys that myracles may be fayned.

Be it so quod I / so that it ron agayne in mennys myndys that all be
not fayned. And then if ye thynke any trewe / this reason abydeth styll /
that syth myracles were specyally gyuen by god for the knowlege of his
20 doctours and declaracyon of hys doctryne / those myracles be specyally
to be taken for trewe that be reportyd to be done by his doctours. For
they seme for the comprobacyon of hys holy doctryne. And for bycause
ye saye that myrcles may be fayned / that we spake of Moyses and
Crystes dyscyples putteth me now in mynde. There were of old tyme also
25 false doctours and myracles falsely fayned / were there not?

Yes mary quod he.

By whom were those myracles faynyd quod I?

Mary quod he some by men as there be now and some by the deuyll
/ and happely so there be now to.

30 Well be it quod I bothe twayne and ye wyll. But were there not in the
olde tyme bothe twayne founde out and vaynquysshed by the trewe
doctours sent by god and trewe myracles for them wrought by god? As
when the serpent of Moyses deuoured all the serpentes made by the
wytchecraft of the Egypcyan ioglers. And whan the prophete Danyell
35 dyd by the steppys of the false prestys fete fynde out the meane wherby
the meate was eten that they faynyd to be eten by the ydoll Bell. And
when the prophete Helyas vaynquysshed by miracle the false prophetys
of Baall. And the holy appostles & dyscyples of Cryst dyde at theyr
worde all to breke in pecys the false ydollys in syght of the paynym
40 people. So that alway god hath preparyd his trew doctours / to dystroy
by playne miracle the false myracles / whereby men were and myght be
deceyued. Is not this thus quod I?

Yes quod he.

Well then quod I yf our olde holy doctours were false / & theyr
45 doctryne vntrue / and theyr myracles fayned / it is not ynough now to
say so. But if any of them that so say be sent by god to reprove it / then
must they proue that they be sent so. And that not in wordys onely /
but let some of them come forth / and at theyr word breke our ymagys /
as Crystes doctours dyd the paynyms. And to proue our myracles fayned

/ let them do some very myracles them selfe.

As for myracles quod he be none artycle in any mannys crede. And there is not so symple a secte of heretykes / but they myght yf they were set theron / some matche you with myracles / whereof they myght fayne
5 fyften in a fornone. And then as we sayd now it wolde be thought that though some were vntrue / yet all were not lyes.

It were eth in dede quod I / yf men were mad / among whom they sholde reporte them / and wold no thyng do for the tryall.

I wys yet if they dyd quod he / yet myght a fewe meane wyttid men
10 deuyse & fayne a thyng of suche a fassyon / that it wold be byleued and harde to trye the trouthe out.

Let it be so quod I. But yet wolde it not longe holde amonge good crysten people. But god wolde eyther bryng the falshed to lyght / or some cast it out of credence. What laboure toke Phylostratus to make a boke
15 full of lyes / wherby he wold haue had Appolonius Thianeus in myracles matche vnto cryst? And when he had all done / he neuer founde one olde wyfe so fonde to byleue hym. But I praye you tell me quod I / be there not of heresydes many sectes?

Yes quod he.

20 Is there quod I any mo very chyrches of cryst than one?

No mo quod he.

Is not that it quod I that is true?

Yes quod he.

Be not quod I then all the sectes of heresydes false?

25 Yes quod he.

Who is lykely quod I to fayne & lye / the company that is the true parte or some of them that be false?

It is quod he more lykely that they sholde all lye that be false / than the company that is the true parte.

30 Than false & fayned myracles quod I / be they lyes or not?

What els quod he.

Then quod I by your argument it semeth that they were moche more lykely to be among euery secte of heretykes then in the chyrch.

So semeth it quod he.

35 How happeth it then quod I yf myracles be fayned ware / that among all the false sectes of heretykes (where such false stuffe sholde be by all reason most ryfe) is none at all spoken of / but myracles tolde only in the chyrch of Cryst / which is only as ye agree that true parte?

40 There be quod he peraduenture some done eyther myracles or meruayls / but they dare not speke of them for fere of persecucion.

If they were quod I false meruayls only done by the deuyll / it wolde not helpe your mater. For then must you graunt very myracles of god only done in Crystes chyrch. And yf there had ben very myracles of god done for any secte whom we call heretykes / that secte had ben no secte
45 of heretykes / but the very chyrch. Or els had god by myracles testefyed the trouthe of a false fayth / & that is impossyble. And therof sholde haue folowed / that excepte there were of Cryst two chyrches of two contrary faythes / & bothe true which were impossyble / els not some / but all the myracles done / tolde / & wrought in one chyrche / had ben eyther

fayned or done by the deuyll / wherby sholde it folow that our chyrch
were not the very chyrch / but a false secte of heretykes which were as I
haue all redy proued you dyuers wyse / as ferre impossyble. But now for
the more clerenes of our parte therin / & for the further profe that ours
5 is the sure chyrch / & only the doctours & the doctryne of our chyrch
approued by myracles / neuer hath there ben any done for the doctours
of any sectes of heretykes. For if there hath any true myracles ben done
by god / & then that secte not a false secte but the true chyrch / all the
persecucion that coulde haue ben / coulde neuer haue quenched the
10 fame therof / as well appereth by the myracles done in our chyrche / in
all suche tyme as bothe the Iewes & the paynymys pursued it. Now syth
there be so many false sectes & but one chyrch true / & myracles not
spoken of in any but in one / it is a good token that the matter &
substaunce of them is true. For els they were as lykely to be spoken of in
15 mo / syth of the false & lyeng sectes be so many. And then also
myracles beyng true & beyng done but in one of all those many
companyes / eche callyng hym selfe the chyrche / it is a good profe that
the same one in whiche onely they be done / is onely the very trewe
chyrche of Cryste to whiche his holy spyryte and meruaylouse maiestye
20 gyueth his specyall assystence. And surely of all myracles that euer god
hathe wrought for his chyrche / I se not in my mynde lyghtly a more
meruaylous / then that as many sectys of heretykes as hath sprongen
and parted out of Crystys chyrche / and eche of them laborynge to be
taken for the very chyrche / yet hath our lorde hytherto neuer suffered
25 neyther the deuyll to do any wonder for them that myght haue the
colour and face of a myracle / nor as false as they be theym selfe / yet
hath he not sufferyd theym hytherto not so moche to do as fayne a
myracle for theyr parte. Whiche is to my mynde not onely great wonder /
but also theyr confessyd falshed consydered / a very clere profe that
30 they coulde neuer haue bene kept from it / but by the especyall
prouydence of god and his tender cure vpon his chosen chyrche / by
whiche it hath lyked hym hytherto / that myracles among other thyngys
haue bene one good & sure marke betwene his chyrche and all those
enonyous sectys that ben sprongen out therof and be not his chyrche
35 but wolde seme to be. For as for paynymys / turkes and sarasyns /
whiche by open professyon arne of another flocke / & bere not the name
of Cryst / nor loke for hym / he suffereth the deuyll somtyme to delude
with wonders & meruaylys. But the Iewes that styll gape after hym /
theyr myracles as far as I can here be gone / to the entent they may
40 know that he hath lefte them & gyuen them vp / whiche was wont to
worke all those wonders for them. Now as for heretykes which falsly
fayne them selfe to be his owne flocke / & presume to bere & professe
his name / he kepeth them from the honour of any myracles doynge / to
the ende that the lacke therof among all theyr sectys / & the doynge
45 therof in his onely chyrche / may be among many other thynges one
good marke & sure token / wherby all these false sectys of them may be
dyscernyd & knowen frome hys very true chyrche / that is to say from
the hole congregacyon of true crysten people in this worlde / whiche
without intermyxcyon of obstynate heresyas / professe the ryght

catholyke fayth.

Now is it not onely true that myracles be wrought onely in the chyrche / and thereby do shewe whiche is the very chyrche / but also they do shew that those holy doctours for whom god hath shewed them
5 / were good men & of the ryght byleue. For yf it were as ye wold of late haue had it seme / that it myght peradventure be so that the holy doctours of our fayth (whom we take for sayntes) were in dede no sayntys nor sauyd soules / but happely those were saued soules & sayntes in heuen (though it were vnknownen here in erth) whych dyd
10 teche the doctryne here that we now call heresyas / then were it a wonderous chaunge / that wher as god among the Iewes prouyded / that in euery age / there were some good men by theyr good lyuyng & his hyghe myracles / so notable & well knownen to the people (that men had them alwaye lyke bryght lyuely starres / whose doctryne they
15 myght boldely byleue / and whose lyuyng they myght surely folowe) he wolde nowe in his specyall chyrche of Cryst / not onely do nothyng lyke / but also do clene the contrary. For yf he sholde take the way that ye saye / to leue euer synce the appostles dayes / all the true interpretours of his & theyr holy wrytynge and doctours of the very true fayth lye to
20 the worlde vnknownen / & then on the other syde set forth with myracles or suffre so to be set forth with meruayles / that his chyrche sholde take and accepte for sayntes suche euyl persons or ypocrytes as construed the scripture wronge / & euer synce his appostles dayes haue taught false errorrs / & led his flocke out of the ryght waye in a by path to
25 hellwarde with wycked heresyas & ydolatry / then hath not god sent the holy gost / & hym selfe also taryed styll therin / to teche his chyrch the trouthe as he sayd he wold. But he then had holpen to begyle them hym selfe / whiche were impossyble for god to doo / & more than blasphamy for any man to thynke. For this were not lyke the sufferance of an vnconsecrate host / wherof ye put the sample / wherin the peoples
30 inuyncible ygnorance with theyr deuoute affeccyon may without harme to theyr soules be suffered in the thyng that seldom happeth & endureth for so shorte a whyle. But yf god wolde leue all good doctours vnknownen / & suffre his chyrche to be deceyued with myracles & meruayles done by them that taught heresyas & set forth ydolatry /
35 then sholde hym selfe as I say not onely suffre his honour and ryght fayth and relygyon to be perpetually lost / but helpe also hymselfe to dystroy it. Whiche who so coulde thynke possyble / were worse than Iudas / and more mad then any man in bedlem. And therefore can it not
40 in no wyse be / that the chyrche can be deceyued in that they take for sayntes these holy doctours of the chyrch. Nor they so beyng / can it in any wyse be that the doctryne wherin they consent & agree can be false or vntrue? Amonge whiche doctryne syth the thynges wherof we speke / I mene the praynge to sayntes / the worshyp of ymages / reuerencyng
45 of relyques / and goynge in pylgrymages is a parte as by theyr bokes playnly doth appere / we may well & surely conclude / that none of these thynges be dampnable or dyspleasaunt to god / but thynges hyghly to his contentacyon and pleasure. And syth we further perceyue that theyr bokes be wryten in dyuers regyons & sondry ages / we therby

well perceyue that these thynges be parcell of the rytes vsages and
byleue of Crystes chyrch / not onely nowe and of late / but contynually
from the bygynnyng hytherto. And syth it is playnly proued you that
the chyrche can in no wyse be suffred of god to fall in to any damnable
5 errour therby / it is yet most surely concluded / that these thynges be
none suche. And consequently prouyd / that no texte of scrypture
semyng to sowne to the contrary / canne be so taken or vnderstanden.
Nor that the chyrche can not in preiudyce of the fayth mysse
vnderstande the scrypture. And that the substancyall poyntys of the
10 fayth therfore lernyd of the chyrche / is one of the surest rules that can
be founden for the ryght interpretacyon of holy scrypture. And that no
secte of heretykes can be the chyrche of Cryste / but that our chyrche is
the very chyrche. And it is also clerely proued that the matter of
myrales therin dayly done / is neyther faynyd by men nor done by the
15 deuyll / but onely by the myghty hand of god. And suche obieccions as
ye layd vnto the contrary of any poynt aforesayd / be as farre as I can se
suffyciently answerd / excepte that ye haue any further obieccyon to lay
therein. Whiche yf ye haue ye gette no thanke to spare.

Wherevnto he sayd and sware therwith that he so fully felte hym selfe
20 answerd and contented therin / that he thought hym selfe able therwith
to content and satysfye any man / that he sholde hapen to mete with /
that wolde holde the contrary. Wherevpon for that daye we departed tyll
another tyme / in whiche we appoynted to peruse the remenaunt of the
thyngys that he had in the begynnyng purposed.

25

The ende of the seconde boke

30

The thyrde boke.

The first chapiter

35

About fortentyght after your frende came agayne in a mornyng new
comen from the vnyuersyte / where he was as ye wote at lernynge ere he
came at you. And there had he now as he sayd vysyted some of his olde
acquayntaunce. And vpon occasyon rysyng in communycacyon / had
40 agayne repeted with some of them very fresshe lerned men / good parte
of our foremare dysceptacyon & resonyng / had bytwene vs before his
departyng. Which as he sayd they toke great plesure in / & moch
wysshed to haue ben present therat. But surely he sayd that some of
them semed to take very sore to hart / the hard handelyng of the man
45 that ye wryte of / & the burnyng of the new testament and the
forbedyng of Luthers bokys to be redde whiche were as some of them
thought / not all thynges so badde as they were made for. And fynally
touchyng the burnyng of heretykes / there were some that thought the

clergy therein farre out of ryght order of charyte.

I am quod I very glad that it hath ben your hap to be there. Not so moche for any thyng that ye haue shewed them of our communycacyon had all redy / concernyng the prayeng of sayntes / worshyppynge of
5 ymages and relyques / and goyng in pylgrymage / wherin I thynke ye tolde them no newelte / for I doubte not but they coulde haue tolde you more of the matters them selfe than ye haue herde or coulde here of me / as for that I thynke that amonge them / beyng as ye saye so well lerned / ye haue eyther herde somewhat wherby ye be in some parte of
10 these matters (that we shal speke of) all redy satysfied / wherby our busynes therin maye be the shorter / or els ye be the more strongly instructed for the other parte wherby our dysputacyon shall be the fuller / and the matters the more playnly touched / for the more ample satysfaccyon of such as your selfe or your mayster shall hereafter
15 happen to fynde in any doubte of these thynges that we shall now touche and treate of.

In dede quod he somewhat haue they shewed me theyr myndes therin / as in some parte of the matters ye shall here whan we hap to come to them.

20 That shall I gladly here quod I / and shape you suche answere as my poore wyt wyll serue me. But yet I pray you be playne with me in one thyng. Were they satysfied and helde them selfe contente in those thynges that were at last with moche worke agreed bytwene vs?

In good faythe quod he to saye the trouthe / all were saue one / and
25 he in all thyng saue one. And to your grete prayse and hygh commendacyon / they sayd that in these matters.

Nay quod I let theyr prayse passe lest ye make me to prowde. But I pray you tell me / not which one myslyked one thyng / but what one thyng it was / and why he myslyked it.

30 Surely quod he for ought that I coulde bende vpon hym / he could neuer agree that the fayth of the chyrche out of scrypture / sholde be as sure and bynde vs to the byleue therof / as the wordes of holy scrypture.

Why quod I yf ye remembred well what we sayd / ye had ynoughe to proue hym that.

35 Trouth is it quod he so had I and so dyd I / and in suche wyse that dyuers wayes I brought hym to the bay / that he wyst not howe to voyde. But than sayd he to me that he wolde not do with me as I had done with you. Nor it was (he sayd) no wysdom for a man agaynst his aduersary to vse alway the buckeler hande. For so must all the parell be
40 his / & his aduersary stande in surety. But on the other syde yf he vse the sworde therwith / and stryke among / and dryue the other to his defence / so may he hap to put hym in halfe the parell. And lykewyse he sayd that yf I proued my parte so clerely to hym that he coulde not saye naye / yet yf I wolde agayne answere hym an other whyle / he myghte
45 peraduenture bryng me to the same poynte on the other syde / and than sholde the matter stande yet at large. For of two contraryes yf bothe the partes be proued / than stande they bothe vnproued. And therefore quod he I praye you answere me this a lytell. Whan you byleue the chyrche / wherfore do you byleue the chyrche? do you not byleue it

bycause it sayth trouth?

Yes mary quod I what ellys.

And how knowe you quod he that the chyrche sayth trouth? Knowe ye that any other wyse than by scrypture?

5 Nay mary quod I. But than by playne scrypture I knowe it very well. For the scrypture telleth me that god hath fully taught and techeth his chyrche and byddeth me byleue his chyrche.

Lo quod he for all your longe processe se whereto ye be brought now. Ye wolde in any wyse before / and ye semed to proue it to (all the whyle
10 that ye argued and I answered) that the chyrch was in all necessary poyntys of our faythe / as moche to be byleued as the scrypture / and that we sholde not haue byleued the scrypture / but for the authoryte of the chyrche / as ye say saynt Austyne sayth. And nowe whan I argue & ye answeare / I haue dryuen you to the wall in thre wordys / and prouyd
15 vnto you that the chyrche is not to be byleued / nor that your selfe byleueth it not / but for the authoryte of the scrypturc. And after that he had thus sayd / the remenaunt that were present alowed it moche / and I was therewith astonyed and sayd I wolde aduyse me further theron. But he laughed and sayd he wolde lende me this / and not to be hasty
20 on me / for he wold gyue lie respyte of payment tyll I had spoken with you agayne.

Whan your frende had tolde / forsoth quod I he delte with you tyke a courteys credytour. And syth he hath gyuen you so longe day / ye shall not nede I truste to dye in his dette. And to say the trouthe ye owe hym
25 not moche. For ye may bere hym his owne agayne and tell hym his money is nought. But I haue espyed it is as he sayth a great aduauntage for hym to oppose. For he hathe suche crafte in arguynge / that he wyll sone brynge the answerer to a peryllous poynt / yf he happen on one that wyll answeare hym hansomly as he wolde haue hym. But on the
30 other syde yf he had happened on one that hadde answered hym as frowardly as the boy answered one Caius a poete at Cambrydge / than hadde he by his opposynge parte / wonne nothyng at all. For Caius for his pleasure playenge wyth the boye beyng a yonge sophyster / sayd that he wolde proue the boye an asse. Whyche whan the boye denyed /
35 Well quod Caius thou wylt graunte me thys fyrste / that euery thyng that hath two erys is an asse.

Nay mary mayster wyll I not quod the boy.

No wylt thou quod Caius / Ah wyly boy / there thou wentest beyond me. For & thou woldest haue graunted me that / I wolde haue proued
40 the an asse anone.

Mary mayster quod the boy ye myght well / and so myght euery fole do.

Well quod Caius I wyll go nowe another waye to worke wyth the. Thou wylt graunte me that euery asse hath two erys.

45 Nay mary wyll I not mayster quod the boy.

Why so boy quod he?

Mary mayster quod he for some asse may hap to haue neuer one / for they may be cut of bothe.

Nay quod Caius I gyue the ouer for thou arte to frowarde a boy for

me. And so yf ye had not graunted what he wolde / he had nothyng
wonne at your hande.

Why quod your frende what thyng dyd I graunt hym that I sholde
not?

5 Forsoth quod I no more but all that euer ye graunted. For fyrst whan
he asked you whyther the cause why we byleue the chyrche be not
bycause it is true that the chyrche telleth you / thoughe your answeere
whiche ye made therin was not the cause of your redargucyon nor the
10 thyng wherby ye were concluded / yet answered that not well therto
whan ye graunted it.

Why quod he / wherfore sholde I byleue the chyrche or any man els
but bycause they tell me trewe.

Somtyme quod I it happeth so / but somtyme it happeth otherwyse.
For yf a knowen lyar tell you a knowen trewe tale / ye wyll byleue hym
15 bycause he telleth you trouth. But nowe if a knowen true man tell you
an vnknownen trouth ye byleue not him / bycause the thyng is trouth /
but ye byleue the thyng to be trouth bycause ye byleue that man to be
true. And so byleue you the chyrche / not bycause it is trouth that the
20 chyrche telleth you / but ye beleue the trouth of the thyng bycause the
chyrche telleth it. But yet was not the answeere of his as I say the thyng
that confounded you. For nowe yf ye so sholde haue answered hym as I
haue shewed you / thoughe ye sholde haue somewhat blenched hym ther
with / yet he myght & wolde of lykelyhed haue gone further with you /
& haue asked you wherby ye know that ye sholde byleue the chyrche.
25 And what answeere wolde ye than haue made therevnto?

Mary quod he than myght I haue sayd / that I byleue the chyrch /
bycause that in such necessary poyntes of fayth the chyrch can not erre.

That had ben very well sayd quod I. But he wolde haue asked how ye
know that.

30 Than must I quod he haue sayd the same that I dyd / that I knowe it
by playne & euydent scrypture / that the chyrch in suche thynges can
not say but true. And than wolde I haue layde hym the textes that ye
alleged vnto me for the same purpose before.

If ye so had sayd quod I ye had answered hym truely / but yet not
35 with your most aduauntage.

Why so quod he?

For quod I your nexte answeere were to say as trouth is / that ye
byleue that the chyrche in suche thynges can not erre / bycause ye
byleue that god hath taught and tolde the same thynges to his chyrche.

40 Than wolde he haue asked me further quod your frende / what
thyng maketh me byleue that god hath taught and tolde the chyrche
those thynges.

So wold he haue asked you quod I / and so myght he well.

45 Than were we commen quod your frende vnto the same poynte
agayne that he sholde haue concluded me as he dyd before.

Nay quod I not yf ye answered therto well.

Why quod he what coude I answeere ellys / but clerely graunt hym
that I byleue that thyng for none other cause but only bycause the
scrypture so sheweth me?

No could ye quod I? what yf neuer scriptur had ben wryten in thys world / shuld there neuer haue bene eny chyrch or congregacyon of faythfull & ryght byleuyng people?

That wote I nere quod he.

5 No do ye quod I? were there neuer eny folke that byleued in god / & had a true fayth betwene Adam and Noe / of such as neuer herd god speke them self?

Yes quod he I suppose ther were some / but yt shold seme ther were very few. For ther were few saued in Noes shyp.

10 The world was at that tyme quod I waxen worse and worse as yt waxeth now. But yt ys not vnlykely that ther were many ryght byleuyng people in the meane tyme.

That ys quod he lykely ynough.

15 Now as for the dayes quod I of Noe hym selfe / though ther were few saued a lyue / yet proueth not that the people to be all myscreantes & without fayth. For yt fared by them as yt fareth now by vs / ther were many that byleued the trouth and had a fayth / but they folowed the flesh and sanke for theyr synne. For there appereth no ferther vppon the story in genesys / but that the world was wasshed wyth the water of
20 the grete flode for the fylthe of theyr fleshely lyuyng. And all be yt that in the fyrst epystle of saynt Peter / yt myght seme some incredulitye in them / yet may yt be that yt stretched no ferther than to the lakke of fere in the credence of goddys commynacyon / and ouer mych hope and boldnesse of goddys ferther fauour and sufferaunce. wherof they
25 repented after to late for thys present lyfe / & yet many through goddys mercy not to late for the fynall saluacyon of theyre soules (as appereth by the good & great clerke Nicolaus de lyra vppon the same place) whyche could in no wyse haue bene so yf they had lacked fayth.

30 Whych fayth what scriptur had they to teche them / or all the menne in effecte that eny fayth had frome Adam thytherto? Was ther also no faythfull folke at all frome Noe to Moyses / nor hymselfe neyther tyll he had the law delyuered hym in wrytyng? Dyd Abraam neuer byleue more but those thyngis that we fynd in scripture specyally to haue bene tolde hym by god? Was hys father and all his frendys infydeles? Were ther no
35 peple besyde in all that long tyme that had a ryght fayth?

Yes quod your frende that I thynke veryly there was.

40 That may ye quod I be sure there was. And why dyd eny man than byleue that chyrch that ys to wytte the nombre and congregacyon of good and ryght byleuyng folke / of whose mouth and tradycyon he herde the true byleue / agaynste the wronge and mysse byleue / that was in all the world amonge infydeles and Idolaters bysyde? why dyd eny man thys / but bycause they byleued that god hath taught those
45 thyngys to good men byfore / and that yt was & wolde be styll the good lesson of god? And then what thyng made them to byleue that god had taught them so? It was not the scrypture that made them beleue that / as ye wold that nothyng can tell vs that bylefe but the scrypture. I praye you tell me what scrypture hath taught the chyrch to knowe whyche bookys be the very scrypture / and to reiecte many other that were wryten of the same maters / and that in suche wyse wryten / and in the

namys of suche men as (sauynge for the spyryte of god geuen to hys
chyrch) a naturall wyse man had bene as lykely ynough / eyther to haue
taken both for holy scrypture / or to haue reiected both as none holy
scriptur? And surely in the receyte of the tone / and reieccyon of the
5 tother / there wolde haue ben at the lest way suche dyuerse opynyons
that the hole chyrch had neuer taken all the tone sorte and reiected all
the tother / had not that holy spyryte inspyred that consent / qui facit
vnanimes in domo / whyche makyth the chyrche all of one mynde and
accorde. And therefore all be yt that agaynste them that no thyng wyll
10 byleue but scrypture / we proue thauthoryte of the chyrch by scripture
/ and in Such wyse proue yt them by scripture / that thry shall be fayn
eyther ferther to graunte that they be bounden to byleue the chyrch in
thyngys not specyfyed in scrypture / and as fully as they byleue the
scrypture selfe / or ellys they shall deny the scrypture and all: yet shold
15 we haue byleued the chyrche yf neuer scrypture had ben wryten / as
those good faythfull folke dyd / that byleued well byfore the scripture
was wryten. And now the scrypture self maketh vs not byleue the
scrypture / but the chyrch maketh vs to know the scryptur. And god
wythout scrypture hath taught hys chyrche the knowledge of his very
20 scrypture from all counterfete scrypture. For yt ys not as I saye the
scrypture that maketh vs to byleue the worde of god wryten in the
scrypture (For a man myght (as happely many doth) red yt all to gyther
and byleue therof neuer a whit) but yt ys the spyryte of god that wyth
our owne towardnesse and good endeuour / worketh in hys chyrch and
25 in euery good membre therof the credulyte & bylyef / wherby we byleue
as well the chyrch concernynge goddys wordys taught vs by the chyrch
and by god graued in mennys hartys wythout scrypture / as hys holy
wordys wryten in hys holy scrypture. And thus ye perceyue that where
ye graunted hym that so dyd oppose you / that we byleue the chyrche
30 by none other way but by the scrypture / there dyd ye not answere hym
well. For we besyde the scrypture do byleue the chyrch / bycause that
god hym selfe by secrete inspyracyon of hys holy spyryte / doth (yf we be
wyllynge to lerne) teche vs to byleue hys chyrche / And also yf we wyll
walk wyth hym / ledeth vs in to the bylyefe therof / by the selfe same
35 meane by whych he techeth vs and ledeth vs in to the bylyefe of hys holy
scrypture. For lykewyse as whan we here the scrypture or rede yt / yf we
be not rebellyous but endeuour our self to byleue / and captiue and
subdew our vnderstandyng to serue and folow fayth / prayng for hys
gracyous ayd and help / he than worketh wyth vs / and inwardly doth
40 inclyne our hart in to thassent of that we rede / and after a lytell sparke
of our fayth / encreaceth the credence in our incredulyte: so doth hys
goodnes in lyke wyse inclyne and moue the mynde of euery lyke towarde
and lyke well wylyng body / to the geuyng of fast and ferme credence to
the fayth that the chyrche techeth hym / in such thyngys as be not in
45 the scrypture / & to byleue that god hath taught hys chyrch those
poyntys by hys holy word wythout wrytyng. And now yf ye had answered
hym thus I byleue surely that ye had clerely dysarmed hym & broken
his gay sworde in twayn. Whych in my mynd I promyse you how gayly so
euer yt glyter in ones eye for a floryssh / yet who fyght therwyth shall

fynd yt neyther sharpe nor sure / yf yt fall on a good bukler and not on a naked man.

By my trowth quod your frende so semeth me now to. And though the bryghnesse blered myne eye at that time / yet I trust he shall wynne no
5 worshippe therof whan we mete agayne.

The .ii. chapyter.

10 **B**ut surely syr concernynge the mannes abiuracyon that we spake of / they be meruelously persuaded that he had mych wronge. Not in that the opynyons were catholyque whych were layed to his charge (for therin haue ye sayed ynough) but in that he was wronge borne in hand that he
15 had preched them / where he dyd not so. And thus be they very credibly enformed both by worde & wrytynge of such as were present therat. And therefore long I sore and wold be very glad / to here howe those maters were proued.

Now & I am quod I for my parte very sory so help me god to lese tyrne therin / as a thyng in effecte frutelesse / sauynge that yt may be
20 Peraduenture a frutefull example that no man be lyght to byleue such thyngis hereafter / as he shall happe to here spoken agaynste the chyrch in the fauour of any man condempned of heresy / whyle he seeth as mych sayd agaynst the judgement yf thys man: wherin so to say they can haue no more holde than yf they wolde say the crowe were white.
25 And in good fayth to say the trowth / there can not in my mynde be a more mete example to matche theyr wordes wyth all. For lykewyse as he that wold say the crowe were white / must yf he wylbe byleued go tell the tale to a blynde man / and may percase wyth hym be as well byleued as one that wyl say the contrary / tyll that he be eyther by mo
30 men or men of more honeste put after out of credence / so must these folke that thus talke & wryte of hym / seke as they do in dede suche herers as be blynde in the mater / and knowe nothyng therof / whome they persuade wyth false suggestyons to conceyue an euyll opynyon of the iudges / to inclyne theyr hartis fyrst for pytye to the fauour of the
35 man / and after to the fauour of the maters that he was abiured for. I haue my self sene a letter wryten out of London by a prest reputed honest / how be yt in dede as I saw yt proued after a playne pestylente heretyque. In whych letter he wrote that the man we nowe talke of dyd no more abiure eny heresy / than he had done hym self or the man
40 that he wrote vnto. And yet was hys wrytynge as false as god ys trewe. Wherwyth he laboured couertly to make the man byleue / that thopynyons were none heresy. And that he whyche was pretended to haue abiured them had not so done in dede / but had well auowed them and styfly abyden by them. Lo thus do suche as are of that secte / set
45 forth theyr maters wyth lyes. And reason ys yt that they so do. For syth theyr sectys be false / lyes be for them moste mete. And yet ys yt a madde thyng of them to boste of hym. For he forthwyth forsoke them / and euer byfore hys iudges he confessed from the begynnynge that the

maters were playn false heresyas / and the holders therwith heretyques.
Saynge for hymselfe that he neuer preched them. And so had they no
cause to be proude of hym / whych in open audyence at the fyrst worde
refused and condempned them. But they happely thynkyng that for all
5 hys denyenge wyth hys mouthe / he fauoured styll in dede them / and
theyr heresyas in hys mynde / pardoned therfore those wordys whych
they thought spoken but of infyrmyte for fere and faynt harte. And
therfore wolde they be glad yet amonge men that knewe not the mater /
to mayntayne and vpholde hys aucthoryte agaynst a better tyme. And
10 surely thys that I shall tell you / haue I harde reportyd / how be yt I wyll
not warrant yt for trouth. But yet haue I as I say harde yt reportyd
ryghte credably / that the man we speke of whyche was abiuryd / vsyd
amonge some of that secte to say / Let vs preche and set forthe our way.
And yf we be accused / lett vs saye we sayd not so / and yet some of
15 them shall we wyn alway the whyle. And albe it I wyll not as I say
warrant you that he thus sayd / yet I assure you to my mynde hys
maner in hys mater before hys iudgys was as consonaunt as coud be to
that intent and purpose. For surely theeffect of hys defense was nothyng
els / but agaynst a well and playnly prouyd mater / an obstynate
20 shameles nay.

By my trouth quod your frende I maruell me mych therof. For he was
callyd a good man and a very deuout.

I wyll not quod I as I tolde you in the beginnyng go about to reprove
his lyuyng / syth the question standeth not but in his techyng: And yet
25 maye I be bolde wyth you to tell you what I haue hard. He was (as yt was
sayd) after that he fell from the study of the law (wherin he was a
proctour and partely well lernyd) vnto the studye of scrypture / he was
as I say very ferefull and scrupulouse / & began at the furste to fall in to
such a scrupulouse holynes / that he rekenyd hym self bounden so
30 straitly to kepe and obserue the wordys of Cryst after the very letter /
that bycause our lorde byddeth vs when we wyll pray enter into oure
chamber and shyte the dore to vs / he thought yt therfore synne to saye
his seruice abrode / and alway wold be sure to haue hys chamber dore
shyt vnto hym whyle he sayd hys matyns. Whyche thyng I in dede harde
35 hym onys deny in an honorable presence.

But I harde agayn a nother man more credible than twayne of hym /
and yf I had sayde than such ten I thynk I lyed not / & one of hys beste
prouyd frendys / auowe yt in hys face for trouth. How be yt I tell you not
thys thyng for any grete hurte in the man. For yt was more pcuysh and
40 paynfull / than euyll and synfull. But surely men say that in conclusyon
wyth the werynesse of that superstycyous fere and seruyle drede / he
fell as Carre to the contrary. And vnder pretexte of loue and lyberty
waxed so dronke of the new must of lewd lyghtnes of mynd & vayn
gladnesse of harte / whyche he toke for spyrytuall consolacyon / that
45 what so euer hym self lysted to take for good / that thought he forthwith
approued by god. And so framed hym selfe a fayth / framed hym selfe a
conscyence / framed hym selfe a deuocion wheryn hym lyste / and
wherin hym lyked he sette hym selfe at lybertye.

And yf yt so were quod youre frende / than ye se lo what cometh of

thys sayenge of seruyce.

Of sayeng seruyce quod I / thys ys mych lyke as at Beuerlay late
whan myche of the people beynge at a bere baytyng the chyrch fell
sodaynly down at euensonge tyme / and ouerwhelmed some that than
5 were in yt / a good felow that after herde the tale tolde / lo quod he now
maye you see what yt ys to be at euensong whan ye shold be at the bere
baytynge. How be yt the hurt was not therin beynge at euensong / but
in that the chyrch was falsely wrought. So was in hym or eny man ellys
none harme but good in sayng of dyuyne seruyce / but the occasyon of
10 harme ys in the superstycyous fassyon that theyr owne foly ioyneth
there vnto / as some thynke they say yt not / but yf they saye euey
psalm twise. In fayth quod your frende than yf I were as he / I wold
mombell yt vp a pace or ellys saye none at all.

That were as euyll quod I on the tother syde. There ys a meane may
15 serue betwene both.

Ye quod he / but wote ye what the wyfe sayd that complayned to her
gossep of her husbandes frowardnes? She sayde her husbände was so
wayward that he wold neuer be plesed. For yf hys brede quod she be
dowe baken / than ys he angry. Mary no meruayle quod her gossep.
20 Mary & wote ye what gossep quod she? And yf I bake yt all to harde
colys yet is he not content neyther by saynt lame. No quod her gosseppe
ye shold bake it in a meane. In a meane quod she? mary I can not
happen on yt. And so in a payre of matyns yt ys moche work to happen
on the meane. And than to saye theym to shorte ys lacke of deuocyon.
25 And to saye theym to seryously is somewhat superstycyouse. And
therfore the best waye ware in my mynd / to saye none at all.

Ye quod I but than is god as wayward an hysband as ye spake of/
that wyll neyther be content wyth hys brede brennyd to colys / nor
dough baken neyther.

30 By our lady quod he but be he content or not I wene he hath mych
dough baken brede among. For the matens I tell you be in some places
songen faster than I can say them.

Peraduenture quod I so were yt nede. For yf they shold syng matens
no faster than ye say them / they shold I wene syng very few matens in
35 a yere.

In fayth quod he & som that say them make me to dout mych /
whether the bees in theyr hyues vse to say matens a mong them. For
euen such a nother buzzyng they make.

Surely quod I yt is as true as yt ys euyll done. For as yt is a vyce &
40 some fawte to be in the seruyce of god superstycyouse in stede of
religouse / ouer dredefull & scrupulous in stede of deuoute & dylygent
/ so ys yt a mych more fawte to be theryn rechelesse & neglygent. For
accursed ys he as holy scrypture sayth / that doth the work of god
neglygently. The parell therof appereth by Euthicus the yonge stryplyng
45 that ys spoken of by saynt Luke in thactes of thapostles. Who fallyng in
slepe whyle the apostles & the dyscyples were occupied in redyng /
prechyng / & prayer / fell out of an hygh wyndow downe vnto the
grounde / & there had dyed god wote in what case yf the merites of
saynt Powle had not recoueryd hym. And now yf he be of god accursed

that neglygently doth his worke / how mych is he more accursed yl
casteth hys work away & leueth yt quyte vndone / such worke I saye as
they be bounde to do? But in thys mater we spende more tyme than
nedeth. For yt ys not mych to our present purpose / sauynge that yf yt be
5 trouthe that the man whome we talke of fell fyrste in such superstycyon /
yt ys the more lykely that the deuyll dyd cast hym there in / for none
other intente / but that he myght after for very werynesse therof/ brynge
hym in to a contempte of all the thyngys that he was waxen wery of/
and set hym in a delyte of lyberte. Wherby wyth lenyng to his owne wit /
10 he myght reken euery thyng good or bad as hym self wold accompte yt.
Whych was the redy way to brynge hym to these heresyys wheryn he
was now fallen.

15 The .iii. chapyter.

Fallen quod your frende? what abyde / we be now gone ouer the
style or we come at it. We be yet in question whether it were rightuously
iudged that he was fallen in theym or not. For I thynke yt no synne to
20 dout therof yet tyll I here how the mater was proued. In dede quod I that
ys as ye say the mater wherof we fyrst haue to talke. And yet yf ye neuer
herde ferther therin / but that he was iudged fawtye / all though ye had
euer accompted the man in your owne mynde for very vertuose & of
right bylyefe / yet syth he can not be good except mo men than he be
25 naught / whom ye ought no more to mysdeme than hym / & specyally
hys iudges whych are elect & chosen for indyfferent / and whych
wythout lykely liode of lucre or losse be sette to consyder examyne & by
theyr judgement ordre the cause of a nother man / where as the partyes
maye resonably be more mystrusted theym selfe / both the accuser
30 whych maye speke of malyce / & specyally the partye that ys accused /
whych is well lykely to lye for hys defence in a mater of parell yf he were
proued gyltye / ye therefore ought not to mistruste the judgement /
except ye knewe the mater vntruely iudged in dede / or by very good and
substauncyall folke that were presente and indyfferent / hadde playne &
35 sure informacyon therof.

Mary quod he men thynke that yf any such informacyon may serue /
they haue had ynough therof by men of wysdom lernyng and honestye /
both by month & by writyng that were present at all the handelyng of
the mater.

40 Well quod I we shall lette theyr wysdom and theyr lernynge alone.
But as for theyr honesty shall somewhat shewe yt selfe / vppon the
trouthe or vntrouthe of theyre report. Wherin fyrst I pray you could they
saye that he was not conyucted by as many wytnesses & as good and as
credible as the law requyreth?

45 So many quod he and such as the law requyreth? wolde god quod he
that we coud as easely fynd good men and true / as we maye fynd so
many such. For the law doth as I here say requyre but twayne / and yet
in cause of heresy careth not mych how bad they be / not though they

be heretyques them selfe. And ys not thys a wonderouse case that where
as in a mater of a lytell money no law receyueth any wytnesse but
honeste & credyble / the lawe made by the chyrch / shold in so grete a
mater / so hyghly towchyng the vtter destruccyon of a man in body &
5 goodys wyth a deth the moste paynfull that can be deuysed / admytte &
receyue a persone infamed / & gyue faythe and credence to an infydell /
whome they haue proued and reproued fals in his fayth to god? Nor me
thynketh the excuse but very slender that I haue ere thys herde in thys
poynt alledged for the chyrche / that suche symple wytnesse are
10 admytted in heresy / bycause the cryme ys so great and so odyous /
that therefore yt ys worthy to be handled wyth the more rygour and the
lesse fauour. And this thyng wyll I well agre for good reason in the
punyshment of the cryme whan it ys proued. But for god not in hatred
/ and persecucyon of the person ere the cryme be proued.

15 But now where as they receyue the wytnesse of so sleight and false
felowes for a profe / they pursew the person & not the cryme. Where as
me thynketh on the tother syde / the more heyghnouse / odyouse and
abhomynable that the crime is / the more slow / shold we be to byleue
yt / and the more sure and playn profe shold we haue ere we shold
20 iudge any man for so euyll to commyt yt.

There ys quod I no dowt / but that the worlde ys so bad / that there
be many so naughty / that they wyll be redy ynough to bere false
wytnesse. And yet god forbede that yt were so bad as ye say / that a
roan myght soner fynde suche than good men & trewe. And also though
25 the wytnesse were false & wold lye / yet whan they be wysely and
seuerally examyned / they can seldom so well make theyr tale before /
but that theyr vntrouth shall in some parte appere. And fynally the law
byndeth not the iudge so precysely to the wordys of the wytnes / but
that yt leueth many thyngys to be pondered and wayed by hys
30 wysdorne. For yt ys in a iudge as yt ys in a physycyon / to whom there
be many good bokys wryten / able to gyue good lyght and instruccyon.
And yet who so wold so precysely bynde hym to his boke / that he shold
nothyng vse the dyscressyon of hys brayne / he shold somtyme do full
euyll seruice.

35 And yet ys yt as Arystotle sayth well done in dede to make the lawes
so sufficient / that as few thyngys as may / shall remayne and be left to
the dyscressyon of the iudge / sythe that the comen lawes be comenly
made by many moo than ar the particuler iudges / and also many such
as are as wyse as iudges. And ouer that the lawes be to the iudges a
40 sure and substaunciall shelde / to defende and kepe them from the
hatred and obloquy that ellys wolde folowe theyr sentence on the tone
syde or the tother / were theyr judgement neuer so iuste. For men be so
parciall alway to theym selfe / that oure harte euer thynketh the
iudgement wronge / that wryngeth vs to the worse. For be yt neuer so
45 right / all reken we wronge wherof we fele harme.

But yet of all thynges specyally the lawe sholde beste content vs / for
that yt is ferthest out of all cause of suspycion. For where as a iudge
medleth wyth a mater present / and persons whom he seeth & knoweth
/ wherby there may parcas fauour / hated / hope / or drede / pytye /

cruelte / mede / request / or some other affeccyon inclyne hym to
mysordre hym self in the mater: the lawes alwaye be made for the
punyshment of thynges only that are yet to come / and who shall fall in
parell the makers can not tell. Happely theyr foos / happely theyr
5 frendys (and as mennys maners be mutable) peraduenture theym selfe /
for whyche cause the makers of the lawe made by the people in cawses
crimynall / can be but indyfferent. And therefore I meruayle the more /
sythe that faut ye fynde now ys not in the iudges but in the lawes selfe /
10 Wheryn ye thynke yt euyll prouyded that for the hatered of an
hyghnouse cryme / the person peraduenture innocent shold fall in
parell of a paynfull dethe by the takyng of more sleight wytnesse than
wold be taken for suffycient in a farre sleighter mater. Somwhat ye
sayde in dede yf the hatered of the cryme were all the cause / But
15 thereyn ye go far wyde. For the chyef cause why that in heyghnouse
crimynall causes / as thefte / murder / treason / & heresy / the law
taketh such for wytnesse as yt wyll not accept in a mater of money or
other contract made betwene two partyes / ys for that ellys all such
crymes shold passe forth vnpunshed / and therby shold the world
20 swarm full of such myscheuous peple for lacke of profe and tryall in the
mater / by cause that those whyche go about suche an heyghnous dede
as cummynge ones to knowledge wolde brynge them to a shamefull
deth / do not vse comenly / to take a notary / & honest wytnesse wyth
them to make an instrument therof / as many men do and all men may
do in a contracte or couenaunt / but vse to do yt by stelth as couertly as
25 they can. By reason wherof / reason moueth and necessity compelleth
(except ye wolde haue all go to nought) to receyue suche recordys as
they be wonte to make of theyr consayle / whyche be as ye wote well
none but suche as they be theym selfe. And yet sometyme whyche maye
seme more straunge / we be contente and reason wold we so were /
30 wyth the wytnesse of the partyes theym selfe. For yf that .x. theuys
robbed foure men at onys in a wood / though all the good that they take
away were one comen purs of all foure / and wolde all .x. whan they
were taken well and styfly say naye / yet were I theyr iudge (syth all
witnesser serueth but only to induce a credence or credulyte in the iuges
35 myndes) I wolde not let (except some other cyrcumstance wythstode yt)
to byleue the .iiii. complaynautys in theyre owne mater agaynste all ten
defendauntis. And all be yt that percase a iudge myght be in a contracte
made bytwene two partyes enduced in hys owne mynde wythout ony
dowte to the contrary to gyue credence in such a poynt to the tone parte
40 agaynst the tother for the well knowen trouth and honesty of the tone /
and in the tother parte the contrary / yet doth the law thorow the world
almost prohybyte hym so to procede in a cyuyle cause / leste they
sholde brynge that fourme of iudgement in custume / wheryn for lucre
ensuyng to the party / there were occasyon to corrupte the iudge / and
45 also for as mych as the fasshyon were in a cyuyl cause dene wythout
necessyte / syth the partyes maye yf they lyst for the surete of theyr
bargaynes haue writyng or good wytnesse therat. Whych yf thry lyste not
for to do / eyther for foly / slouth / or trust / good reason is that yt
rather tourne them selfe to losse / than for the redressyng of theyr

ouersyght / to brynge in place that fourme & fasshyon of iudgement /
that may be the cause of other mennys wrongfull trouble / where as in
heyghnouse crymynall causes neyther ys there alway such cause of
corrupcyon / specyally toward the condemnacyon vppon whych syde
5 onely falleth the faute and paryll that ye speke of / and ys also as ye se
ineuytable necessaryte for lacke of possybylyte of other recorde and
wytnesse / tyll ye prouyde that theues and murderers wyll be content to
take honest witnesse wyth them that maye bere wytnesse agaynst them.

10

The .iiii. chapyter.

How be yt though thys seme for such maters in grncrall / yet for
thys one mater that we now speke of / we stande farre in a nother case.
15 For thys man was not conuycted by the wordys of one or twayne / but
by the othes of one or twayne aboue twentye / not such men as we now
speke of / lollardys and heretiques / but honest men and almost of all
sortes / of relygyous folke / husband men / & gentill men.

In dede quod he to say the trouth I herd say there were many
20 wytresses. But I herd agayne that he offeryd to brynge twyse as many /
and that of suche as were present as well as they / and stode as nere as
they / and vnderstode as well as they / and slepte no more at hys
prechyng than a person doth at hys offeryng / and wold depose playnly
for hym.

25 Whither he sayd so or not quod I / that can I not tell you / but thys I
wote well. Hym self was well lerned in the law / & neuer could say ythat
he was denyed eny fauour that the law wold graunt. And many a
wytnesse was there to whom he layd none excepcion / nor coud say the
contrary / but that they were at his sermons & herd hym. And then
30 whan he was so clerely conuycted by so many / so honeste & so farr
from all suspycyon of corrupcyon / yt were peraduenture a thyng not
conuenyent / after those wytresses publysshed / to bryng proues a
fresshe vppon the princypall mater. For yf yt so shold be / than shold
eyther the new proues depose the same that the tother dyd before / or
35 ellys they sholde depose the contrary / or finally saye such thyng as
neyther cowlde make nor marre. Now yf they dyd the fyrst / that is to
saye depose as the fyrst dyd / than were we no ferther than we were
before / and that tyme lost and the mater delayed in vayne. Yf they dyde
the thyrde / deposynge percase that theyr selfe were not present / or a
40 slepe or not well vnderstode / or not well remembred the mater / yet
were we styll at one stay. Put now the seconde poynt (whych were in
maner the onely thyng that myght seme to haue eny colour for hym)
that the new proues wold depose / that they were at the same tyme
present / and stode nere hym / marked hym well / and were also well
45 remembred that he sayd not so / ye and peraduenture that he sayd the
contrary / thys case were possyble / but surely yt were so seldom lykely
/ that yt were not worth to chaunge a law therefore. But now yf yt so
sholde happen / here were a greate confusyon. And how coulde eny

sentence be gyuen / yf they shulde byleue the seconde as well as the fyrst?

That maketh quod he no mater. For yf the mater appere vppon his syde therby / eyther clere or doutefull / than may the iudges acquite
5 and assoyle the defendaunt. And better were yt the fauty to be quytte / than the fautles to be punysshed.

It were a strange thyng quod I yf the lawe shold in suche a mater as thys ys / after the wytnessys onys publysshed / and therby the mater well proued / than examyne other wytnesse a fresshe vpon the
10 pryncypall poynt. Thys were in my mynde peryllous / not onely for fere of subornacyon and false instruccyon of wytnesse / a thyng easy to be done vppon the syght of that that ys deposed all redy before / but also for that yf the affyrmatyue be proued / specyally in thys case of heresy beynge by so many suffycyently proued / that one taught and preched
15 suche thyngys in hys open sermons / if other that were presente at the same sermons wolde nowe depose the contrarye / It may be that the fyrste herde the thyng whyche the seconde marked not as many tymes yt happeth. And more lykely ys yt also that one maye forgete the thyng that he herd / than that a nother sholde remember that thyng that he
20 herde not. And yf they wold peraduenture adde therto that he sayd the contrary of suche thyngys as was proued agaynste hym / than can it at the best be no better taken / than that he in one sermone sayd taught and preched both twayne / that ys to wyt the trouth and the heresy. In whych case he well were worthy in iudgement to knowlege hys faut
25 and be corrected therfore.

By my trouth quod he yet me thynketh euer that it ought to be herde all that eny man wyll say / & take all to the beste for hym that is accused / and specyally in heresy pretended to be preched where so many be present.

Surely quod I what were best god woteth for I can not telle. But this wote I well that the wytte of the hole world in effect agreeth / that in all such heyghnous crymes / reason ys clere to the contrary and quyte
30 agaynst your mynd. And where ye thynke your mynd worthy to take specyall place in the profe and examinacyon of heresy / surely me semeth that of all crymes in heresy myghte yt leste be sufferyd. For well ye wote that heresy be false byleyfe and faccyous wayes full of busynes. And suche as geue theym selfe therto / be stourdy and studyouse about the furtheraunce of theyr sedycyouse sect. And syth they be fallen frome
40 god and hys true fayth / they haue no greate care of trouth / nor be very scrupulouse in the lendynge of an othe tyll they neede in lyke case to be payed agayne. So that yf theyr nay may stand agaynste other good mennys ye / and where the heresy ys proued to haue be preched / there men may be herd and beleued in deposynge the contrary / the false precheour maye be bold to say what hym lyste. For he shall neuer
45 fayle to haue hys recordys redy.

Ye quod he but thys way wold not serue hym. For men myghte take excepcyon to them yf they were heretykys.

Nay quod I not yf they be so / but yf they be proued so. And that shall they neuer be yf your way were receyued. For eche of theyr

wytnesse shall alway serue other.

Forsoth quod he yt semeth somewhat perylouse as ye say / yf men
shold agaynste thaffyrmatyue prouyd / lene to the contrary wyttesse /
for the negatyue in eny cryme that ys sedycyouse and hath dayly folke of
5 euyll conscyence feruently fall in therto / but yet I mych meruayle of one
thyng. For I haue herd yt credibly reported that there were twayn / and
both benefysed men / both very connynge men / both twayne very
vertues men / whych herd hym preche as well as they dyd that had
deposed agaynst hym. And those twayne affermed and offred to depose /
10 that he preched not the thyngys whych he was accused of. And surely
had I ben iudge / I wolde haue byleued those twayne aboute other
twentye / except wyttesse be taken onely by nomber and not by weyght.

Surely quod I my mynd and yours be not farre a sonder. For syth all
wytnes serue to enduce the iudgys mynde to conceyue a credence and
15 an opynyon / or rather a certayn persuasyon on the tone syde / I could
not my selfe but byleue some twayne better than some twentye. And
wold not fayle to way them rather then take them by tale. How be yt
quod I of those twayne that ye speke of / the tone was in dede suche as
ye say. But as for the tother was neyther than holden very clere / and
20 synnis that tyme proued derely nought. But though the tone was as he
was in dede a very good man / yet for the mannys excuse he was no
very good wyttesse / nor the tother neyther all though he had bene as
good a man as he / nor yf they had ben fourty men mo as good as the
better of them both / saynge as they dyd.

25 Why quod he sayed they not well for hym?

Yes quod I for as farre as they wente / but they wente not farre
ynoughe.

Ah quod he theyr wordys were of lyklyhod narrowly taken.

They were quod I taken as large as they were spoken: whych was that
30 he prechyd not such heresyys in a place where they hard hym in
London. But than was hys deteccyon and the profe made theruppon / of
those heresyys prechyd at sondrye placys out of London / wherby theyr
wordys went as wyde for hys excuse / as yf one that were arreygnyd for
a felonye done at Salysbury on shroue tewsdays / brought in good wytnes
35 to the barr that wold depose & swere for hym that he dyd no such felony
at Shrewsbury on shereThursday / for they were with hym there all the
day them self. But for conclusyon he was conuyetyd by moo then twenty
/ and excusyd by neuer one. And therefore yf his iudgys wrongyd hym /
there was neuer man had ryght. And yet were there besydes the
40 wyttesse some letters wryten of hys owne hande vnto one of hys iudgys
/ whyche letters I haue synce sene / soundynge in myne erys to as iuell
heresyys as those were that he was detectyd of. Whyche letters were
neuer layed into the court tyll that after the proues publysshed and
redde / he appered obstynat standyng styll in the denyall / and
45 prowdeley refusynge to submytte him selfe to his abiuracyon. For than
sayd his iudge to whom they were wryten / that syth he refused to be
reconcyled to the chyrche / he wold kepe no counsayle of his. And
therwith brought in those letters and fyled them amonge the recordys of
the courte.

This man had also bene before that accused vnto the gretest prelate
in this realme / who for hys tender fauour borne to the vnyuersyte / dyd
not procede far in the matter agaynst hym. But acceptyng his denyall
with a corporall othe that he shold from that tyme forth be no setter
5 forth of heresydes / but in his prechyngs and redyngys impugne them /
dysmyssed hym very benygnely / and of his lyberall bounte gaue hym
also money for his costys. And yet was none of all these matters layed
vnto his charge. Whiche yf they had bene / wold peradventure haue put
hym to parell.

10 I was also my selfe synce his abiuracyon present (as it happed) with
an honorable prelate at suche tyme as one that was an aunccyent
heretyke had ben examyned / and there had confessed that he had
holden / taught / and in dyuerse countrees spredde about almost all
the heresydes / that any lewd heretyke holdeth.

15 May ye not tell his name quod he?

Whiche of them quod I. For he had mo names than halfe a lefe can
holde.

Where dwellyd he quod your frende?

20 Euery where and no where quod I. For he walked about as an
apostle of the deuyll from shyre to shyre and towne to towne thorowe
the realme / and had in euery diocyse a dyuerse name. By reason
wherof he dyd many yores moche harme or he coulde be founde out.
This heretyke towchyng all his other heresydes / he knowlegyd them in
conclusyon to be nought / and offeryd to abiure them. But as for
25 dyspysyng of ymagys / relyques and pylgrymagys / those thyngys he
sayed were none heresydes but very good and trewe poyntys / for he
herde them preched he sayd of the great doctour / namyng the man we
speke of / and tolde where / Confessyng also that he lyked so well his
sermons / that he letted not to go .xx. myle to here him. And yet was
30 there synce that another heretyke that confessyd for his owne parte the
lyke. So that ye may se that good crysten folke were offended wyth his
prechyng / and heretykes lyked hys prechyng / and grounded theyr
heresydes vppon his prechyng. And than loke you what maner of
prechyng it was lykely to be.

35 I tolde you also ryght nowe that one of those two that ye toke for so
good & connyng men / was after founden worse than many men wolde
haue went. Syr so was it in dede that he was detectyd for byeng of many
bokes of Luther / Lambartt / & zuynglius wyth other of that sorte / and
well proued & by hym selfe also confessed / that he had bought of those
40 bokes very many / whiche he brought forth at last / where he had layde
them vp no lesse suspycyously than secretly / & so secretly that all the
towne sholde haue sought them long ere they sholde haue founde theym
out.

45 He had also set a prest of his and a seculer seruaunt of his besyde to
bye many of the same suyte / & double & treble of one sorte / whiche
were by them vttred to dyuers yonge scolers suche as they founde
properly wytted / fetely lerned / & newfangly mynded. And thus
laboured to corrupte the realme. Another paryshe prest had he before /
that kepte his cure also as this other dyd / whiche was after proued a

very pernycyouse heretyke.

But what was quod he done to the mayster?

Forsoth quod I grete fauour had he / and as some men sayd grete
wrong to / that he was not openly declared. Howe be it bycause he was
5 in good estymacyon / there was of pyte moch regarde had to the
conseruacion of his honesty. And nothyng was there in effecte exacted
of hym / but his amendement with the knowledgyng of his faute. For
surely that man was of suche a pore spyryte in Cryst / that for any othe
that collide be gyuen hym / longe it was ere pryde wolde for shame
10 suffre hym to saye the trouthe. After which ones confessed with his
hande wrytyng / than as farre as I haue herde without any other
abiuracyon / there was secretely his solempne othe taken in iudgement
/ that he sholde do no suche thyng any more vpon payne of a relapse /
& so with certayne secret penaunce dysmysed. But the thyng that I
15 tell you my tale for is this. This man besydes that / all the bokes in
effecte whiche he hadde bought of this Lutherane secte were dilygently
red ouer and studyed / and with suche maner of notes marked in the
margyne and wordes wrytten of his owne hande where the worst matters
were / that he lefte no man in doubte that red them what feruent
20 affeccyon he bare vnto them / he had I say besydes all this / dyuers
pystles I wote nere whose / but wrytten were they with his owne hande
/ wherein were plenty of pestylent heresydes. And a sermon also worse
than they all wrytten with his owne hande also / redy to be preched as it
semed yf the worlde wolde so chaunge that the tyme wolde serue it. And
25 whan he was in his examynacyon sore preced vpon to tell (or what
intent he made suche a sermon redy and layde it vp so secretly /
destytute at last of all excuses that myght bere any colour of any good
cause / Well quod he I se well I must tell all / I am loth to hurte any
body. And thervpon he told how it was made the most parte by the man
30 that was abiured of whom we specyally speke. So that nowe setting all
this gere togyther / this mannes confessyon / his secret frende &
companyon in such matters / his olde accusacyons of lyke matters / the
heretyques confessyons that founded theyr heresydes in the same
matters vpon the authoryte ofhys sermon / and besydes all this mo than
35 .xx. wytnessys playnely prouynge the matter agaynste hym / I wolde
fayne wyt who had ryght yf he had wronge / all though there hadde
bene vsed to hym more rygour a greate dele than there was.

40

The .v. chapiter

Why quod he what deuyll rygoure coude they more haue shewed
for the fyrst tyme / than make hym abiure and here a faggot?

45 Yes quod I some man had leuer here twayne colde in hys necke /
than haue one bere hym hote on a fyre at his feete.

In fayth quod he they coude not haue done that to hym at the fyrst
tyme.

No quod I not yf he wyllingly retoumed to the chyrche knowlegyng

his faute / & redy to abiure all heresyys / & penytently submytted hym
selfe to penaunce. And els yf he proue hym selfe obstynate & impenytent
/ the chyrche neyther is bounden nor ought to receyue hym but vtterly
may forsake hym and leue hym to the secular handys. But now was he
5 so obstynate that he wolde not abiure of longe tyme. And dyuers dayes
were his iudgys fayne of theyr fauour to gyue hym / with sufferaunce of
some his beste frendys and whom he most trusted / to resorte vnto
hym. And yet scantely coulde all this make hym submytte hym selfe to
make his abiuracyon. And fynally were they fayne for sauynge of his lyfe
10 / to deuise a forme of abiuracyon / wherof I neuer sawe the lyke / nor
in so playne a case neuer wolde were I the iudge / suffer the lyke here
after.

What maner of abiuracyon was that quod he?

Mary quod I his abiuracyon was suche that he therein abiured and
15 forsware all heresyys / knowlegyng hym selfe lafully conuycte. But
where as they be wont to confesse in theyr owne abiuracyon that they
haue holden suche heresyys & be gyltye therof / that wolde he do in no
wyse / but as clerely as his faute was proued / and by as many / yet
wolde he not to dye therefore confesse hym selfe faulty / but alway stode
20 styll vpon it in vertue of his othe that all they belyed hym.

It myght happen quod he that he had forgotten that he so had
preched.

That were quod I great wonder. For I am sure whan he had preched
so in so many placys / he had not done it of a sodayne aduenture / but
25 of a delyberat purpose / which excepte he fell mad / yt were not writ
possyble for hym in so great a matter to forgete. And besydys this it was
also deposed / that in a place where he preched / he was after the
sermon resoned withall forthwith. And by an honest ley man had it layd
vnto his charge / that he had peryllously preched / shewyng hym
30 wherin. Wherunto he made answeare not that he had not sayd so / nor
that he had not ment so / or that they had mystaken & wrong
vnderstanden his wordes / but that he wolde preche there agayne sone
after / & proue his prechyng true by the olde doctours of the chyrch.
And this happed hym not long before that he was accused. Was it now
35 possyble by your fayth that he coulde haue forgote this?

It was quod he possyble ynoughe that all togyther was false / and
that they lyed all. For so myght they do by possybylyte beyng but men /
and thoughe they had ben mo then they were. And then he
peraduenture knowynge that they so dyd / why sholde he falsly confesse
40 a faute in hym selfe for the falshed of other folke?

That is quod I true yf he so knewe it. But howe coulde that be so /
agaynst so many prouys sworne and deposynge the matter vpon theyr
othes / beyng thoughe they were but men / yet men of wyt and
honesty & some well lerned also / and men that bare hym no
45 dyspleasure for any other matter than his euyll prechyng / men almost
all suche as coulde haue none other matter to hym / folke that neuer
had other matter with hym / and many of them of lytell acquayntaunce
or none the one with the other / so that there was no fere of
conspyrynge togyther in one tale.

Yet quod he were it possyble that they myght lye all.

And what quod I that he had ben accused in other places before as he was in dede not onely to the most honourable prelate that I tolde you / but besydes hym vnto two other bysshops to?

5 Well quod he and yet they that so accused hym myght happen to lye to.

And what quod I that his owne secret acquayntaunce confessed that he made the fyrst draught of that vngracyous sermon that I tolde you?

Herde you yt your selfe quod he?

10 My selfe quod I nay / but suche as I herde it of were men of more worshyppe and truthe therto than that any man I wene wolde mystrust theyr tale.

As worshypfull as they were quod he and as trusty to / I coule mystrust theyr tale well ynough somtyme for lacke of indyfferency peradventure as they stode vnsworne. And yet though I mystrusted not them all / it myght be that they sayd trewe / and that the other lyed / whiche for his owne excuse layde the fyrste makynge of that sermon to the other man.

20 The layenge therof to hym quod I coule not excuse hym selfe. For he confessed that hym selfe lyked it / and alowed it. And therefore wrote it out / and added also many thynges mo therto.

Well quod he and yet all this myght be.

And what quod I of the heretykes that grounded theyr oppynyons vpon his sermons?

25 May it not be quod he that they lyed?

And what quod I of them that accused hym to other prelates before?

By god quod he euen as I tolde you before it myght be that they lyed well ynoughe.

30 And what than quod I of all those twenty that deposed against hym nowe?

Mary quod he as I tolde you now / it myght be that they dyd euen the same.

This is quod I a straunge thyng to me.

35 Why quod he sholde this be straunge to you? Me thynketh it sholde be straunge to no man but very playne to euery man / that it myght be so. For I praye you myght it not so be? Were it not possyble that they myght all lye and though they were as many mo?

Possyble quod I? that I say not nay but that it were possyble though they were .M. tymes as many.

40 Well quod he syth it myght be so / then put case it was so. Dyd not he ryght than in that he styll sayd so? And yf he had dyed therein had he not dyed for the trouth? For knowyng in hym selfe that all they belyed hym / he was not bounde to belye hym selfe with them / and confesse agaynst hym selfe an vntrouth / but had bene in great synne yf he so shold haue done. What say ye to this?

45 I say quod I to this that all the force and effect of your conclusyon hangeth vppon the case whyche ye put / that all that euer ought sayd or deposed agaynst hym lyed all the meyny. Which case ye wolde nedys haue graunted bycause it was possyble. And than that case ones

graunted / ye deduce your conclusyon very surely. And in good fayth ye
brynge me therwith so to my wyttes ende / that I wote not well whiche
way to answeere you admytting your case. But euer my mynde gyueth
me that your case though it be possyble / were rather to be graunted at
5 a scole in argument / than at a courte in iudgement. And I praye you for
the profe thereof lette me put you another case / whyche in good fayth I
am halfe ashamed to put you / sauynge that ye dryue me to seke a
shyfte. And yet shall not my case in my minde be moch vnlyke to yours.
Yf it so were that Wylken had layd a wager with Symken / that in a
10 certayne way named bytwene them vsuall ynough for men and horse
both there had gone of late an horse or two / and that he wolde so
clerely proue it that it coulde not be the contrary. If Symken sayd and
layd hys wager the contrary / and than they bothe sholde chese vs for
Iudges / and we commynge all foure into the way / Wylken wolde shewe
15 vs on the grounde parte in the claye and parte peradventure in the
snowe the prente of horse fete and of mennys fete also by a longe way
ten myle togyther and ye wyll / tyll they come at a water where as went
a waye by shyppe no man can tell who nor whyther it forceth not for our
wyse case / but nowe yf Wylken wolde saye that he hadde wonne his
20 wager/ for lo here ye se the prente of the horse fete all thys waye shone
and all wyth the very naylys in theym / so that yt may be none other
wyse but horse hathe gone here. If Symken after all thys wolde saye the
wager were hys for it is not proued that any horse hadde gone there / for
it myghte be that they were geldyngys or marys / here were we fallen in
25 a greate questyon of the lawe / whyther the gray mare may be the better
horse or not / or whyther he haue a wyse face or not that loketh as lyke
a foole as an ewe loketh lyke a shepe. And in this questyon yf the
partyes demurred in our iudgement / we myght aske aduysse further of
lerned men & iudges.

30 We myght quod he by suyt to be sure of the matter / make it a
cheker chamber case. Or sauynge the premunyre / we myght haue it
tryed in the rote at Rome.

Very well quod I so that I se well by your wyt and myne togyther /
one shyfte or other we sholde fynde for a fynall ende therin / yf the
35 doubte were in that poynt. But now yf Symkyn stycked not therto / but
wolde say thus / lo here ye se the men haue gone this way / and how
can ye than be sure that any horse wente here? For I put case sayth he
that these men whiche wente here had horse shone in theyr handes
made fast vpon longe steles / and alway as they wente prycked them
40 downe harde in the grounde.

Tut quod he this were a wyse inuencyon.

Veryly quod I to me it wolde not seme very gay. But nowe yf Symkyn
were contencyous and wolde say the wager were his excepte it be so
proued that it can be none otherwyse but that horse haue of late gone
45 there & then wyll say to vs / lo syrs as ye se it / it may be otherwyse.
For men myght make with theyr handes all the pryntes of horse shone
in the grounde. And than yf we wolde say that was neuer so / he wolde
aske vs howe can we be sure therof / whyle we can not say naye but it
myght be so / & than wolde styll prece vpon vs with this questyon may

it not be so?

It may quod he by possybylyte be so.

Than quod I whan we graunt hym ones that it may be so / than wyll
he by and by put case that it were so. And then yf we graunt hym his
5 case ones for the possybylyte / than wyll he shortly conclude that the
other parte is not so surely proued / as it must be yf Wylkyn sholde
wynne the wager. What sholde we say to hym nowe / to whom sholde we
gyue the wager?

In fayth quod he I wote nere what to say to hym. And the mater is so
10 mad that as for the wager what I wolde gyue wylkyn I wote nere / but as
for Symkyn excepte he better impugned the profe / if the wager were but
a butter flye / I wolde neuer awarde hym one wyng.

Surely quod I / & you shall rule that mater for me. For yf ye gyue
hym nought / he geteth as lytell of me. But nowe what yf he waxe angry
15 yt his proper inuencyon were no more set by / nor his wyt no more
regarded / and wolde thervpon helpe forth his parte with his othe and
swere vpon a boke that hym selfe sawe whan the men made those
pryntes in the grounde with horse shone holden in theyr handes / what
wolde ye than saye?

Mary quod he than wolde I saye and swere to / that besyde the losse
20 of his wager he hadde lyke a false folysshe knaue loste his honestye and
his soule to.

In good fayth quod I & for ought I se yet I durst be bold to swere with
you. And than lettyng wylkyn alone with Symkyn dysputyng theyr
25 sophem them selfe / let vs retorne home agayne to our owne mater. In
whiche whyle there were so many so clere and open proues agaynst the
man of whom we speke all this whyle / though it were possyble that all
they myght be false / yet could there none indifferent iudge so thynke /
30 excepte it were so proued / & that by other meanes than the onely othe
of the partye that is accused / sweryng alone agaynst them all.

Yet quod he for all that yf he knowe in dede that he dyd it not / he
doth but well to abyde by the trouth.

Very soth ye say quod I. Nor Symken neyther yf he sawe the men
prynt the horse shone in the hyghe way though it semed vs neuer so
35 vnlykely / yet had he done well ynough to say it and swere it to and
styfly to stycke thereby. And yet ye remember parde that yf he so wolde
haue sworne ye and I bothe durst ryght now ryght boldely haue byleued
that he lyed. And myght we not well byleue the same in our case to?

Yes quod he that wyll I well. And therefore the iudgys dyd him but
40 ryght to reken hym as conuycted / and therefore to compell hym to
abiure. But yet they shewed hym therin no suche fauour as ye speke of
/ in that they admytted hym to hys abiuracyon wythout confessyng of
the faute. For yf they had forced hym thereto / they had in my mynde
done hym playne and open wronge / bycause it myght be that he sayd
45 and sware true. And then sholde they haue forced hym agaynst hys
conscyence / to say of hym selfe vntreue. And that sholde they do not
only clene agaynst ryght / but also wythout necessaryte / consydeyng
that they myght as in conclusyon they dyd / abiure hym other wyse.
And therefore they toke the best way both for hym and for them selfe

also. But synce they dyd therin none other wyse then as they were of duty bounden / it well appereth he had therin no such fauour as ye wold make it seme that they shewed hym.

Well quod I syth your self agreeth that he had no wrong / albe it no
5 fauour hadde bene shewed hym / yet were your erand answered as farre
as toucheth his abiuracyon. And now yf I sholde prone you that his
iudgys shewed hym suche fauoure / I fere me lest I sholde therewyth
somewhat seme to charge theym that they hadde done though not
10 wronge yet very nere wronge / the fauour apperynge to be shewed / yf
not agaynst the lawe / yet at the leest way the lawe for fauour so farre
stretched forth that the lether coulde scant holde. But yet chese they for
me. For syth I haue sayd it / I wyll tell you why / and so moch the more
boldely bytwene vs twayne / for that I perceyue not in you any suche
15 maner of mynde towarde theym / that ye wolde blowe abroad any faute
of vnlauffull fauour founden in theym.

Ah well sayd quod he and laughed. Ye wene I were more redy to
reporte theyr rygour then any poynt of theyr fauour.

Well taken of you quod I. I se well a man can not haue a good
oppynyon of you / but your conscyence construeth it to the contrary.
20 But nowe for the matter / I trowe we be agreed bothe / that all were it so
that the man had ben fautlesse in dede / yet were the prouys agaynste
hym so many / so good / so clere & euydent / & so moch more than
sufficyent / that neyther his iudges nor our selfe neyther / nor I thynke
his owne father neyther if he had herde them / coulde haue thought
25 hym other than very gretly gylty.

Surely quod he that is true.

Now quod I that beyng true that they coulde none otherwyse reken in
hym though he styll sware the contrary / must it not nedes be that in
his denyenge in vertue of his othe / the thynges which they coulde not
30 but byleue true / they must nedes therewith byleue hym all the whyle to
lye & be periured?

That foloweth quod he.

Now quod I whan one is accused & conuycyed of heresy / what thyng
wyll the law that the chyrch shall receyue hym to?

35 What thyng quod he? mary to mercy.

Nay quod I merry is the thyng as it semeth that they receyue hym by
/ not the thyng that they receyue hym to.

Then is it quod he to penaunce.

40 That semeth well sayd quod I. For the chyrch by mercy receyueth
hym to penaunce.

But now quod I doth the chyrch openly receyue to penaunce any
person apperyng & prouyng hym selfe styll impenytent?

Nay quod he.

45 Appereth not he styll impenytent quod I that styll appereth periured /
& styll standyng in periury? And where the fyrst part of penaunce is
confessyon & humble knowlegyng of the faute / can the chyrche reken
hym penytent that styll refuseth to confesse his faute / that lyeth falsly
styll / & falsly forswereth hym selfe?

The chyrche quod he can not surely know whyther he swere true or

fals / & therefore they can not surely iudge hym forsworne. For it may be by possybylyte that all the wytnesse lyed.

It may be to quod I by possybylyte yf we go this way to worke / that all the men lyed that euer haue sayd they came from Rome / and that
5 all the bryefs and bulles were fayned that euer were supposed to be brought from thens / for ought that he can tell that neuer came there hym selfe. For some one man myght lye & some one bull or bryef myght be fayned / and so some other and one by one / and so forth of all the remenaunt. For lyke possybylyte is there in euery one as is in any one.
10 And peraduenture as for your owne selfe haue neuer yet talked with .xx. that haue tolde you they haue ben at Rome.

No no quod he nor I wene with .x. neyther.

And howe many bulles quod I & bryefs haue ye sene that came thens.

15 By our lady quod he bulles very fewe / & bryefs neuer none / for I neuer aske after them.

Then quod I myght you by your owne reason as well doubtte whyther there were any Rome or no / as whyther the man lyed & were forsworne or no. But in this poynte I wyll not longe stycke with you. For surely
20 standyng the matter in such case that his iudges coude not otherwyse thynke of hym but tht he was faulty of thynges which he styll in vertue of his othe denyed / all were it so that they myght thynke therewith that by possybylyte they myght be in that mynde deceyued / yet whyle they coude not thynke nor they coude haue none other mynde / but that he
25 (though it myght by possybylyte be trewe that he sware) yet was forsworne in dede / and in very dede perseuered in periury. Nowe the matter I say standyng in suche case / syth he that wyth so playne apperynge periury / standeth in the denyall of his faute and false defence of hym selfe can not be rekened of hys faute penytent / and vnto
30 penaunce ought none impenytent person to be admytted / I wyll not say that his iudgys dyd wrong. But surely me thynketh I may well say that they shewed hym great fauour in that they receyuyd hym to penaunce without the confessyon of his faute. And I thynke verely it was a fauorable fassyon of abiuracyon / and so straunge that the lyke hath
35 bene very seldome sene yf euer it were sene before. And that dyd they in hope that god shall sende hym more grace in tyme to come / and so I beseche hym to do. For I promyse you for my parte I neuer can conceyue good hope of his amendement / all the whyle that I se that pryde abyde styll in hys harte / that can not suffer hym for shame to confesse his
40 faute.

The .vi. chapter

45 It is quod he peraduenture better thus. For than sholde he sklauder hym selle and the worde of god also / yf he sholde hereafter preche agayne.

Nay mary quod I than shold he rather delyuer hym self fro sklauder

and the worde of god also. For than sholde euery man se the deuyll
caste clene out of hys harte / and hope that he sholde be frome
thensforth a very good man. Where nowe thynkyng hym to perseuer in
a proude periury / we can none other thynke but that he must nedys be
5 very nought styll / though we sholde hereafter here hym preche neuer
so well. And that were a sore sklauder to the worde of god / that men
sholde se hym whom they here preche well / so proude an ypochryte
and therewyth so folyshe to / that for a false hope of hys owne
estymacyon preseruyd / he labouryth as moche as in hym is to make
10 the worlde wene that twenty trewe men were forsworne agaynste hym.
Wherein whyle there is no man so madde to byleue hym / he leseth (yf
he preche in thys plyght) all his hole purpose / and wynneth nothyng
but the contrary / that is double shame of hys proude periury and hys
malycyous mynde / in stede of the prayse that he lokyth and prechyth
15 for.

The .vii. chapter

20 In good fayth quod he I begyn in this matter to be of your mynde. For
the matter beyng so playne & clerely proued / it was & is bothe synne &
foly to stande in the denyenge. But there cometh a thyng in my mynde
though it be somewhat out of oure matter / wherin I wolde be glad to
here what ye thynke. What thyng is that quod I? Mary quod he I haue
25 herde some well lerned men say / if a man were accused of a faute that
were true in dede / yet yf it be secret & can not be proued in an othe put
vnto hym / he may & ought to swere nay / bycause that of secret and
vnknowen thynges no man can be his iudge. For onely god is iudge of
mannes harte. And yf he sholde confesse it where he nedeth not before
30 no competent iudge / that is to wyt his secret faute openly before men
wherof only god is iudge / than sholde he defame hym selfe / and that
were grete synne. For holy scrypture sayth / curam habe de bono
nomine. Take hede of thy good name. Et melior est nomen bonum quam
diuitie multe. Better is a good name then moche rychesse. And it sayth
35 also. Maledictus homo qui negligit famam suam. Acursed is the man
that careth not what men say of hym. And therefore I haue herde some
well lerned men say / that in this case a man may boldly deny the mater
vpon his othe be it neuer so true / so that it be so secret as it be not able
to be proued by wytnesse.

40 Forsoth quod I it is a large & a long mater to speke of periury. But as
for this poynt I holde it in my mynde lytell questyon. For I holde this
ones for a sure & an infallyble conclusyon / that a man may neuer
lawfully be forsworne. Mary trouth it is that a mannes oth receyueth
interpretacyon / & is not alway bounden precysely to thewordes. As yf a
45 iudge wolde swere me generally in a courte to make true answeere to
such thynges as shold be asked of me / & after myn oth gyuen / he
wold aske me certayne questyons of maters nothyng belongyng to hym /
I were not by myne oth bounden to make hym answeere for as moch as

no such thyng was in myne oth intended. And therefore if a prest had herde a mannes confessyon were called before a iudge and sworne for a wytnes / he myght boldly swere he knewe nothyng of the matter. Not for the comen glose that the confessyon was not made to hym as to hym selfe but as to goddys mynyster / but for that the law dyschargyth hym
5 of shewyng any suche thyng / no lesse than yf his othe were gyuen hym in this maner / what know ye of this matter out of confessyon. For ellys yf there were a tyraunt that wolde compelle hym by expresse wordes to swere what he knew by the mannys confessyon / the confessor had in
10 my mynde no remedy but to tell hym playnly / syr I wyll not swere for you nor in such matter make you any answeere to dye therfore / not for any thyng that I know in the man for this matter though I tolde you all his hole confessyon anone / but for the euyll that shold grow by suche a precedent. For yf I sholde now excuse an innocente sweryng truely that I
15 herd no suche thyngys in his confessyon / I shold in some other cause eyther be forsworne / or by my refusyng to swere I shold make that man the more suspect / in that I refuse to swere as moche for hym as I dyd for another. And therefore wyll I not make any answeere in this for the perell ythat may fall in other / & with this answeere or such other must
20 he playnly refuse to swere what payn soeuer he shold endure therfore. And in lyke wyse if any iudge wold gyue an oth to any person to tell hym the trouthe of any cryme / whiche were so secrete as the iudge had neuer herd any thyng therof / but wold for his only plesure know by the mannys othe whyther there were peraduenture any such thyng or not /
25 the partye may deny to swere or to make hym answeere therein. But on the other syde yf he be denounced or detected vnto hym / eyther by commune fame or other informacyon / wyth suche conjectures and lykelyhedys as the lawe gyueth the Iudge authoryte to gyue the partye an othe for the further serche of the matter / there is he playnely
30 bounden vppon payne of eternall dampnacyon wythout conerynge or cautell to shewe and dysclose the playne trouthe / and to haue more respecte to hys soule than to hys shame. For as for those textys whiche ye alledged / be far frome this poynte. For they none other mene / but that a man sholde in hys lyuyng auoyde not onely synne / but also all
35 occasyons whereby men myght haue resonable cause falsly to dyffame hym. And it was neuer ment of the shame that a man taketh of hys owne confessyon for hys synne commytted in dyde. For by that he lesyth not hys good name / but getteth hys good name amonge good folke. And as for of euyll inemys wordys there is no rekenyng. But surely as I saye
40 yf a manne hadde bene all yll as a deuyll / and after repentyng hys synne wold for parte of hys penaunce wyllingly offer hym selfe to the sufferaunce of open shame / there were no good crysten manne that wolde after that lyke the manne the worse / but a greate deale the better. And yf all such open confessyon were syn / there was moche syn
45 vsed among good folke many day in Crystes chyrche / whan it was moche better than it is now.

Lo Acham that hadde commytted sacrylege whereof ys wry ten in Iosue / was exorted by Iosue to confesse his fawte openly / and gyue glory to god that had detected hym by lottes. And so dyd he / and

mekely suffered for his synne as well the shame and wonder of the
worlde / as the payne and bytternes of deth. And therefore I no more
doubte of the thefe / but that he is a gloryous saynt in heuyn / than I
doubte of the thefe that Cryste promysed paradyce hangynge on the
5 crosse. And surely yf mennes olde fawtes were styll theyr infamy after
theyr amendement / than was saynt Peter lytell beholden to saynt
Mathewe and other of his felowes that haue slaundered hym in theyr
gospels / tellynge howe shamfully after all his crakes he forsoke his
mayster & forsware hym bothe. If a good man waxe nought / the better
10 he was the more synne it is and the more shame also. And is it not than
in reason on the other syde yf a noughty man waxe good / the worse he
was the better is for hym & the more worshyp also? Our lorde saythe
hymselfe that for one synner comynge agayne to grace / there is more
ioy in heuyn then vpon almost an hundred good folke that neuer
15 synned. And reken we then that man shamed by the knowlege of his
synne here amonge synfull men / whose humble confessyon & meke
amendement wynneth hym so moche worshyp in heuyn? Trust me
truely whan a man hath done euyll yf he be duly sworne / it is a
worshypfull shame and a ioyfull sorowe to confesse the truthe. And good
20 folke though they abhorre the synne / yet loue they and commende the
man / as one that was nought and is good. And the shame that he
conceyueth in his harte afore the worlde / geteth hym grete honour afore
god / and the shorte glowynge hete in his chekes spedely burneth vp
and wasteth / the neuer wastyng fyre of hell / standyng hym further in
25 stede of grete parte of his purgatory. And therefore to the poynte that we
speke of without longe processe I tell you playnly my mynde / that no
man can be excused from the parell of endlesse dampnacyon / that
wolde vpon boldnes of any doctours opynyon / hyde or couer his faute
by any cautell / after a lawfull othe gyuen hym to tell the playne trouth
30 therin. And who so wyl saye the contrary he must nedes holde playne
agaynst the lawe / and say that no iudge may lawfully gyue an othe to
the party. For whereof sholde the othe serue yf the party myght lefully
forswere hym selfe? And also yf the iudge may not lawfully gyue hym the
othe / than may he refuse to swere / and may not fyrst swere and than
35 say false / whiche euery man must vpon dampnacyon eschewe though
he folyly take an othe / where he lawfully myght refuse it.

Forsothe quod he me thynketh ye take the sure way. Well quod I yf
this be so in one that is sworne where the matter as he thynketh can not
be well proued / howe farre wronge went the man that we spake of / to
40 forswere hym selfe in a matter of prechyng that he wyst well was so
open that it wolde be playnly proued what synne was therin / and what
synne & foly therto was there to stycke styll in his periury / whan he
sawe the matter all redy proued so clerely and by so many / so good / so
honest / & so indyfferent / that he coulde nothyng nowe wyne by the
45 denyng but euyll oppynyon / and almost a dyspayre of his
amendement in all that euer herde hym? In good fayth quod he all thys
is very truth and therefore we shall let hym a lone tyll god sende hym
better mynde.

5 **B**vt now I pray you let me know your mynde concernyng the
burnyng of the newe testament in englysh whiche Tyndall lately
translated / and (as men say) ryght well / which maketh men moche
meruayll of the burnyng.

10 It is quod I to me great meruayll / that any good crysten man hauyng
any drop of wyt in his hede / wold any thyng meruayll or complayne of
the hurnyng of that booke yf he knowe the matter. Whyche who so
callyth the newe testament calleth it by a wronge name / excepte they
wyl call it Tyndals testament or Luthers testament. For so had Tyndall
after Luthers counsayle corrupted and chaunged it frome the good and
15 holsom doctryne of Cryste to the deuylysh heresydes of theyr owne / that
it was clene a contrary thyng.

That were meruayle quod your frende that it sholde be so clene
contrary. For to some that red it it semed very lyke.

20 It is quod I neuer the lesse contrary / and yet the more peryllous. .
For lyke as to a trew syluer grote a false coper grote is neuer the lesse
contrary thoughe it be quycke syluered ouer / but so moche the more
false in howe moche it is counterfeted the more lyke to the trouth / so
was the translacyon so moche the more contrary in how moche it was
craftely deuysed lyke / and so moche the more peryllous in howe moche
it was to folke vnlernyd more harde to be dyssernyd.

25 Why quod your frende what fautys were there in it?

To tell you all / that quod I were in a maner to reherse you all the
hole boke / wherein there were founden and noted wronge & falsly
translated aboue a thousande textys by tale.

I wolde quod he fayne here some one.

30 He that sholde quod I study for that / sholde study where to fynde
water in the see. But I wyl shewe you for ensample two or thre suche as
euery one of the thre is more than thryes thre in one.

That were quod he very straunge excepte ye mene more in weyght.
For one can be but one in number.

35 Surely quod I as weyghty be they as any lyghtly can be. But I mene
that euery one of them is more than thryes thre in number.

That were quod he somewhat lyke a rydell.

40 This rydell quod I wyl sone be red. For he hath mysse translated thre
worries of grete weyght and euery one of them is as I suppose more than
thryse thre tymes repeted and repeted in the boke.

Ah that maye well be quod he / but that was not well done. But pray
you what wordes be they?

The one is quod I this worde prestys.

45 The other the chyrche. The thyerde charyte. For prestys where so euer
he speketh of the prestes of Crystes chyrche he neuer calleth them
prestes but alway senyours / the chyrche he calleth alway the
congregacyon / & charyte he calleth alway lone. Nowe do these names in
our englysshe tonge neyther expresse the thynges that be ment by them

/ and also there appereth (the cyrcumstaunces well consydered) that he had a myscheuous mynde in the chaunge. For fyrst as for prestys & presthed thoughe that of olde they vsed comonly to chose well elderly men to be prestys / & therefore in the greke tonge prestes were called
5 presbiteri / as we myght say elder men / yet neyther were all prestys chosen olde / as appereth by saynt Poule wrytyng to Timotheus / nemo iuuentutem tuam contempnat. Let no man contempne thy youth / nor euery elder man is not a prest. And in our englysshe tonge this worde senyor sygnyfyeth no thyng at all / but is a frenche worde vsed in
10 englysshe more than halfe in mockage / whan one wyll call another my lorde in scorne. And yf he mene to take the latyn worde senior / that worde in the latyn tonge neuer sygnyfyed a prest butonely an elder man. By whiche name of elder men if he wolde call the prestes englysshly / than shold he rather sygnyfy theyr age than theyr offyce. And yet the
15 name doth in englysshe playnly sygnyfy that aldermen of the cytees / and nothyng the prestys of the chyrche. And thus maye we perceyue that rather than he wold call a prest by the name of a prest / he wolde seke a newe worde he neyther wyst nor cared what.

Nowe where he calleth the chyrche alway the congregacyon / what
20 reason had he therin? For euery man well seeth that thought the chyrch be in dede a congregacyon / yet is not euery congregacyon the chyrche / but a congregacyon of crysten people / whiche congregacyon of crysten people hath ben in Englande alway called and knowen by the name of the chyrche / whiche name what good cause or coloure coulde he fynde
25 to tourne in to the name of congregacyon / whiche worde is comen to a company of crysten men or a company of turkes?

Lyke wysdome was there in the chaunge of this worde charyte in to loue. For thoughe charyte be alwaye loue / yet is not ye wote well loue
30 alwaye charyte.

The more pyte by my fayth quod youre frende that euer loue was synne. And yet yt wolde not be so moche so taken yf the worlde were no more suspycyous than they say that good saynt Frauncys was / whiche
35 whan he saw a yong man kys a gyrlle ones in way of good company / kneled downe and helde vp his handys into heuen / hyghly thankynge god that charyte was not yet gone out of this wretched worlde.

He had quod I a good mynde and dyd lyke a good man / that demed all thyng to the best.

So say I to quod he. But howe far be folke fallen from the good mynde now. Men be now adayes waxen so full of mystruste / that some man
40 wolde in fayth wene his wyfe were nought / yf he shold but fynde her in bed with a pore frere.

Forsothe ye be a wanton quod I. But yet in ernest how lyke you the chaunge of these wordys?

Surely quod he very naught. And that it was not well nor wysely done
45 / there wyll I trowe no good wyse man deny. But yet whyther Hychens had in the translacyon therof any malycyous purpose or not / therin wyll I tyll I se further play saynt Frauncys parte / and iudge the man no worse than the matter requyreth.

Fyrst quod I wolde ye that the boke sholde go forth and be red styll in

that fassyon?

Nay in good fayth quod he that wolde I not yf he vse it so very often.

5 With that worde quod I ye hyt the nayle on the hede. For surely yf he
chaunged the comon knowen worde into the better / I wolde well alowe
it. If he chaunged it into as good I wolde suffer it. If somewhat into worse
so he dyd it selde I wolde wynke at it. But now whan he chaungeth the
10 knowen vsuall names of so great thyngys / into so far he worse / and
that not repeteth seldom / but so often and so contynually inculketh /
that almost in the hole boke his lewde chaunge he neuer chaungeth / in
this maner could no man deme other / but that the man ment
myscheuously / scant suche a good sely soule as wolde wene all were
15 well whan he founde his wyfe where ye sayd ryght now. If he called
charyte somtyme by the bare name of loue / I wolde not stycke therat.
But now where as charyte sygnyfyeth in englysh mennys crys / not
euery comon loue / but a good vertuous and well ordred loue / he that
wyll studyously flee fro that name of good loue / & alway speke of loue /
and alway leue out good / I wolde surely say that he meaneth naught.

In good fayth quod he so is it not vnlykely.

20 Than quod I when ye se more ye shall say it is moche more than
lykly.

For now it is to be consydered that at the tyme of this translacyon
Hychens was with luther in Wyttenberge / & set certayne glosys in the
mergent / framed for the settinge forthe of the vngracyous secte. By
saynt Iohan quod your frende yf that be trewe that Hychens were at that
25 tyme wyth Luther / it is a playne token that he wrought somewhat after
his counsayle / and was wyllynge to helpe hys matters forwarde here.
But whyther Luthers matters be so madde as they be made for / that
shall we se hereafter.

30 Very trewe quod I. But as touchynge the confederacye betwene
Luther and hym / is a thyng well knowen and playnly confessed / by
suche as haue ben taken and conuycted here of heresy comynge frome
thens / and some of them sent hyther to sowe that sede aboute here /
and to sende worde thyther fro tyme to tyme howe it sprange.

35 But nowe the cause why he chaunged the name of charyte / and of
the chyrche / and of presthed / is no very grete dyffyculte to erceyue.
For syth Luther and his felowes among other theyr damnable heresy
haue one / that all our saluacyon standeth in faythe alone / and
towarde our saluacyon nothyng force of good workes / therefore it
40 semeth that he laboureth of purpose to mynysshe the reuerent mynde
that men bere to charyte / and therefore he chaungeth that name of
holy vertuous affeccyon / in to the bare name of loue comen to
thevertuous loue that man bereth to god / and to the lewde loue that is
bytwene flecke & his make. And for bycause that Luther vtterly denyeth
45 the very catholyke chyrche in erthe / and saythe that the chyrche of
Cryste is but an vnknown congregacyon of some folke here two and
there thre no man wote where hauyng the ryght fayth / whiche he
calleth onely his owne newe forged fayth / therfore Hychens in the new
testament can not abyde the name of the chyrche / but tourneth it in to
the name of congregacyon / wyllynge that it shold seme to englysshe men

/ eyther that Cryst in the gospell had neuer spoken of the chyrche / or
els that the chyrche were but suche a congregacyon as they myght haue
occasyon to say / that a congregacyon of some suche heretykes were the
chyrche that god spake of.

5 Nowe as touchynge the cause why he chaunged the name of preste in
to senyor / ye must vnderstande that Luther and his adherentys holde
this heresy / that all holy order is nothyng. And that a preste is nothyng
els / but a man chosen amonge the people to preche / and that by that
choyce to that offyce he is preste by and by without any more a do / and
10 no preste agayne whan so euer the people chose an other in his place /
and that a prestys offyce is nothyng but to preche. For as for sayenge
masse and heryng of confessyon and absolucyon therevpon to be gyuen
/ all this he sayth that euery man woman and chylde may do as well as
any preste. Nowe dothe Hychen therefore to set forth this oppynyon
15 withall / after his maysters heresy put awaye the name of prest in his
translacyon / as thoughe presthed were no thyng. Where soo euer the
scrypture speketh of the as prestys that were amonge the Iewes / there
dothe he in hys translacyon call them styll by the name of prestys. But
where so euer the scrypture speketh of the prestys of Crystes chyrche /
20 there dothe he put awaye the name of preste in his translacyon / bycause
he wolde make it seme that the scrypture dyd neuer speke of any
prestes dyfferent from ley men amonge crysten people. And he sayth
playnely in his booke of obedyence that presthed and all holy orders
amonge crysten people be but faynyd inuencyons / and that prestys be
25 nothyng but offycers chosyn to preche / and that all the consecracyon
whereby they be consecrate is nothyng worthe. And for this cause in all
his translacyon where so euer he speketh of theym / the name of preste
whiche to vs in oure owne tonge hath alwaye sygnyfied an enoynted
person and with holy orders consecrated vnto god / he hath chaunged
30 into the name of senyor no worde of our language / but eyther vsed
halfe in mockage whan we speke french in sporte / die vous garde senior
/ or at the furthest nothyng betokenynge but elder. So that it is eth to se
what he ment in the turnynge of these names.

35 In good faythe quod your frende it semeth veryly that he ment not
well.

 Surely quod I ye wolde well say so yf ye sawe all the placys which I
shall cause you to se when ye wyll / and ye shall sone iudge them your
selfe. For it were to longe to rehearse theym all nowe. Nor these haue I not
rehersted you as for the chefe / but for that they came fyrst to mynde.
40 For elles I myght shortely rehearse you many thyngys mo / as farre out of
tewne as these be. For he chaungeth commenly the name of grace into
thys worde fauour / where as euery fauour is not grace in englyshe / for
in some fauour is there lytell grace. Confessyon he translath into
knowledgyng. Penaunce into repentaunce. A contryte harte he
45 chaungeth into a troubled harte. And many mo thyngys lyke / and
many textys vntrewly translated for the mayntenaunce of heresy as I
shall shew you some when we loke in the boke. Whiche thyngys we shall
not nowe reason vppon for they be not worthy to be brought in
questyon. But I tell you thys moche onely for thys cause / that ye may

perceyue that he hath thus vsed hym selfe in his translacyon / to the entent that he wolde set forthe Luthers heresyas and his owne thereby. For fyrste he wolde make the people byleue that we sholde byleue nothyng but playne scrypture / in whyche poynte he techeth a playne
5 pestylent heresy. And then wolde he with his false translacyon make the people wene further / that suche artycles of our faythe as he laboreth to destroy / and whyche well proued by holy scrypture / were in holy scrypture nothyng spoken of / but that the prechers haue all thys .xv. C. yere mysse reported the gospell and englyshed the scrypture
10 wronge / to lede people purposely out of the ryght way.

The .ix. chapter

15 **B**vt to the entente ye shall yet the lesse doubt what good fruyte was intended by this translacyon / and easily iudge your selfe whyther it was well worthy to be burned or not / ye shall vnderstande that there hath ben synce that tyme another boke made in englyshe and imprynted as it sayth in Almayne / a folysshe raylynge boke agaynst the clergy and
20 moche parte made in ryme / but the effecte therof was all agaynst the masse / & the holy sacramentes. In this boke the maker rayleth vpon all them that caused Tyndals translacyon of the newe testament to be burned / sayeng that they burned it bycause that it dystroyed the masse. Wherby ye may se that he rekened the translacyon very good for
25 theyr purpose towarde the destruccyon of the masse.

By saynt mary masse quod your frende that boke is a shrewd glose for the other. For it shewed a cause for whiche it was well worthy to be burned and the maker with it / if it were made to destroy the masse. But who made that seconde boke?

30 Forsothe quod I it appereth not in the boke. For the boke is put forth namelesse / & was in the begynnyng rekened to be made by Tyndall. And whyther it so were or not we be not yet very sure. How be it syth that tyme Tyndall hathe put oute in his owne name another boke entytled Mammona / whiche boke is very Mammona iniquitatis / a very
35 treasury and well spryng of wyckednes. And yet hath he sythens put forth a worse also named the obedyence of a crysten man / a boke able to make a crysten man that wolde byleue it / leue of all good crysten verities and Irse the meryte of his crystendom. In the preface of his fyrst boke called Mammona he sayth that one frere Hyerom made the other
40 boke that we talke of / whiche frere Hyerom gvyng vp his order of (he frere obseruautes came to hym where he was / shewyng hym that he wolde cast of his abyte and leue his relygon / & assay nowe to seme god / and that afterwarde he lefte hym and wente vnto Roy / which is as I thynke ye know another appostyta / by whose counsayle Tyndall sayth
45 that the frere Hyerom made the boke / wherin Tyndall sayth that he myslyketh his rymes / & his ouer moche raylynge. And sayth also that he fereth lest frere Hyerom shall not well proue all that he promyseth in the boke.

Why quod your frende is that all the fere that he fyndeth in hymselfe
& all thefaute that he fyndeth in the frere & his boke?

Ye in good fayth quod I euey whyt.

Than fyndeth he quod your frende no faute in his apostasye?

5 No more quod I than I shewe you.

Nor fyndeth he quod your frende no faute in the the freres boke sayth
the the newe testament of Tyndall was burned bycause it dystroyed the
masse?

Neuer a whyt quod I more than you here.

10 And fereth he quod your frende nothyng els but lest the frere shold
fayle of performyng of somewhat that his boke promyseth?

That is all quod I / & what he promyseth therin in fayth I remember
not. But it semeth what so euer it be / Tyndall wolde it were well
performed.

15 He had quod your frende moch more cause as me thynketh to fere
lest men sholde reken hygh defaute in his translacyon / in that he
nothyng answereth to those wordys of the freers boke / wherin he
sayeth that the new testament that was burnyd dyd dystroy the masse.

20 Ye say quod I very trouth in my mynde / & so wolde he of lyklyhed Yf
hym self had not mente as the freer sayd. But surely for the translacyon
I shall shew you so many textes in suche wyse corrupted / that ye shall
not I suppose greatly doute what he ment in his doying. And therwith all
I shewed your frende a boke with the placys redy notyd / whiche boke I
25 saw so many corrupcyons / & of suche maner sorte / that albe it vpon
some we somewhat resoned in the way / yet at y last hym selfe sayd lo /
& verely confessyd that the boke in such wyse translated was very
nought & nothing metely to be red.

30

The .x. chapter

Bvt yet he sayd that the fautys myght be by some good men
amendyd / & than the boke prynted agayne yf nothyng letted but that.

35 Surely quod I yf we go therto / the fautys be as ye se so many and so
spred through the hole boke / the lyke wise as it were as sone done to
weue a new web of cloth as to sow vp euey hole in a net / so were it
almost as lytell labour and lesse to translate the hole boke all newe / as
to make in his translacyon so many chaunges as nede must be ere it
40 were made good / besydes this that there wold no wyse man I trow take
the brede which he well wyst was of his enemyes hande ones poysoned /
though he sawe hys frende after scrape it neuer so clene.

45

Syr quod your frende I wyll not greatly stycke wyth you in that
 poynt. But surely the thyng that maketh in this matter the clergy most
 5 suspecte / and wherin as it semeth it wold be full hard to excuse them /
 is this / that they not onely dampne Tyndals translacyon (wherin there
 is good cause) but oner that do dampne all other / and as thoughe a
 leye manne were no crysten man / wyll suffer no ley man haue any at
 all. But whan they fynde any in his keyng / they lay heresy to hym
 10 therefore. And thervpon they burne vp the boke and somtyme the good
 man withall / allegynge for the defence of theyr doynge a lawe oftheyr
 owne inakynge a constytucion prouyncyall / whereby they haue
 prohybyted that any man shall haue any vpon payne of heresy. And
 this is a lawe very prouyncyall / for it holdeth but here. For in all other
 15 countrees of crystendome the people haue the scrypture translated in to
 theyr owne tonge / and the clergy there fyndeth no suche faute therin.
 Wherefore eyther our people be worst of all people / or els our clergy is
 worst of all clergyes. But by my trouthe for aught that I can se here or
 perceyue by them that haue bene els where / our ley people be as good
 20 and as honest as be any where. And yf any be otherwyse / the occasyon
 and example cometh of the clergy / amonge whom we se moche more
 vyce than amonge our selfe.

Where as they sholde gyue vs example of vertue and the lyght of
 lernyng / now theyr examples what they be we se. And as for lernyng /
 25 they neyther wyll teche vs but selde / and that shall be but suche
 thynges as pleseth them / some gloses of theyr owne makynge / nor
 suffer vs to lerne by our selfe / but by theyr constytucion pull Crystes
 gospell out of crysten peoples handes. I can not well se why but lest we
 shold se the trouthe. The Iewes be not letted to rede theyr lawe bothe
 30 lerned and lewde. And yet are there in the olde testament thynges for
 vnlerned folke farre more straunge & peryllous than in the newe. And
 why shold thanne our ley men be forboden the gospell / but yf they wyll
 make vs worse than Iewes? Wherein I can in goodfaythe se no scuse they
 can fynde. For the scrypture is to good folke the nouryssher of vertue /
 35 and to them that be nought it is the meane of amendement. And
 therefore whyle the clergy doth withdrawe it vs / yf our soules be in good
 helth / they take away our fode / yf our soules be syke they take away
 the medycyne. And therefore as I sayd the faute is not in the dampnyng
 of Tyndals translacyon / but in that they haue by an expresse lawe
 40 forboden that we sholde haue any at all.

Your wordes quod I be somewhat pugnaunt and sharpe. But surely
 they prycke somewhat more the men than the matter. For where ye
 touche in effecte two thynges / one the constytucion prouyncyall by
 whiche ye thynke the clergy of this realme haue euyll prohybyted all
 45 translacyons of scrypture in to our tonge / another the vyce of the
 clergy in generall / the fyrst point which in dede toucheth our mater / I
 can & wyll with fewe wordes answeere you. But as for the other which
 toucheth the men / as where ye accuse the clergy in theyr persons of

very vycyous lyuyng as men moche worse than ye saye that we be / and
yet as thoughe theyr owne fautes were to fewe / charge theym with ours
to / wherof ye call theym the cause / in this poynte wyll I kepe no scoles
with you / nor entre in to dyspycyons therof / nor gladly medle with the
5 matter. For as I tolde you in the begynnyng syth we talke but of
mennys lernynge / I wyll not medle of mennys lyuyng / nor in that
treatynge of this matter eyther prayse or dysprayse any mannys maner /
excepte som suche as are for theyr heresyas and euyll doctryne caste out
of Crystys chyrche / and through all Crystendome dampned and
10 dyffamed all reddy by theyr owne obstynate malyce. But yet where ye
speke of other countrees / makynge an argument that our clergie is the
worst of all other / I wote well the hole worlde is so wretched that
spyrytuall and temporall euery where all be bad ynough god make vs all
better. But yet for that I haue my selfe sene / and by credyble folke haue
15 herde / lyke as ye say by our temporaltye that we be as good and as
honeste as any where ellys / so dare I boldely say that the spyrytualty of
Englonde / and specyally that parte in whiche ye fynde most faute /
that is to wyt that parte whiche we comenly call the secular clergie / is
in lernynge and honeste lyuyng well able to matche and (sauynge the
20 comparysons be odyouse I wolde say further) farre able to ouer matche
number for number the spyrytualtye of any nacyon crysten. I wote well
there be therein many very lewde and naught. And surely where so euer
there is a multytude / it is not without myracle well possyble to be other
wyse. But nowe yf the bysshops wolde ones take vnto presthed better ley
25 men and fewer (for of vs be they made) all the matter were more than
halfe amended. Now where ye say that ye se more vyce in them than in
our selfe / trouth it is that euery thyng in theym is greater / bycause
they be more bounden to be better. But els the thyngys that they mysdo
/ be the selfsame that we synne in our selfe / which vycys that as ye say
30 we se more in them than in our selfe / the cause is I suppose / for we
loke more vpon theyrs than on our owne / and fare as Esope sayth in a
fable / that euery man caryeth a dowble walet on his sholder / and into
the one that hangeth at his brest he putteth other folkys fautys / and
therein he toteth and poreth often. In the other he layeth vp all his owne
35 & swyngeth it at his backe / whych hym selfe neuer lysteth to loke in /
but other that come after hym caste an eye into it amonge. Wolde god we
were all of the mynde that euery man thought no man so badde as hym
selfe. For that were the way to mende bothe theym and vs. Nowe they
blame vs / and we blame theym / and bothe blame worthy / and eyther
40 parte more reddy to fynd others fautys than to mende theyr owne. For in
reproche of theym we be so studyouse / that neyther good nor badde
passeth vnreproued. If they be famylyer we call theym lyght. If they be
solytary we call theym fantastyke. If they be sadde we call theym
solempne. If they be mery we call theym madde. If they be compynable
45 we call theym vycyouse. If they be holy we call theym ypochrytys. If they
kepe fewe seruauntys we call theym nyggardys. If they kepe many we
call them pompose. If a lewde preste do a lewde dede than we say / lo se
what sample the clergie gyueth vs / as though that preste were the
clergie. But than forgete we to loke what good men be therin / and what

good counsaile they gyue vs / and what good ensample they shewe vs.
But we fare as do the rauens and the caryn crowes that neuer medle
with any quycke flesshe. But where they maye fynde a ded dogge in a
dych / therto they flee & theron they fede a pace. So where we se a
5 good man / and here or se a good thyng / there we take lytell hede. But
whan we se ones an euyll dede / theron we gape / therof we talke and
fede our selfe all day with the fylthy delyte of euyll comunycacyon. Let
a good man preche / a shorte tale shall serue vs therof / and we shall
neither moche regarde his exhortacyon nor his good example. But let a
10 lewde frere be taken with a wenche / we wyll gest & rayle vpon the hole
order all the yere after / and say / lo what sample they gyue vs. And yet
whan we haue sayd / we wyll folow the same / & than say that we
lerned it of them / forgettyng that we lyste not to here and folowe some
other / whose worde and dede wolde gyue vs lyght to do better yf we
15 lysted as well to lerne the better as to folowe the worse.

In dede quod he bycause ye speke of lyght / they say that yf a woman
be fayre than is she yonge / and yf a preste be good than he is olde. But
yet haue I sene a preste gyuen lyght to the people that was but very
yonge.

20 Mary quod I god forbede els / ye maye se that often and ye wyll.

Truely quod he it is pyte that we se suche lyght so selde / beyng this
wretched worlde in suche darkenes as it is. For I neuer sawe it but ones.
Nor as it semed fewe of the people neyther. For in faythe they wondred
as fast theron as though they had neuer sene it before.

25 Howe happed that quod I?

Mary quod he it happed that a yong preste very deuoutly in a
processyon / bare a candell before the crosse for lyenge with a wenche /
and bare it lyght all the longe waye. Wherin the people toke suche
spyrytuall pleasure and inwarde solace / that they laughed a pace. And
30 one mery marchaunt sayd vnto the prestes that folowed hym / Sic
luceat lux vestra coram hominibus. Thus let youre lyght shyne afore the
people.

Forsoth quod I it were pyte but that an euyll prest were punysshed.
But yet it is as moche pyte that we take suche a wretched pleasure in
35 the herynge of theyr synne / and in the syght of theyr shame. Good is it
for theym to loke on theyr fautes / but for vs were it better to loke lesse
to theyrs and more vnto our owne. But surely many of vs haue suche
delyte to here of theyr harme / that it semeth we be glad whan one of
them dothe any suche thyng / as we may haue occasyon to se them
40 punysshed or hadde in derysyon. Whiche wretched appetyte and synfull
affeccyon yet is moche worse & moch more worthy the curse of god /
than the lewde mynd of Cam which fell into the curse of his father Noe /
for that he made a gaude and shewed forthe in skorne the secrete
membres of his father / that of aduenture lay & slepte vncovered /
45 whiche partes Sem and Iaphet the blyssed chyldren reuerently couered /
goyng backward to him bycause they wold not se him. And surely we
haue lytell cause to laughe at theyr lewdnesse. For vndoutly yf the
clergy be nought we must nedes be worse as I herde ones mayster Colet
the good deane of poulys preche. For he sayd that it can be none other /

but that we must euer be one degre vnder theym. For surely as he sayd
it can be no lye that our sauour saythe hym selfe / whiche sa th of
them that they be salt of the erthe. And yf the salte ones apalle / the
worlde must nedys waxe vnsauery. And he saythe that they be the lyght
5 of the worlde. And then yf the lyght sayth he be darked / how darke wyll
than the darkenesse be / that is to wytte all the worlde besyde / wherof
he called the clergie onely the lyght. How be it though there be bothe
among vs and them many very naught / whose fautes be neyther the
fautes of the temporaltie nor of the spyrytualtye / but of those lewde
10 persons them selfe / yet are I trust neyther theyr parte nor ours come to
that poynte / but that there be many good men amonge vs / and as for
among them I wote nere whyther I may say many mo or not / but surely
I thinke many better.

I fere me quod your frende that those many be very few in
15 comparyson of the multytude.

I can not quod I loke into theyr hartes to se who is good and who is
bad / nor haue the leysour yf they were all knowen to go aboute and tell
them by the pollys / to se whiche syde were the more. And therefore in
the meane whyle I trust in god the better parte is the greater. How be it if
20 there were in dede amonge theym very fewe / yet thynke I veryly that for
those few all the worlde fareth the better / and is in theyr vertue and
prayer by goddys grete mercy mayntayned and vpholden / as we fynde
in scrypture placys mo than one / declarynge playnely the profyte that
an hole synfull cytye or somtyme an hole regyon / taketh by the prayer
25 of a few godly men. And no doute is there but lyke wyse as he that is in
the clergie nought / is far the worse bycause he is therein / so he that
therein is good / is for his clergie very far the better / and hys prayer to
god for hym selfe and all other far the more auaylable.

30

The .xii. chapter

And be a preest neuer so nought / all be it that he do some way
moche harme bothe to hym selfe and other / yet this aduauntage take
35 we by the pryuylege and prerogatyue of his presthed besyde the
mynystracyon of the sacramentes vnto vs / the goodnes wherof his
noughtynes can not appayre / that be he neuer so vicyous and therwith
so impenytent and so farre from all purpose of amendement / that his
prayers were afore the face of god reiected and abhorred / yet that
40 sacred sacryfyce & swete oblacyon of Crystes holy body offred vp by his
offyce / can take none empayrynge by the fyfth of his synne / but
hyghely helpeth to the vpholdynge of this wretched worlde from the
vengeaunce of the wrathe of god / and is to god as acceptable and to vs
as auaylable for the thyng it selfe / as though it were offred by a better
45 man / though percase his prayers ioyned therwith neyther moche
profyte other / nor the oblacyon hym selfe / as with whome god is the
more gretely greued / in that beyng so bad he durst presume to touche
it.

Mary quod your frende yf this be thus I meruayle than why ye sayd
ryght nowe that it were good to make fewer prestes / that they myght be
taken onely of the better / and the worse refused. For yf theyr masses be
so good for vs be theym selfe neuer so nought / than semeth it better for
5 vs to make yet mo though they were yet worse / that we myght haue mo
masses.

That reason quod I wyll not holde. For thoughe god of his goodnes
how bad so euer the preste be / well accepteth the oblacyon of Crystes
holy body for other folke / yet is he with that prestes presumpcyon
10 hyghly dyscontented. And we neuer ought to seke our owne commodyte
with our neyghbours harme. And also we sholde of our dutye to god /
rather forbere the profyte that oure selfe myght attayne by a masse /
than to se his maiestye dysreuerenced / by the bolde presumpcyon of
suche an odyous mynyster as he hathe forboden to come aboute hym.
15 Lyke as yf ye sent a present vnto a prynce which were very plesaunt vnto
hym / thoughe the messenger moche myslyked hym so farre that he
had ben forboden the courte / yet yf ye were not ware therof / your gyfte
coulede not lese his thanke / but his malepert boldenes myght
peradventure be punyshed / and well were worthy to be. But on the
20 other syde yf ye knewe the messenger for suche as the prynce wolde not
haue come at hym / ye wolde rather kepe your present at home &
forbere the thanke / than wyttyngly to send it by suche a messenger /
or ellys thoughe your present were very grete / your thanke wolde be
very lytell. And surely in lyke maner wyse who so surely knoweth a
25 preste to be nought / vycyous / and in dedly dyspleasure of god / shold
gete I thynke lytell thanke if he made hym say masse. And therefore well
shall the prelates do / as moch as they may to prouyde / that god shall
rather be more seldome presented with the plesaunt present of the
masse / than more often offended with a dyspleasaunt messenger. And
30 veryly were all the bysshops of my mynde (as I knowe some that be) ye
sholde not of prestys haue the plentye that ye haue. The tyme hath bene
whan there were very fewe in a greate cytye / and in a monastery of fyue
hundred in one howse / scantely wolde there foure monkys be bolde to
be prestys. Than was all holy orders in hyghe honour. Than fynde we
35 that the degree of a deken was a greate thyng and of such dygnyte /
that whan one of them went somtyme in pylgrymage / he wolde not be
aknowen of his order / bycause he wolde not that folke shold do hym
worshyp in the waye. But as for nowe adayes yf he be deacon and preste
to / he shall nede to fere no suche pryde / but rather rebuke and
40 vylany. Whiche though it haue happened by the lacke of vertue among
them / and decay of deuocyon amonge vs / yet hath moche of all this
gere growen by the meane of so great a number of prestys and so
famylyer amonge vs. Whiche thyng nedys must mynysshe on our parte
reuerence and estymacyon towarde them / whiche we neuer haue but in
45 thyngys rare and scarse. Golde wolde we not set by yf it were as comen
as chalke or clay. And whereof is there nowe suche plentye as of
prestys?

In fayth quod he there is more plentye of prestys than of good men
and there be to many but yf they were better chosen.

Doutlesse quod I there wold be more dylygence vused in the choyce /
not of theyr lernynge onely / but moche more specyally of theyr lyuyng.
For without vertue the better they be lerned the worse they be / sauynge
that lernynge is good store agaynste god sende theym grace to mende.
5 Whiche els it wolde be than happely to late to loke for / specyally yf the
prouerbe were trewe that ye spake of / that yf a preste be good than he
is olde. But this is a very surety that it is not well possyble to be without
many very naught of that company / whereof there is suche a mayne
multytude. The tyme was as I say / whan fewe men durst presume to
10 take vpon them the hyghe offyce of a preste / not euen whan they were
chosen and called there vnto. Nowe ronnethe euery rascall and boldely
offreth hym selfe for able. And where the dygnyte passeth all pryncys /
and they that lewde be / desyreth it for worldely wynnynge / yet cometh
that sorte therto with suche a madde mynde / that they reken almost
15 god moche bounden to them that they vouchesaufe to take it. But were
I pope.

By my soule quod he I wolde ye were / and my lady your wyfe
popesse to.

Well quod I than sholde she deuise for nonnes. And as for me
20 touchynge the choyce of prestys / I coulde not well deuise better
prouysions than are by the lawes of the chyrche prouyded all redy / if
they were as well kept as they be well made. But for the number / I wold
surely se suche a way therin / that we sholde not haue suche a rabell /
that euery meane man must haue a preste in his house to wayte vpon
25 his wyfe / whiche no man almost lacketh nowe / to the contempte of
presthed in as vyle offyce as his horse keper.

That is quod he trouthe in dede & in worse to / for they kepe hawkes
& dogges. And yet me semeth surely a more honest seruyce to wayte on
an horse than on a dogge.

30 And yet I suppose quod I yf the lawes ofthe chyrche whiche Luther &
Tyndall wolde haue all broken were all well obserued & kepte / this gere
sholde not be thus / but the nombre of prestes wolde be moche
mynysshed & the remenaunt moche the better. For it is by the lawes of
the chyrche prouyded to the entent no preste sholde vnto the slaunder
35 of presthed be dryuen to lyue in suche lewde maner or worse / there
sholde none be admytted vnto presthed /vntyll he haue a tytell of a
sufficyent yerely lyuyng / eyther of his owne patrymony or otherwyse.
Nor at this day they be none otherwyse accepted.

Why quod he wherfore go there than so many of them a beggyng?

40 Mary quod I for they delude the lawe & them selfe also. For they
neuer haue graunt of a lyuyng that may serue them in syght for that
purpose / but they secretly dyscharge it ere they haue it / or els they
could not gete it. And thus the bysshop is blynded by the syght ofthe
wrytyng / & the prest goth a beggyng for all his graunt of a good
45 lyuyng / and the lawe is deluded / & the order is rebuked by the
prestes beggyng & lewde lyuyng / whiche eyther is fayne to walke at
rouers and lyue vpon trentalles or worse / or ellys to serue in a seculer
mannes house / whiche sholde not nede yf this gappe were stopped. For
ye shold haue prestes fewe ynoughe yf the lawe were truly obserued

that none were made / but he that were without colusyion sure of a
lyuyngge all redy.

Than myght it hap quod he that ye myght haue to fewe to serue the
romes & lyuynges that be prouyded for them / excepte the prelates
5 wolde prouyde that orders were not so comenly gyuen / but alwaye
receyue in to orders as romes & lyuynges fall voyde to bestowe them in
& no faster.

Surely quod I for ought I se sodeynly / that wolde not be moche
amysse. For so shold they nede no suche tytles at all nor sholde nede
10 neyther ronne at rouers / nor lyue in ley mennes houses / by reason
whereof there groweth amonge no lytell corrupcyon in the prestes
maners / by the conuersacyon of ley people & company of women in
theyr houses.

Nay by our lady quod he I wyll not agree with you therein. For I
15 thynke they can not lightly mete with moche worse company than them
selfe / and that they rather corrupte vs than we them.

The .xiii. chapter

20

Bvt I wolde wene it wolde amende moche parte of this mater / yf
they myght haue wyuys of theyr owne.

Mary quod I so sayth Luther and Tyndall also / sauynge that they go
somewhat further forthe. For Tyndall (whose bookys be nothyng ellys in
25 effecte but the worst heresyeyes pycked out of Luthers workes and Luthers
worst wordys translated by Tyndall and put forth in Tyndals owne name)
doth in his frantyke boke of obedyence (wherein he rayleth at large
agaynst all popes / agaynst all kyngys / agaynste all prelates / all
prestys / all relygyous / all the lawes / all the sayntys / agaynst the
30 sacramentys of Crystys chyrche / agaynste all vertuous workys /
agaynst all dyuyne seruyce / and fynally agaynst all thyng in effecte
that good is) in that boke I say Tyndall holdeth that prestys must haue
wyuys. And that he groundeth wysely vpon the wordys of saynt Poule /
where he wryteth to Thimotheus / Oportet episcopum esse
35 irreprehensibilem vnus vxoris virum. That a bysshop must be a man
vnreproueable / and the husband of one wife. And that it must be
consydered whyther he haue well brought vp his chyldren / and well
gouerned his housholde. By these wordys doth Tyndall after Luther
conclude for a playne matter / that prestys must nedys haue wyues /
40 and that saynt Poule wolde there sholde in no wyse be none other
prestys but maryed folke. Is it not now a wonder with what spectacles
Luther & Tyndall haue spyed this thyng now in these wordes of saynt
Poule? In whiche of so many great connyngge fathers and holy sayntys as
haue often redde / and depely consydered those wordys before / there
45 was neuer none that had eyther the wytte or the grace to perceyue that
great specyall commaundement thys .xv. C. yere / tyll nowe that god
hath at last by reuelacyon shewed this hygh secrete mystery to these
two goodly creatures Luther and Tyndall / leste that holy freer sholde

haue lost his maryage of that holy nonne / and Tyndall some good
maryage that I thynke hym towarde. Tyndall nothyng answereth in his
booke to that poynt / but ronnet and rayleth ouer without reason /
and sayth that the scrypture is playne therin for him. And euer he
5 passeth ouer as though he herd it not that all the holy doctours that
euer were in crystes chyrche / sayen that th'e scrypture whiche he
alledgeth to be very playne for hym / is very playne agaynst him as it is
in dede. For saynt Poule in that place / for as moche as yet at that tyme
excepte none but yonge men sholde haue bene prestes / which he
10 thought not comenly conuenient / els could they make no prestes then
/ but suche as eyther were or had ben maryed / therfore the appostell
hauyng in the choyce of prestes a specyall respecte to chastyte / &
wyllynge to go as nere to no wyfe as myght be / dyd ordayne as god had
instructed hym / that who so euer shold be admytted to presthed /
15 shold be the husbnde of one wyfe. Meanyng suche as then had or
before had had no mo but one / & that neuer had had twayne. He
meaned not as madde Luther & Tyndall wolde now make the worlde so
mad to byleue that a prest must nedes haue one / nor that he maye
neuer lacke one / nor that he may haue one after another / nor the
20 onely forbyddyng of twayne at ones / but he ment onely that none
sholde be admytted to presthed but only suche a man as neuer had had
nor sholde haue but onely one. Whiche is the thyng that euer was &
hath ben by those wordes vnderstanden. And not onely where saynt
Poule taught / but also thorowe crystendome / where thother apostles
25 planted the fayth / hath it euer ben so obserued. Whiche is a playne
profe that concernyng the prohybycyon of any mo wyues then one /
and the forbyddyng of bygamy by the weddyng of one wyfe after
another / was the specyall ordenaunce of god / and not of saynt Poule /
whose epystles wherin he wryteth any thyng of this mater / was
30 peraduenture not comen to the handes of other appostles / whan they
toke yet the same order by the same spyryte that taught it hym. For this
is certayne that euer and euery where in crystendome the bygamy of two
wyues eche after other / hath ben a let and impedymnt agaynst the
takyng of holy orders / and hath of longe tyme ben a let / though the
35 one wyfe had ben maryed & buryed before the mannes baptysme. And
nowe these two wyse men agaynst the olde holy fathers and connyng
doctours / & agaynst the contynuall custome of Crystes chyrch so many
hundred yeres bygone / and contynued by the spyryte of god / haue
spyed at last that saynt Poule sayth and meaneth that a prest may mary
40 twyse & haue one wyfe after another and that he must so haue. For by
Tyndall a prest must euer haue one wyfe at the lest. And surely yf we
leue the true vnderstandyng of saynt Poules wordes and byleue Tyndall
/ that it is there ment & commaunded bycause of this worde oportet /
that a prest must haue one / then may Tyndall as for that place tell vs
45 that a prest is at lyberty to haue twenty at ones or twayne & he wyll /
bycause saynt Poule sayth no more but the the bysshop must be the
husband of one wyfe. Whiche wordes Tyndall may tell vs be veryfyed / yf
he be the husband of .x. wyues. For the husbnde of .x. wyues were the
husbnde of one / as the father of .x. chyl dren is the father of one / yf

the wyues were as compatyble as the chyldren be / as it is no doute but
Luther & Tyndall wold sone make them by scrypture / yf theyr owne
interpretacyon may be taken for authoryte / agaynst the perceuyng
that god hath gyuen to all good crysten people this .xv. C. yere. Nowe as
5 I say vpon Tyndals takyng saynt Poule shold meane not that a prest
shold haue but one wyfe (for that but is not in saynt Poules wordes) but
he shold meane that a prest must haue one at the lest / as thoughe
saynt Poule hadde leuer that the prest had twentye saue for
ouerchargynge. Yet it semeth that Tyndall so take it in dede / & that a
10 preste myght haue dyuers wyues at ones / specyally for the great reason
that he setteth therto. For where as saynt Poule / syth there was at that
tyme lytell choyse to make prestys of but maryed men / wyllled therfore
that in the choyse of the byshop there sholde be consyderd hew he had
gouerned his owne housholde / bycause he that had mystetched his
15 wyfe and his chyldren / were vnmete for a great cure / therfore sayth
Tyndall that neuer shold there any prest be made / but suche as hath a
wyfe and chyldren and by the gouernaunce of them shewed / that he is
mete to bere a rule / as though we neuer sawe any man that neuer had
wyfe / gouerne an housholde better than many that haue had wyfe. And
20 yf the hauynge and good rulyng of a wyfe be so specyall a profe of a man
mete to be a preste as Tyndall taketh it / then syth saynt Poule after
Tyndals interpretacyon can not appere to forbede the hauyng of dyuers
together / best were it after Tyndall specyally to make that man a preste
that had many wyues and all at ones / and many chyldren by eche of
25 theym / yf he guyde theym all well. For more profe is it of a wyse
gouernour to rule well fyue wyues / than one / and fourty chyldren then
foure. But now that euery chylde may se the wysdom of Tyndall and his
mayster Luther in the construccion of holy scrypture / wherof he
speketh so moche and vnderstandeth so lytell / I beseche you consyder
30 lyke wordes of saynt Poule in a moche lyke mater. Saynt Poule as he
wryteth to Thimotheus that a byshop muste be the housband of one
wyfe / so wryteth he also to hym / that no wydow sholde be specyally
chosen and taken in to be founden of the goodes of the chyrche that
were yonger then .lx. yere / and that she shold be one that hadde bene
35 the wyfe of one housbande. Nowe set these two textys together of the
byshop and the wydowe / and consyder the wordys of one wyfe in the
one / and one housbande in the other / yf we shall after Tyndall take
the one wordys for the byshop / that saynt Poule sholde meane not that
he haue or haue hadde but one wyfe / but that he muste nedys haue
40 one wyfe / than must we lykewyse take the wordys spoken by saynt
Poule of the wydow / as though saynt Poule sholde meane not a wydowe
whiche had neuer had mo than one housbande / but a wydowe that had
had one housbande / as thoughe saynt Poule hadde nothyng fered nor
forbode / but leste Thimotheus sholde take in suche a wydowe as neuer
45 hadde no housbande at all. Were not this wysely construed? Now yf
Tyndall wyll agre as he nedys must but yf he be madde / that saynt
Poule in gyuyng commaundement that the wydowe sholde be suche as
had had one housbande / ment thereby suche one as neuer had hadde
mo than one / then muste he nedys graunte and hys mayster Luther to

/ that saynt Poule in lyke wyse where he sayd that a byshop muste be a
good man and the housbande of one wyfe / ment that he muste neuer
haue nor haue had any mo than one. And not that he must nedes haue
one / or that he muste haue one at the leste / and myght haue many
5 mo than one / eyther eche after other or all togyder and he lyst. And in
this matter hath Tyndall no shyfte. For syth this worde one in one wyfe
and one husbande / was not by saynt Poule set in for nought. It must
nedes sygnyfye eyther that there sholde be no more but one / or that
there sholde be one at the lest. If he sholde mene that a bysshop sholde
10 haue one wyfe at the lest / and that the wydowe sholde haue had one
husbande at the lest / than wolde he rather that they sholde haue mo
than so fewe / which euery man seeth howe folysshe that construccyon
is. Nowe yf Tyndall wyll say that by this worde one / saynt Poule ment
there sholde be but one wyfe at ones and one husbande at ones / than
15 dyd saynt Poule soo speke of the bysshop as thoughe he had sayd / a
bysshop must be a good man and haue but one wyfe at ones. In whiche
wordes Tyndall had lost his purpose. For so were onely a prohybycyon
for any mo than one / and no commaundement but a bare permyssyon
for one. And yet were yt lytell to purpose / for in saynt Poules dayes a ley
20 man had but one wyfe at ones. And the foly of this construccyon
appereth in the wordes spoken of saynt Poule in the choyse of the
wydowe / wherin Tyndall wolde by this way make saynt Poule to say
thus. Take & chose in / but suche a widow / as hath had but one
husbande at ones / as though the gyse were in his dayes that wyues
25 myght haue two husbandes at ones.

In fayth quod your frende I thynke saynt Poule mente not so. For
then had wyues ben in his tyme lytell better than grasse wydowes be
now. For they be yet as seuerall as a harbours chayre / & neuer take
but one at ones.

30 In fayth quod I the foly of suche folke doth well appere that seke in
the scrypture of god suche newe construccyons agaynst the very sence
that god hath this .xv. C. yere so taught his hole chyrche / that neuer
was there pope so couetous yet that durst dyspence in this poynte /
seyng the consent of Crystes chyrche so full and hole therein / and the
35 mynde of saynt Poule so clere to suffre onely one with vtter exclusyon of
any moo than one / that who so euer wolde construe hym otherwyse /
must nedes fall in to suche open folyes as Tyndall and Luther do. And
thus ye se howe substancyally Tyndall and his mayster construe the
40 scrypture / and with what authoryte they conferme this noble newe
doctryne of theyrs / by whiche they wolde condempne all crystendome
as brekers of the lawe of god / as long as they suffre not any prest take a
wyfe / or rather as longe as they suffre hym to be without a wyfe. For
wyues they muste nedes haue by Tyndals tale whyther they wyll or no.

45 By my trouth quod your frende yf Tyndall and Luther haue none
other holde than that place of saynt Poule / they be lykely to take a fall.
But I thynke they saye more than that.

Surely quod I Tyndall hath another reason in dede. He sayth that
chastyte is an excedyng seldome gyfte / and vnchastyte excedyng
perylous for that estate. And theron he concludeth that prestys must

nedys haue wyues. But now what yf a man wolde deny him though
chastyte be a great gyfte / that yet it is a seldome gyfte. For though it be
rare and seldome in respecte of the remenaunt of the people that haue it
not / yet is it not seldome in dede / for many men haue it. And Cryste
5 sayth that all men take it not / but he sayth not that no manne taketh it
/ nor that fewe men take it. And hyghly he commendeth them that for
hys sake do take it. What inconuenyence is it than to take into his
specyall seruyce men of that sorte that he moste specyally commendeth?
Or yf we graunted to Tyndall that fewe men can lyue chaste / whyche is
10 playne false (for many hath done and doth) but nowe yf we dyd I say
graunte hym that thyng / though he myght peraduenture therevppon
conclude / that there shold not be so many prestys made & bounden to
chastyte as could not lyue chaste / yet coulde he not conclude as he
nowe concludeth / that no preste sholde be suffred to lyue chaste / but
15 that euery preste muste nedys haue a wyfe. For this is his argument.
Fewe men can lyue chaste / ergo euery prest must take a wyfe. If we
sholde impugne the fourme of this argument / Tyndall wold rayle and
say we medle with sophystrye / and wyse men wolde say we were Idely
occupied to laboure to shewe that foly that so euydently sheweth it selfe.
20 And therefore we shall lette hys wyse argument alone / syth it suffyseth
vs that euery man that any wyt hath / may well se that vpon his
vnresonable reason / one of two thynges must nedys folow / eyther that
Cryste in commendyng perpetuall chastyte / dyd commende a thyng
not commendable / or elles yf euery prest must nedys haue a wyfe /
25 than were it not lawfull to make a preste of the sorte that is of goddys
owne mouth commended.

Surely quod your frende me thynke they go ferre therin to say that
prestys muste nedys haue wyues. But me thynke that this they myght
well saye and I to / that it is not well done to bynde them with a lawe /
30 that they shall haue none / but it may be well done to suffer no them
haue wyues that wolde as they haue in wales. And I here say that in
Almayne they fynde great ease therin. For lyke as here the good wyfe
kepeth her housband from her maydys / so there the persons wyfe
kepeth her housband from all the wyues in the paryshe.

35 As for walys quod I ye be wronge enformed / for wyues haue they
not. But trouth it is that incontynence is there in some place lytell loked
vnto / wherof moch harme groweth in the countrye. And as for Almayne
such parte therof as that is vsed in / whiche is onely where Luthers
secte is receyued / who so consyder well what commodyte hath comen
40 to them by such vngodly wayes / I thynke shall haue no great fantasy to
folow theym.

Well quod he let Wales and Almaygne go / yet prestes had wyues of
olde when they were better than they be nowe. And yet haue in grece
where they be better than they be here.

45 As for the prestes of grece I wyll not dyspraye them quod I / for I
knowe them not. But somewhat was not well there / that god hath
suffred all that empyre to fall in to hethen mennes handes. And yet be
they there not so lose as ye reken them. For thoughe a wedded man
taken there in to the clergye be not nor can not be put from his wyfe /

but is there suffred to mynystre in the offyce of a preste
notwithstandynge his maryage / yet yf he be vnmaryed at the tyme that
he taketh presthed / he than professeth perpetuall contynence / and
neuer maryeth after / as I haue lerned by suche as haue comen from
5 thense.

Nowe where ye speke of olde tyme / surely ye shall vnderstande that
there maryed not so many as ye wold happely wene.

Peraduenture quod he no more there wolde nowe. Some of them
wolde haue no wyues though that lawe were set at large. For as a good
10 felowe sayd ones to his frendes that meruayled why he maryed not / and
thought hym vnnaturall yf he cared not for the company of a woman /
he sayd vnto them that he had leuer lese a fynger than lacke a woman.
But he had leuer lacke the hole hande than haue a wyfe. So yf the
prestes were at lybertye / some of the worst sorte wolde yet I wene
15 rather haue women than wyues. But other that wolde be more honest /
wolde I suppose be maryed. And yet wolde some peraduenture lyue in
perpetuall contynence as fewe do nowe.

God forbede quod I.

Well quod he they that wolde / were not restrayned. But yf I shall be
20 bolde to saye what I thynke / it semeth me surely a very harde thyng
that the chyrche sholde make a lawe to bynde a man to chastyte magry
his tethe / to whiche god wolde neuer bynde any man.

The chyrche quod I byndeth no man to chastyte.

That is trouthe quod he excepte a prest be a man.

25 Ye mysse take the matter quod I as I shall shewe you after.

There wolde quod he many harmes be auoyded / and moche good
wolde there growe thereof / yf they myght haue wyues that wolde.

What good or harme quod I wold come therof / the profe wolde shewe
/ wherin we myght be the more bolde to trust well / were it not hat we
30 nowe fynde it nought in Saxony where we newly se it assayed. And as for
that ye spake of olde tyme whan the prestes were better / surely as I
wolde yf ye had not stopped me haue sayd further before. We perceyue
well by wryters of olde tyme / that of those good menne very fewe were
maryed. And none in effecte after that offyce taken. And many suche as
35 hadde wyues before / wyllyngely with the assente of theyr wyues forbare
the carnall vse of them. And syth the good or harme growynge of the
matter best appereth by the profe / besyde the experyence that we haue
now in Saxony where this chaunge is begonne wyth an infynyte hepe of
heresydes / it is ethe to se that the good fathers whiche gaue theyr
40 aduyce to the makynge of that lawe / with the thyng almost receyuyd in
generall custome before / and with the consente of all crystendome in
effecte that ratefyed and receyued it after / had a good profe therof / and
founde thys the best way before the lawe made / and therefore I wyll not
dyspute with you there vpon. But for as moche as ye laye
45 vnreasonablenesse to theyr charge that made it / bycause they bynde
men as ye reken agaynst theyr wyll to chastyte / somewhat were it that
ye say / yf the chyrche compelled any man to be preste. But nowe whan
euery man is at his lyberte not to be preste but at his pleasure / how
can any man say that the chyrche layeth a bonde of chastyte in any

mannys necke agaynst his wyll? The chyrche dothe in effecte no further
but prouyde/ that where as men wyll of theyr owne myndys some lyue
chast and some wyll not / the mynysters of the sacrament shall be
taken of that sorte onely / that wyll be contente to professe chastyte.
5 Wherewith who so fyndeth faute / blameth not onely the clergye but also
the temporalyte / whiche be and haue bene all thys whyle parteners in
the authoryte of the making & conseruacyon of this law. Whereof there
can no man blame the prouysyon / but yf he be eyther in that heresyte
that he thynke that the clenness of chastyte is no more pleasaunte to
10 god than the carnall vse of matrymony / or els that he thynke it euyll
done to prouyde that the prestys whiche shall serue god in his holy
sacramentes / sholde be taken of the purest and moost plesaunt sorte.
Wherevnto the veryPaynims had suche respecte / that theyr presty
durste not presume to the sacryfyce of theyr mammettes but after
15 certayne tyme of corporall clenness / kepte from theyr wuyys / and
some of theym bounden to perpetuall chastyte / wyth the losse of that
parte of theyr body wherewith they myght do the contrary.

Ye mary quod he that was a good sure waye.

It was quod I sure in dede / but not so good as this. For therein
20 wolde be loste the meryte that good men haue in resystynge of the deuyll
/ and the refraynyng of theyr fleshly mocyon. But as I wolde and was
aboute to saye / in the olde lawe gyuen to Moyses / the prestys of the
temple for the tyme of theyr mynystracion forbare theyr owne house and
the company of theyr wuyys. And therefore they serued the temple by
25 course / as it well appereth in the begynnyng of saynt Lukys gospell. So
that chastyte was thought both to god and man a thyng mete and
conuenient for prestes / among them whiche most magnifyed carnall
generacyon. And than how moche more specyally now to the prestys of
30 Cryste / whiche was bothe borne of a vyrgyn / and lyued and dyed a
vyrgyn hym selfe / & exhorted all his to the same? whose counsayll in
that poynt syth some be content to folowe and some to lyue otherwyse /
what way were I say more metely than to take in to Crystes temple to
serue aboute the sacrament / onely suche as be of that sorte that are
contente and mynded to lyue after the clenness of Crystes holy
35 counsayle.

Trouth yf they so wolde quod he.

They say quod I that they wyll whan they come therto beyng all redy
warned of the lawe. And to the entent that fewer sholde breke it /
therefore wolde I as I sayd haue the better respecte taken to the
40 chosynge. And syth it is harde to haue so many so good / I wolde haue
the fewer made. But to say that the chyrche byndeth men to chastyte
agaynst theyr wyll / bycause they take not a prest but yf he fyrst
professed chastyte / is as farre agaynst reason / as yf he wolde saye
that they bynde men to chastyte agaynst theyr wyll / bycause they wyll
45 make no monkes but suche as wyll promyse to lyue chaste. Whiche
promyse euery man well woteth they make of theyr owne myndes /
though the chyrche wyll neyther make monkes nor prestes but suche as
so wyll. And as touchynge whyther the order of the chyrch therin be
better than the contrary / good men and wyse men bothe had the profe

of bothe before the lawe made / and it well allowed thorowe crystendome
longe tyme synce. Whiche ere I wold assent to chaunge / I wold se a
better authour therof / than such an heretyke as Luther / and Tyndall /
and a better sample than the sedycyous and scysmatyke prestes of
5 Saxony.

Surely quod he ye haue well declared the chyrche touchynge that
lawe. But what so euer the cause be / by my trouthe nought they be
/and as farre worse than we / as they be bounden to be better / and yet
be we the worse for them.

10 There be quod I many ryght good amonge them and els were it
wronge with vs. And many be there bad also / and some the worse for
vs. But whyther parte is the better or the worse / wyll I not dyspute. But
this wyll I say that it were best that they thought them selfe the worse /
and we our selfe / and euery man hym selfe worste.

15 I wolde that we were all in case with our owne fautes / as my father
sayth that we be with our wyues. For whan he hereth folke blame wyues
and say that there be so many of theym shrewes / he sayth that they
dyffame them falsely. For he sayth playnly that there is but one shrewde
wyfe in the worlde / but he sayth in dede that euery man weneth he
20 hath her / & that the one is his owne. So wolde I fayne that euery man
wolde wene there were but one man nought in all the hole worlde / and
that the one were hym selfe. And that he wolde therupon go aboute to
mende that one / and thus wolde all waxe well. Whiche thyng we
sholde shortely do / yf we wolde ones tourne our walet that I tolde you of
25 / & the bagge with other folkes fautes cast at our backe / and cast the
bagge that bereth our owne fautes cast it ones before vs at our brest. It
wolde be a goodly brooche for vs to loke on our owne fautes another
whyle. And I dare boldely say / both they & we shold moche the better
amende / yf we were so redy eche to praye for other / as we be redy to
30 seke eche others reproche and rebuke.

In fayth quod he I trowe that be trewe and pray god we so may.

The .xiii. chapter

35

Bvt now to the matter we were in hande with. Ye sayd ye wold make
answere for the law / wherby the clergy of this realme hath forboden all
the peple to haue any scrypture translated into our tonge / which is as I
sayd in my mynd an euyll made lawe. Mary quod I that is sone
40 answered. Lay the charge to them that made it.

Mary quod he so I do. For who made the constytucion but they.
Surely quod I no body els / nor they neyther. No quod he? what euery
man knoweth it.

45 Verely quod I many men talke of it / but no man knoweth it. For
there is none suche in dede. There is of trouthe a constytucion that
speketh of suche matter / but no thyng of suche fassyon. For ye shall
vnderstande that the great archheretyke Wyclyffe / where as the hole
byble was longe before his dayes by vertuous & well lerned men

translated into the englysh tonge / & by good and godly people with
deuocyon & sobernes well & reuerently red / toke vpon him of a
malycious purpose to translate it of new. In which translacyon he
purposely corrupted the holy texte / malycyously plantyng therin suche
5 wordys / as myght in the reders erys serue to the profe of suche
heresyas as he went about to sow / which he not onely set forth with his
own translacyon of the byble / but also with certayne prologes & glosys
which he made thervpon. And these thynges he so handeled (which was
no great maystrye) with reasons probable & lykely to ley people &
10 vnlearned / that he corrupted in his tyme many folke in this realme. And
by other yll bokes whiche he made in laten beyng after borne into
Boheme & there taught by Iohan Husse & other / he was the occasyon
of the vtter subuersyon of the hole realme bothe in fayth & good lyuyng
/ with the losse also of many a thousand lyues. And as he began agayn
15 the olde heresyas of those aunycient heretykes whom & whos errours the
chyrch of cryst had condempned & subdued many dyuers agys afore /
so doth luther agayn begyn to set vp his. For all that he hathe in effecte
/ he hathe of hym. Sauynge that leste he sholde seme to say nothyng of
his owne / he added some thynges of hym selfe of such maner sort / as
20 there was neuer heretyke before his dayes / neyther so wycked that he
wold for synne / nor so folysshe that he durste for shame wryte / say /
or I trowe thynke the lyke.

I longe quod he to here some of them / for the man is taken for wyser
than to mene so madly as men bere hym in hande.

25 Well quod I that shall we se sone whan we come therto. But for our
present purpose / after that it was perceyued what harme the people
toke by the translacyon / prologes and gloses of Wyclyffe / and also of
some other that after hym holpe to set forth his secte / than for that
cause / and for as moche as it is daungerous to translate the texte of
30 scripture out of one tonge into another as holy saynt Hyerom testyfyeth
/ for as moche as in translacyon it is harde always to kepe the same
sentence hole / it was I say for these causes at a counsayle holden at
Oxenforde / prouyded vppon grete payne that no man sholde from thens
forth translate in to the englysshe tonge or any other langage of his owne
35 authoryte / by way of boke / lybell / or treatyce / nor no man openly or
secretly any such boke / lybell / or treatyce rede newly made in the
tyme of the sayd Iohan Wyclyffe or synce / or that sholde be made any
tyme after / tyll the same translacyon were by the dyocesane / or yf
nede sholde requyre by a prouyncyall counsayle approued. And this is a
40 lawe that so many so longe haue spoken of / and so fewe haue in all this
whyle rought to seke whyther they say trouth or no. For I trowe that in
this lawe ye se nothyng vnreasonable. For it neyther forbedeth the
translacyons to be red that were all redy well done of olde before
Wyclyffys dayes / nor dampneth his bycause it was newe / but bycause
45 it was nought / nor prohybyteth newe to be made / but prouydeth that
they shall not be redde yf they be mysse made / tyll they be by good
examynacyon amended / excepte they be suche translacyons as wyclyffe
made & Tyndall / that the malycious mynde of the translatoire had in
suche wyse handled it as it were labour lost to go aboute to mende

them.

I longe by my trowth quod he and euen syt on thornes / tyll I se that
constytucion. For not my selfe onely but euery man els hath euer taken
it farre otherwyse / that euer I haue herde spoken thereof tyll nowe. But
5 surely I wyll se it my selfe ere I slepe.

Ye shall be soner eased quod I. For I can not suffre to se you syt so
longe on thornes. And therefore ye shall se it by and by.

And therwith I fet hym forth the constytucyons prouyncyall with
lynwood thervpon / & tourned hym to the place in the tytle de magistris.
10 Whiche whan hym selfe had redde / he sayd he meruayled moche how it
happened that in so playne a matter men be so farre abused / to reporte
it so farre wronge.

This groweth quod I partely by malyce / partely by slouthe &
neglygence / in that folke be more glad to byleue and tell forth a thyng
15 that maye sowne to the dyspraysse of the clergye / than to serche and be
sure whyther they say trewe or no.

The .xv. chapter

20

I suppose quod he that this opynyon is rather growen another waye
/ that is to wytte by the reason that the clergye though the lawe serue
them not therefore / do yet in dede take all translacyons out of euery ley
mannys hande. And somtyme with those that be burned or conuoycted of
25 heresyse / they burne the englyshe byble without respecte / be the
translacyon olde or new / bad or good.

Forsoth quod I yf this were so / than were it in my mynd not well
done. But I belyue ye mystake it. How be it what ye haue sene I can not
say. But my selfe haue sene & can shew you bybles fayre & old wryten in
30 englyshe / whych haue ben knowen & sene by the byshop of the
dyocyse / & left in ley mennys handys & womens to suche as he knew
for good & catholyke folke / that vsed it with deuocyon & sobernesse.
But of trowth all suche as are founden in the handys of heretykes / they
vse to take away. But they do cause none to be burned as farre as euer I
35 coulde wytte / but onely suche as be founden fautye. Whereof many be
set forth wyth euyl prologys or glosys malycyously made by wycliffe and
other heretykes. For no good man wolde I wene be so mad to burne vp
the byble / wherein they founde no faute / nor any lawe that letted it to
be loked on and red.

40 Mary quod he but I haue herde good men say that euen here in
London not many yerys ago / in the dayes of the byshop that laste dyed
/ they burned vp as fayre bybles in englyshe as any man hath lyghtly
sene / and therto as fautlesse for aught that any man coulde fynde / as
any byble is in laten. And yet besydys this they burned vp the dede body
45 of the man hym selfe / whom them selfe had hanged in the byshops
pryson before / makyng as though the man had hanged hym selfe And
of the burnyng of his body had they no colour / but onely bycause they
founde englyshe bybles in his house. Wherin they neuer founde other

faute / but bycause they were englyshe.

Who tolde you this tale quod I?

Forsothe dyuers honest men quod he that saw it / and specyally one
that saw the man hangyng in the byshops pryson ere he was cut downe.
5 And he tolde me that it was well and clerely proued / that the
chaunceler and his kepers had kylled the man fyrst / and than hanged
hym after. And that they hadde layde heresy to hym onely for hatred
that he sued a premunyre agaynst dyuers persons / for a suyte taken
aboute a mortuary in the audyence of the archebyssshoppe of
10 Canterbury. And than they proued the heresy by no thyng ellys / but
by the possessyon of a good englysshe byble. And vppon heresy so
proued agaynste hym whome they had hanged / lest he sholde saye for
hym selfe / they burned vp the holy scrypture of god / and the body of a
good man therewith. For I haue herde hym called a very honest person
15 and of a good substaunce.

Forsothe quod I of good substaunce he was I thynke well worth a
thousande markes. And of his worldely conuersacyon amonge the people
I haue herde none harme. But surely as touchyng his faythe towarde
Cryste / me thynketh I maye be bolde to saye that he was not honest.
20 And as touchyng trouthe in wordes / he that hath tolde you this tale
was not so honest in dede as me thynketh ye take hym for.

Why quod he do ye knowe the matter well?

Forsothe quod I soo well I knowe it frome toppe to too / that I
suppose there be not very many men that knoweth it moche better. For I
25 haue not onely ben dyuers tymes presente my selfe at certayne
examynacyons thereof / but haue also dyuers and many tymes sunderly
talked with almooste all suche excepte the ded man hym selfe / as
moost knewe of the matter. Whiche matter was many tymes in sundry
places examyned. But specyally at Baynardes castell one daye was it
30 examyned at grete length / and by a longe tyme euery man beyng sente
for before / and redy there all that coulede be founde that any thyng
coulede tell or that hadde sayd they coulede any thyng tell in the matter.
And this examynacyon was had before dyuers grete lordes spyrytuall
and temporall and other of the kynges honourable counsaile / sente
35 thyther by his hyghnesse for the nonys of his blessyd zeale and pryncely
desyre borne to the serchyng of the trouthe. Whervnto his gracyous
mynde was moche enclyned / and had ben by a ryght honourable man
enformed / that there was one had shewed a frende of his that he coulede
go take hym by the sleue that kylled Hunne / for Rycharde Hunne was
40 his name whome ye speke of. I was also my selfe present at the
judgement gyuen in Poules / whervppon his bokes and his body were
burned. And by all these thynges I very well knowe / that he of whome
ye haue herde this matter / hath tolde you tales farre from the trouthe.

In good faythe quod your frende / he tolde me one thyng that ye
45 speke of now / that there was one that sayd he cowlede goo take hym by
the sleue that kylled Rycharde Hunne / and that he dyd soo in dede
before the lordes / and came euen there to the chauncellour and sayd /
my lordes this is he. But whan he was asked howe he knewe it / he
confessed that it was by suche an vnlawfull craft as was not taken for a



profe. For it was they say by necromancye. And the byshops that were there wolde haue had that man burned to for wychehafte. And tolde me also that there was another whyche hadde sene many men that had hanged theym selfe / a manne that hadde bene longe in offyce vnder
5 dyuers of the kyngys almoyners / to whom the goodys of suche men as kyll theym selfe be appoynted by the lawe / & his offyce / as deodandes to be gyuen in almous. This man as I haue herde say / shewed vnto the lordys by suche experyence as he hadde good and playne tokens / by whyche they perceyued well that Hunne dyd neuer hange hym selfe. I
10 haue herde also that a spyrytuall man and one that loued well the chaunceller / and was a laborer for that parte / yet coude not deny before all the lordys but that he hadde tolde a temporall man and a frende of his / that Hunne hadde neuer bene accused of heresy yf he had neuer sued the premunyre. And by saynt mary that was a shreewd
15 worde. Howe be yt in dede it went not so nere the matter as the other two thyngys dyd.

Yes in good fayth quod I all thre lyke nere whan they were all herd. But of trouth many other thyngys were there layd / that vpon the herynge semed moche more suspicyouse than these. Whyche yet whan
20 they were answered / alway loste more than halfe theyr strength. But as for these thre matters I promyse you proued very tryfles / and such as yf ye had herde them ye wolde haue laughed at them seuen yere after.

I beseche you quod he lette me here howe they proued.

I am lothe quod I to lette you / and lese your tyme in suche tryfles. Howe be it syth ye longe so sore therefore / rather than ye sholde lese
25 youre chylde for theym / ye shall haue theym all thre as shortly as I can. Fyrste ye muste vnderstande that bycause the commynge togyther of the lordys frome Grenewyche to Baynardys castell for the tryenge out of the matter shold not be frustrate / there was such dylygence done before /
30 that euery man that aughte hadde sayd therein / was redy there agaynste theyr commynge. Where they beganne with the fyrste poynte that ye spake of / as the specyall mocyon wherewpon the kyngys hyghnesse hadde sent theym thyther. Wherfore after the rehersall made of the cause of theyr commynge / the greatest temporall lorde there
35 present sayd vnto a certayne seruaunt of his owne standynge there besyde / syr ye tolde me that one shewed you that he coude go take hym by the sleue that kyled Hunne. Haue ye brought hym hyther?

Syr quod he yf it lyke your lordshyp thys man it was that tolde me so / poyntyng to one that he hadde caused to come thyther. Than my
40 lorde asked that manne howe saye ye syr can ye do as ye sayd ye coude?

Forsothe my lorde quod he and it lyke youre lordeshyppe I sayd not soo moche / this gentyll man dydde somewhat mysse take me. But in dede I tolde hym that I had a neyghboure that tolde me that he coude
45 do it.

Where is that neyghboure quod my lorde?

This man syr quod he bryngynge forthe one whiche had also ben warned to be there. Than was he asked whyther he had sayd that he coude do it.

Naye forsothe quod he my lorde / I sayd not that I coulede do it my selfe / but I sayde that one tolde me that he coulede do it.

Well quod my lorde who tolde you so?

Forsothe my lorde quod he / my neyghboure here.

5 Than was that man asked. Syr knowe you one that can tell who kyllled Rycharde Hunne?

Forsothe quod he and it lyke your lordshyppe I sayd not that I knewe one surely that coulede tell who hadde kyllled hym / but I sayd in dede that I knowe one whiche I thought veryly coulede tell who kyllled hym.

10 Well quod the lordes at the laste yet with moche worke we come to somewhat. But whereby thynke you that he can tell?

Naye forsothe my lorde quod he it is a woman / I wolde she were here with your lordshyppes nowe.

15 Well quod my lorde woman or man all is one / she shall be hadde where so euer she be.

By my faythe my lordes quod he and she were with you she wolde tell you wonders. For by god I haue wyst her tell many meruaylous thynges ere nowe.

Why quod the lordes what haue you herde her tolde?

20 Forsothe my lordes quod he yf a thyng hadde ben stolen / she wolde haue tolde who hadde it. And therefore I thynke she coulede as well tell who kyllled Hunne as who stale an horse.

Surely sayd the lordes so thynke all we to I trowe. But howe coulede she tell it / by the deuyll?

25 Naye by my trouthe I trowe quod he / for I coulede neuer se her vse any worse way than lokynge in ones hande.

Therewith the lordes laughed and asked what is she?

30 Forsothe my lordes quod he an Egypcyan / and she was lodged here at Lambeth / but she is gone ouer see nowe. Howe be it I trowe she be not in her owne countree yet / for they say it is a grete way hense / and she wente ouer lytell more than a moneth ago.

35 Nowe forsothe quod your frende this processe came to a wyse purpose / here was a grete post well thwyted to a puddynge prycke. But I praye you to what poynte came the seconde matter of hym that hadde ben in offyce vnder so many of the kynges almoygners / that he knewe by hys owne experyence / and proued that Rycharde Hunne had not hanged hym selfe?

40 Forsothe quod I he was called in nexte. And thanne was he asked whereby he knewe yt. But wolde god ye had sene his countenaunce. The man hadde of lykelyhed sayd somewhat to farre and was moche amased / and loked as though his eyen wolde haue fallen out of his hed into the lordys lappys. But to the questyon he answered and sayd / that he sawe that very well / for he sawe hym bothe ere he was taken downe and after.

45 What than quod the lordys so dyd there many mo / whyche yet vppon the syght coulede not tell that.

No my lordys quod he but I haue another insyght in suche thyngys than other men haue.

What insyght quod they?

Forsothe quod he it is not vnknowen that I haue occupied a great whyle vnder dyuers of the kyngys almoygners / and haue sene and considered many that haue hanged them selfe / and therby yf I se one hange I can tell anone whyther he hanged hym selfe or not.

5 By what token can you tell quod the lordys.

Forsothe quod he I canne not tell the tokens / but I perceyue it well ynoughe by myne owne syght.

10 But whan they herde hym speke of hys owne syght / and therewith sawe what syght he had / lokynge as though his eyen wolde haue fallen in theyr lappys / there coulde fewe forbere laughynge / and sayd we se well surely that ye haue a syghte by youre selfe. And than sayd one lorde meryly / peraduenture as some man is so connyng by experyence of iewels that he can perceyue by hys owne eye whyther a stone be ryght or counterfete thoughe he canne not well make another man to perceyue
15 the tokens / so thys good felowe though he can not tell vs the markes / yet he hath such an experyence in hangyng / that hym selfe perceyueth vppon the syghte / whyther the man hanged hym selfe or no.

20 Ye forsothe my lorde quod he euen as your lordeshyp sayth. For I knowe it well ynough my selfe / I haue sene so many by reason of myne offyce.

Why quod another lorde meryly your offyce hathe no more experyence in hangynge than hath an hange man. And yet he can not tell.

25 Naye syr quod he and it lyke your lordshyp he medleth not with them that hange them selfe as I do.

Well quod one of the lordys howe many of them haue ye medled with in your dayes?

30 With many my lorde quod he / for I haue bene offyicer vnder two almoygners and therefore I haue sene many.

Howe many quod one of the lordys?

I can not tell quod he howe many / but I wote well I haue sene many.

Haue ye sene quod one an hundred?

Nay quod he not an hundred.

35 Haue ye sene foure score and ten? thereat a lytell he studied as one standynge in a doute and that were lothe to lye and at last he sayd / that he thought nay not fully foure score and ten. Than was he asked whyther he hathe sene twenty. And thereto without any styckynge he answered nay not twenty. Thereat the lordys laughed well to se that he was so sure that he hadde not sene twenty / and was in doute whyther
40 he hadde sene foure score and ten. Than was he asked whythere he hadde sene .xv. And thereto he sayd shortely naye / And in lykewyse of ten. At laste they came to fyue / and fro fyue to foure. And there he beganne to study agayne. Thanne came they to thre / and than for shame he was fayne to saye that he had sene so many and mo to. But
45 whan he was asked / whan / whome / and in what place / necessaryte draue hym at laste vnto the trouthe / whereby it appered that he neuer had sene but one in all his lyfe. And that was an Irysshe felowe called croke shanke whome he had sene hangynge in an olde barne. And whan all his connyng was come to this / he was bydde walke lyke hym selfe.

And one sayd vnto hym that bycause he was not yet connyng ynoughe
in the crafte of hangynge / it was pyte that he had no more experyence
therof by one mo.

5 Forsothe quod your frende / this was a madde felowe. Came the
thyrd tale to as wyse a poynt?

Ye shall here quod I. The temporall man that had reported it vpon the
mouth of the spyrytuall man / was a good worshypfull man / and for
his trouthe and worshyppe was in grete credyte. And surely the
spyrytuall man was a man of worshyppe also / and well knowen bothe
10 for connyng and vertuous. And therefore the lordes moche meruaylled
knowyng them bothe for suche as they were / that they sholde be lyke to
fynde / eyther the one or the other / eyther make an vntrue reporte / or
vntruely denye the trouthe. And fyrst the temporall man before the
lordes in the herynge of the spyrytuall persone standynge by sayd.

15 My lordes all / as helpe me god and halydome mayster doctoure here
sayd vnto me his owne mouthe / that yf Hunne had not sued the
premunyre he sholde neuer haue ben accused of heresy.

Howe saye you mayster doctoure quod the lordes / was that trewe /
or ellys why sayd you so? .

20 Surely my lordes quod he / I sayd not all thyng so / but mary thys I
sayd in dede / that yf Hunne hadde not ben accused of heresy / he
wolde neuer haue sued the premunyre.

Lo my lordes quod the other I am gladde ye fynde me a true man.
Wyll ye commaunde me any more seruyce?

25 Naye by my trouthe quod one of the lordes not in this matter by my
wyll / ye maye go whan ye wyll. For I haue espyed good man / soo the
wordes be all one it maketh no matter to you whiche waye they stande /
but all is one to you a horse myll and a myll horse / drynke ere ye goo
and goo ere ye drynke.

30 Naye my lordes quod he I wyll not drynke god yelde you. And
therewith he made curtesye and wente hys waye / leuyng some of the
lordes laughynge to se the good playne olde honest manne / howe that
as contrary as theyr two tales were / yet whan he herde theym bothe
agayne / he marked no dyfference bytwene them / but toke them bothe
35 for one / bycause the wordes were one.

By my trouthe quod youre frende these thre thynges came meryly to
passe / and I wolde not for a good thyng but I had herde theym. For
here may a man se that mysse vnderstandynge maketh mysse
reportynge. And a tale that fleeth thorowe many mouthes / catcheth
40 many newe fethers / whyche whan they be pulled away agayne / leue
hym as pyllled as a cote and somtyme as bare as a byrdys ars. But I
thynke veryly for all thys there was great euydence gyuen agaynst the
chaunceler / for he was at length endyted of Hunnys deth / and was a
greate whyle in pryson / and in conclusyon neuer durste abyde the
45 tryall of .xii. men for his acquytale / but was fayne by frendshyp to gete
a pardon. But I beseche you for my myndys sake / shewe me what
thought your selfe therin.

Of trouthe quod I there were dyuers suspicyouse thyngys layd
agaynste hym / and all those well and substancyally answered agayne

for hym. Howe be it vpon the tellynge of a tale oftentyme happeth / that
whan all is herde that can be sayd therein / yet shall the herers some
thynke one waye and some another. And therefore thoughe I can not
thynke but that the Iury whyche were ryght honest menne / founde the
5 verdycte as them selfe thought in theyr owne consyence to be trouthe /
yet in myne owne mynde for ought that euer I herde thereof in my lyfe as
helpe me god I coulde neuer thynke it.

If he had not bene gyltye quod your frende / he wolde neuer haue
sued his pardon.

10 Yes quod I ryght wyse men haue I herde saye ere thys / that they wyll
neuer refuse neyther goddys pardon nor the kynges. It were no wysedom
in a matter of many suspycyouse talys be they neuer so false / to stande
on twelue mennys mouthes where one may fynd a surer way. But I
thynke veryly that yf he had bene gyltye / he shold neuer haue gotten
15 hys pardon. For albe it that there was neuer I trowe brought in thys
worlde a prynce of more benygne nature / nor of more mercyfull mynde
/ than is oure souerayne lorde that nowe reygne and longe mote
reygne vppon vs / whereby neuer kyng could fynde in his harte more
frelly to forgyue and forgete offencys done and commytted vnto hym selfe
20 / yet hathe hys hyghnesse suche a feruent affeccyon to ryght and
iustyce in other mennys causys / and suche a tender zele to the
conseruacyon of hys subgectys (of whose lyuys hys hyghe wysedome
consydereth many to stande in parell by the gyuyng of pardon to a few
wylfull murderers) that neuer was there kyng / I byleue that euer ware
25 the crowne in this realme / whyche hath in so many yerys gyuen vnto
suche folke so fewe. And therefore I make my selfe sure that in suche a
wylfull purpensed haynouse cruell dede as this had bene yf it had bene
trewe / all the frendys that coulde haue bene founden for the
chauncellour in this worlde coulde neuer haue gotten his pardon to
30 passe in such wyse / hadde it not be that vppon the reporte of all the
cyrcumstaunces / the kynges hyghe prudence whiche without flattery
perceth as depe in to the botome of a doubtfull matter as euer I sawe
man in my lyfe / had well perceyued his innocencye. And syth I veryly
byleue that yf he had ben gyltye he neuer coulde haue gotten in suche
35 an haynous murder any pardon of the kynges hyghnes / I dare make
my selfe moche more bolde of his innocencye nowe. For ye shall
vnderstande that he neuer sued pardon therfore. But after longe
examynacyon of the matter as well the chauncelour as the other /
beyng endyted of the dede / and arrayned vppon the endytement in the
40 kynges benche / pleded that they were not gyltye. And therevppon the
kynges grace beyng well and suffyciently enformed of the trouthe / and
of his blessyd dysposycyon not wyllyng that there sholde in his name
any false matter be maynteyned / gaue in commaundement to his
attourney to confesse theyr ples to be trewe without any further
45 trouble. Whiche thyng in so faythfull a prynce is a clere declaracyon
that the matter layde to the chauncelour was vntrue.

And as for my selfe in good faythe as I tolde you before / I neuer
herde in my lyfe (and yet haue I herde all I wene that well coulde be
sayd) therein any thyng that moued me after bothe the partyes herde /

to thynke that he sholde be gyltye.

And besydes all this consyderynge that Hunne was (as they that well knowe hym saye he was in dede) though he were a fayre dealer amonge his neyghbours / yet a man hyghe mynded and set on the glory of a
5 vyctory / whiche he hoped to haue in the premunyre / wherof he moche bosted as they sayd amonge his famylyer frendes / that he trusted to be spoken of longe after his dayes / and haue his matter in the yeres and termes called Hunnes case. Whiche whan he perceyued wolde go
10 agaynste hys purpose / and that in the temporall lawe he sholde not wyne his spurres / and ouer that in the spyrytuall lawe perceyued soo moche of his secrete sores vnwrapped and dyscouered / that he began to fall in fere of worldely shame. It is to me moche more lykely that for werynes of his lyfe he rydde hym selfe out thereof (whiche maner of affeccyon we se not seldome happen / specyally syth the deuyll myght
15 peraduenture ioyne therewith a meruayllouse hope of yt whiche after happed that the suspycyon of hys dethe myght be layde to the charge and parell of the chauncelloure) This ys I saye moche more lykely to me / thanne the thyng whereof I neuer herde the lyke before / that the bysshops chauncellour shold kyll in ye lollardes towre a man so sore
20 suspecte & conuycte of heresy / wherby he myght bryng hym self in busynes / where as if he hated ye man (For kyll hym he wold not ye wote well yf he loued hym) he myght easely brynge hym to shame and peraduenture to shamefull dethe also.

In good fayth quod your frende wyste I that it were trewe that he was
25 an heretyque in dede / and in parell to be so proued / I wolde well thynke that in malyce and dyspayre he hanged hym selfe.

God quod I knoweth of all thyng the trouth. But what I haue herde therein that shall I shewe you.

My selfe was present in poulys whan the byshop in the presence of
30 the Mayre and the aldremen of the cytye condempned hym for an heretyque after his dethe. And then were there red openly the deposycions / by whyche it was well proued that he was conuycte as well of dyuers other heresy as of mysbyleue towarde the holy sacrament of the awter. And therevpon was the iudgement gyuen / that
35 his body sholde be burned / and so was it.

Nowe this is quod I to me a full profe. For I assure you the byshop was a very wyse man / a vertuouse and a connyng.

By saynt mary quod he the profe is the better by so moche.

I shall tell you quod I another thyng / whyche whan ye here / ye
40 shall peraduenture byleue it yet the better.

That wolde I gladly knowe quod he. For as farre as I can here / neuer man had hym suspecte of any suche thyng before.

Forsothe quod I that can I not tell. But so it happed that as I
45 remember syx or seuen yere after that Hunne was thus hanged and hys body burned for an heretyque / there was one in Essex a carpenter that vsed to make pumpes / whyche hadde entended with other suche as he was hym selfe to do greate robbery / and therevpon was he brought vnto the courte. Where by the commaundement of the kyngys grace / a greate honourable estate of thys realme and my selfe had hym in

examynacyon. Wherein amonge other thyngys he confessed that he hadde longe holden dyuers heresyys / whyche he sayd that his brother beyng a clerke of a chyrche had taught bothe his father and hym. And I promyse you those heresyys were of an heyght. Than he shewed vs what
5 other connyng maysters of that scole he hadde herde rede / and specyally in a place whyche he named vs in London / where he sayd that such heretyques were wonte to resorte to theyr redyngys / in a chamber at mydnyghte. And whan we asked hym the namys of theym that were wonte to haunte those mydnyghte lectures / he rehersed vs
10 dyuers / and amonge other he named Rychard Hunne. Whereof we somewhat meruayled in oure myndys / but nothyng sayd we thereto / but let hym rehearse on all suche as he coulde call to mynde. And whan he stopped and coulde remember no mo / than asked we of theym that he hadde named / what they were and where they dwelled. And he tolde
15 vs of some of theym that were conuycted / and some that were fledde / and some that were yet at that tyme dwellyng styl in the towne. And in the waye whan we asked hym what man was that Hunne that he spake of / he tolde vs his person and his howse. And where is he nowe sayd we? Mary quod he I wente to Tournay / and whan I came thense agayne
20 / than herde I saye that he was hanged in the lollardys towre and his body burned for an heretyke. And thus there lerned we longe after / that Hunne had haunted heretykes lectures by nyght longe before / whiche we declared vnto the kynges hyghnesse as he hadde confessed. And his hyghnesse thoughte he was sorry that any man sholde be so lewde / yet
25 hyghly dyd reioyce that the goodnes of god brought suche hydde myschyefe more and more to lyght. So after had we (by the kynges commaundement) that mannes brother in examynacyon / whiche dyd in dede confesse nothyng / neyther of the felonyes nor of the heresyys. But yet his brother dyd abyde by them and auowed theym in his face /
30 with suche markes and tokens as it myght well appere that he sayd treuthe. And surely meruayle were it yf he wold falsly haue fayned suche haynouse thynges agaynst his owne brother / his owne father / and hym selfe / beyng thereto nothyng compelled / nor put eyther in payne or fere. Nowe was the father dede / and other coulde we not come
35 by / whome we myght further examyne of that nyght scole / sauynge that he whiche as I tolde you confessed this matter / shewed vs also at the fyrste tyme of one man in London taken for good and honest / whiche was as he sayd a scoler also of his brother in those heresyys /
40 whiche man for his honestye we forbare to medle with / tyll we sholde haue the other brother. Whome as sone as we had in handes / and that he was commytted to the Marshalsye / this other manne whiche was as I tolde you detected vnto vs for an heretyke and a scoler of his / came to me to labour and sue for hym / pretendynge that he dyd it for charyte. And for as moche as we thought we coulde not fayle of hym whanne we
45 wolde haue hym / we forbare therefore to examyne hym tyll we sholde haue examyned the other whom he laboured for. But than were we not ware in what wyse we sholde be dysapoynted of hym. For so mysse happed it in dede / that after hys beyng at me to laboure for hym / whose scoler in heresy he was detecte to be / he was in his owne house

sodeynly stryken and slayne. And that wretched ende hadde he. What
conscience he dyed with god knoweth / for I can tell you no further.

By saynt Iohan quod your frende but vppon the hole tale / yt semeth
to me very clere that Hunne was hym selfe not clere of the mater.

5 Surely quod I soo semed it as farre as I coulde wytte / vnto as many
as euer herde it / and wolde yet I wene haue semed so more clerely / yf
they had bene present at the examynacyons / and sene vnder what
maner the man came forthe therwith.

10 But yet quod your frende as for his englysh byble / though Hunne
were hym selfe an heretyke / yet myght the boke be good ynoughe.

And no good reason is there why a good boke sholde be burned with
an euyll man.

Ye call me well home quod I / and put me well in mynde. For that
was the thyng whereby ye toke occasyon to talke of Hunne / of whom
15 we talked so longe / that at laste I had forgotten wherefore and
wherevpon we entred into that comunycacyon. And yet make those
bokys not a lytell to the matter that we hadde in hande / I meane
toward the perceuyng what oppynyon that Hunne was of. For surely
at such tyme as he was denounced for an heretyke / there lay his
20 englyshe byble open / and some other englyshe bokys of hys / that
euery man myght se the placys noted with his owne hande / such
wordys / and in suche wyse / that there wolde no wyse man that good
were / haue any great doute after the syght thereof / what naughty
myndys the men hadde / both he that so noted theym / and he that so
25 made theym. I remember not nowe the specyalties of the mater / nor
the formall wordys as they were wryten. But this I remember well that
besydys other thyngys framed for the fauoure of dyuers other heresyas /
there were in the prologe of that byble suche wordys touchyng the
blyssed sacrament / as good crysten men dyd moche abhorre to here /
30 and whyche gaue the reders vndouted occasyon to thynke that the boke
was wryten after wyclyffs copy / and by hym translated into our tonge.
And yet whyther the boke be burned or secretly kepte I can not surely
saye. But truly were the clergie of my mynde / it sholde be some where
reserued / for the perpetuall profe of the matter / there hathe gone so
35 moche suspycouse rumor thereof. Whyche as I byleue were all well
answered and the mynde fully satsfyed of any man that wyse were and
good therewyth / that ones had ouerlooked / red / and aduysedly
consydered that booke.

40

The .xvi. chapter

Sir quod your frende yet for all this can I se no cause why the
clergie sholde kepe the byble out of ley mennes handes / that can no
45 more but theyr mother tonge.

I had wente quod I that I had proued you playnly that they kepe it
not from them. For I haue shewed you that they kepe none from them /
but such translacyon as be eyther not yet approued for good / or suche

as be all redy reprov'd for nought / as Wycliffes was and Tyndals. For
as for other olde ones / that were before Wycliffes dayes remayne lawfull
/ and be in some folkes handes had and red.

Ye say well quod he. But yet as women say / somewhat it was alway
5 that the cat wnyked whan her eye was out. Surely so is it not for nought
that the englysshe byble is in so fewe mennes handes / whan so many
wolde so fayne haue it.

That is very trouthe quod I / For I thynke that though the fauourers of
a secte of heretykes be so feruent in the settinge forth of theyr secte /
10 that they let not to lay theyr money togyder and make a purse amonge
them for the prynting of an euyll made or euyll translated boke / which
thoughe it hadde to be forboden and burned yet some be solde ere they
be spyed / and eche of them lese but theyr parte / yet I thynke there
wyl no prynter lyghtly be so hote to put any byble in prynt at his owne
15 charge / wherof the losse sholde lye hole in his owne necke / and than
hange vpon a doubtfull tryall whyther the fyrst copy of his translacyon
was made before Wycliffes dayes or as synce. For yf it were made synce
/ it muste be approued before the pryntinge. And surely howe it hadde
happed that in all this whyle god hath eyther not suffered or not
20 prouyded that any good vertuous man hath had the mynde in faythfull
wyse to translate it / and therupon eyther the clergy or at the lest wyse /
some one bysshop to approue it / this can I nothyng tell. But howe so
euer it be / I haue herde and here so moche spoken in the matter / and
so moche doubt made therein / that peraduenture it wolde let and
25 withdrawe any one bysshop from the admytting therof / without the
assent of the remenaunt. And where as many thynges be layde agaynst
it / yet is there in my mynde not one thyng that more putteth good men
of the clergy in doubt to suffre it / than this that they se somtyme
moche of the worse sorte more feruent in the calling for it / than them
30 whom we fynde far better. Whiche maketh them to fere lest suche men
desyre it for no good / and lest if it were had in euery mannes hande /
there wold grete parell aryse / & that sedycyous people sholde do more
harme therwith / than good and honest folke sholde take fruyte therby.
Whiche fere I promyse you nothyng fereth me / but that who so euer
35 wolde of theyr malyce or foly take harme of that thyng that is of it selfe
ordeyned to do all men good / I wold neuer for the auoydunge of theyr
harre / take frome other the profyte whiche they myght take / and
nothyng deserue to lese. For els yf the abuse of a good thyng sholde
cause the takynge away thereof frome other that wolde vse it well /
40 Cryst sholde hym selfe neuer haue bene borne / nor brought his fayth
into the worlde / nor god sholde neuer haue made it neyther / yf he
sholde for the losse of those that wolde be dampned wretches / haue
kepte away the occasyon of rewarde from them that wolde with helpe of
his grace endeuoure them to deserue it.

45 I am sure quod your frende ye doute not but that I am full and hole of
your mynde in this matter that the byble sholde be in our englyshe
tonge. But yet that the clergy is of the contrary and wolde not haue it so
/ that appereth well in that they suffer it not to be so. And ouer that I
here in euery place almost where I fynde any lerned man of them / theyr

myndys all set thereon to kepe the scrypture frome vs. And they seke
out for that parte euery roten reason that they can fynde / and set
them forth solely to the shewe / though fyue of those reasons be not
worth a fygge. For they begynne as far as our fyrst father Adam / and
5 shewe vs that his wyfe and he fell oute of paradyse with desyre of
knowlege and connyng. Nowe yf this wolde serue / it muste from the
knowlege and study of scrypture dryue euery man preste and other /
leste it dryue all out of paradyse. Than say they that god taught his
dyscyples many thyngys a parte / bycause the peple sholde not here it.
10 And therefore they wolde the peple sholde not nowe be suffred to rede all.
Yet they say further that it is harde to translate the scrypture out of one
tonge into another / and specyally they say into ours. Whiche they call a
tonge vulgare and barbarous. But of all thynges specyally they say that
scrypture is the fode of the soule. And that the comen people be as
15 infantys that muste be fedde but with mylke and pappe. And yf we haue
any stronger mete it must be chammed afore by the nurse and so put
into the babys mouth. But me thynke though they make vs all infantys /
they shall fynde many a shrewde brayne among vs / that can perceyue
chalke fro chese well ynough and yf they wolde ones take vs our mete in
20 our owne hande. We be not so euyll tothed but that within a whyle they
shall se vs cham it our selfe as well as they. For let them call vs yonge
babys and they wyll / yet by god they shall for all that well fynde in
some of vs that an old knaue is no chylde.

Surely quod I suche thynges as ye speke / is the thyng that as I
25 somewhat sayd before putteth good folke in fere to suffer the scrypture
in our englyshe tonge. Not for the redynge & receyuyng / but for the
bysy chammyng therof / & for moche medlyng with suche partys therof
as lest wyll agre wyth theyr capacityes. For vndoutedly as ye spake of
our mother Eue / inordynate appetyte of knowlege is a meane to dryue
30 any man out of paradyse. And inordynate is the appetyte whan men
vnlearned though they rede it in theyr langage / wyll be bysy to enserch
and dyspute the grete secrete mysteryes of scrypture / whiche thoughe
they here they be not able to perceyue. This thyng is playnly forboden
vs that be not appoynted nor instructed thereto. And therefore holy
35 saynt Gregory naziazenus that grete solempne doctour sore toucheth &
reproueth all suche bolde busy medlers in the scrypture / and sheweth
that it is in Exody by Moyses ascendynge vp vpon the hyll where he
spake with god and the people taryenge bynethe / sygnyfyed that the
people be forboden to presume to medle with the hygh mysteryes of holy
40 scrypture / but ought to be contente to tary bynethe & medle none
hygher than is mete for them / but receyuyng fro the heyght of the hyll
by Moyses that that is delyuered them / that is to wytte the lawes and
preceptes that they must kepe / and the poyntes they must byleue /
loke well therupon / and often / and medle well therwith. Not to dyspute
45 it but to fulfyll yt. And as for the hygh secrete mysteryes of god / and
harde textes of hys holy scrypture / let vs know that we be so vnable to
ascende vp so hygh on that hyll / that it shall become vs to saye to the
prechours appoynted therto as the people sayd vnto Moyses / here you
god and let vs here you. And surely the blessyd holy doctour saynt

Hierome gretely complayneth and rebuketh that lewde homely maner /
that the comon ley people men and women were in his dayes so bolde in
the medlynge / dysputyng / and expownyng of holy scrypture. And
sheweth playnly that they shall haue euyll prefe therin / that wyll reken
5 them selfe to vnderstande it by themselfe without a reder. For it is a
thyng that requyreth good helpe / and longe tyme / and an hole mynde
gyuen gretely thereto. And surely syth as the holy appostle saynt Poule
in dyuers of his epystles sayth / god hath by his holy spyryte so
instytute & ordeyned his chyrch / that he wyl haue some reders and
10 some herers / some techers & som lerners / we do playnly peruerte &
tourne vp so downe y ryght order of Crystes chyrch / whan the one
parte medleth with the others offyce. Plato the grete phylosopher
specyally forbedeth suche as be not admytted thervnto nor men mete
therefore / to medle moche and embysye theym selfe in reasonyng and
15 dysputyng vppon the temporall lawes of the cyte / whiche wolde not be
reasoned vpon but by folke mete therefore and in place conuenient. For
ellys they that can not very well attayne to perceyue them / begynne to
mysse lyke / dysprayse / and contempne them. Whereof foloweth the
breche of the lawes and dysordre of the people. For tyll a lawe be
20 chaunged by authoryte / yt rather ought to be obserued thanne
contempned. Or ellys the example of one lawe boldely broken and sette
at noughte / waxeth a precedent for the remenaunt to be vsed lyke. And
commenly the beste lawes shall worste lyke moche of the comen people
/ whiche moost longe (yf they myghte be herde and folowed) to lyue all at
25 lyberte vnder none at all. Now yf Plato so wyse a man so thought good in
temporall lawes / thynges of mennys makynge / how moche is it lesse
mete for euery man boldely to medle wyth the exposycyon of holy
scrypture / so deuysed and endyted by the hyghe wysedome of god /
that it far exceedeth in many placys the capacitye and perceuyng of man.
30 It was also prouyded by the Emperour in the lawe cyuyle / that the
comen people sholde neuer be so bolde to kepe dyspycyons vpon the
fayth or holy scrypture / nor that any suche thyng shold be vsed
amonge them or before them. And therefore as I sayd before / the
specyall fere in this matter is / lest we wolde be to besy in chammyng of
35 the scrypture our selfe / which ye say we were able ynough to do. Which
vndoutedly the wyseste and the best lerned / and he that therein hath
by many yeres bestowed his hole mynde / is yet vnable to do. And than
far more vnable must he nedys be / that boldely wyll vpon the fyrst
redyng bycause he knoweth the wordys / take vpon hym therefore to
40 teche other men the sentence with parell of his owne soule and other
mennys to / by the bryngynge men into madde wayes / sectys / and
heresyas / suche as heretyques haue of olde brought vp and the chyrche
hath condempned. And thus in these matters yf the comen people
myght be bolde to cham it as ye say and to dyspute it / than sholde ye
45 haue the more blynde the more bolde / the more ignoraunt the more
besy / the lesse wyt the more inquysytyfe / the more fole the more
talkatyfe of great doutys and hygh questyons of holy scrypture and of
goddes great and secrete mysteryes / and thys not sobrelly of any good
affeccyon / but presumptuously and vnreuerently at mete and at mele.

And there whan the wyne were in and the wytte out / wolde they take
vppon them with folyshe wordys and blasphemye to handle holy
scrypture in more homely maner than a songe of Robyn hode. And some
wolde as I sayd solemply take vpon them lyke as they were ordynary
5 reders to interprete the texte at theyr pleasure / & therewith fall them
selfe and drawe downe other with theym into sedycyouse sectys and
heresydes / whereby the scrypture of god shold lese his honoure and
reuerence / and be by suche vnreuerent and vnsyttynge demeanour
amonge moche people quyte and dene abused / vnto the contrary of that
10 holy purpose that god ordayned it for. Where as yf we wolde no further
medle therewith but well and deuoutly rede it / and in that / that is
playne and euydent as goddes commaundementes and his holy
counsaylys endeouore our selfe to folowe wyth helpe of his grace asked
therevnto / and in his greate and merueylouse myracles consyder hys
15 godhed / and in his lowly byrthe / his godly lyfe / and hys bytter
passyon / exercyse our selfe in suche medytacyons / prayour / and
vertues / as the matter shall mynyster vs occasyon / knowledgyng our
owne ignoraunce where we fynde a doute / and therein lenyng to the
faythe of the chyrche / wrestle with no suche texte as myght bryng vs
20 in a doute and werestyng of any of those artycles wherein euery good
crysten man is clere / by this maner of redyng can no man nor woman
take hurte in holy scrypture. Nowe than the thynges on the other syde
that vnlearned people can neuer by theym selfe attayne / as in the
psalmes and the prophetes and dyuers partes of the gospell / where the
25 wordes be some tyme spoken as in the person of the prophete hym selfe
/ some tyme as in the person of god / some tyme of some other as
aungels / deuyls / or men / and some tyme of our sauour Cryste / not
alwaye of one fassyon / but some tyme as god / some tyme as man /
sometyme as hed of this mystycall body his chyrche mylytant here in
30 erthe / sometyme as hed of his chyrche tryumphaut in heuyn /
sometyme as in the person of his sensuall partyes of his owne body /
otherwhyle in the persone of some partyculare parte of his body
mystycall / and these thynges with many other often tymes
interchaunged / and sodeynly sundry thynges of dyuerse matters
35 dyuersly mengled togyther / all these thynges whyche is not possyble for
vnlearned men to attayne vnto / yt were more than madnes for theym to
medle withall / but leue all these thynges to theym whose hole study is
byset therupon / and to the prechours appoynted therunto / whiche
may shewe theym suche thynges in tyme and place conuenyent with
40 reuerence and authoryte / the sermon so tempered / as many may be
mete and conuenyent alwaye for the present audyence. Wherevnto it
appereth that our sauoure hym selfe and his appostles after hym / had
euer specyall respecte. And therefore as I saye forsothe I can in noo wyse
agree with you that it were mete for men vnlearned to be busy with the
45 chammyng of holy scrypture / but to haue yt chammed vnto them. For
that is the prechours parte and theirs / that after longe study are
admytted to rede and expowne it. And to this entente waye all the
wordes as farre as I perceyue of all holy doctours that any thyng haue
wryten in this matter. But neuer mente they as I suppose the forbedyng

of the byble to be redde in any vulgare tonge. Nor I neuer yet herde any
reason layde / why it were not conuenient to haue the byble translated
in to the englysshe tonge / but all those reasons semed they neuer so
gay & gloryous at the fyrste syght / yet when they were well examyned
5 they myght in effecte for ought that I can se / as well be layde agaynst
the holy wryters that wrote the scrypture in the ebrue tonge / &
agaynste the blessyd euangelystes that wrote the scrypture in greke / &
agaynst all those in lykewyse that translated it out of euery of those
tonges in to latyn / as to theyr charge that wolde well and faythfully
10 translate it out of latyn in to oure englysshe tonge. For as for that oure
tonge is called barbarouse / is but a fantasye. For so is as euery lerned
man knoweth / euery straunge langage to other. And yf they wolde call
it barayne of wordys / there is no doute but it is plentuouse ynoughe to
15 speke with another. Nowe as touchynge the dyfficultye whiche a
translatour fyndeth in expressynge well and lyuely the sentence of hys
authour / whyche is harde alway to do so surely but yl he shall
somytyme mynyshe eyther of the sentence or of the grace that it bereth in
the formare tonge / that poynte hathen in theyr lyght that haue
20 translated the scrypture all redy eyther out of greke into laten or out of
ebrew into any of them bothe / as by many translacyons whyche we
rede all redy to theym that be lerned appereth. Nowe as touchynge the
harme that may growe by suche blynde bayardys as wyll whan they rede
the byble in englyshe be more besy than wyll bycome them. They that
25 touche that poynt harpe vpon the ryght strynge / and touche truely the
greate harme that were lykely to grow to some folke / howe be it not by
the occasyon yet of the englysh translacion / but by the occasyon of
theyr owne lewdnes and foly / which yet were not in my mynde a
sufficyent cause to exclude the translacion and to put other folke from
30 the benefyte therof / but rather to make prouysyon agaynste suche
abuse / and let a good thyng go forth. No wyse man were there that
wolde put all wepens bycause manquellers mysse vse them. Nor this
letted not as I sayd the scrypture to be fyrste wryten in a vulgare tonge.
For the scrypture as I sayd before was not wryten but in a vulgare tonge
35 / suche as the hole peple vnderstode / nor in no secrete cyphers but
suche comen letters as almost euery man coulde rede. For neyther was
the ebrew nor the greke tonge nor the laten neyther / any other speche
than suche as all the people spake. And therefore yf we sholde laye that
it were euyll done to translate the scrypture into our tonge / bycause it
40 is vulgare and comen to euery englyshe man / than had it ben as euill
done to translate it into greke or into laten / or to wryte the new
testament fyrst in greke or the olde testament in ebrew / bycause both
those tongys were as very vulgare as ours. And yet sholde there by this
reason also not onely the scrypture be kept out of our tonge / but ouer
45 that sholde the redynge therof be forboden bothe all suche ley people
and all suche prestys to / as can no more than theyr grammer and very
scantly that. All whiche company thoughe they can vnderstande the
wordys / be yet as farre frome the perceyuyng of the sentence in harde
and doutfull textys / as were oure women / yf the scrypture were

translated to oure owne langage. Howe be it of trouthe seldome hath it
ben sene that any secte of heretyques hath bygonne of suche vnlearned
folke as nothyng coulede ellys but the langage wherein they red the
scrypture / but there hath alwaye comenly these sectys sprongen of the
5 pryde of suche folke / as hadde wyth the knowledge of the tonge some
hygh persuacyon in theym selfe of theyr owne lernynge besyde. To
whose authoryte some other folke haue sone after / parte of malyce /
parte of symplenes / and moche parte of pleasure and delyte in newe
fanglenes / fallen in and encreased the faccyon. But the hed hath euer
10 comenly ben eyther some proude lerned man / or at the leste besyde the
langage som proude smaterer in lernynge. So that yf we sholde for fere of
heretykes that myght hap to grow thereby kepe the scrypture out of any
tonge / or out of vnlearned mennes handes / we sholde for lyke fere be
fayne to kepe it out of all tonges / and out of lerned mennes handes to /
15 and wote not whom we myght trust therewith. Wherefore there is as me
thynketh no remedy but yf any good thyng shall go forwarde /
somwhat muste nedes be aduentured. And some folke wyll not fayle to
be nought. Agaynst whiche thynges prouysyon must be made / that as
moch good maye growe / and as lytell harme come as can be deuysed /
20 and not to kepe the hole commodyte from any hole people / bycause of
harme that by theyr owne foly and faute maye come to some parte. As
thoughe a lewde surgyan wolde cut of the legge by the knee to kepe the
too from the gowte / or cut of a mannes hed by the sholders to kepe
hym from the tothe ache. There is no trectyce of scrypture so harde but
25 that a good vertuous man or woman eyther / shall somewhat fynde
therin that shall delyte and encrease theyr deuocyon / besydes this that
euery prechyng shall be the more pleasaunt and fruytfull vnto theym
whan they haue in theyr mynde the place of scrypture that they shall
there here expowned. For thoughe it be as it is in dede / grete wysedom
30 for a prechour to vse dyscrecyon in his prechyng and to haue a
respekte vnto the qualytees and capacitytes of his audyens / yet letteth
that nothyng / but that the hole audyens may without harme haue red
and haue redy the scrypture in mynde / that he shall in his prechyng
declare and expowne. For no doubte is there / but that god and his holy
35 spyryte hath so prudently tempered theyr speche thorowe the hole corps
of scrypture / that euery man may take good therby and no man harme
/ but he that wyll in ththe study therof lene proude to the foly of his
owne wytte. For all be it that Cryst dyd speke to the people in parables
and expowned them secretly to his especyall dyscyples / and somtyme
40 forbare to tell some thynges to theym also bycause they were not as yet
able to bere theym / and the appostles in lyke wyse dyd somtyme spare
to speke to some people the thynges that they dyd not let playnly to
speke to some other / yet letteth all this nothyng the translacyon of the
scrypture in to our owne tonge / no more than in the latyn. Nor it is no
45 cause to kepe the corps of scrypture out of the handes of any crysten
peple so many yeres fastly conformed in faythe / bycause Cryst & his
appostles vsed suche prouysyon in theyr vtteraunce of so straunge &
vnherde mysteryes / eyther vnto lewes Paynims or newly crystened folke
/ except we wold say that all the exposycyons whiche Cryste made hym

selfe vppon his owne parables vnto his secrete seruauntys and dysciples
wythdrawen frome the people / sholde nowe at this day be kept in lyke
wyse from the comens / and no manne suffred to rede or here theym
but those that in his chyrche represent the state and offyce of his
5 appostles. Whyche there wyll I wote well no wyse man say /
consyderynge that those thyngys whyche were than comenly most kept
frome the people / be nowe most necessary for the people to knowe. As it
well appereth by all suche thyngys in effecte as our sauour at the tyme
taught his apostles a parte. Whereof I wolde not for my mynde withhold
10 the profyte that one good deuout vlnerned ley man myght take by the
redyng / not for the harme that an hundred heretykes wolde fall in by
theyr owne wylfull abusyon / no more than our sauour letted for the
weale of suche as wolde be with his grace of his lytell chosen flocke / to
come into thys worlde and be lapis offensionis / et petra scandali / the
15 stone of stumblynge / and the stone of fallyng / and ruyne to all the
wylfull wretches in the world besyde. Fynally me thynketh that the
constytucion prouyncyall of whyche we spake ryght nowe hath
determynd this questyon all redy. For whan the clergye therein agreed
that the englyshe bybles sholde remayne whyche were translated afore
20 Wyclyffys dayes / they consequently dyd agree that to haue the byble in
englyshe was none hurte. And in that they forbade any new translacyon
to be red tyll it were approued by the byshops / it appereth well thereby
that theyr entent was that the byshop sholde approue it yf he founde it
fautlesse / and also of reason amende it where it were fauty / but yf the
25 man were an heretyque that made it / or the fautys suche and so many
/ as it were more eth to make it all newe than mende it. As it happed for
bothe poyntys in the translacyon of Tyndall.

Nowe yf it so be that it wolde happely be thought not a thyng metely
to be aduentured / to set all on a flushe at ones / and dashe rashly out
30 holy scrypture in euery lewde felowes tethe / yet thynketh me there
myght suche a moderacyon be taken therin / as neyther good vertuous
ley folke sholde lacke it / nor rude & rashe braynes abuse it. For it
myght be wyth dylygence well and truely translated by some good
catholyque and well lerned manne / or by dyuers dyuydyng the laboure
35 amonge theym / and after conferryng theyr seuerall partys togyther
eche with other. And after that myght the worke be alowed and
approued by the ordynaryes / and by theyr authorityes so put vnto
prente / as all the copyes sholde come hole vnto the byshoppys hande.
Whiche he may after hys dyscrecyon and wysedome delyuer to suche as
40 he perceyueth honeste sad and vertuous / wyth a good monycyon &
fatherly counsayll to vse it reuerently with humble hart & lowly mynde /
rather sekyng therin occasyon of deuocyon than of dyspicyon. And
prouydyng as moche as may be / that the boke be after the deceace of
the partye brought agayne and reuerently restored vnto the ordynary. So
45 that as nere as may be deuysed / no man haue it but of the ordinaryes
hande / & by hym thought and reputed for suche / as shall be lykely to
vse it to goddes honoure & meryte of his owne soule. Amonge whome yf
any be proued after to haue abused it / than the vse therof to be
forboden hym / eyther for euer / or tyll he be waxen wyser.

By our lady quod your frende this way myslyketh not me. But who sholde set the pryce of the boke?

Forsothe quod I that reken I a thyng of lytell force. For neyther were
5 the mene pryce for a boke of so grete profyte / nor for the bysshop to
gyue them all free / wherin he myght serue his dyocyse with the cost of
.x. li. I thynke or .xx. markes. Whiche some I dare saye there is noo
bysshop but he wolde be glad to bestowe aboute a thyng that myght do
his hole dyocyse so specyall a pleasure with suche a spyrytuall profyte.

10 By my trouth quod he yet wene I that the people wolde grudge to
haue it on this wyse delyuered them at the bysshops hande / and had
leuer paye for it to the prynter than haue it of the bysshop free.

It myght so happen with some quod I. But yet in myne oppynyon
there were in that maner more wylfulnes / than wysedom or any good
15 mynde in suche as wolde not be content so to receyue theym. And
therefore I wolde thynke in good faythe that it wolde so fortune in fewe.
But for god the more doute wolde be / lest they wold grudge and holde
them selfe sore greued / that wolde requyre it and were happely denyed
it. Whiche I suppose wolde not often happen vnto any honest house
20 holder to be by his dyscrecyon reuerently red in his house. But thoughe
yt were not taken to euery lewde ladde in his owne handes to rede a
lytell rudely whan he lyst / and than cast the boke at his helys / or
among other such as hym selfe to kepe a quotlibet & a pot parlyament
vpon / I trow there wyll no wyse man fynde a fawte therin. Ye spake
25 ryght nowe of the Iewes / amonge whome the hole people haue ye say
the scrypture in theyr handes. And ye thought it no reason that we
sholde reken crysten men lesse worthy therto than theym. Wherin I am
as ye se of your owne oppynyon. But yet wolde god we had the lyke
reuerence to the scrypture of god that they haue. For I assure you I haue
30 herde very worshypfull folke say whiche haue ben in theyr houses / that
a man coulde not hyre a Iewe to syt downe vpon his byble of the olde
testament / but he taketh it with grete reuerence in hande whan he wyll
rede / and reuerently layeth it vp agayne whan he hath done. Where as
we god forgyue vs take lytell regarde to sytte downe on our byble with
35 the olde testament and the newe to. Whiche homely handlyng as it
procedeth of lytell reuerence / so dothe it more and more engender in
the mynde a neglygence and contempt of goddys holy wordes. We fynde
also that among the Iewes though all theyr hole byble was wryten in
theyr vulgare tonge / and those bokys therof wherein theyr lawes were
40 wryten were vsuall in euery mannys handys / as thyngys that god wolde
haue comenly knowen / repeted / and kepte in remembraunce / yet
were there agayne certayne partys therof whiche the comen peple of the
Iewes of old tyme / bothe of reuerence and for the dyfficultye dyd
forbere to medle with. But now syth the veyle of the temple is broken
45 asunder that dyuyded amonge the Iewes / the people from the syght of
the secretys / and that god had sente his holy spyryte to be assyistent
with his hole chyrch to teche all necessary trouth / though it may
therefore be the better suffred that no parte of holy scrypture were kept
out of honest ley mennys handys / yet wolde I that no parte therof shold

come in theyrs / whiche to theyr own harme and happely theyr
neyghbours to / wolde handle it ouer homely / and be to bold and besy
therwith. And also though holy scrypture be as ye sayd whyle ere / a
medycyne for hym that is sycke / and fode for hym that is hole / yet
5 syth there is many a body sore soule sycke that taketh hym selfe for hole
/ and in holy scrypture is an hole feste of so moche dyuers vyaunde /
that after the affeccyon & state of sundry stomakys / one maye take
harme by the selfsame that shall do another good / and sycke folke
often haue suche a corrupte tallage in theyr taste that they moste lyke
10 the mete that is moste vnholosome for them / it were not therfore as me
thynketh vnreasonable that the ordynary whom god hath in the dyocyse
appoynted for the chyef physycyon / to dyscerne bytwene the hole and
the syck and bytwene dysease and dysease / sholde after his wysedom
and dyscrecyon appoynte euery body theyr parte / as he sholde
15 perceyue to be good and holsom for them. And therfore as he shold not
fayle to fynde many a man / to whom he myght commyt all the hole / so
to say the trouth I can se none harme therin / though he sholde commyt
vnto some man the gospell of Mathewe / Marke / or Luke whom he
shold yet forbede the gospell of saynt Iohan / and suffer some to rede
20 the actys of the apostles / whome he wolde not suffer to medle with the
Apocalyps. Many were there I thynke that sholde take moche profyte by
saynt Poulys epystle ad Ephesios / wherin he gyueth good counsaile to
euery kynde of peple / and yet shold fynde lytell frute for theyr
vnderstandynge in hisepystle ad Romanos / conteynyng suche hygh
25 dyfficultyes as very few lerned men can very well attayne. And in lyke
wyse wold it be in dyuers other partys of the byble as well in the olde
testament as the newe / so that as I say though the byshop myght vnto
some ley man bytake and commyt with good aduyse & instruccyon the
hole byble to rede / yet myght he to som man well and with reason
30 restrayne the redynge of some parte / & from some busy body the
medlynge with any parte at all / more than he shall here in sermons set
out and declared vnto hym / and in lykewyse to take the byble away
from such folke agayne / as be proued by theyr blynde presumpcyon to
abuse the occasyon of theyr profyte vnto theyr owne hurte and harme.
35 And thus may the bysshop order the scrypture in our handes / with as
good reason as the father doth by his discrecyon appoynte which of his
chyl dren may for his sadnes kepe a knife to cut his mete / & which shall
for his wantonnes haue his knyfe taken from hym for cuttyng of his
fyngers. And thus am I bolde without preiudyce of other mennes
40 iudgement / to shewe you my mynde in this matter / howe the
scrypture myght without grete parell and not without grete profyte / be
brought in to our tonge and taken to ley men and women bothe / not yet
menyng therby but that the hole byble myght for my mynde be suffred to
be spred abrode in englysshe. But if that were so moche doubted that
45 percase all myght therby be letted / then wolde I rather haue vsed suche
moderacyon as I speke of / or some suche other as wyser men can
better deuise. Howe be it vpon that I red late in the pystle that the
kynges hyghnes translated in to englysshe / of his owne / whiche his
grace made in latyn / answeyng to the letter of Luther / my mynde

gyueth me that his maiesty is of his blessyd zeleso mynded to moue
this matter vnto the prelates of the clergye / among whom I haue
perceyued some of the gretest and of the best of theyr owne myndes well
inclynable therto all redy / that we ley people shall in this matter ere
5 longe tyme passe excepte the fawte be founde in our selfe / be well and
fully satysfyed and contente.

In good fayth quod he that wyll in my mynde be very well done. And
now am I for my mynde in all this matter fully content and satysfyed.

Well quod I than wyll we to dynere / and the remenaunt wyll we
10 fynysse after. And therewith wente we to mete.

The ende of the thirde boke

15

The fourth boke.

20

The furst chapter

When we had after dynere a lytell paused / your frend and I drewe
our selfe asyde into the gardyn. And there syttyngedowne in an herber /
he bygan to entre forth into the matter / sayeng that he had well
perceyued that not in his countre onely but also in the vnyuersyte where
25 he had bene / there were that had none euyl oppynyon of Luther / but
thought that his bokys were by the clergye forboden of malyce and euyl
wyll / to the ende that folke sholde not surely se and perfytely perceyue
what he sayth / or at the leste what thyng he meaneth by his wordys.
30 Whyche wyll not appere they thynke by a lyne taken out in the myddys
of a lefe / but by the dyligent consyderacyon of the hole matter. Without
whiche men might impute a wronge blame they say / to the best wryters
that euer wrote in this world. But they thynke that the clergye wyll not
haue his bokys red / bycause that in them ley men may rede the prestys
35 fautes / whiche was they say the very cause of the condempnacyon. For
els whyther he had wryten well or euyl / yet they say his bokys hadde
bene kept in mennys handys and red. For there is they thynke therein
though some parte were nought / many thyngys yet well sayd / whereof
40 there was no reason that men sholde lese the profyte for the bad. And
also reason men thynke it were / that all were herde that can be sayd
touchyng the treuth to be knowen / concernyng the matters of our
saluacyon / to the entent that all herde and perceyued / men may for
theyr owne surety the better chese and hold the ryght way.

Forsothe quod I yf it were now doutfull and ambyguouse whyther the
45 chyrche of Cryst were in the ryght rule of doctryne or not / than were it
very necessary to gyue them all good audyence that coulde & wolde any
thyng dyspute on eyther party for it or agaynst it / to the ende that yf
we were now in a wronge way / we myght leue it and walke in some

better. But now on the other syde yf it so be as in dede it is / that
 Crystys chyrche hath the true doctryne all redy / and the selfe same
 that saynt Poule wold not gyue an aungell of heuen audyence to the
 contrary / what wysedom were it nowe therein to shewe oure selfe so
 5 mystrustfull and waueryng / that for to serche whyther oure faythe were
 false or trewe / we sholde gyue herynge not to an aungell of heuen / but
 to a fonde frere / to an apostate / to an open incestuouse lechour / a
 playne lymme of the deuyll / and a manyfest messenger of hell. In
 10 whiche wordys yf ye wolde happely thynke that I vse my selfe to sore to
 call hym by suche odyouse namys / ye muste consyder that he spareth
 not bothe vntruely and wythout necessaryte in hys raylynge bookys / to
 call by as euyl / them whome hys duty were hyghly to reuerence /
 where as I do bytwene vs twayne call hym butas himselfe hath shewed
 15 hym / in his wrytyng / in his lyuyng / & in his mad maryage. And yet I
 neyther do it nor wolde / were it not that the matter selfe of reason doth
 requyre it. For my parte is it of necessaryte to tell howe nought he is /
 bycause that the worse the man is the more madnes were it for wyse
 men to gyue his false fables herkenyng agaynst goddes vndoubted
 20 treuthe / by his holy spyryte taught vnto his chyrch / and by suche
 multytude of myracles / by so moche bloode of holy martyrs / by the
 vertuous lyuyng of so many blessyd confessours / by the puryte and
 clennes of so many chast wydowes and vndefouled vyrgyns / by the
 holsome doctryne of so many holy doctours / and fynally by the hole
 25 consente and agrement of all crysten people this fyften hundred yere
 confermed. And therefore not any respect vnto his raylyng agaynst the
 clergie / is as some wolde haue it seme the cause of his condempnacyon
 and suppressyon of his bokes. For the good men of the clergie be not so
 sore greued with them that touche the fautes of the bad / nor the bad
 them selfe be not so tender ered / that for the onely talkyng of theyr
 30 fautes they wolde banysshe the bokes that were good in other thynges
 besyde. For els coude not the bokes of many olde holy fathers haue
 endured so longe / wherein the vyces of them that in the clergie be
 nought / be very vehemently rebuked. But the very cause why his bokes
 be not suffred to be red / is bycause his heresydes be so many / and so
 35 abhomynable / and the prouys wherwith he pretendeth to make them
 probable be so far from reason and trouth / and so far agaynst the ryght
 vnderstandyng of holy scrypture / wherof vnder coloure of grete zeles
 and affeccyon he laboureth to destroy the credence and good vse / and
 40 fynally so farre stretcheth all thyng agaynst good maner and vertue /
 prouokyng the worlde to wronge opynyons of god and boldenesse in
 synne & wretchednes / that there can no good / but moche harme
 growe by the redyng. For yf there were the substaunce good / and of
 erreure or ouersyght some code amonge the come / whiche myght be
 45 syfted out and the remenaunt stande in stede / men wold haue ben
 content therwith as they be with suche other. But nowe is his not
 bysprynt with a fewe spottes / but with more than halfe venym
 poysoned the hole wyne / & the ryght roten of it self. And this done of
 purpose & malyce / not without an euyl spyryte in such wyse walkyng
 with his wordes / that the contagyon therof were lykely to enfecte a feble

soule / as the sauoure of a sykenes sore enfecteth an hole body. Nor the
trouthe is not to be lerned of euery mannes mouth. For as Cryst was not
contente that the deuyll sholde call hym goddes sonne though it were
true / so is he not content that a deuyls lymme as Luther is or Tyndall /
5 shold teche his flocke the trouthe / for infectyng them with theyr false
deuylysshe heresydes besydes. For lykewyse as the holy scripture of god
bycause of the good spyryte that made it / is of his own nature apte to
purge and amende the reder / though some that rede yt of theyr
10 inuincyble malyce tourne it to theyr harme / so do such wrytynges as
Luthers ys / in the makyn wherof the deuyll ys of counsayll and gyueth
therwyth a breth of his assystence / though the goodnesse of some men
mayster the malyce therof / walkyng harmeles wyth goddes helpe / as
the prophete sayth vppon the serpent and the cocatrice / and tredyng
15 ryght vnholysom to medle wyth / mete and apte to corrupt and infecte
the reder. For the profe wherof we nede none other example / than thys
that we be in hand wyth all / yf we consyder what good the redyng of
hys bokes hath done in Saxony. And this fynde we more than to mych
20 proued here amonge vs / that of .x. that vse to rede hys bokys / ye shall
scantly fynd twayn / but that they not onely caste of prayer and fastyng
and all such godly vertues as holy scripture commendeth / and the
chyrch commaundeth / & vertuouse peple haue euer had in grete pryce
/ but also fall in playne contempte and hatered therof. So that what
frute shold growe of the redyng ye may sone gesse.
25

The .ii. chapyter.

30 **A**nd in good fayth I wold wene that eny good man except some
resonable necessite shold compell hym therto / ellys wold (yf he herd
but hys opynions onys rehersed) be very loth to lose his tyme in the
redyng / eyther of his fonde profe / or of the very tytles & namys therof
agayn.

35 Yf they be such in dede quod your frende & that they be not
mystaken or mysreported.

Me thynketh quod I that the frute whych ye se spryng of theym /
shold suffyse to make you perceyue theym for nought. And ywys a frerys
lyuyng that weddeth a nunne when hys lyuyng is suche / shold make
yt ethe to wyt that hys techyng ys not very good.

40 Surely quod he I can not say nay but that these be shrewde tokens.

I shall quod I do more fore you. For I shall fynde the meanys that ye
shall se hys own bokys / and therin perceyue your self that men belye
hym not.

45 I pray you quod he lette me here some of hys opynions by mouthe the
whyle / & for the seyng of them in his owne bokes I shall bythynke me
after.

Fyrst he began quod I wyth pardons & wyth the popys power /
denyng fynally eny of both to be of eny effect at all.

And sone after to shewe what good spyryte moued hym / he denyed all the vii. sacramentes / except baptisme / penaunce / and the sacrament of the auter / saynge playnly that all the remanaunt be but fayned thynges & of none effect.

5 Now these that he leueth for good / yt is good to se how he handleth them. For in penaunce he sayth / that ther neyther nedeth contrycyon nor satysfaccyon. Also he sayth that there nedeth no preste for the heryng of confessyon / but that euery man & euery woman to / ys as suffycient to here confession & assoyle & do all that longeth to a
10 confessour as is a preste.

Mary syr quod your frend this were an easy way for one thyng. For the sorest thyng that I fynd in confessyon / is that whan I see many confessours at a pardon / yet can I scant lyke one of them so well vppon the syght / that I wold tell eny such talys to / onys in seuen yere
15 & I might chese. But now yf I might after Luthers way be confessed to a fayre woman / I wold not let to be confessed weekly.

Ye wold quod I peraduenture tell her a tale that ye wold not tell euery man. But yet yf some men told som talys to a fayre woman that they tell in confessyon to a fowle frere / they wold wysch I
20 wene among that they had kept theyr counsaile in theyr own brest.

Mary quod he that may happen also in the confessyon that is made vnto a preste.

Possyble yt were in dede quod I. And Tyndall in hys boke of
25 obedience or rather dysobedience sayth / that the curates do go & shew the bysshops the confessyons of such as be ryche in theyr paryshes / & that the bysshoppis theruppon do cyte them & lay theyr secrete synnes to theyr charge / & eyther put them to open shamefull penaunce / or compell them to pay at the bishops
30 pleasure. Now dare I be bold to say / & I suppose all the honest men in this realm will say & swere the same / that thys is a very folysh falshed ymagyned of hys own mynd / wherof he neuer saw the sample in hys lyfe. We se in som rather the contrary faut / that not onely the ryche but the pore also / kepe open quenys &
35 lyue in open aduoutry / wythout payment or penaunce or eny thyng almoste onys sayd vnto them. But therwith findeth Tindall no faut in the byshops. For he sayth playnly that the bisshop hath none authorite to punish eny such thyng at all. But he letteth not on the tother syde to belye the bysshops & the curates to /
40 faynyng that the tone doth vtter folkes confessyons to the tother. And whan he hath so bylyed them / then forthwyth as though he had proued hys tale true / he taketh the same fals fayned lye for a grounde theruppon to byeld the destruccyon of the holy sacrament of penaunce. For vppon that lye and such other lyke / he sayth
45 playnly the confessyon to the preste ys the worst thyng that euer was founde. Now if that were trew as it is as false as he that sayd yt / how happed yt than (whych questyon Luther & he be asked often & alway make as they herd it not) how happed yt I say that of so many vertuouse wyse & cunnyng fathers as haue ben in

Cristes chyrch in so many hundred yerys / neuer none had the
wyt nor the grace to spye this gret thyng / but all teche confessyon
/ tyll now that Tyndall cam / whych yet in this poynt passeth hys
mayster Luther. For he sayth he wold in eny wyse haue confessyon
5 stand / but he wold haue yt made at lybertye as well to women as
men. But Tyndall wyll haue none at all / bycause he lysteth to
belye both the bysshoppis & the curatys / faynyng that they shold
bytwene them dysclose our confessyons.

10 In fayth quod your frend that ys a thyng that I neuer herd to
haue happened.

Nor he neyther quod I that dare I boldely saye. And yet I wote
well as ye sayd right now / that prestys shold vtter folkes
confession were well possible / & in many of them nothyng in thys
15 world more lykely neyther / yf god and his holy spyryte were not
as yt is assystent & workynge wyth his holy sacrament. But surely
where as there be many thyngys that well & clerely proue the sacrament
of confessyon to be a thyng institute & deuysed by god / yet yf all the
remanaunt lacked / thys one thyng were vnto me a playne persuasyon
& a full profe / whych thyng I fynde in the noble boke that the kyngys
20 hyghnes made agaynst Luther / that ys to wyt / that in so comen a
custume of confessyon offer than onys in the yere / where no man
letteth boldely to tell such his secretys / as vppon the discoueryng or
close keynge thereof hys honestye comenly and often tyme hys lyfe also
dependeth / so many symple as be of that sorte ythat here theym / and
25 in all other thyng so lyghte and laues of theyre tonge / and some
therewyth so lewde in all theyre luyng / that for money they force lytell
to stele robbe and murder to / and myght many tymes wyth the
dysclosynge of some suche thyngys gete so mych as some of theym
wolde kyll a man for lesse: yet fynde we neuer eny man take harme by
30 hys confessyon / or cause gyuen of complaynte / thorowe eny suche
secretes vttered and shewed by the confessoure.

In good fayth quod he thys ys very trouth & a grete thyng in myne
opnyon. But vndowtely yf confessyon came onys to womens erys /
there wolde be a sore chaunge. For yt wolde be harde for god and the
35 deuyll to / to kepe theyre tongys.

Yes yes quod I a woman can kepe a counsayll well ynoughe. For
though she tell a gossyppe she telleth yt but in as counsayle yet / nor
that gossyppe to her gossyppe neyther / & so whan all the gosseppys in
the towne knowe yt / yet ys yt but counsayll styll. And therefore I saye yt
40 not for eny harme that wolde come by theym but for the neweltye therof.

Nowe in ernest quod your frende thys was a myche mery madde
inuencyon of Luther / and Luther ys in a maner as madde as Tyndall.
For yt were as good almoste to haue no confessyon at all / as to set
women to here yt.

45 Forsothe quod I yf yt hadde ben wysedome and not agaynste goddys
wyll / yt wolde of lykelyhedde haue ben founden by some good men
byfore these dayes / in thys longe tyme of so many hundred yerys. Howe
be it he gooth nere ynoughe to take yt all awaye. And dyuerse of hys
scolars bysyde Tyndall / do nowe denye yt vtterly. And hym selfe leueth

lytell substaunce and lytell frute therin. For he wolde that we sholde not care myche for eny full confessyon of all deedly synnys / nor be very studyouse in the gatheryng of our fautes to mynde / nor ponderynge the cyrcumstauncys nor the weyght & grauyte therof / nor takyng eny
5 sorow therefore. Now these thyngys taken away / & the sacrament of penaunce lefte such as he wold haue it / consyder in your self what frute were a man lykely to fynde in yt / he that taketh a confessour he forceth not whom / & then confesseth he forceth not what / dysposyng hym to repentaunce he forceth not how / good workes in satisfaccyon
10 accompteth for nought / what maner of amendement shall thys man cum to? & specially yf bysyde all thys he may take to hys confessour a fayr woman such as a yonge man wold haue a lust to breke hys mynd vnto / dothe yt not playnly appere that thys fonde felow so playeth wyth thys holy sacrament of penaunce / that he gooth about vtterly to
15 dystroye yt? And yet ys thys one of the thre that he leueth / takynge foure away expressly.

Surely quod your frende so dooth he this to / as thynketh me.

Forsoth quod I & he handeleth the sacrament of baptysme not mych better. For he magnifyeth baptysme but to the suppressyon of penaunce
20 & of all good lyuyng. For therin he techeth that the sacrament self hath no vertue at all / but the fayth onely.

Item he techeth the onely fayth suffyseth to our saluacyon wyth our baptysme / wythout good workys. He sayth also that yt is sacrylege to go abowte to please god wyth eny workys & not with fayth onely. Item that
25 no man can do eny good worke.

Item that the good & ryghtuouse man alway synneth in doying well.

Item that no synne can dampne eny cristen man / but only lacke of bilefe. For he sayth that our fayth suppeth vp all our synnys how grete
30 so euer they be.

Item he techeth that no man hath no fre wyll / nor can eny thyng do therwyth / not though the helpe of grace be ioyned thervnto / but that euery thyng that we do good & badde / we do nothyng at all there in our self / but onely suffer god to do all thyng in vs good & badde / as
35 wexe ys wrought in to an ymage or a candell by the mannys hande wythout eny thyng doying therto yt selfe.

Item he sayth that god ys as veryly the author and cause of the euyll wyll of Iudas in betrayeng of Cryst / as of the good wyll of Cryst in suffryng of hys passyon.

In matrymony he sayth playnely that yt ys no sacrament / & so sayth Tyndall to.
40

Item that yf a man be not able to do hys dutye to hys wyfe / he ys bounden secretely without sclaunder to prouyde a nother to do yt for hym.

Forsoth quod your frende thys was courteysly consydered of hym / he is a very gentylman I warant you. It is no meruayll though his wyfe be well teemyng yf he make her such prouysyon.
45

Surely quod I thys wyse deuise hathe he / and mych other bestelynesse he sayth in such thynges & his discyple after hym of such sort as honest erys coud scant abyde the herynge.

In the sacrament of order he sayth / that presthede and all holy orders be but a fayned inuencyon.

Item that euery crysten man and euery crysten woman ys a preste.

Item that euery man may consecrate the body of cryst.

5 Thys ys a shamefull saynge in good faythe quod youre frend.

Abyde ye quod I & ye shall here wurse yet. For he sayth ferther that euery woman and chylde may consecrate the body of our lord.

Surely quod he than ys the man mad out ryght.

He sayth quod I ferther yet / that the canon of the masse ys false.

10 Item that the hoste in the masse ys none oblacyon nor sacryfyce.

Item that the masse wyth hys canon after the fourme that ys & euer hath ben vsed in Crystys chyrche / ys sacrylege and abomynacyon.

And thoughe myche of thys concerneth hys dampnable heresyys touchyng the blessyd sacrament of the auter / yet sayth he therof many lewd doctrynes mo. And amonge other he techeth that yt is heresy to byleue that there ys not very brede and very wyne in the sacrament of the auter ioynyd wyth the bodye and blode of our lorde.

Item Swynglius and Ecolampadius scolers of Luther haue byelded ferther vppon thys vngracyouse ground of theyr mayster / and teche that the sacrament of the auter ys not the very body nor blood of oure lord at all. And Luther hym selfe all be yt he now wryteth agaynste them there in / yet (as yt by many thyngys appereth) mynded and intended to putte forthe by laysour the same heresyie hym selfe / tyll he chaunged his mynd for enuye that he bare toward them / whan he saw that they wold be hedys of a secte them selfe (for that cowlde he suffer no man to be but hym selfe). But byfore as I saye he dyd entende yt hym selfe. And therefore he made away towarde yt by these other heresyys that I haue rehersed you / & by dyuerse other mo.

30 For he techeth also that the masse auayleth no man quyck nor dede / but onely to the preste hym selfe.

Item he techeth that men shold go to masse as well after sowper as byfore brekefast / & in hys commen clothes as he gooth all daye wythout lyght or eny other honorable ryte vsed therin.

35 Item he sayth it were beste that men sholde neuer be howeseled / but onys in theyre lyfe. And that neuer tyll they lye a dyenge / as they be but onys crystened / & that at theyre begynnyng.

Item he techeth that euery man & woman shold take the holy sacrament / & spare not to touche yt & handell yt as mych as theym lyst.

40 Item he sayth that the blyssed sacrament of the auter ys ordayned of god to be receyued / but not to be worshypped.

In fayth quod your frende these thynges be farre owte of course.

Ye see quod I now howe he handleth all the blyssed sacramentys.

45 But now hathe he other wylde heresyys at large. For he techeth agaynste scrypture and all reason that no crysten man ys or can be bounden by eny law made amonge men / nor ys not bounden to obserue or kepe eny.

Item he techeth that there ys no purgatory.

Item that all mennys soulys lye styll & slepe tyll the daye of dome.

Item that no man sholde praye to sayntys nor sette by any holy relyques nor pylgrymagys / nor do any reuerence to any ymagys.

By my trouthe quod your frende I hadde forgotten / that whan I was nowe in the vnyuersyte in the communycacyon that I had wyth my
5 frendys there in that mater / one of theym obiected agaynst me / that the worshyppe of ymagys hath be ere thys condempned by a greate counsall in Grece.

There was in dede quod I a counsayll onys in grece gathered by an
emperoure / that then was an heretyque there / whych was after in the
10 eyghteth Synode by the generall counsayll dampned and adnulled. But thys no more doth to the mater / then yf there wolde now in Saxony and Swycherland and such other places / such people as be swarued fro the fayth gather theym selfe togyther and kepe as they wolde call it a generall counsell / wherin they myght determine what they wold. And
15 yet were all that no preiudyce to the ryght byleue of the catholyque chyrch / whych ys alwaye that knowen people that styll perseuer as one body wyth our sauour Cryst in theyr former fast confermed fayth / from whych faythfull body these other wytherynge brawanches be blowen away by the deuyll. And therefore as a counsayle of Lutheranis
20 assemblyng theym selfe in Saxony cowlde make none authoryte agaynste the true fayth of the chyrch / so could that counsayle in grece no thyng proue theyr purpose / whych made none interrupcyon of the ryght byleue and godly custume of worshyp done to sayntys and ymages / that yet dyd for all that continue styll in all the catholyke chyrche of
25 Cryste / & euer synnys hath done.

Forsothe quod he that is trouthe.

But yet quod he / was there one at our communycacyon lerned in the lawe / and in hys chambre were we / whych sayed that yf he lyst he could shew a fayre law incorporate in the decrees of the chyrch /
30 whych lawe yf it were layed in theyre lyght that wold take vpon them the defence of eny worshyppe to be done to ymagis / wolde make all theyr eyen dase. Then longed not onely I but all the remenaunte also very sore to se that law. In bryngyng forth wherof he made a whyle somewhat straunge / as of a thyng kepte for a secrete mystery. But in
35 conclusyon he sett forth a boke of the decrees / and therin he redde vs in good fayth a playne text as me thought and all that were present / by whych saynt Gregory wryteth vnto a certayn bysshoppe that had broken downe the ymagis in hys chyrch / and there saynt Gregory al be yt that he blameth hym for brekyng them / yet for all that he commendeth
40 hym for that he wold not suffre them to be worshypped.

Dyd you quod I rede that law your selfe?

In good fayth quod he I stode by and loked on that boke whyle he redde yt.

Dyd he quod I or you eyther rede the next law folowyng in the boke?

45 Nay veryly quod he / for me thought thys was ynough.

So was yt veryly quod I & to mych to / wythout more. But and yf ye had eyther red the next lawe folowyng or the glose vpon the selfe same law that ye redde / ye shold then haue seen that the law whych he shewed you made lytle for his purpose.

By my trowth as for the glose quod he neyther I nor eny man ellys
that there was had lyste onys to loke on / consydryng that the texte was
playne and eth to vnderstande. And as for the law next folowyng we
loked not after / for we thought to fynde yt contrary. And yf we shold /
5 then shold we not yet haue wyst which we shold byleue.

Yes / yes quod I ye wold not mych haue dowted yf ye had redde the
law that foloweth / for yt ys a law synodall made in the .vi. Synode / in
whyche there is well and playnely shewed that ymagis be to be
worshypped among crysten men / and wen declareth in what wyse we
10 worshyppe theym and owe to do / that ys to wyt none ymage to be
worshypped as god / nor ye hope of our helth to be bysette vppon the
ymage / nor to loke that the ymage shall be he whych shall iudge our
soulys in tyme to come / but we worshyp the ymage and reuerence /
and well owe to do for the remembraunce of the thyng that the ymage
15 representeth. And yet though we do the ymage honour & reuerence / yet
for dyuine honour & seruyce onely done to god / that kynde of
worshyppe called latrya we neyther do nor may do / neyther to ymage
nor any creature in all the hole world eyther in heuen or erth. And this
shold ye haue seene yf ye had eyther redde as I say the lawe next
20 folowyng or the glose of that law that ye redde.

Mary quod he but in the lawe selfe that we rede good saynt Gregory
sayth playne the contrary. For he commendeth the bysshoppe there
bycause he wolde not suffre the ymagys to be worshypped at all.

That worde at all quod I ye set to your selfe more then ye fynd in the
25 boke. For in dede the boke sayth no more but that they shold not be
worshypped by thys laten word adorare. By whyche word he vnderstode
the diuine worshyp called latrya.

Wherby knowe we quod he he vnderstode yt so / for I byleue not
myche the glose.

30 Ye may quod I perceyue it by the lawe that foloweth. Wherein albe yt
that there by the same word adorare / yet is yt there shewed how we
may adorare / that ys to wyt how we may worshyppe ymagis.

Why quod he yf that law say quod possumus adorare & saynt
Gregory sayth quod non licet adorare / be not they twayn playne
35 repugnant?

Yes quod I yf they both toke that word adorare in one sence. But
when the Synode vsed that word for such worshyppe as we may do to a
creature / & saynt Gregory vseth yt for suche worshyppe onely as may
not be done but onely to the creatoure / then they be nothyng
40 repugnaunt at all.

But yet quod he wherby shall I be sure that saynt Gregory toke yt so
/ for it appereth by the law as your selfe sayth that the worde may be
taken otherwyse. For the same law yt selfe taketh it otherwyse / & then
peraduenture so dyd he / & therby forbode all maner worshyppe to be
45 done vnto ymagys.

That were very vnlykely quod I that saynt Gregory were of one mynd
and the hole Synode of the contrary.

But now syth ye make the mater so clere vppon the wordes of saynt
Gregory incorporate in the decrees / and wyll not byleue the glose /

whych appereth playnely that he ment onely to forbed vs to do such
worshyp to ymages as ys onely due to god: will ye be content therin to
byleue saynt Gregory hym self yf he tell you hym selfe that he ment none
other?

5 Ye for god quod he that wyll I well.

Then quod I we shall agre well Inough. And therwyth I toke downe of
a shelve among my bokes the regystre of saynt Gregoryes epystles / and
therin turned to the very wordes whych are by Gracyane taken owt of
hys secunde epystle ad Serenum episcopum Massilie / and in corporate
10 in the decrees. And then caused I hym to rede the formall wordys as
they be cowched in the decre. And by the collacyon of the tone with the
tother I caused hym to se that Gracian had taken but a parte of the
epystle / and that by other wordys of the epystle selfe / yt appereth
euydently that saynt Gregory spake of none other worshyppe to be wyth
15 drawen from ymagys but onely dyuyne worshyppe & obscurauns dew to
god / as by dyuerse other thyngys in thepystle appereth playn / as in
that he sayth that / that yt ys not licfull to worsyppe eny thyng
wroughte by hand / by cause yt ys wrytten. Dominum deum tuum
adorabis / et illi soli seruias / thou shalt worshyppe thy lord god and
20 onely hym shalt thou serue.

Now ys yt in thys place of scrypture ment none other worshyppe nor
seruyce then dyuyne honour / and seruyse called latrya as ys to lerned
men well knowne. And he that wyll afferme the contrary and say that in
scrypture ys forboden from ymages all maner of worshyppe / he must
25 afferme also that all maner worshyppe & all maner seruyce is forboden
by scrypture from all maner creaturis. For the scripture sayth there /
thou shalt worshyppe and serue onely god / and so shold we by that
construccyon neyther worshyppe nor serue father nor mother / maystre
nor prynce nor kyng. And in the same place saynt Gregory sayth that we
30 do worshyppe onely the holy trynite / whych sheweth that he speketh
onely of diuyne worshyppe called latrya / whych ys done wyth a mynd
that reputeth the thyng worshypped to be very god. For ellys by those
wordes yf he forbod eny maner worshippe for to be done to eny thyng
sauyng the trynite / then dyd he forbed eny worshyppe to be done to
35 eny saynt or to our blessyd lady eyther. And euery man well woteth how
reuerently hym selfe worshypped both our lady and all sayntys as well
by many bokis & epystles of hys / as by the letany whych as his epystles
well sheweth he ordeyned to be wyth great deuocyon vsed in honour of
god our lady & all holy sayntys. And ouer that by the great honour that
40 he dyd to sayntes in chyrches specyally dedicat vnto theym / and also
great honour and reuerence vsed vnto theyr holy reliques / as in his
awne bokys & epystles appereth. And fynally yf hys epystles had bene
loste owt of whych the decre ys taken / Yet the wordys of the decre yt
selfe wolde well Inough suffyse. For theryn ys yt specyefyed that ymagys
45 be the bokys of lay peple wherin they rede the lyfe of Cryste. And then yf
yt be as yt is in dede well and vertuously done deuotely to kysse a boke
in whych Crystes lyfe / and hys deth is expressed by wrytyng / why
shold it be euyll done reuerently to kysse the ymagys by whych Crystys
lyfe & his passyon be represented by scrypture or payntyng?

In good fayth quod he I am well satysfied in thys mater / and so wold they that then were wyth me yf they had seen all that I se now.

They may quod I sone se as myche when so euer they lyste to loke therfore.

5 But now to turne agayne to the mater / neyther the bysshoppe of Massyle that brake the ymagis that they speke of / nor the counsayle of grece neyther scismatycall as it was / went neuer yet so farr as Luther and Tyndall and theyr company do / whych not onely set at nought ymagis but also leue no saynt vnblasphemed / nor Cristes own mother
10 neyther.

For Luther can not abyde the comen anthem of our lady and the most deuout Salue regina / bycause we therin call that blyssed vyrgyn our aduocate.

15 Item he sayth that euery other woman nowe lyuyng yf she haue the same fayth maye be prayed vnto as well as our lady / and wyth her prayer as mych profyte vs.

Item he techeth that men sholde do no worsyp to the holy crosse that Cryst dyed on / saynge that yf he had yt hole or all the pyecys therof / he wolde caste yt in such a place as no sone shold shyne theron / to
20 thende yt shold neuer be founden to be worsypped more.

Item of all feests he sayth that he hateth the feest of the holy crosse / and the feest of Corpus christi.

He techeth also that no man or woman ys bounden to kepe and obserue eny vowe that he hath made to god of vyrgynyte / or wydowhed
25 / or other chastyte out of maryage / but that they maye mary at theyr lyberte theyr vowe not wythstondyng.

And how proueth he that quod your frende?

30 Mary quod I by the brekyng of hys owne / whan he maryed the nunne. And now he rayleth agaynste all chastyte / and sayth that yf a preste lyue chaste / he ys lyke to the prestys of the ydole Sybeles.

Longe wolde yt be to wryte you all thabomynable heresydes of thys newe secte. But some of theym haue I rehersed / that ye may therby
35 consyder whyther he that techeth such thyngys / go not about vtterly to dystroye the hole fayth / relygyon / and vertue of crystendom. And that he ys not in eny of these poyntes bylyed / I shall fynde the meane that ye shall se yt in hys owne bokys. And there shall ye se how madly he laboreth to proue theym.

40 Proue theym quod your frende? the substaunce of these maters be to abomynable to be reasoned. And to make hym hated of all good folke / is ynough to here theym rehersed. But I meruayl me mych how he fell in to suche an hepe of heresydes.

The .iii. chapyter.

45

Now that ys quoth I somewhat worth to consyder / how thys lewde frere bygan to fall in these mischeuous maters. Ye shall vnderstande that there was a pardon obtayned in Saxony / for whyche pardon as the

maner ys there / Luther was the precheour and preched to the people /
exhortynge them therto / and auauuncynge the authoryte therof all that
he possyble myght / not wythout hys greate aduauntage therfore. So
happed yt than sone after / that the setting forth of the pardon with
5 thaduauntage therof / was taken from hym and set to a nother. For
anger wherof he fell in to suche agaynst all pardons. How be it because
the mater was new and straunge / he bygan fyrst by way of dowtis and
questyons onely / submytting hym self and hys wrytynge to the
iudgement of the pope / & desyring to be enformed of the trouthe.
10 Wheruppon whan he was by wrytynge answered by the mayster of the
popys palays / than waxed he more wood and fell to raylyng agaynste
hym / and made also a nother boke agaynste the power of the pope /
affermyng that hys power vppon the chyrch was neuer instytute of god /
but ordeyned only by the commune consent of crysten people for
15 auoydynge of scysmys. But yet he sayd that all crysten men were
bounden to stand and obay therunto / and that the Bohemes were
dampnable heretyques for doynge the contrary. But sone after whan he
was in suche wyse answered by good and cunnyng men / that he
perceyued hym selfe vnable to defend that he had affermed / than fell he
20 from reasonyng to raylyng / and vtterly denyed that he had byfore
affyrmed. And than bygan to wryte that the pope had no power at all /
neyther by god nor man. And that the Bohemes whom he had in hys
wrytynge byfore called dampnable heretykes / were good cristen men /
and all theyr opynyons good and catholyque. Than whan he was cyted
25 by the popes holynes to appere / he appeled to the next generall
counsayle / whyche sholde be gathered in the holy goost. So that what
so euer generall counsayle were after assembled / he might geste & rayle
theron / and saye yt was not yt that he appeled vnto / for yt was not
assembled in the holy goost.

30 He toke quod your frend a good wyly way.

As wyly as yt was quod I yet wold he not stand therby / but fledde
from that to a nother. For now shall ye vnderstand / that yet sone after
this in the boke by which he not answereth but rayleth against that
boke wherin our souerayne lord the kynge lyke a moost faythfull
35 vertuous & moost erudyte prynce / euydently and effectually reuynced
& confuted the moost venemous and pestylent boke of Luther entytled
the captyuyte of Babylon / in whych he laboreth to destroy the holy
sacramentys of Crystys chyrch: in that boke I saye Luther which had
byfore appeled to the next generall counsayll / vtterly denyeth the
40 authoryte of all generall counsaylys / and setteth theym all at nowghte.

By my trouthe quod your frend eyther was the man very negligent
byfore / or very naught after / whan he chaungeth so often / and
wryteth euer the longer the more contrary / not to hys aduersary onely /
but also to hym self. But I pray you how excuseth he his inconstaunce?

45 Mary quod I he sayth that he seeth ferther than he sawe byfore.
Wherunto the krfyngys grace sheweth hym that yt were vnlykely / that
he shold se better through a payre of euyl spectacles of ire and enuye.

Very true quod your frende by my trouthe. But yet I here saye that he
hath offred to stande at the iudgement of lerned men in all hys maters /

yf hys offre had ben taken in tyme.

In dede quod I onys he promysed to stande to the iudgement of the vnyuersyte of Parys / and theruppon was there open dyspycyons kepte / and the very wordys wryten by notaryes sworn for bothe the partyes. But
5 whan hys opynyons were after at Parys by the vnyuersyte condempned / than he refused to stand to theyr iudgement / and fell agayne to hys olde craft of raylynge.

He appered also at Wormys before the emperoure and the pryncys of the empyre by a safeconducte. And there recognysed and knowleged as
10 well the sayde pestylent boke wryten agaynst the sacramentys / as many other of lyke sorte to be his owne / and offred to abyde by theym. Whyche he myght boldely do / beynge by the saufe conducte in good suretye of hym selfe that he could take none harme. Than was he moued to dyspycyons vppon the articles / so that he shold agree vppon som
15 persons vertuous and well lerned / that shold be iudgys of that dysputacyons / and that he sholde be content to stand to theyr iudgement vppon the same. Wheruppon he agreed to come to dyspycyons / but he wolde in no wyse agre to make eny men lyuyng judges vppon yt / nor stande to no mannys iudgement erthly.

20

The .iiii. chapyter.

And that these thyngys be true / yt well appereth to all the world in
25 the boke that he made hym self of his demeanure / and hys actys at the cytye called Wormys in almayne. Whych boke who so redeth / shall haue a grete pleasure to se therin / both the frantyke vaynglory of the fond frere / and yet there wythall to se hym caryed out wyth foly so far from hym selfe / that in a lyne or twayne he discouereth all that he went
30 abowte to hyde / in all the boke bysyde. For ye shall vnderstande that albeyt he made that boke hym selfe / yet he made yt so / that he wold yt shold seme to haue ben of some other mannys makynge and not of hys owne / to thentent that suche worsypfull wordys as he speketh of hym selfe / myght make hym in the erys of the reder / seme some honorable
35 person. Whyche wordys ellys he wyst well spoken of hys owne mouth / all the world wolde wonder on. Now in thys boke bysyde that he leueth out some thyngys there sayde and spoken where the wordys wryten in coulde do hym no worshyppe / and som thyngys recyteth wyth aduauntage for hys part / rehersyng the tother syde nakedly & barely &
40 sum part pared of to / to make yt seme the more slender / one thyng he obserueth dylygently / that where as spekyng of the emperour he calleth hym neuer but symply and syngly charles / he neuer speketh of hym selfe but he setteth forthe hys name in grete capytall letters and solempne tytles / The Man of God Luther. And where as they that spake
45 agaynst his errours / he wryteth that they brast out in vyrulent and venymouse wordys / whan he cometh to hys owne answer / than he wryteth in thys wyse / but than D. Martine for hys incredible humanyte & bountye answered in this wyse benygnely. And somtyme wyth these

wordys / The most benygne father most myldely made answer. And
 fynally he fynysheth and endeth hys boke as yt were with a Gloria patri
 to the hole psalme in this wyse. Thys holy deuout man therfore euen
 borne to teche and preserue the gospell of god / our lord long preserue
 5 for hys chyrch wyth hys holy word also Amen. Now who was there euer
 borne so suspycouse that euer wold haue suspected that he whych
 wrote such gloryous wordys of Luther shold be Luther hym selfe. For
 where shold a man fynde so very a vayngloryouse fole / that wold not in
 10 hym self be ashamed of hym selfe to thynke such thyngys. But now ye
 that rede this / I pray you for goddys sake se how vtterly this ych and
 tyklyng of vanyte and vaynglory hadde cast hym clene bysyde hys
 mynde and memorye. For where as all the boke bysyde was so dyuysed
 and handeled / that yt sholde seme some other to haue made yt and not
 15 hym selfe / sodenly the fonde felowe bewrayed hym selfe vnware. For in
 one place forgettynge hym selfe / he speketh in thys wyse. Whan thys
 was spoken / than the oratour of the empyre in a chydyng maner sayde
 that I had not answered to the purpose / and that those thyngys whyche
 had ben dampned and determyned in generall counsayls of old / ought
 20 not now of newe to be brought agayne in questyon by me / and therefore
 I shold gyue a playn answer whyther I wold reuoke myne errorrs or not.
 Than vnto thys I answered in this wyse. Syth that yt ys so .&c. Lo here
 may ye se the incredible humylyte and lowly mynd of this moste
 benygne father / whych vnder the vysour of a straunge herald / bloweth
 25 out hym self hys owne boste. Than may ye se therwyth hys meruelouse
 profounde prudence / that had not the wyt to beware that hym self
 bewrayed not his own so folysh a deuyce / in the vayne auauntynge of
 hys owne false boste and prayse / that though the wordes had ben true
 / yet wold almost a very naturall fole haue ben ashamed of hym self to
 30 wryte them.

By my trouth quod your frend this deuyse was madly mynded of
 Luther / and madly handled / and madly ouersene / to shew hym selfe
 so fond / but yf pryde as the prouerbe ys must nedys haue a shame.

35 The .v. chapyter.

Now as for his constaunce appereth quod I / by that I haue byfore
 rehersed of hys contynuall chaunge in hys heresydes fro day to day / fro
 worse to worse / whych course he kept not onely in the maters aboue
 40 rehersed / but almost in all the remanaunt. For as concernyng
 purgatory / he wrote fyrst that all though yt could not be proued by
 euydent scrypture as he affermed / yet was there no dowte but that
 there ys purgatory / & that thyng he sayd was of all crysten men
 fermely to be byleued. And than he wrote that he wondred of the madnes
 45 of such false and folyshe heretyques as were borne wyth in one hundred
 yere passed / and are not ashamed to denye purgatory / whyche the
 hole chyrch of Cryst hath byleued this fyftene hundred yere. Now what
 constaunce ys there in this frere / that wrote thys of heretyques that

denye purgatory / and wyth in a whyle after denyeth yt hym selfe /
sayng in the sermon that he wrote of the ryche man & Lazare / that all
mennys sowlys lye styll and slepe tyll domys day?

5 Mary quod your frend than hath som man had a slepe of a fayre
length. They wyll I wene whan they wake forgete some of theyr dremys.

By my fayth quod I he that byleueth Luther that hys sowle shall slepe
so long / shall whan he dyeth slepe in shrewd reste.

I mych meruayle quod your frende what euyll ayled hym to fynd out
this fond foly.

10 To thys opynyon quod I / or rather to the faynyng of thys opynyon
(for I verely thynke that hym selfe thynketh not as he wryteth) he fell for
enuye and hatered that he bare to prestehode / by the malyce of whych
hys vngracyous mynde / he rather were content that all the world lay in
the fyre of purgatory tyll domys daye / than that there were one peny
15 gyuen to a preste to praye for eny sowle.

This is quod your frend very lykely.

Lyke constaunce quod I hath he vsed in the mater of holy vowes. For
in hys boke of the captuyte of Babylon / he wryteth that neyther man
nor aungell ys able to dyspense wyth the vowe made by man to god. And
20 some after he wrote that no vowe could bynde eny man but that euery
man may boldely breke theym of hys owne hed. But yt well appereth
that he wrote the fyrste of angre and malyce towarde the pope / and
than chaunged to the second of a lecherous lust to the nunne that he
mynded to mary.

25

The .vi. chapyter.

30 His inconstaunte wyt and very deuylyshe entent specyally shewed it
self / by this also which I shall now reherse you. In the beginnyng the
man had the mynd that comonly such foles haue / he rekened all the
world wylde gesesauē hym self/ and all the wyt & lernyng to stande in
hys own hed. And than wenyng that he shold fynde no matche / but
35 that he shold as he lyst be able to proue the mone made of grene chese /
he professed in his bokis that he wold for the profe or reproue of his
opinyons / stand to naturall reason / to the authoryte of the olde holy
fathers / the lawes & canons of Crystes chyrche / and to the holy
scripture of god wyth thinterpretacyons of the olde holy doctours. But
40 some after whan he perceyued hym selfe in hys opynyon deceyued / and
that he saw hym selfe confuted and concluded euydently both by
scripture / naturall reason / the lawys and determynacyons of the
chyrch / and the hole consent of the holy fathers interpretours of holy
scripture / than bygan he to syng a nother songe. For than as for
45 reason he refused to stand to / saynge that the maters of our fayth be
thyngys aboue reason / and that reason hyndereth vs in our fayth / &
ys vnto fayth an enemy. And as for the lawes of the chyrch / he wyth
other blasphemouse heretyques burned vp openly at Wittenberge /
syngyng in derysyon a dyryge about the fyre for the lawys soule. And

than wold he stand to nothyng but only scrypture / nor to that neyther
 but yf yt were very playne and euydent. But now yf yt were in questyon
 whyther the scripture were euydent for hym or agaynste hym / therein
 wolde he stande to no mannys iudgement but hys owne. For as for the
 5 hole fayth of Crystys chyrch contynued by so many hundred yerys / he
 set vtterly at naught / callynge yt mennys deuycys. And in scrypture the
 interpretacyon of saynt Hierome / saynt Austayne / saynt Ambrose /
 and all the old holy fathers of so many yerys passed / he no thyng wolde
 esteme / but with blasphemouse wordes letted not to wryte / I care not
 10 for Austayn / I care not for a hundred Cipryans / I care not for a
 thousand Hieromis / I care not but for scripture alone / & that is playne
 on my parte. As though none of these old holy cunningg men had
 vnderstande eny scripture tyll he came. Now was he by thys
 vnreasonable maner dreuen to a nother deuyllysh deuyce agaynst
 15 sayntes. For to entent that theyr authorite shold not by the deuocion &
 reuerence that all good men bere theym / mynysh his credence / he was
 forced to labor to brynge men in that heresy that they shold praye to no
 sayntys / but wolde haue theyre ymagys drawen downe / all theyr
 pylgrymagys left vp / all theyre relyquys cast out / all theyr honour &
 20 mennys deuocyon toward theym wythdrawen / so ferforth that he could
 neyther abyde the honour of our blessed lady / nor the holy crosse / nor
 Cristes blyssed body / as playnely declareth hys abhomynable bokys.

25

The .vii. chapyter.

It ys quod your frende a wonder to me / that the people beyng before
 brought vp in the right bylyefe / could fynde in theyre hartys to gyue
 hym audyence in some such heresies as these be.

30 Ye must vnderstand and maye perceyue quod I that he dyd not set
 forth all at onis. But as Tyndall hath bygonne here in england wyth the
 thyng that had a good visage / though he had corrupted yt and ment
 nought in dede / puttyng forthe fyrst the new testament in suche wyse
 handled / that vnlearned folke were lykely to take harm and conceyue
 35 dyuers heresyas in theyre hartys ere they cowlde perceyue hys falshed /
 and than hath synnys by .ii. other bokys openly shewed hym selfe to
 lacke nothyng of Luther / but that he hath not yet maryed a nunne: so
 dyd Luther also put forth in the begynnyng no more but the mater of
 pardons as I told you / and theryn nothyng affermed neyther agaynste
 40 the determynacyon of the chyrche / but submytted hym selfe therto.
 Nowe wyth thys demeanure was there no man offended. But yet dyd he
 that tyme entende a ferther myschyef / whyche he lytell and lytell
 pursued and brought to passe. And one specyall thyng wyth whych he
 spyced all the poyson / was the lybertye that he so hyghly commended
 45 vnto the people / bringyng them in byleue that hauyng fayth / they
 neded nothyng ellys. For as for fastyng / prayer / and suche other
 thyngys / he taught theym to neglecte and set at nought as vayn and
 vnfrutefull ceremonies / techyng them also that beyng faythfull

crystyens / they were so nere cosyns to Criste / that they be in a full
fredome and lybartye discharged of all gouernours and all maner lawys
spyrytuall or temporall / except the gospell onely. And albe it he sayd
that of a speciall perfeccyon yt shold be well done to suffer and bere the
5 rule and authorite of popys pryncys and other gouernours / whyche rule
and authoryte he calleth but only tyranny / yet he sayth that the people
be so fre by fayth / that they be no more bounden therto / then they be
bounden to suffre wrong. And thys doctryne also techeth Tyndall / as
10 the specyall mater of hys holy boke of dysobediencie. Now was thys
doctryne in Almayne of the comen vplandysh people so plesauntly harde
/ that yt blynded theym in the loking vppon the remanaunt & could not
suffer theym to consider and se what ende the same wold in conclusyon
cum to. The temporall lordys were glad also to here thys gere agaynste
15 the clergye / and the people as glad to here yt agaynst the clergye and
agaynst the lordys to / and agaynst all theyr gouernours of euery good
towne and cite. And finally so farr went yt forward / that at the last yt
began to brast out and fall to open force and violence. For entendynge to
bygyn at the feblest / there gathered theym together for the setting forth
of these vngracyouse heresyas / a boystyous company of that vnhappy
20 sect / and first rebelled agaynst an abbot / and after agaynste a
bysshop / wherwyth the temporall lordys had good game and sporte &
dyssembled the mater / gapyng after the landys of the spyrytualtye / tyll
they had almost played as Esope telleth of the dogge / which to snatch
at the shadow of the chese in the water / let fall and lost the chese that
25 he bare in his mouthe. For so was it shortly after that those vplandysh
Lutheranys toke so great boldnes & so bygan to grow strong / that they
set also vppon the temporall lordys. Whych had they not set hand therto
the soner whyle they loked for other mennys landys / had ben lyke
shortely to lese theyre owne. But so quyt they them self / that they slew
30 vppon the poynt of .lxx. thousand Lutheranis in one somer / and
subdued the remanaunt in that parte of Almayn to a ryght miserable
seruytude. How be it in the meane whyle many myscheuous dedes they
dyd.

And yet in dyuerse other partyes of Almayne and Swycherlande /
35 thys vngracyous secte by the neglygence of the gouernours in great
cytyes / ys so ferforth grown / that fynally the commune people haue
compelled the rulers to folow them / whom yf they had take hede in
tyme / they myght haue ruled and led.

And now ys yt to pyteouse a syghte to se the dyspytuous dyspyghtes
40 done there in many placys to god and all good men / wyth the
meruelous chaunge frome all face and fassyon of cristendom / in to a
very tyrannous persecucion / not onely of all good cristen people quyck
and dede / but also of Cryste hym selfe. For there shall ye se nowe the
goodly monasteryes destroyed / the placis burned vp / the relygyous
45 people put out and sent to seke theyr lyuyng / or in many cytyes the
placys yet standynge / wyth more dispyte to god than yf they were
burned vp to ashes. For the relygyous people / monkys / frerys / and
nonnis / be clene drawen and dreuen out / except suche as wolde agre
to forsake theyre vowys of chastyete and be wedded / and the placys

dedycate to clennes & chastyte / lefte onely to these apostatas &
brothelles to lyue there in lechery. Now the paryshe chyrches in many
placys not onely defaced / all ornamentys wythdrawen / the holy
ymagys pulled downe / and eyther broken or burned / but also the holy
5 sacrament cast out / & the abhominable bestes (whych abhorreth me to
thynke on) not abhorred in dyspyte to fyle in the pyxys / and vse in
many placys contynually the chyrches for a cornen syege. And that in so
dyspyghtefull wyse / that whan a straunger of other placys where Cryst
ys worshypped resorteth to these citeys / some of those vnhappy
10 wretched cytesyns fayle not as yt were for courtesye & kyndnes / to
accompany them in walkynge abrode to shewe them the pleasures
and commodityes of the town / and than brynge them to no place
lyghtly but onely the chyrches / to shewe them in derysyon what vses
the chyrches serue for.

15 Of thys sect was the greate parte of those vngracyous people also /
whyche late entred in to Rome wyth the duke of Burbon / not only
robbynge and spoylyng the cyte as well theyr owne frendys as the
contrary parte / but lyke very bestys dyd also vyolate the wyuys in the
syghte of theyr husbandys / slew the chyldren in the syghte of the
20 fathers. And to extorte the dyscouerynge of more money / whan men
had brought out all that euer they had to saue them selfe from dethe or
ferther payne / and were at pactys and promyses of reste wythout
ferther busynes / than the wretched tyrauntes & cruell tormentours /
as though all that stode for nothyng / ceaced not to put them eftesonys
25 to intollerable tormentys. And olde auntyente honorable men / those
fyerce heretyques letted not to hang vp by the preuy membres / and
frome many they pulled them of & cast them in the strete. And some
brought out naked wyth his handes bounden behynd hym / and a corde
tayed fast vnto his preuy members. Than wold they set byfore hym in
30 hys way other of those tyrauntys with theyr morysh pykes the poyntys
toward the brestis of these pore naked men. And than one or two of
those wretches wold stand behynd those morysh pykes / and drawe the
poore sowlys by the membres towarde them. Now than was all theyr
cruell sporte and laughter eyther to se the sely naked men in shrynkynge
35 from the pykys to tere of theyr membres / or for payn of that pullynge to
runne theyr naked bodyes in depe vppon the pykes. To pyteouse and to
abhomyable were yt to reherse the vylanouse payne and tormentys that
they deuyseed on the sely women / to whom after that they had bestely
abused them / wyuys in the syght of theyr husbandys / and the
40 maydens in the syghte of theyr fathers / they were rekened for pyteous
that dyd no more but cut theyre throtys. And very certayn ys yt that not
in Rome onely but also in the countrey of Mylleyne that they kepte and
oppressed / after turmentys vsed and money fet out that way / than
some callynge hym selfe a gentylman in Almayne or Spayne / wolde
45 fayne hym selfe fallen in loue of hys hostys doughter / and that he wolde
mary her in eny wyse / and than make myche earnest bysynes for to
haue som money wyth here. And whyther he gate aught or gate naught
by that deuyse / he letted not sone after to putte the father / the mother
/ the fayre doughter and all the hole howse to newe tormentys / to make

them tell where eny more money were / were there eny or none. And
some fayled not to take the chylde and bynde yt to a broche / and lay yt
to the fyre to roste / the father and mother lokynge on. And than begyn
to comen of a pryce for the sparynge of the chylde / askynge fyrste an
5 hundred ducatys / than fyfty / than fourty / than twenty / than ten /
than fyue / than twayn whan the sely father had not one left / but these
tyrauntis had all byfore. Than wolde they let the chylde roste to dethe.
And yet in derysyon as though they pytyed the chylde they wolde saye to
the father and the mother / Ah fy fy for shame what meruayle ys yt
10 though god send a vengeance among you. What vnnaturall people be
you that can fynde in your hartys to se your owne chyld rosted afore
your face / rather than ye wold out wyth one ducate to delyuer yt frome
deth.

Thus deuysed these cursed wrechis so many dyuers fassyons of
15 exquisyte crueltees / that I wene they haue taucht the deuyll new
tormentis in hell / that he neuer knewe byfore / and will not fayll to
proue hym selfe a good scoler / and surely render theym hys lesson
whan they come there / where yt ys to be fered that many of them be by
thys. For sone after that they had in Rome excercysed a whyle thys
20 fyerce and cruell tyranny / & entred in to the holy chyrchys / spoyled
the holy relyquys / caste owt the blessyd sacrament / pulled the chalyce
from thauter at masse / slayn prestis in the chyrch / lefte no kynd of
cruelte or spyte vndone / but from howre to howre embruyng theyre
handys in bloode / and that in suche wyse as eny Turke or Sarycyne
25 wolde haue pytyed or abhorred / our lorde sent sone after suche a
pestylence amonge theym that he lefte not of them the thyrd parte alyue.
For thys purpose I reherse you this theyr heuy myscheuous delynge /
that ye may perceyue by theyre dedys / what good cometh of theyre
secte. For as our sauour saythe ye shall knowe the tree by the frute.
30

The .viii. chapyter.

Syr quod youre frend in good fayth I neyther can nor wyll defende
35 that secte. But yet reason yt ys to take euery thyng as yt is. And yf yt be
nought / yt hath the lesse nede to be made worse. But as for the
malycyous cruell dealynge of men of warre / ys not in my mynde to be
imputed to the secte of Luther. For there ys no secte so sayntly / but
they falle in cruelte whan they fall to warre. And of euery sect also be
40 some badde. And therefore the malyce of the men ys not as me semeth to
be imputed vnto the secte.

It ys not quod I all one to be sum nought and all nought. But they
that fall in thys secte / wax nought all the hole mayny. For forthwith
vppon thys sect ones begon / the hole flockys of such as were infecte
45 therwith / fell vnto those myscheuous dedes that I byfore rehersed you.
And also though men in warre wax furiose and cruell / yet was there
neuer none that wente therein so farre / and specyally in such kynde of
crueltye as hath ben amonge crysten men in theyre warre alwaye

forborne / as is the dyspytes done to the blessyd sacrament / wherein
these bestes were more hote and more busy than wold the great Turke /
and that bycause theyr secte ys yet in maner worse than hys. More ouer
the vnhappy dedys of that secte muste nedys be imputed to the secte
5 selfe / whyle the doctryne therof techeth and gyueth occasyon to theyre
euyll dedis. A cristen mannys euyll lyuynge / can not be imputed to hys
crystendome. For hys lyuynge ys contrarye to the doctryne and lyuynge
of Cryste. But as for the doctryne of thys vnhappy secte and the lyuynge
also of the begynners of the same ys suche / as euery wyse man well
10 perceyueth / dothe teche and gyue occasyon of theyr euyll dedys. For
what good dede shall he studye or laboure to do / that byleueth Luther
that he hathe no fre wyll of hys owne / by whych he can wyth helpe of
grace eyther worke or praye? Shall he not saye to hym selfe that he may
syt styll and lette god alone?

15 What harme shall they care to forbere / that byleue Luther / that god
alone wythout theyre wyll worketh all the myschyef that they do them
selfe?

What shall he care how longe he lyue in synne / that byleueth Luther
/ that he shall after thys lyfe neyther fele well nor yll in body nor sowle
20 tyll the daye of dome? Wyll not he trowe you saye as the Welsheman
sayde? Yf thou gyue her that day / by god Dauy wyll haue thy cote to.
And thys thyng I say but for a sample. For loke his opinyons thorow /
and ye shall fynde that they playnely sette forth all the worlde to
wretched lyuynge. If they wold say that we mysse constrew their wordys
25 / theyr bokys be open / and the wordys playne / and inculked agayne
and agayne so often and so openly that men can not erre theryn / nor
they by eny cloke or colour defende them.

And bysydys that not only the comenaltye of theyr secte shewe the
effecte and frute of theyr doctryne by theyr abhomynable dealyng as I
30 haue rehersed you / but also the doctours and the archeheretyques
them selfe / well declare the holynes of theyr doctryne by theyr own
lyuynge. For as they lyue they teche / and as they teche they lyue.

35 The .ix. chaptyer.

If the world were not nere at an ende / and the feruour of deuocyon
so sore coled that it were almost quenched among crysten people / yt
coude neuer haue comen to passe that so many people sholde fall to the
40 folowyng of such a bestlysect. For albeyt that the machometanys beyng
a sensuall & fylthy sect / dyd in few yeris draw the great part of the
world vnto yt / by the selfe same ways whych now the Lutheranyse vse /
that is to wytte voluptuose lyuynge & vyolence / offeryng delyte vnto the
receyuours / & deth to the refusours / yet was there byfore this
45 abhominable secte neuer eny sect so shamelesse / that wolde styll
auowe them selfe for cristen folke grauntynge the scrypture to be trewe /
and therwyth all so enemyously blaspheme & oppugne the chyrch of
Criste / the sacramentys of Cryste / the sayntys of Cryst / the crosse of

Cryst / the mother of Crist / and the holy body of Cryst / so shamefully
lyuyng and openly professyng a bestyall maner of lyuyng / clene
contrary to the doctryne and lyfe of Cryste. Tharryanes / the Pelagyanys
/ the Manycheis / and so forthe euey sorte of heretyques / bygan of
5 suche as thoughe they wyckedly erred in substauncyall artycles of the
faythe / yet was theyre outwarde fassyon of lyuyng so honeste and
spyrytuall in apparence / that men thought theym selfe bounden the
better to byleue theyre doctryne as crysten / for som spyrytuall forme
and fassyon of theyr crysten lyuyng. But now the chyefteyns of these
10 execrable heresyas / both teche and vse more sensuall and lycencyous
lyuyng / than euer dyd Machomet. Whyche though he lycence men to
many wyuys / yet he neuer taught nor suffred his folke to breke theyr
chastyte promysed onys and solempnely dedycate to god. Where as
Luther not only techeth monkys freris and nonnes to maryage / but also
15 beyng a frere hath maryed a nunne hym selfe / and wyth her lyueth
vnder the name of wedlocke in open incestuouse lechery without care or
shame / bycause he hath procured and gotten so many shamefull and
shameles companyons.

Who coud haue bydden to loke eny man in the face that shold haue
20 don thus in saynt Hieromes & saynt Austeyns days? what speke we of
saynt Hierom and saynt Austyn? who durst haue don yt for shame eny
tyme synnys Crystys byrthe vntyll oure wreched days? Or who synnys
Adams tyme amonge the chosen people of god? what speke we of the
chosen people of god? the very Paynims and Paganys ydolaters kepte
25 theyr chastyte vowed onys to theyr false goddis / and rather chase to cut
of the membres wyth whyche they myght breke yt than to stande in the
ieopardy to breke yt. And in Rome of olde tyme whan they were Paganys
/ yf eny vestall vyrgyn (for so called they theyr nunnes) were vyolated /
they not onely bette the man to deth wyth roddys in the market place /
30 and beryed the woman quycke / but also rekened yt for a wonderfull
monster / and a token of wrath and indygnacyon of theyr goddys
towardes theyr cyte and empyre / puttyng theruppon them selfe in
deuour wyth open processyons and prayers and sacrefyce / to procure
the recouerye of theyr goddys fauoure. Is yt not than nowe a wonderouse
35 case to se / synnys that the chastyte promysed onys to god / and also to
the false ydols vnder the name of god / hath alwaye ben syth the worlde
began / among crysten and hethen so hyghly esteemed / that the brekers
therof haue alwaye ben by the commune consent of the hole worlde / as
a thyng taught by god vnto good men / and by nature to all men taken /
40 reputed / and punyshed as abomynable wycked wredches / is it not I
saye now a wonderouse thyng to se that in the flok of crysten people /
whyche by Cryste hym selfe / by all hys apostles / by all hys holy
martyrs / confessours / and doctours / by all hys hole chyrche / all the
hole tyme of these .xv. C. yeres passed / chastyte hath ben more hyghly
45 praysed and estymed than euer it was of eny other secte syth the worlde
bygan / we sholde se now a lewde frere so bolde and so shameles to
mary a nunne and byde therby / and be taken styll for a crysten man /
and ouer that for a man mete to be the begynner of a secte / whome eny
honeste man sholde vouchesaufe to folowe? Yf oure lorde god / whose

wysdome ys infynyte / sholde haue syt and studyed to deuise a waye /
wherby he myght caste in our face the confusyon of our foly / how
myghte he haue founden a more effectuall / openly to shewe vs the
shame of oure synne / than to suffer vs that call oure selfe crysten folke
5 / to se suche a rable sprynge vp amonge vs / as professyng the faythe
and relygyon of Cryste / let not to sette at nowght all the doctours of
Crystys chyrche / and lene to the onely authoryte of frere tuk and mad
Maryon?

10

The .x. chapyter.

Surely as I say thys worlde ys eyther after the wordys of saynt Iohan
/ Totus positus in maligno / all set in malyce / that we be so prone
15 wyttyngly to take so wrong a way / or ellis is yt in a meruelouse
blyndnesse / yf we can neyther perceyue by the nowghty lyuynge of the
persons that theyr secte ys nought / nor can perceyue by theyre
doctryne that theyr secte must make theyr persons nought / theyr
heresydes beyng such as ye haue herd. Wherby euery man that eny fayth
20 hath & eny maner knowledge of crysten bylyefe / may well and surely
perceyue that Luther and all hys ofsprynge / wyth all those that fauour
and set forth hys secte / be very lymmes of the deuyll / and open
enemyes to the faythe of Cryst. And not onely to the fayth and manhode
of oure sauour Cryste / but also agaynste the holy goost and the father
25 hym self/ and vtterly agaynst all goodnes of the godhede / as those that
wrechedly lay all the weyght and blame of oure synne to the necessaryte
and constraynt of goddys ordynaunce / affyrmyng that we do no synne
of oure selfe by eny power of our owne will / but by the compulsyon and
handy worke of god / And that we do not the synne our selfe / but that
30 god dothe the synne in vs hym selfe. And thus these wretched
heretyques wyth this blasphemouse heresyde alone / lay more
vylaynouse rebuke to the greate maieste of god / than euer eny one
rybawld layed vnto a nother. For who was there euer that layde vnto a
nother all the partyculere euyll dedys of eny one other man / where
35 these rybawldys laye to the charge and blame of god / all the malyce and
myschyefe frome the fyrste fawt to the laste / that euer was wrought or
thought by man woman or deuyll? And by thys gyue they wretches
greate boldnesse to folowe theyr fowle affeccyons / as thyngys after
theyre opynyon more veryly wroughte in theym by god / than the beste
40 myndys be in good menne. And that yt were therfor in vayne for them to
resyste theyre synnefull appetytys. And yf they shall be dampned / yet
they say yt shall be long or they fele it. For Luther sayth that all soules
shall slepe and fele neyther good nor bad after thys lyfe tyll domes day.
And than they that shall be dampned / shall be dampned he sayth for
45 no deseruyng of theyr owne dedys / but for suche euyll dedys / as god
onely forced and constreyned them vnto and wroughte in them hym
selfe / vsynge them in all those euyll dedys but as a dede instrument /
as a man heweth with an hachet. And that god shall dampne all that

shalbe dampned for his owne dedys onely whych hym self shall haue
done in them / and fynally for hys only pleasure bycause yt lyked hym
not to chose them as he dyd hys chosen people. Whom they say that he
chose in such wyse byfore the bygynnyng of the world / that they can
5 neuer synne.

The .xi. chapyter.

10 **W**han your frend had herd all thys he sayd at last that albeyt the
wordes of Luther semed very playn toward the affermyng of such
opynyons / yet were the thyngys so farr out of all frame / that yt gaue
hym occasyon to dowl lest Luther ment not all thyng so euyll as hys
wordys seme to way to. And yf he so ment hym self wyth other of hys
15 flok & affynyte in Almayne / yet thought your frend that such as here
fauour & folow his sect in England / of whom sum seme ryght honest &
farr from hys maner of lyuyng / do not so take hys wordes nor
vnderstande them that way / but construe them to sum better sence.

Forsoth quod I they can not but know hys open lyuyng in lechery
20 wyth his lewd lemman the nunne. And that all the capteyns of the sort /
sum late cartusyences / sum obseruautis / sum of other relygyons / &
all now apostatas & wedded / lyue in lyke maner & teche other the
same. And by this can they not dout but that theyr doctryne is nought /
except them self alow that way for good. Now as for theyr own goodnes
25 ye find few that fall to that sect / but that sone after they fall in to the
contempt of prayer and fastyng and of all good workys vnder the name
of ceremonies. And yf eny do other wyse / yt is for some purpose for the
whyle to blynde the people and kepe them selfe in fauoure / tyll they
may fynde the tyme by leysoure to fassyon and frame them better to
30 theyr purpose / whyche in the begynnyng yf they shewed them selfe
playnely / could happely not abyde to here them. Of whyche theyre
demeanure / and that in these heresyys they mene here no better than
Luther dothe hym selfe / I haue had good experyens / and amonge
many other thyngys thys that I shall shewe you. It happed me to be
35 lately present / where as one in the Lutheranes bokis depely lerned /
and of trouth neyther in holy scrypture nor in seculare lytterature
vnlerned (as I perceyue not only by the testimony of other men and the
degrees that he hadde taken in the vnyuersyte / but also by hys wordys
and hys wrytynge) was in the presence of ryght honorable vertuous and
40 very cunnyng persons examyned. For he was at that tyme in warde for
heresyie / bycause that beyng lerned and vsynge to here confessyons /
and among many folke metely well alowed in prechyng / and therby
growyng in good opynyon and fauour of many good symple peple /
abusyd all these open & apparent good thynges / to the secrete sowyng
45 and settinge forth of Luthers heresyys. And had for that entent not only
taught and wryten and couertly corrupted dyuers lyght and lewd
persons / but also had bought grete number of the bokys of Luther / &
wyclyfe / Husse / and zuynglyus / and such other heretyques / & of

many one sorte dyuers bokys / to be delyuered as he coud fynd
occasyon vnto yonge scolers of the vniuersytees / such as he thought of
youth and lyghtnes most lykely to be sone corrupted. Thys man I say
beyng examyned & long kepyng hym selfe close from disclosyng of the
5 mater/ and more redy to go strayte to the deuyll wyth lyenge and false
forswerynge / than to be a knowen of hys euyll demeanure and confesse
the trouth / at the last perceyuyng the maters partely by the confessyon
of other folke / partely by his own hand wrytynge / so ferforth comen to
lyghte that they coud in no wyse be cloked / than began he sumwhat
10 playnely to confesse and declare / not onely what he had don for the
setting forth of that secte / but also partely what opynyons he and other
hys felowes had holden and were of. Settynge neuerthesse all the
colours he coud to make yt seme / that though the wordys whych they
spake or wrote were straunge and contrarye to ryght byleue / yet
15 theeffect of theyr meanyng was not mych dyscrepant from the trew faythe
of Crystes chyrch. How be yt whan he was reasoned wythall / and sawe
that he coud not so shyfte yt of/ but that for eny coloure he could fynd
one parte of his tale euer contraryed a nother / at last he shewed
playnly thyr opynyons / & layd forth as in parte for hys own excuse as
20 thyngys enducyng hym therto / all the textys of scrypture / by whych
they pretend to proue theyr opynyons true. Amonge whyche opynyons
whan he came to the opynyon / by whych they holde that onely fayth
alone ys suffycient wythoute good workys / vnto that he sayd in
the begynnyng that they ment nothyng ellys therby / but that men
25 shold put theyr fayth in goddys promyses and hope to be saued
therby / and that they shold not put theyr trust in theyr workys /
for that wolde turne them to pryde.

Then was yt answered hym that he and hys felows could not mene
so. For yf they dyd / than could they not blame the chyrch as they
30 do / makynge as though the chyrch had all thys whyle hyd the
true fayth from the people / and that them selfe were now shent
for prechyng the gospell truely. For yf thys were theyr menyng /
they then ment none other then euery comen prechor of the
chyrche hath alway preched byfore Luthers days. For what prechor
35 hath not told the peple the parable of the pore publycan ashamed
of hys synnys / & the proud pharisey bostynge of his vertues?
Who hath not bod them do well? And albe yt that god wyll rewarde
them for theyr good dedis / yet put not theyr trust in them self
and theyr own dedys / but in goddys goodnes. Who hath not told
40 them that they sholde as god byddeth them in the gospell that
whan they haue done all they can do / yet say to them selfe / we
be but vnprofytable seruauntes / we haue done but our dutye.
These thynges & such other the chyrch hath alway taught
agaynste the puttyng of a proud truste in our own dedys /
45 bycause that we can not alway surely iudge our own dedys for the
blynd fauor that we bere toward our selfe. And therefore was it sayd
to hym / Yf ye ment but thus as the chyrche meneth / than wolde
ye preche but as the chyrch precheth / and not blaspheme the
chyrche in your sermons / as though ye bygan true prechyng of

the gspell / and that the chyrch had hytherto preched false. And
also ye must nedis mene sum other thyng. For Luther whose secte
ye confesse that the haue lened vnto / wryteth in thys mater farre
other wyse. For he sayth playne that faythe alone wythout eny
5 good workys doth iustifye vs and suffyseth for our saluacyon.
Then answered he that therein they ment none other / but that
fayth ys sufficyent alone / yf one happen after he haue faythe and
baptysme to dye ere he haue tyme to do eny good workys. Than was
yt sayde vnto hym / yf they sholde teche thys opynyon vnder suche
10 wordys for a great secrete mystery newe founden oute / & therby blame
the chyrch for mystechyng the people / as though the chyrche taught
theym to put lesse trust in god and in fayth of Cryste than they shold do
/ and induced them to put theyr trust in them self and theyr own good
workes / they vsed them self meruelously / consydering that yf they
15 ment none other / the chyrch and they ment all one thyng. But they
cowlde not mene so. For than why shold they blame the chyrch / that
sayth not the contrary. And also yf they ment none other thyng / few
wordys wolde serue them. They shold not nede so often to speke therof.
For than that tale can do lytell good here or eny where ellys where folk
20 be crystened in theyr cradels. For eyther they dye ere they haue tyme to
do good workys / and than they be to yonge to here that sermon / or
ellys they lyue and haue tyme to do good workys. And than that sermon
were not holsome for theym / that good workys nede not but onely
faythe ys sufficyent wythout theym. And when the people take yt as ye
25 speke yt / that fayth alone is ynough for theym / than is yt now a bare
glose for you to saye that ye ment not so / but onely that fayth alone
had ben ynough for them / yf they had dyed in theyr swadlyng clowtys.

To thys he sayde that they thought also that fayth alone doth iustifye
a man wythoute eny good workys / not onely in chyldren but also in
30 euery age. For whan so euer a man that hath ben a synner dothe
repente and amend in hys mynde wyth a full faythe in the promysys of
god / he ys iustifyed ere euer he do eny of these good workys / almoyses
/ fastyng / or eny such other. For he can not worke well tyll he be good
all redy. For as Criste sayth / Arbor mala non potest bonum fructum
35 facere / an euyll tre can not brynge forth good fruyte / and therefore syth
good workys be good frute / an euyll man can not worke theym. Wherby
it appereth well that the man ys iustifyed byfore by his fayth alone
wythout the workes / and then out of that fayth groweth the good frute
of good workys. But fayth dyd iustifye the man byfore / & the man was
40 as good byfore the workes as he is after. For his fayth dyd iustifye hym.
And as for ythe workes be but thynges that the fayth in the man or the
man by the fayth bryngeth forth / as the tree bryngeth forth hys
leuis & can do none other / fayth beyng in the harte.

Then was yt sayde vnto hym that in this tale he semed to make
45 the good workys to be mych lyke a shadow that the body
maketh of necessaryte whyle yt standeth in the sonne / and is
neuer the better therefore. And then was yt asked hym whyther a
man must not yf his fayth shall serue hym haue charyte
therwythe and a purpose to do good workys. Yes quod he that he

must yf he haue age & dyscrecyon therto. Then was it answered
hym that then was all goone that hym self had sayd bifore. For
than dyd not fayth alone iustifye the man / but the charyte wyth
the purpose of good workys / must by his owne grauntyng nedys
5 go therwith / or ellys wold hys fayth iustifye nothyng at all. For
yf he had neuer so greate a fayth and neuer so sure a bylyef in
goddis promyses / yet yf he purposed to do no good dedys
therwith / but peraduenture harme / he shold haue lytell
iustifycacyon by hys onely fayth. And therefore yt was false that
10 he had sayd a man is neuer the better for his good workys /
whyle his good workys be so taken & reputed with god / that
the purpose of them yet vndone so far forth worketh to hys
iustifycacyon / that wythout that purpose he can not be iustified.
And that yt ys also false that he sayd that fayth alone iustifyeth a
15 man / whan hym self ys fayne to graunt that fayth wythout
charite and purpose of good workes can not iustifye / which is
as mich to say as fayth alone can not iustifye.

To this he answered that he had sayd that fayth onely was
sufficyent / and that fayth alone doth iustifye / bycause that yf a
20 man had fayth / yt could not be but that he sholde worke good
workys. For fayth he sayd coude neuer be ydell / as the fyre must
nedys burne and gyue hete. And therefore as a man maye saye /
the fyre ys ynough to burne a tre though he speke nothyng of
hete / and yet the fyre dothe yt by hete / and a man may saye
25 the fyre maketh me se by nyghte and yet the fyre dothe yt but by
the lyght / so may a man saye that faythe dothe saue vs / though
fayth do yt not wythoute hope and charyte and other vertuouse
workys / bycause that fayth hath alway good hope and charite
wyth yt / and can not but worke well / no more than the fyre
30 can be without hete and lyght and burne all combustyble
thyngys that yt may towche and tary wyth. Then was yt sayde
vnto hym that albeyt a man myghte so speke by the fyre / yet
wold not this thyng serue theyr secte. For he that sayth fyre
alone ys ynough to burne / wold not say nay to hym that wold
35 say that fyre could not burne but yf yt had hete. But your sect
scorneth & blameth the chyrch / bycause the chyrche sayth
that fayth wyll not suffyse but yf yt haue charyte and good
workys. For ellys ye had no cause in this mater to preche
contrary to the chyrche. More ouer where ye saye that fayth
40 hath alway good hope wyth it / that semeth not alway trewe.
For he that hopeth that by fayth alone he shall be saued
wythout eny good workys / as Lutheranis do byleue in dede / he
hath an euyll hope & a dampnable. Now where ye saye that ye
preche faythe alone to be sufficyent bycause that faythe hath
45 alway charyte ioyned therwyth / yf thys were trew / why preche
ye not as well that charyte alone is sufficyent / whych were as
nere the trouthe as the tother. Now where ye make all the
ground vppon this / that fayth hath euer charyte therwyth /
and that yt can not be but that charyte whych is in dede the

thynges that specially bryngeth forth good workys myche more
properly than fayth / forfaythe bryngeth theym forthe by
charyte when yt ys ioyned therwyth / as the apostle sayth /
Fides que per dilectionem operatur / fayth worketh by cheryte /
5 where ye say it can not be but that thys charyte is alway ioyned
vnto fayth / thys grounde wyll fayle you / and make your
foundacyon false / & all your byldynge fall. The apostell Poule
in many places of his epistles sayth the contrary therof. For he
sayth that yf a man haue so grete fayth that he myght by the force
10 of his fayth worke myracles / and also such feruent affeccyon to
the fayth that he wolde gyue his body to the fyre for the defence
therof / yet yf he lacked charite / all hys fayth suffysed not.

In good fayth quod your frende he was well & properly
answered. But yet me thynketh he might haue replied a lytell
15 agayn to those wordys of saynt Poule / & myght haue auoyded
them well wyth other wordes of hys owne. For where he writeth also to
the Galathes / that yf any angell wold come downe from heuen &
preche a contrary gospell to that that he had preched all redy /
accursed sholde he be & not to be byleued / he dyd not in these
20 wordys afferme nor entend therby that euer yt sholde so be / or coude
so be / that any angell so shold do in dede. For he knew ryght well yt
was impossyble that any angell of heuen sholde come downe and tell
a false tale. But he sayde it onely by a maner of spekyng whyche ys
amonge lerned men called yperbole / for the more vehement
25 expressyng of a mater / nothyng menyng ellys but that the
gospell whych he had preched / was the playne sure and vndoutable
trouth / agaynste whyche no man were to be byleued. And in lyke
wyse me thynketh the man that ye speke of myght haue sayde / that
though saynt Poule sayd / If he had so great fayth that he were able
30 therby to remoue hyllys / except he had cheryte therwyth it wold not
scrue hym / he ment therby no more but to shew the grete nede that
men haue to cheryte / & not that yt were possyble that fayth coude be
wythout cherite / no more than he ment that an angell may come
downe from heuen to preche a false fayth. And therefore myght yt yet
35 stande ryght well wyth all those wordis of saynt Poule / that fayth can
not fayle of saluacyon / syth it can not fayll of cheryte. And of trouth
me semeth as that man sayde that fayth can not be ydle but yt muste
nedys worke well.

Forsooth quod I the man lacked you there / for he founde not
40 that glose. Whych though he had / yet wold it not haue serued hym.
For bytwene those two placys of saynt Poule ys there grete dyference.
For in the tone ys there an impossyble excesse and yperbole / in the
tother ys there not so. For angels of heuen neuer can come downe &
teche a false fayth. But faythe may be seuered from charyte. And in the
45 tone place he none other thyng entendeth than as ye saye to shewe
by that great excedynge word / the vndowted trouth of the fayth
whyche hym selfe had preched. But in the tother place his specyall
purpose was to teche the Corynthians / that they sholde neyther
trust that eny gyft of nature / or gyft of god aboute nature / or eny

maner vertue / almoyses dede / faythe / or other / were able to stande
them in stede wythout cheryte. And thys dyd he specyally / for that
he wolde that no man shold be in suche errour / as to reken that
eyther excellent gyfte of cunnynge / greate labour spent in prechyng
5 / great almoyses spent on pore people / or a very feruent fayth / myght
suffyse to theyr saluacyon yf cherite lacked. Agaynst which errour he
doth in suche wyse exhorte theym to cherite / in auoydunge the
rankour whych by occasyon of scysmes dyd aryse among them / that
he shewed theym precysely / that wythout cherite they lost clerely the
10 merite of all theyr other vertues & gracys that god had geuen theym /
cunnynge / almoyses dede / fayth / & all / puttyng the example by his
own self / which though he were a chosen seruaunt & apostle / yet if
he were in langage egall with all the hole world & with angelles to / &
had all the cunnynge that possyble could be had / & the spyryte of all
15 prophecye therwyth / & wold geue all hys goodes in almoyses / & had
also all the full fayth so great that yt suffysed to worke wundes with /
& so feruent that he wolde abyde to be burned for yt / yet yf he lacked
cheryte / all this wolde not serue hym. So that ye may se nowe that
your glose wold not haue releued thys man. For though none aungell
20 could come downe and teche an vntrouthe / and therefore the wordys
that ye alledge can be none otherwyse taken than as ye say by way of
excesse & yperbole / to declare the vehemence of hys mynde in the
mater of fayth whych he than spake of / yet thys other place of saynt
poule that was layed agaynste that heretyque that I speke of / as
25 greate and vehement as the wordys be / yet do they playnely proue
that the apostle sheweth / that fayth may be wythout cheryte /
and that both so grete that yt may suffyse to the doying of greate
wonders / and so feruent that yt may suffre a paynfull deth / and yet
for fawte of charyte not suffycient to saluacyon / and that thys may
30 happe as well in fayth as in almoyses dede / whych the appostle putteth
in the same case. And therefore where that man sayde and ye seme to
conferme the same / that fayth can not be ydle from the workyng of
good worlds / the apostle to shew the contrary / & that all the
workes of fayth though they seme neuer so good / be yet nought in
35 dede if they be not wrought with charyte / commendyth only the
fayth that workyth by charite / sygnyfyng that all other workes of
fayth be not auaylable. And surely fayth alone wyth out charite may
be bysydes this not only ydle with out the busynes of good workes
/ but also for lack of good workes it may be vtterly dede. And
40 therefore as it was there obiected vnto that man / the holy apostle
lames sayth to theym that reken fayth suffycient for saluacyon with
out good workes / that they be worse than deuyls. For he sayth
that the deuyls do byleue / & tremble for the fere of god. And that
men whych by the hope & boldnesse of theyr byleue thynk theyr
45 fayth wythout good workes suffycient / be worse than deuyls /
bycause they stande out of drede of god / that manasseth vnto
them the paynes of hell except they do good workys. Wythout
whyche saynt Iamys for a fynall conclusyon sayth that the fayth
ys but dede.

But here was yt also sayed vnto hym yet agayn / that though
saynt Iamys do say that fayth wythout good workys ys dede / he
sholde not therby runne to hys old glose and say that therefore he
and other Lutheranyes ment that fayth suffyseth to saluacion /
5 bycause they thynk yt can not be but that yt shall nedys bryng
forth good workys / and that therefore on the contrary syde yf one
haue no good workys he hath no fayth / by cause a dede fayth ys
no fayth / as a dede man is no man. It was told hym that this glose
wold not serue hyrn. For saynt Iainis ment not that the fayth that
10 he calleth dede for lakke of good workys ys no fayth / no more
then saynt Powle ment / that a wydow lyuyng in delyte and
pleasure ys no woman / though he sayed that she ys dede euen as
she goth a lyue. But saynt Iamys ment onely that suche fayth shall
not stand them in stede. For saynt Iamys denyeth not but that
15 suche a dede fayth as he calleth dede bycause yt is vnprofytable
/ ys yet a very fayth in dede / though yt be not quykke in good
workys. And therefore he resembleth such a fayth in a man vnto
the vnprofytable fayth that ys in a deuyll. For he sayth that where
such a man ys bold of his fayth / the deuyll hath fayth as well as
20 he / for the deuyll doth byleue such thynges as we byleue. To this
the man answered / that sum ryght well lerned men were of the
mynde / that wythout a man wrought good workys yt was a good
profe that he had no fayth at all / for very fayth could not but
worke / and that the deuyll had no fayth but by equyuocatione of
25 thys word fayth. For the very fayth in dede ys a fayth in the
promyses of god. And the deuyll is desperate and hath not nor can
not haue fayth and trust in goddys promyses.

Then was yt answered hym that those ryght well lerned men
were Luther and Tyndale and theyre felowes / that take theym
30 selfe for better lerned than Crystys blessed apostles saynt Powle
or saynt Iamys / whych in theyre holy wrytyng afferre fully the
contrarye. And where they say that the deuyll hath no fayth but
hath the knowledge of the thyngys that we byleue and so he hath
not fayth / they afferre therin more then they may make good.
35 For saynt Iamys sayth they byleue / and sayth not they know.
And he when he wrote yt knew mych better then Luther and
Tyndall to / what maner perceyuyng the deuylys haue in the
artycles of our fayth. In whych as therbe some wherof the deuylys
haue peradventure not a beleue but a certayn and sure knowledge
40 as of Cristys descensyon in to hell / and spoylynge of theyre
possessyon / so are they of lykelyhed in any other artycles of our
fayth wherof they haue onely belyefe and persuasyon / wythout the
very knowledge and science. And where those well lerned men
Luther and Tyndale / say that the deuyll hath not fayth but by
45 the equyuocacyon of the word fayth beyng in dede as ye say a
fayth in the promyses of god / wherby cristen men hope to cum to
heuen where as the deuylys be desperate and can haue no such
fayth in goddes promyses nor hope or loke for heuen / these well
lerned men that so say go about to sette saynt Iamys to skole. For

they wold we sholde wene that saynt lames dyd speke of fayth lyke
one that wyste not what fayth ment / but were deceyued by
equiuocation of the word / callyng fayth the thyng that is not fayth
in dede / where as in dede saynt lamys speketh of yt as he sholde
5 / and vseth the word in hys ryghte sygnyfycation / and these
Lutheranys abuse the word of a malycyouse mynde to deceyue
vnlerned people wyth equyuocation. For where as fayth
sygnifyeth the bylyef and ferme credence geuen / not onely to
such thyngys as god promyseth / but also to euery trouth that
10 he telleth hys chyrche by wrytyngew wythout whych thyng he
wyll haue vs bounden to byleue / and where as of trouth the
deuylys as saynt lamys sayth do byleue such thyngys and haue
them in a reuerent drede: now wold these heretyques blynd vs
wyth theyre equiuocation / by which they not onely restrayne that
15 fayth vnto the promyses alone frome all other artycles of the fayth
of whych many be no promises as to byleue that there is a god and
that there be .iii. persons and many such other articles / but
also abuse the word fayth all to gether / turnyng it slyly from
bylyefe in to truste / confidence / & hope / and wolde haue
20 yt seme as though our fayth were no thyng ellys but a sure truste
and a faythfull hope that we haue in goddys promises. And thys
sophystycall handelyng of fayth ys the thyng that as appereth
by Tyndall in hys boke of obedience these Lutheranes wene to
deceyue all the world wyth all / and to make men wene that
25 fayth bytokeneth not byleue / but hope and truste / and so to
make men wene that saynt lamys wyste not what fayth ment /
when he layed agaynste them that put theyre truste as these
Lutheranys teche vs in theyr onely fayth / the comparyson
bytwene them and deuylls which byleue as surely as they. And
30 therefore to reprove saynt lamis / they wold make vs byleue that
our fayth were no thyng but hope / where as euery man woteth
that faythe and hope be two dystyncte vertues / and that hope
ys not faythe but foloweth fayth in hym that hath hope. For no
man can hope for heuen yf he byleue yt not. But on the tother
35 syde he may as the deuyll doth though he byleue yt and knowe yt
to / yet fall farr from all hope therof. And yf these Lutheranys wyll
defend theyre heresye by that sophystycall glose / they must then
chaunge theyre artycle / and say no more that fayth alone ys
suffycient / but they muste say that hope alone is suffycient. And
40 yet shall they then lye as lowd as they do now. For hope wythout
cheryte wyll but bygyle them.

After such resonyng the man sayd that he and thother
Lutheranys whan they spake that only fayth was suffycient /
they meane not of a dede fayth that ys wythoute charyte and
45 good workys / but a very fayth that is quicke and worketh by
charite / & that such fayth he thought was suffycient. But than
was it answered / that neyther they nor he could meane so. For
how could they call that thyng fayth onely that is ioyned wyth
charyte and good workys? Or how can yt stande that they

meane that faythe whych by charyte worketh good workis /
whan they say that yt is suffycient alone wythout good workys /
and that yt is as Luther sayth grete synne and sacrylege to go
about to please god by good workes / & not by only faythe? How
5 coud they say that onely fayth suffyseth / yf they shold meane
that without charyte and good workis no fayth suffyseth? For yt
were a mad thyng to saye that fayth alone suffyseth withoute
good workis / and therwyth to say that wythout good workes
fayth suffyseth nothyng. And so was yt sayd vnto hym that
10 therfore though they colour theyr maters whan they be examined
/ yet it can not be but that he and other Lutheranyes where they
sowe theyr heresy / meane playnly as they speke / that folke
nede no more but byleue / and than how so euer they lyue
shall make no mater. For no thyng as Luther sayth can
15 dampne a crysten man / saue onely lacke of byleue. For all
other synnys (yf byleue and fayth stand fast) be quyte absorpte &
sупped vp he sayth in that fayth.

Whan this man was wyth such resonyng and mych better
than I do or can reherse you somewhat sore preced vppon / than
20 brought he forth a nother glose and sayd / that they meaned
not but that faythe yf yt shold suffyse for saluacyon / must
nedys haue wyth yt charyte & good workys / or ellys yt were no
very fayth / as a dede man ys no very man. How be yt he sayd
that though yt be no thyng without good workys / yet whan yt
25 ys ioyned wyth good workys / all the meryte cometh of our fayth
onely / and no parte therof for our workes. So that god gyueth vs
heuen for our fayth only / and nothyng for our workys. For
though he gyue it not for our fayth yf we lacke good workis / yet
yf we haue both / he regardeth not in his rewarde our workes
30 eny thing but only our fayth. And he sayd that for this cause
they say y^l only fayth causeth our saluacion.

To thys it was answered that yf this opinyon were true / yet it
well appered that this is not the thyng that they mene. For the
wordys of Luther & Pomerane & all the archeheretiques of that
35 secte be very playn. For they say that yt is sacrylege to go about to
please god by eny good worlds but fayth only. And than why
sholde good workes be ioyned to fayth / or why shold god exacte
good workes of vs? wherof shold they serue / yf they be nothyng
plesaunt to god? And whan Luther sayth that nothyng can
40 dampne eny crysten man but onely lacke of byleue / he sheweth
manifestely that we not onely nede no good workys wyth our
fayth / but also that so we haue fayth / none euyll workys can
hurte vs. And so he meaneth playnely that fayth onely wyth out
eny good workys ioyned therto / and also wyth all kynd of euyll
45 workys ioyned therto / ys suffycient to saue vs. And therefore yf ye
be of hys secte (was yt sayde to the man) ye can not auoyde but
that thys is your very doctryne how so euer ye colour yt. Than
was yt ferther asked hym yf theyr meanyng shold be such as he
had sayd / what shold moue hym and other hys felowes so to

thynke / that in fayth and good workys ioyned to gether / the
good workys were nothyng worthe / but that all the merite
shold be in the fayth / and all the thanke and reward sholde be
gyuen to the fayth / and right nought to the good workys.

5 Wherunto he answered that many textes of scrypture
enduced them there vnto / and specyall textys of saynt Powle:
Fides iustificat / fayth iustifyeth. And / Credit Abraam deo /
et reputatum est ei ad iusticiam / Abraam byleued god / & yt
was accompted in hym for iustyce. Si ex operibus / habet quidem
10 gloriam / sed non apud deum / Yf he were iustified by the
workys / than had he glorye / but not wyth god. Si ex operibus /
Cristus pro nobis gratis mortuus est. Yf we be iustified by the
workys / than dyd Cryste dye for vs for naught. Gratis redempti
estis / Ye be redemed frely. And therby maye we se that oure
15 workys were no parte of the cause. And yet specyally these
wordys of oure sauour Cryst he sayd myche moued them to be
of that mynde / where he sayth / Qui crediderit et baptizatus
fuerit saluus erit / He that byleueth and ys baptysed shall be
saued. Where Cryst requyryth nothyng but onely fayth.

20 By all these textys he sayde yt playnely appered that all our
saluacyon came of fayth / as Abraam was iustified by fayth & not
by his workys. And that yf our good workys sholde be the cause of
our saluacyon / than as saynt Poule sayth Cryste dyed for
nought. For he neded not to dye for vs / yf our owne workys
25 myghte saue vs. Nor we were not redemed frely / yf we sholde
redeme oure selfe wyth the payment of oure owne workys.

To thys was yt answered that those textys and all other
alledged for that purpose / signyfy none other but that after
the fayth of Cryst brought in to the worlde by the incarnacyon
30 and passyon of our blessyd sauour / men are no lenger
bounden to the obseruaunce of Moyses lawe. Nor that all the
law of Moyses / nor all the good workys of man / were not able
to saue one man of them selfe / nor wythout fayth / & that
Criste frely redemed vs. For neyther had he or euer shall haue
35 eny rewarde of vs for the bitter paynes taken in hys blyssed
passyon for vs. Nor neuer deserued we vnto hym that he sholde so
moche do for vs. Nor the fyrst fayth / nor the prechyng therof /
nor the fyrste iustifycacyon of man therby / nor the sacrament
and fruyte of our baptysme / was not gyuen to the worlde for
40 eny good workis that euer the world had wrought / but onely of
goddys mere lyberall goodnes. But yet there ys neuer a texte of
them nor eny other in all scrypture so ment / that after the
baptysme the fayth onely shall saue vs wythout good workys / yf
we lyue and haue reason to do them. For though yt be sayd by
45 the mouth of our sauour / he that byleueth shall be saued /
where he nothyng speketh of eny good workys / yet meaneth he
not that he that byleueth shall be saued / wythout good workys
yf he lyue to do them. For ellys why sholde ye not as well say
that men shall be saued for kepyng of the commaundementys

wyouth fayth / syth Criste sayth yf thou wylte entre in to the
kyngdome of heuen kepe the commaundementis. And sayth
also / do that and thou shalt haue lyfe. At whyche tyme he
spake no worde of eny faythe. He sayth also in holy scripture /
5 Date elemosinam / et omnia munda sunt vobis / Gyue almyse /
and all is clene in you. Whych wordys yf men sholde as largely conster
for the preemynence of almyse dede / as ye that are of Luthers secte
conster the textys that speke of faythe / they myghte take a false
glose and coloure to saye / that wythout faythe or penaunce eyther /
10 or eny other vertue / almyse dede alone suffyseth for saluacyon / how
wretchedly so euer we lede oure lyfe besyde. But yf we sholde so saye of
almyse dede / we sholde saye wronge / as ye do whan ye say so of
faythe. For lyke wyse as yt is vnderstand that fayth must nedys go
wyth good workes yf they shall be frutefull / though it be not spoken of
15 in those textis that speke of good workys / so is yt vnderstanden that in
theym whyche after baptysme haue tyme and reason to worke well /
good workis must walke wyth faythe and sorow at harte for fawte of
good workis / yf the fayth shall aught auayle them. For yf bothe good
workys and fynall repentaunce of the lacke of good workys do fayle
20 vs / hauynge tyme and reason to them / we be lyke to fare myche the
worse for our fayth. And that thys ys thus / we maye well knowe by the
textys of holy scripture yf we sette theym together / and take not one
texte for our parte and set a nother at nought.

To thys answered he that albe yt these textys set together / do proue
25 that fayth alone dothe not suffyse wythout good workys (whych
thyng he sayde that hym selfe denyed not) yet he sayd that none of
those textys proue eny thyng the contrary / but that whan fayth and
good workys be ioyned together / all the meryte cometh yet of oure
faythe onely and nothyng of our workys.

30 Wherunto he was answered that though yt so were in dede that
no textys of scripture proued the contrary / yet syth there ys none that
sayth so / and the hole chyrche sayth and byleueth the contrary /
what reason haue ye to say so / and to gyue the hole meryte vnto
faythe / and no parte of the rewarde to good workys? And now haue ye
35 myche lesse reason so to do / whan the playne wordys of holy wryt be
openly to the contrary. For dyd not god saye to Cain / Yf thou do well
thou shalte haue well? Sayth not Cryste of theym that dothe
almyse / A good measure shaken together / heped and runnyng ouer
shall they gyue in to your bosome? Dothe not our lorde shewe that in
40 the day of iugement he wyll geue the kyngdome of heuen to theym
that haue done almyse / in mete / drynke / clothe / and lodgyng /
bycause of theyr charite vsed in those dedes? Which dedys though he
wyll not rewarde wyth heuen excepte fayth went wyth them / yet yf
they were wrought in fayth / he promyseth to rewarde those workys
45 and not theyr fayth onely / and that so ferforth that yt appereth by the
wordys of our sauoure in the same placys / and by his wordys in
whyche he sayd he wolde in the daye of iudgement speke to them that
had by fayth wrought wonders in hys name wythout good workys and
cheryte / whome he wolde than bydde / walke workers of wyckednesse

/ and tell theym that he knoweth theym not / by these thyngys I saye
yt well appereth / that be a mannys fayth neuer so greate / yet yf
those good workys fayle hym / hys fayth shall fayle of heuen.

5 Than sayde he yet agayne that faythe can neuer be wyth oute good
workys. But and yf a man haue fayth / hys fayth shall not fayle nor
ceace to brynge for the the fruyte of good workys / as the tre bryngeth
forthe hys leuys.

10 Than was it answered him that he was dreuen from that poynt byfore
/ as well by thauthoryte of saynt Poule as of saynte Iamys. And also
that he wyste well that fayth or byleue ys not contrary to euery synne /
but only to infydelyte and lacke of bylyef / so that wyth other synnes it
maye stand. Than sayd he that yf men byleued surely / he thought
they wold not syn. For who wolde synne sayde he yf he byleued veryly &
surely that synne sholde brynge hym to hell? Wherunto it was
15 answered / who so byleued after your Lutherane fayth / sholde neuer
let to synne / syth Lutheranis byleue that no synne cowlde dampne
theym but onely lacke of beleue / and that no good worke nedeth
them / but that they shall be saued how so euer they lyue for their
onely fayth. Wherby yt well appereth that ye Lutheranys haue but half
20 a fayth. For ye byleue god onely in his promises / and in hys threttys
ye byleue hym not at all. How be it yf one byleued in dede surely as
ye wold nowe seme to byleue / trouth is yt that yt wold let many a
man from synne / but yet not euery man. For all be yt that many
men there be eyther the more bolde in synne or the more negligente in
25 good vertues / bycause theyr faythe ys very faynt and feble / which
wold yf they had a sure and an vndowted fayth be in such drede of god
and loue also / that yt wold wythdrawe theym from synne and sette
theym in the waye of vertue / yet many men be there on the tother
syde that were theyre fayth neuer so stronge / yet shold yt not mayster
30 the frowardnes of theyr malycyouse appetytys. And thys wolde happen
sometyme and dayly dothe / in menne not depely drowned in malice /
nor folke out of the fayth neyther / which yet fall in to the breche of
goddes commaundement by the subtyll suggestyon of the deuyll / or
by the frayletye of theyr owne fleshe. Wherof yt semeth that the holy
35 apostle was hym self so sore afrayd for all hys fayth / that he thryes
prayed god to take the temptacyon away. I can not se but that Adam
byleued the wordys of god / & yet he brake hys commaundement. And
I thynke that kyng Dauyd fell not from his fayth though he fell fyrst
in aduoutry and efte in manslaughter. And some examples haue we
40 sene of theym that haue sought the reuengyng of theyr owne
malicyous myndes / by such wayes as they sawe whan they went about
yt their own vndowted deth byfore theyr eyen. And therefore yt is but a
tale to say that faythe draweth alway good workis wyth yt / and that
ye Lutheranys in that ye saye that faythe ys suffycyent alone wy
45 thout good workys sholde saye so / bycause yt bryngeth alway good
workys wyth yt. For thys were a very vayn doctryne / that faythe ys
alone suffycyent to saue them that haue the vse of reason wythout
good workys / yf in suche as haue the vse of reason faythe be neuer
wythout good workys.

After suche obieccyons / than fell he to a nother poynt / and sayd
that yf our good workys and faythe be ioyned / yet myghte yt well
appere by scrypture that all the meryte was in our faythe / and
nothyng in manns workys. For all the workes of man he sayde be
5 starke nought / as thyngys all spotted wythe synne. And for that he
layde dyuers textys of scrypture. But specyally as the moste playne
profe / the wordis of the prophete / *Omnis iusticia nostra velut pannus
menstruate*. And syth that all our workes he sayd be spotted & synfull &
naught how good so euer they seme / yt muste nedys folowe that all the
10 meryte cometh of our fayth.

To thys was answered hym. Lo now by this ye haue somewhat
opened your selfe vnware / and declared youre opynyon in thys mater
to be farre other than ye sayd byfore. For in the gloses that ye haue
vsed byfore / ye haue alwaye sayd that ye and all the secte of Luther
15 as farre as ye knewe and thoughte / byleued that faythe cowlde not
saue vs yf we had reason / wythout good workes. But ye sayde that
fayth was ynough alone / bycause yt brought of necessarye good workys
wyth yt. And yet alt the meryte and rewarde due to the faythe onely /
and not to the good workys that yt bryngeth forth. And now ye saye
20 that there be no good workys at all but all oure workys be starke
nought. Nowe yf ye thynke that there be no good workys / ho we can ye
saye as ye sayde byfore / that ye thynke that faythe alway bryngeth forth
good workys? More ouer the wordys of the prophete / thoughe yt be
generally spoken / maye be well vnderstande to be veryfyed / in farre
25 the most part of mankynd though not of all / or of the iustyce of man
/ yf yt were compared with the souerayne iustyce of god. Or that
iustyce of ryght good men ys yet sore spotted with synne / for that the
frayletye of oure nature seldome constantely standeth eny whyle to
gether in good workys / but that the perseueraunce is interrupted /
30 often spotted / and byspret with synne. And therof ys yt sayd /
Septies in die cadit iustus / et resurget. Seuen tymes in the day
falleth the ryghtuous man / and ryseth agayne. It may be also
vnderstande of all the ryghtuousnesse of a man alone wroughte of
hym selfe / and his pure naturall powers wythout the ayde and help
35 iustyce of ours as ys onely ours / is all spotted and in effect all one
fowle spot / for eny bewtye that yt hath in the glorious eye of god. But
surely the holy prophete neuer ment as Luther & hys felowes wold haue
seme / that the grace of god ys in all hys people so feble of yt selfe / and
of so lytell force and effecte / that no man may with the helpe therof be
40 able to do one good vertuous dede. For Luther sayth playnely that no
man though he haue the helpe of goddys grace therto / ys able
to kepe and obserue the commaundementys of god. Whyche
blasphemous wordys seme to sygnifye that bothe saynt Iohn
the baptyste and our blessyd lady also were synners / & ouer
45 all thys that god were not able by the ayde & helpe of hys grace
to make a man kepe his commaundementys / and kepe hym
out of syn though he wold.

All the old fathers that wrote agaynst Pelagyan / whych
helde opynyon that man ys of nature or at the leste wyse wyth

the generall influence of grace / able and suffycient to do
good and merytoryous workys wythout helpe of eny specyall
grace towarde euery good dede it selfe / myslyked and
condempned his doctryne / for that it mynysshed the
5 necessyte of mannys recourse vnto god / for callynge helpe of
his grace. But ye that hold all mennys dedys for vtterly nought
though grace wrought with theym/ be double and treble
more enemyes to grace than they. For where they sayd we
myght do good somtyme without it / ye say we can at no tyme
10 do no good with it. And than were grace by your tale a very
voyde thyng. Was than all the laboure and the payne that
the appostles toke in prechyng / all naught and synfull? all
the turmentys that the martyrs suffered in theyr passyon all
together syn? all the dedys of charyte that Cryste shall (as hym
15 selfe sayth) reward with euerlastyng lyfe at the generall
iudgement be they synne all together? Saynt Poule
rekened it otherwyse. For he sayd boldely of hym selfe /
bonum certamen certauit / cursum consummauit / et nunc
superest mihi corona iusticie / I haue laboured and stryuen a
20 good stryfe / I haue perfourmed my course / nowe lacketh me
no more for me but the crowne of iustyce.

Therevnto he answered that saynt Poule wolde not say
that our dedys were suffycient of them self / but that all our
suffycyency is of god. Wherevnto it was answered that thys
25 was lytell to the matter. For no more is our fayth suffycient
of it selfe / but the suffycyencye thereof is also of god / in that
our lorde wyth our endeuour gyueth vs grace to byleue / and
in that it lyketh our lorde of his goodnes so hyghly to reward
it. For surely as it is very trew that saynt Poulesayth that /
30 Non sunt condigne passionnes huius vite ad futuram gloriam que
reuelabitur in nobis / all that euer we can suffer in this worlde
/ is not worthy the glory to come that shall be shewed in vs (For
what thyng coude a sely wretched creature do or suffer for god in
the brefe tyme of this shorte lyfe / that myght of ryght requyre to
35 be rewarded euerlastyngly / with suche inestymable ioy as
neyther eye hath sene nor tonge can expresse / nor hart can
ymagyne or conceyue) so is it also as trewe that all the fayth we
haue or can haue / can of his owne nature as lytell or moche
lesse deserue heuen / as our other good dedys. For what greate
40 thyng do we to god / or what greate thyng coude we aske hym
of ryght / bycause we byleue hym? as thoughe he were moche
beholden vnto vs / in that we vouchesaufe to truste hym / as
though hys worshyp honged in our handys / & his estymacyon
loste yf he were out of credence with vs. And therefore amonge
45 many folyshe wordys of Luther / as folyshe as euer heretyke spake
/ he neuer spake a more frantyke / than in that he sayth that
god hath nede of oure faythe. For he sayth that god hath no nede
of oure good workys / but he hath nede of our fayth / and hath
nede that we sholde byleue hym. Trouthe is it that he nedeth

neyther oure faythe nor our workys. But syth that he hath
determined that he wyll not saue vs without bothe yf we be of
dyscrecyon to haue both / therefore haue we nede of bothe. And
yet neyther is there the one nor the other nor they bothe
5 together bytwene theym / that be of theyr owne nature worthy
the rewarde of heuyn. But as we se that one ounce of golde
whereof ,x. pounce weyght were not of his owne nature towarde
man worth one ounce of whete / nor one hundred pounce
weyght thereof/ of the nature selfe worthe one sely shepe / ys yet
10 amonge men by a pryce appoynted and agreed worth many hole
shepe / and many a pounce weyght of brede / so hathe it lyked
the lyberall goodnes of god to set as well our fayth as our dedes /
whiche were ellys bothe twayne of theyr owne nature ryght lytell
in value / at so hyghe a pryce / as none is able to bye them and
15 paye for them but hym selfe / bycause we sholde worke them
onely to hym / and haue none other pay mayster nor none
other chapman to sell our ware and our worke vnto / but onely
hym. Excepte we wolde be so madde and towarde hym so
vnkynde / that we wolde sell it to another for lesse / rather than
20 to hym for more. As som do that had leuer trauayle farre of & sell
for lesse / than they wolde for more sell to theyr neyghbours at
home. And as do these folysshe ypocrytes / which rather than
they wolde sell theyr worke to god for euerlastyng ioy of heuyn /
sell it all to the worlde for the peuysshe pleasure of the vayne
25 prayse puffed out of pore mortall mennes mouthes with a blast of
wynde.

Vnto this he sayd that very trewe it was that all oure workes
toke theyr value and pryce after the acceptacyon of god / and as
he lysted to alowe them. But he sayd that god rejected /
30 dysalowed / and set at nought all the workes of infydels wrought
without fayth. For sine fide impossibile est placere deo /
without fayth it is impossyble to please god.

And that of his faythfull chosen people that byleue and truste
in hym / he accepteth and aloweth all the dedes. And that is sayd
35 he / well proued by the wordes of saynt Poule / Nichil
damnationis est hiis qui sunt in Christo Iesu. And all be it that
in the rehersyng of the comunycacyon had with this man / it
maye well be that my remembraunce maye partely mysse the
order / partely peraduenture adde or mynysshe in som parte of
40 the matter / yet in this poynte I assure you faythfully / there is
no maner chaunge or varyaunce from his oppynyon / but that
after many shyftes he brought it playnly to this poynte at laste /
that he and hys felowes that were of Luthers secte / were fermely
of this oppynyon / that they byleued that onely god worketh all in
45 euery man good workes and bad. Howe be it suche as he
foreknoweth to be dampned / no maner workes be profytable to
them. For god taketh them for nought be they neuer so good. But
on the other syde in those he hath chosen fro the begynnyng and
predestynate to glory / all workes be good ynoughe. For god

accepteth and taketh them well a worth be they neuer so bad.

It was asked hym than whyther that the forsakyng of
Cryste by Peter was alowed and well approued by Cryste.
And whyther the aduoutry and manslaughter was by god well
5 alowed in Dauyd.

Wherevnto he sayd that bycause they were chosen and
predestynate / therefore those synmys were not (nor the synmys of
any such men be not) imputed vnto theym. But god bycause he
hath frome the begynnyng chosen theym to euerlastyng blysse
10 / therefore he arrecteth no blame of theyr dedys vnto theym /
but all the workys of a iuste man that is to say quod he of a
person by god predestynate to glory / turne hym to good / howe
euyll so euer they be. And this for condusyon he declared to be
theyr very playne mynde and oppynyon / for all the clokys that he
15 had sette vppon the matter byfore / to make it seme that they
meaned in theyr wordys none harme. And there it clerely appered
/ that he and his felowes whyche in theyr prechyng do couertly
and craftely sette out the dampnable secte of Luther / hope &
gape alway for some other tyme / in which they trust openly and
20 boldly to play the rauinous woluyes and deuour the shepe and
marre the hole flocke. And in the meane season be content to play
the wyly foxys & wyrry symple soules & pore lambes / as they may
catche them stragelyng from the folde / or rather lyke a false
shepeherdys dogge that wolde but barke in syght / and seme to
25 fetche in the shepe / and yet kyll a lambe in a corner. Men
speke of some that bere two facys in one hode. I neuer sawe any
that more veryly play that pagaunt / than do this kynde of
suche prechours. For in prechyng to the people they make a
vysage as though they came strayght from heuen to teche them a
30 newe better way & more trew than the chyrche techeth / or hath
taught this many hundred yere. as And then to the chyrche in
examynacyon they shewe them selfe as pore men of mydle erthe /
& as though they taught none other wyse than the chyrche doth.
But in conclusyon when they be well examyned / and with
35 moche worke that falshode of theyr cloked collusyon is pulled of/
then appereth there all the malycyous trechery / and what pnyson
they put forth vnder the cloke of hony. As this man that I tell you
of laboryng all that he myght by many meanes to make it seme
/ that in prechyng / that faythe alone was suffycyent for our
40 saluacyon / and that good workys were nothyng worthe / hadde
nothyng entended but well and accordyng to the doctryne of
the chyrche / and that he and his felowes neuer ment other wyse
than the chyrch meaneth / yet in conclusyon he planly shewed
hym selfe / that he and his felowes entende thereby to bryng the
45 people to this poynte at last / that all thyng hangeth onely vppon
desteny / and that the lybertye of mannys wyll sholde serue of
ryght nought / nor mennys dedys good or badde made no
dyfference afore god / but that in his chosen people nothyng
myslyketh hym be it neuer so badde / and in the other sorte

nothyng pleaseth hym be it neuer so good / the very worst and
most myscheuous heresy that euer was thought vppon / and
thereto the moost madde. For as it was sayd vnto hym / yf this
5 one thyng or other? What fruyte coulde come of theyr
exhortacyon yf all sholde hange vppon destenye? There were
shewed vnto hym many thynges for the reprove of that
vnreasonable and detestable heresy / and that the textys whiche
10 he alledged / nothyng made for his purpose. For as for that he
alledged of saynt Poule / that there is no dampnacyon to theym
that be in Cryste Iesu / was mente of good faythfull folke that lyue
vertuously / and therefore where he sayth that there is no
15 dampnacyon to theym that be in Cryste Iesu / yt foloweth
forthwith in the texte / those that walke not after the flesshe.
Meanyng playnely that there is no man so planted in Cryste Iesu
/ but and yf he folowe the fleshly wayes of his sensuall appetites
/ he shall be dampned for all his faythe in Cryst. For ellys it sholde
20 folowe vppon this false oppynyon / yf god accepte well all the
workes of them that are predestynate / than is synne noo synne in
them / but in the other sorte only whome god hath not
predestynate. And than is it as moche to saye as no man may
lawfully be nought / no man lawfully do thefte or aduoutry / nor
25 lawfully be a manquellour / nor lawfully forswere hym selfe /
but goddes good sonnes and his specyall chosen chyldren.
Nowe where he alleged the wordes of saynt Poule / Quod
iustis omnia cooperantur in bonum / To a iust man all thynges
worke together to his wele / yt was sayd that it mente that all
30 the euylles that men dyd vnto theym / tourne them to good and
be to good men occasyon of theyr meryte / as was to lob all the
tourmentes by whiche the deuyll assauted his pacyence / and
all the paynes that Pagan tyrauntes dydde vnto the holy
martyrs. And sometyme the synne in whiche a good man is by
goddes sufferaunce permytted to fall / ys an occasyon to hym of a
35 gretter good / or of the auoydyng of a gretter synne. As the
eschewyng of an hyghe spyrytuall pryde / in to whiche
peradventure the contynuall course of hys vertuous lyfe myght
by the deuyls subtyll suggestyon haue brought hym / where as
one foule act of lechery hath shewed hym his frayltye / and in
40 stede of pryde brought hym in to penaunce and humylyte /
and make hym ronne the faster forward in vertue / bycause he
hathe letted and sytte styll a whyle in synne / and therefore wyll
he ronne forthe to wynne agayne in his waye that he byfore cast
hym selfe behynde. But it was not mente that euer theyr synnes
45 so tourned them to good / that they were accepted the more and
rewarded the better for theyr euyll dedes. Nor god remytteth not
the synnes of hys chosen people / nor forbereth not to impute
the blame therof vnto them / bycause they be hys chosen
people. For he accepteth not folke for theyr persons but for
theyr meryts / but where as they haue synned / he punysheth

as well them as other / and somtyme more because they formare
good lyuyng somewhat of congruence deserued that they sholde
by punyshment be called agayne to grace / and not be for theyr
faute so sone cast dene away / as some other obdurate in
5 malyce and euyll custume of synne / deserue to haue the grace
of god and his callynge on neuer more offred vnto them / and
vnto some it is offred that wyll not receyue it. God called on
Dauyd by the prophete Nathan / and yet punyshed his offence.
Cryst loked on Peter after he had forsaken and forsworne hym
10 / and Peter therewith toke repentaunce. God loked on Iudas
and kyssed hym to / and he turned to none amendement. Nowe
god frome the begynnyng before the worlde was created /
foreseyng in hys dyuine prescyence or rather in the eternyte of
hys godhed presently beholdyng / that Peter wolde repent and
15 Iudas wolde dyspayre / and that the one wolde take holde of hys grace
and the other wolde reiecte it / accepted and chose the one and not the
other / as he wold haue made the contrary choyce / yf he had foresene
in them the contrary chaunce.

20

The .xii. chapter.

Bvt now for to say as that heretyke sayd after all his shyftys at last
that all that shall be saued shall be saued onely because that god from
25 the begynnyng hath chosen them / and because of that choyce all
theyr dedys be good / or yf they be euyll yet god for cause of hys
eternall choyce taketh theym well in worth and imputeth no blame
vnto them / and that all other people whom god hathe created shall be
30 dampned onely because he wolde not chose them / and that all theyr
dedys eyther be nought or not well accepted / because god lyst not in
the begynnyng to chose theym / and that he worketh bothe in the one
sorte and in the other all theyr dedys hym self alone / and they do
nothyng therein theym selfe / and so that god whose goodnes is
35 inestymable doth dampne so houghe a number of people to intollerable
and intermynable tormentys onely for hys pleasure / and for hys owne
dedys wrought in theym onely by hym selfe / thys false oppynyon is as
the kyngys hyghnes moste vertuously wryteth in his epystle to Luther
/the moste abhomyable heresy that euer was. And surely it is so farre
40 agaynst all holy scripture well vnderstanden / so far agaynst all naturall
reason / so vtterly subuertynge all vertue and all good order in the
worlde / so hyghly blasphemynge the goodnes and maiesty of almyghty
god in heuyn / that it is more than wonder howe any man erthely that
hath eyther one sparke of wyt in his hedde / or towarde god or manne
one droppe of good wyll in hys harte / sholde not abhorre to here it. For
45 this execrable heresy maketh god the cause of all euyll / and suche
cruell appetyte as neuer tyraunt and tourmentoure had / ascrybe
they to the benygne nature of almyghty god. For where as our sauour
Cryst toke vpon hym selfe all our synne / and of his endles pyte bare

the payne of theym for our sake / this dampnable heresy holdeth /
that god sholde be fyrste so vntrewe that he sholde laye vnto vs the
wyte and blame of his owne fawtes / that is to wytte the euyll workes
which as they say be not wrought by vs but in vs by god / and
5 therevnto they make hym so dyspytuouse and cruell / that for his
owne dedes so done he shall haue a perpetuall delyte and pleasure to
tourment vs. Nowe tourne they the tryacle of holy scrypture quyte in
to poyson. For this false erreure ones taken for trouth / wherof
sholde all scrypture serue? Wherof sholde serue the exhortacyons to
10 good workes yf men neyther any do / nor any can do / neyther of
them selfe nor with helpe of grace? or yf any be done by theym whiche
be not chosen / theyr dedes be not accepted of god / bycause he hath
not chosen theyr persons / whereof shall serue the prechynges and
exhortacyons to the fayth / yf the herers haue no lybertye of theyr
15 owne wyll / by whiche they may togyther with goddes grace laboure
to submyt and subdue the rebellyon of theyr reason to the obedyence
of fayth and credence of the worde of god? Whereof shall serue all the
dehortacyons and commynacyons and threttes in scrypture / by
whiche god calleth men frame synne and euyll workes / yf the world
20 were ones of mynde that they byleued after Luther / that no man
doth any euyll dede hym selfe / but god doth theym all hym selfe.
And that euery man is eyther chosen or vnchosen. And yf we be of
that the chosen sorte / none euyll dede can dampne vs. And yf we
be of the vnchosen sorte / no good dede can auayle vs. He that thus
25 beleueth / what careth he what he dothe / excepte for the fere of
temporall lawes of this worlde. And yet yf his false fayth be stronge /
he forseth lytell of theym also. For he shall thynke dyenge in his
bedde or on the galows / cometh not after his deseruyng but
hangeth all vppon destenye. And therefore all lawes they sette at
30 nought. And they holde that no man is bounden to obaye any / but
wolde be at lybertye to byleue what they lyste / and doo what they
lyste / as they saye that god dothe with vs not what we deserue / but
what hym selfe lyste.

Wherof shall reason serue yf man had no power of him selfe
35 toward the dyreccyon of his own workys / but that all our workes
were brought forth of vs without oure wyll / worse than the workys
be in dede out of a brute best / by the appetyte of his sensuall
mocyon? For oures shold be by thys oppynyon brought forth / as
the leues come out of the tre / or as a stone falleth downward /
40 and the smoke vpward by the power of nature / so sholde I say all
oure dedys good or bad ascende or descende by the vyolent hande
of god magre our myndys and thus the bestys be not ashamyd to
say / whan they preue howely by theyr owne experyence in theym
selfe / that whan they wyll do a thyng they do it. And whan they
45 lyst they leue it. I say not by them selfe alone wythout god. But
his assystence is alway at hande / yf we be wyllynge to worke
therewith / as the lyght is present with the sonne / yf we lyst not
wylfully to shyte oure eyen and wynke.

Whereof sholde serue all lawes? And where were bycome all good

order among men / yf euery mysordered wretche myght alledge
that his myscheuous dede was his desteny.

If fre wyll serue for nought / and euery mannes dede is his
desteny / why do these men complayne vpon any man? Excepte
5 they wyll say they do it because it is theyr desteny to do so? And
why wyll they then be angry with theym that punyshe heretykes /
excepte they wyll say bycause it is theyr desteny to be so? For yf
they wyll holde theym to theyr owne secte / and say men do them
wronge to burne them for theyr heresydes bycause it was theyr
10 desteny to be heretyques / they may be then well answered with
theyr own wordes / as one of theyr secte was serued in a good
town in Almayne whiche when he had robbed a man and was
brought before the iudges he coulde not deny the dede / but he
sayd it was his desteny to do it and therefore they myghte not
15 blame hym / they answered hym after his owne doctryne that yf it
were his desteny to stele / and that therfore they must holde him
excused / than it was also theyr desteny to hange hym / and
therefore he must as well holde theym excused agayne. And
vndowtedly amonge men these takers away of fre wyll may neuer
20 auoyde that answeere by reason. But than fall the wretches to the
desperate wayes of deuyls and dampned soules. Than fall they to
raylyng and reprouyng the iustyce of god & say that hym selfe
hath wrought theyr euyll workys / & wrongfully punyshed them
/ and cruelly created theym to wretchednes. Our mother Eue layd
25 the wyt of her synne to the serpent / and god was offended that
she toke not her owne parte to her self. But these wretches excuse
them selfe & the deuyll and all / and lay bothe theyr owne fautys
& the deuyls to / to the blame of almyghty god. But surely what so
they saye / they lytell care in dede of hell or of heuen / but wolde
30 in this worlde lyue in lewde lybertye / and haue all runne to ryot.
And syth they se that they can not so be suffered / nor theyr secte
alowed in iudgement / they deuysse by all the wayes they can to
gete so many to fall in to theyr sorte / that they maye be able to
tourne the worlde vp soo downe / and defende theyr foly and
35 false heresyde by force. And this they call the lybertye of the gossell
/ to be dyscharged of all order and of all lawes / and do what they
lyst / whiche be it good / be it bad / is as they say nothyng but
the workes of god wrought in them. But they hope that by this
meane god shall for the whyle worke in them many mery
40 pastymes. Wherein yf theyr heresyde were ones receyued / and
the worlde chaunged thereby they sholde fynde theym selfe sore
deceyued. For the lawes and orders amonge men with fere of
punyssment ones taken away / there were no man so
stronge that coulde kepe his pleasure longe / but that he sholde
45 fynde a stronger take it from hym. But after that it were ones
come to that poynte / and the worlde ones rufled and fallen in a
wyldenes / howe longe wolde it be / and what hepes of heuy
myscheues wolde there fall ere that waye were founden to set the
worlde in order and peas agayne?

The fere of these outrages & myscheues to folow vpon suche sectes
 and heresyas / with the profe that men haue had in some countrees
 5 therof / haue ben the cause that prynces and people haue ben
 constraigned to punyssh heresyas by terryble deth / where as els more
 easy wayas had ben taken with them. And therefore here wyll I somewhat
 (sayd I to your frend) answer the poyntes whiche ye moued at our
 10 fyrst metyng / when ye sayd that many men thought it an harde and
 an vncharytable waye taken by the clergy / to put men conuycte of
 heresy somtyme to shame / somtyme to dethe / and that Cryst so
 farre abhorred all such vyolence / that he wolde not any of his flocke
 sholde fyght in any wyse / neyther in the defence of them selfe or any
 15 other / not so moche as in the defence of Cryst hym selfe / for
 whiche he blamed saynt Peter / but that we shold all lyue after hym in
 sufferaunce and pacyence / so ferforth that folke thought as ye sayd /
 that we shold not fyght in defence of our selfe agaynst the Turkes &
 infydels. These obieccyons be sone answered. For neyther doth the
 20 clergy therin any suche thyng as ys layde & imputed vnto them / nor
 the temporalte neyther. For all be it with good reson they myght / yet
 had they neuer in dede fallen so sore to force & vyolence agaynst
 heretykes / yf the vyolent cruelte fyrst vsed by the heretykes them selfe
 agaynste good catholyke folke had not dryuen good pryncys therto /
 25 for preseruacyon not of the fayth onely / but also of the peas amonge
 theyr people. For albe it that forth with vpon the deth of Cryste in the
 begynnyng of the chyrch / many sectys and heresyas began (as well
 appereth by the apocalyps of saynt Iohan the euangelist / and the
 epystles of the apostle Poule) and after almost contynually dyuers
 heresyas sprange in dyuers places (as we playnly se by the story of the
 30 chyrche by the bokys of saynt Hyerome / saynt Augustyne / saynt
 Eusebye / saynt Basyle / saynt Ambrose / saynt Gregory Nazianzenus
 / saynt Chrysostome / and many other doctours of the chyrche) yet in
 all this tyme by a longe space of many yerys was there neuer other
 punyshment done vpon them in effecte / but onely redargucyon and
 35 reprouyng by dyspycyons / eyther in wordys or wrytynge / or
 condempnacyons of theyr oppynyons in synodys and counsaylys / or
 fynally excommunycacyons & puttyng out of Crystes flocke / sauynge
 that they were put sometyme to sylence vpon payne of forfeiture of
 certayne money. But as I sayd before yf the heretykes had neuer
 40 begonne wyth vyolence / thoughe they had vsed all the wayes they
 coulde to allecte the people by prechyng / thoughe they had therewyth
 done as Luther doth nowe / and as Machomete dyd before / bryng vpon
 oppynyons pleasaunt to the peple / gyuyng them lybertye to lewdnes
 / yet yf they had set vyolence asyde / good crysten people had
 45 peraduenture yet vnto this daye / vsed lesse vyolence towarde them
 than they do now. And yet were heresy well worthy to be as sore
 punysshed as any other faute / syth there is no faute that more
 offendeth god. Howe be it whyle they forbare vyolence / there was lytell

vyolence done to theym. And surely though god be able agaynst all
persecucion to preserue and encrease his fayth amonge the people / as
he dyd in the begynnyng for all the persecucion of the Paynymys and
the Iewes / yet is it no reason to loke that crysten pryncys sholde suffer
5 the catholyke crysten people to be oppressed by Turkys / or by
heretykes worse then Turkys.

By my soule quod your frende I wold all the world were all agreed to
take all vyolence & compulsyon away vppon all sydys crysten and
hethen / and that no man were constrayned to byleue but as he coulde
10 be by grace wysedom and good wordys enduced / and then he that
wolde go to god go on a goddys name / and he that wyll go to the deuyll
the deuyll go with hym.

Forsothe quod I and yf it so were / yet wolde I lytell doute but that
the good sede beyng sown amonge the people / sholde as well come
15 vppe and be as stronge to saue it selfe as the code / and god sholde
alwaye be stronger then the deuyll. But yet be heretyques and hethen
menne in two dyuerse cases. For in case the Turkys Sarrasynys and
Paynymys wolde suffer the fay the of Cryste to be peasybly preched
amonge theym / and that we crysten menne sholde therefore suffer in
20 lyke wyse all theyr sectes to be preched amonge vs / and vyolence
taken awaye by assent on bothe the sydes / I nothyng mystruste
that the fayth of Cryste sholde moche more encrease than decay. And
all be it that we sholde fynde amonge vs / that wolde for the lewde
lybertye of these sectes drawe to the deuyll / yet soo sholde we fynde I
25 doubte not amonge them also many a thousande / that sholde be
content to leue that bestely pleasure and come to the fayth of Cryst /
as came in the begynnyng to crystendome out of the Paynymes / that
lyued as voluptuously as the Turkes do nowe. But syth vyolence is
vsed on that parte / and Crystes faythe not there suffered to be
30 preched and taken / he that wolde now suffer that secte to be
preched or taught amortg crysten men and not punysshe and destroy
the doers / were a playne enemye to Cryste / as he that were contente
to suffer Cryste lese his worshyp in many soules on this syde / without
any one wonne in theyr stede on the other syde. But nowe yf vyolence
35 were withdrawen on that syde then this waye that ye speke of were
peradventure bytwene crystendome and Turkay or Paganys yf the
worlde were assented thervnto and coulde holde it none euyll waye.
For syth we sholde nothyng soo moche regarde as the honoure of god
/ and increasyng of the crysten fayth / and wynnynge of mennes
40 soules to heuyn / we sholde seme to dyshonoure god yf we mystrusted
that his fayth preched amonge other indyfferently without
dysturbaunce sholde not be able to prospere. And byleuyng that it
were / we sholde hynder the profyte yf we wolde refuse the condycyon /
where there be many mo to be wonne to Cryste on that syde / than to
45 be lost from hym on this syde. But yet as for heretykes rysynge amonge
oure selfe / and spryngynge of our selfe / be in noo wyse to be suffered /
but to be oppressed and ouerwhelmed in the begynnyng. For by any
couenaunt with theym / crystendome can nothyng wynne. For as
many as we suffer to fall to them we lese fro Cryst. And by all them

we can not wyne to Cryst one the mo / thoughe we wanne them all
home agayne / for they were our owne before. And yet as I sayde for all
that in the begynnyng / neuer were they by any temporall punyshment
of theyr bodyes any thyng sharply handeled / tyll that they began to
5 be vyolent them selfe.

We rede that in the tyme of saynt Austyn the grete douctour of the
chyrche / the heretykes of Affryke called the Donatystes fell to force
and vyolence robberyng / betyng / tourmentyng / and kyllyng /
suche as they toke of the true crysten flocke / as the Lutheranes haue
10 done in Almayne. For auoydyng wherof that holy man saynt
Austyn / whiche longe had with grete pacyens borne and suffered
theyr malyce / onely wrytyng and prechyng in the reprove of theyr
errorrs / & had not onely done theym no temporall harme / but
also had letted and resysted other that wolde haue done it / dydde
15 yet at the laste for the peace of good people both suffer and exhorte
the counte Bonyface and other / to repress them with force and fere
them with bodyly punyshment. Which maner of doynge holy saynt
Hyerome and other vertuous fathers haue in other placys alowed. And
synce that tyme hath there vpon necessity perceyued by grete
20 outragys commytted agaynst the peace & quiet of the people in
sondry placys of crystendome / by heretykes rysyng of a small
begynnyng to an hyghe and vnruely multytude / many sore
punyshmentys bene deuysed for theym and specyally by fyre / not
onely in Italy and AJmayne / but also in Spayne / and in effecte in
25 euery parte of crystendom. Among whiche in England as a good
catholyke realme it hath bene longe punyshed by deth in the fyre.
And specyally for as moch as in the tyme of the noble prynce of most
famous memory kyng Henry the fyfth whyle the lorde Cobbam
maynteyned certayne heresyces / and that by the meanes thereof the
30 number so grew & encreaced / that wythin a whyle though hym selfe
was fled into wales yet they assembled them selfe togyther in a felde
nere vnto London in suche wyse and suche number that the kynge wyth
his nobles were fayne to put harneys on theyr backes for the repressyon
of them / wherevpon they were dystressed and many put to executyon
35 / and after that the lorde Cobbam taken in wales and burned in London
/ the kynge his nobles and hys people therevpon consyderyng the
great parell and ieopardy that the realme was lyke to haue fallen in by
those heresyces / made at a parlement very good and substancyall
prouysyons besyde all suche as were made before / as well for the
40 withstandyng as the repressyng and greuous punyshment of any
suche as sholde be founden faulty therof / and by the clergye lefte vnto
the secular handys.

For here ye shall vnderstande that it is not the clergye that
laboureth to haue theym punyshed by deth. Well may it be that as we
45 be all men and not angellys / some of theym may haue sometyme eyther
ouer feruent mynde or vndyscrete zele / or percas an angry and a
cruell harte / by whyche they may offende god in the selfe same dede /
whereof they sholde ellys greatly meryt. But surely the order of the
spyrtyuall lawe therein is bothe good / reasonable / pytyouse / and

charytable / and nothyng desyrynge the dethe of any man therein.
For at the fyrst faute he is abiured / forswereth all heresyas / doth
such penaunce for his faute as the byshop assygneth to hym. And is
in suche wyse graciously receyued agayne into the fauour and
5 suffragys of Crystys chyrch. But & yf he be taken eftsonys with the
same cryme agayne / than is he put out of the crysten flocke by
excommunycacyon. And bycause that beyng such / his conuersacyon
were peryllouse among crysten men / the chyrch refuseth hym / &
therof the clergie gyueth knowlege to the temporaltye / not exhortyng
10 the prynce or any man els eyther to kyll hym or punyssh hym / but
onely in the presence of the temporall offycer / the spyrytualtye not
delyuereth hym but leueth hym to the seculer hande / and forsaketh
hym as one excommunicate and remoued out of the crysten flocke.
And thoughe the chyrche be not lyght and sodayne in receyuyng hym
15 agayne / yet at the tyme of his dethe vpon his request with tokens
of repentaunce / he is absolued and receyued agayne.

The .xiii. chapter.

20

Mary quod your frende but as me thynketh the bysshop doth as
moche as though he kylleth hym / whan he leueth hym to the seculer
hande in suche tyme and place / as he woteth well he shall sone be
burned.

25 I wyll not here entre in to the questyon quod I whyther a prest
myght for any cause / and if for any / whyther than for heresyas
without blame of irregularyte put or commaunde any man to deth /
eyther by expresse wordes or vnder the generall name of ryght &
iustyce. In whiche matter I coulde not lacke bothe reason
30 authoryte & example of holy men. But in this matter that we haue in
hande / it is sufficyent that the bysshop neyther dothe it nor
commaundeth it. For I thynke there wyll no reason bere it / that
whan the heretyke yf he wente abrode wolde with the spredyng of his
errour infecte other folke / the bysshop sholde haue suche pyte vpon
35 hym / that he sholde rather than other men sholde punyssh his body
/ suffre hym to kyll other mennes soules.

In dede quod I there be some as ye say that eyther of hyghe
pretended pyte or of a fayned obseruaunce of the counsayls of Cryste /
wolde that no man sholde punyssh any heretyke or infydell eyther /
40 not thoughe they inuaded vs and dyd vs all the harme they possyble
coulde. And in this oppynyon is Luther and his folowers / whyche
among theyr other heresyas holde for a playne conclusyon / that it is
not lefull to any crysten man to fyght agaynst the Turke / or to make
agaynst hym any resystence / thoughe he come in to crystendome with
45 a grete army and laboure to destroy all. For they say that all crysten
men are bounden to the counsayls of Cryst / by whiche they saye that
we be forboden to defende our selfe / and that saynt Peter was as ye
rehered reproued of our sauour whan he strake of Malchus ere / all

be it that he dyd yt in the defence of his owne mayster / and the moost
 innocent man that euer was. And vnto this they lay as ye sayd in the
 begynnyng / that syth the tyme that crysten men fyrst fell to
 fyghtyng / it hath neuer encreaced / but alway mynyshed and
 5 decayed. So that at this day the Turke hath estrayted vs very nere /
 and brought it in within a ryght narrow compace / and narrower
 shall do say they / as longe as we go aboute to defende crystendom by
 the sworde. Whiche they say sholde be as it was in the
 begynnyng encreaced / so be contynued and preserued onely by
 10 pacyence and martyrdome. Thus holyly speke these godly fathers
 of Luthers secte / laboryng to procure that no man sholde
 wythstande the Turke / but let hym wyne all. And whan it
 sholde come to that / than wold they as it semeth wyn all agayne
 by theyr pacyence / hygh vertues / and martyrdome / by
 15 whyche now they can not suffer to resyste theyr bestely
 voluptuousnesse / but breke theyr vowes / and take theym
 harlottys vnder the name of wyuys. And where they may not
 fyght agaynst the Turke / aryse vp in great plumpys to fyght
 agaynst theyr euen crysten. It is I trowe no greate maystry to
 20 perceyue whom they laboure to please that haue that oppynyon.
 And yf the Turke happen to come in / it is lytell doute whose
 parte they wyll take / and that crysten people be lyke to fynd
 none so cruell Turkes as them. It is a gentyll holynes to
 abstayne for deuocyon frome resystynge the Turke / and in the
 25 meane whyle to ryse vp in rowtys and fyght agaynste crysten men
 / and destroy as that secte hath done many a good relygyous
 house / spoyled / meyhemed / & slayne many a good vertuous
 man / robbed / polluted / and pulled downe many a goodly
 chyrche of Cryste.
 30 And nowe where they laye for a profe / that god were not
 contented with batayle made agaynst infydelys / the losse &
 mynyshment of crystendome synce that guyse began / they fare
 as dyd onys an olde sage father fole in Kent at suche tyme as
 dyuers men of worshyppe assembled olde folke of the countre
 35 to commune and deuyse about the amendement of Sandwyche
 hauen. At whiche tyme as they began fyrst to enserche by reason
 and by the report of olde menne there aboute / what thyng had
 bene the occasyon that so good an hauen was in so fewe yerys so
 sore decayed / and suche sandys rysen / and suche shalow
 40 flattys made therewith / that ryght small vessels had nowe moche
 worke to come in at dyuers tydys / where great shypys were
 wythin fewe yerys passed accustomed to ryde wythout dyfficultye
 / & some laynge the faute to Goodwyn sandys / some to the
 landys inned by dyuers owners in the Ile of tenate out of the
 45 chanell / in whyche the se was wont to compace the Ile and bryng
 the vessels rounde aboute it / whose course at the ebbe was wont
 to scoure the hauen / whiche now the see excluded thense / for
 lacke of suche course and scourynge is choked vp with sande /
 as they thus alleged dyuers men dyuers causes. There starte vp

one good olde father and sayd / ye maysters saye euery manne
what he wyll / cha marked this matter well as some other. And
by god I wote howe it waxed nought well ynoughe. For I knewe it
good / and haue marked so chaue whan it began to waxe worse.
5 And what hathe hurte it good father quod these gentyll men? By
my faythe maysters quod he yonder same tenterden stepell and
nothyng ellys / that by the masse cholde twere a fayre fysshe
pole.

10 Why hath the stepell hurte the hauen good father quod
they? Naye byr lady maysters quod he / ych can not tell you well
why / but chote well it hath. For by god I knewe it a good hauen
tyll that stepell was bylded. And by the mary masse / cha
marked it well / it neuer throue synce.

15 And thus wysely speke these holy Lutheranes / whiche
sowyng scysmes and sedycyons amonge crysten people / lay the
losse thereof to the withstandyng of the Turkes inuasyon / and
the resystynge of his malyce / where they sholde rather yf they
had any reason in theyr heddes / lay it to the contrary. For
whan crysten prynces dydde theyr deuoyre agaynst
20 myscreauntes and infydels / there be storyes and monumentes
ynoughe that wytnesse the manyfest ayde and helpe of god in
grete vycторыes gyuen to good crysten prynces by his almyghty
hande. But on the other syde synce that the ambycyon of crysten
rulers desyryng eche others domynyon / haue set theym at
25 warre / & dedly dyscencyon among theym selfe / whereby whyle
eche hathe aspyred to the enhaunsynge of his owne / they haue
lytell forced what came of the comen corps of crystendome / god
for the reuengynge of theyr inordynate appetytes / hath
withdrawen his helpe and shewed that he careth as lytell /
30 sufferynge whyle eche of them laboureth to ete vp other / the
Turke to prospere and so ferforth to procede / that yf theyr
blynde affeccyons loke not therto the soner / he shall not fayle
(whiche our lorde forbede) within shorte processe to swalowe them
all.

35 And all be it Cryste forbode saynt Peter beynge a preste / and
vnder hym selfe prynce of his prestes to fyght with the temporal
sworde / towarde the empechement and resystence of his fruytfull
passyon / where vppon depended the saluacyon ofmankynde / whiche
affeccyon our sauour had before that tyme so sore reprobued and
40 rebuked in hym / that he called hym therefore Sathan / yet ys yt
nothyng to the purpose to al ledge / that by that ensample temporall
prynces sholde withoute the lette of suche spyrytuall profyte and the
sufferaunce of moche spyrytuall harme suffer theyr people to be
inuaded and oppressed by infydels / to theyr vtter vndoyng not
45 onely temporall but also of a greate parte perpetuall / whiche were
lyke of theyr frayletye for fere of worldely grefe and incommodyte / to
fall frome the faythe and renye theyr baptysme.

In whiche parell syth oure lorde wolde not that any man sholde
wylfully put hym selfe / and for that cause aduysed hys dyscyples that

yf they were pursued in one Cytye / they sholde not come forth and fole
hardely put them selfe in parell of renyeng Cryste by impacyence of
some intolerable turmentys / but rather fle thense into som other
place where they myght serue hym in quyete / tyll he sholde suffer
5 them to fall in suche poynt that there were no way to escape / and
than wolde he haue them abyde by theyr takelynge lyke myghty
champanyons wherein they shall not in suche case fayle of his helpe.
Now albe it so that Cryste and his holy appostles / exhorte euery man
to pacyence and sufferaunce / without requytynge of an euyll dede or
10 making any defence / but vsyng further sufferaunce / and doynge
also good for euyll / yet neyther doth this counsayll bynde a man that
he shall of necessyte agaynste the comen nature / suffer another
man causelesse to kylle hym / nor letteth not any man from the defence
of another / whome he seeth innocent and inuaded and oppressed
15 by malyce. In whyche case bothe nature / reason / and goddys
byheste byndeth / fyrste the prynce to the sauegarde of hys peple
with the parell of hym selfe / as he taught Moyses to know hym selfe
bounden to kylle the Egypcyans in the defence of Hebrewe / and after
he byndeth euery man to the helpe & defence of his good & harmles
20 neyghbour / agaynst the malyce and cruelty of the wronge doer. For
as the holy scrypture saythe / vnicuique dedit deus curam de proximo
suo / god hath gyuen euery man charge of his neyghbour to kepe
hym from harme of body and soule / as moche as may lye in his
power.

25 And by this reason is not only excusable but also commendable /
the comen warre which euery peple taketh in the defence of theyr
countrie agaynst enemyes that wold inuade it / syth that euery man
fyghteth not for the defence of him selfe of a pryuate affeccyon to hym
self / but of a crysten charyte / for the sauegard & preseruacyon of
30 all other. Whych reson as it hath place in all batayle of defence / so
hath it most especyally in the batayle by whyche we defende eche other fro
farre the more parell and losse / bothe of worldly substance / bodyly
hurt / and perdycyon of mennys soules. And nowe yf this be lyefull
35 and enioyned also to euery pryuate person / how moche more
belongeth it to pryncys and rulers / whiche yf they may not vpon the
parell of theyr soules wyttyngly sufier amonge the people whome they
haue in gouernaunce any one to take away anothers horse / how may
they with out eternall dampnacyon suffer other people and specyally
40 infydelys / to come in / spoyle / and robbe / and captiue them all?
And yf they be bounden to the defence and may not do it alone / what
madnes were it to saye that the people may not helpe them.

45

The .xv. chapitre.

And surely as the prynces be bounden that they shall not suffer
theyr people by infydels to be inuaded / so be they as depely bounden

that they shall not suffer theyr people to be seduced and corrupted by
heretykes / syth the parell shall in shorte whyle growe to as grete /
bothe with mennes soules withdrawen from god / and theyr goodes lost
/ and theyr bodyes destroyed by comen sedycyon / insurreccyon / and
5 open warre / within the bowelles of theyr owne lande. All whiche maye
in the begynnyng be ryght easely auoyded / by punysshment of those
fewe that be the fyrste. Whiche fewe well repressed / or yf nede so
requyre vtterly pulled vp / there shall farre the fewer haue lust to
folowe. For yf they were handled in a contrary maner / and as ye
10 semed to mene in the begynnyng of our matter / in stede of
punysshment / entreted / faouored / and by fayre wordes and
rewardes brought home agayne / I fere me then that you shold fynde
lytell fruyte in that fassyon. For fyrst where as they fall in to heresy by
pryde / that way sholde make them prowder / and set the more by
15 theym selfe. And than wolde many mo fall thereto / of purpose to be
hyred agayne therfro. So that as Mammolukes and Genysaryes aboute
the Turke and sowdan haue vsed to crysten theyr chyldren of purpose
that by the renaynge of theyr fayth after / they myght be made
Mammolukes or Genysaryes as theyr fathers were / and maye be had
20 the more in estymacyon & faouour aboute the grete Turke / euen lyke
wyse within a whyle yf we take that way with heretykes we shall haue
yonge fresshe felowes fyrst become heretykes / that they may be prayed
and hyred after to come to Crystes faythe agayne. I wolde not they
were ouer hastely handeled / but lytell rygoure and moche mercy
25 shewed where symplenes appered / and not hyghe harte or malyce. For
of suche as be prowde and malycyous / moch profe hath bene made all
redy. For of some sorte many full fayre handeled / lytell chaunge
theym selfe or come to good amendement. I tolde you my selfe and
very trewe it was of twayne that were detected of heresy vnto the
30 most honourable prelate of this realme / and in what benygne
fatherly maner and lyberall also he delte with them. And yet what
amendement made his gentyll and courteyse intreatye / in theyr
stoburne stomake? Were they not after worse then they were before? and
so vsed them selfe that after moche harme done by theym / they came in
35 shorte space after to theyr open conuyecyon? They be ye wote well at
the fyrste customably receyued to grace / and veryly for suche merytes
/ forgyuenes is rewarde ynoughe. And yf they canne not by that
warnyng be warned / surely as saynt Poule sayth he is not to be
trusted often / but rather of all good crysten people to be eschewed
40 and auoyded from the flocke. For they be so ferre waxen croked / that
seldome can they be ryghted agayne.

Forsoth quod your frend yet as I sayd at my fyrst comyng to you /
were I worthy to be of counsayle with the clergy when there were a
manne founden fawtye therein / whom the people haue in good
45 estymacyon for some greate oppynyon of lernyng and vertue / they
sholde be secretely and soberly monyshed / and not the matter
publyshed among the peple. And fynally yf they so sholde nedys be
openly conuyctyd and corrected in face of the worlde / than wolde I
not yet haue them called Lutheranes / lest the people whiche had

good oppynyon of them / may peraduenture lyke luther the better for
them / or yf they happen to perceyue them for nought and so take
theym / than shall they peraduenture gyue the lesse credence to all
good men / and set the lesse by all good prechours after.

5 Surely quod I certayne rule that were alway best / were harde to
gyue in suche case. Sometye there may peraduenture suche
honestye be ioyned wyth suche repentaunce / that it wolde not be
moche a mysse to preserue the mannys estymacyon amonge the people
/ to whom hys perfayte chaunge may percas more than recompence hys
10 formare errour and ouersyght. But where as the contrary shall seme
conuenient / there can I not se why we sholde forbere to call theym
Lutheranys / syth it is bothe an olde vsage to call heretykes after the
name of hym whom they folow in theyr heresyne / and also as Luthers
secte is in effecte the hole hepe of all heresyne gathered togyther / it
15 is nowe all one to call hym a Lutherane or to call hym an heretyke /
those two wordys beyng in maner equyualent / Luther techynge
allmoste nothyng but heresyne / nor none heresyne founden any
where all moste that the Lutheranys haue not amonge theym. And
syth it so is / reason dothe in my mynde requyre that the name of
20 Lutheranys sholde be custumably brought in mennys erys as odyous
as the name of heretykes. Nor I se not so great fere that eyther folke
shall for oppynyon of any mannys vertue in whom they se them selfe
deceyued / withdrawe theyr fauoure and affeccyon from suche as are
good in dede / or fall into the fauour of Luthers secte for the
25 estymacyon of the man whom they now se preued nought. For this wyll
no man do but suche as eyther be so folysh that they wolde hate all
Crystes apostles for the falsehed of Iudas / or so noughty that they wold
fayne haue all the world fall to the same secte & be of theyr own suyt.

30

The .xvi. chapter.

Forsothe quod youre frende yet wolde there me thynketh be moche
pyte vsed in those matters amonge. For many a manne vnlearned
35 when he hereth one that he taketh for connyng / and seeth suche a
manne as he taketh for vertuose / commende Luthers waye / he is
of symplenesse and good mynde moued to folowe the same.

Surely quod I therin I say not nay but that these thynges beyng
suche / grete pyte it is to se many good symple soules deceyued and
40 led out of the ryght way by the authoryte of suche as they reken for
good men and connyng / whom they haue eyther by open sermons or
secrete communycacyon perceyued to be fauourers of that
vngracyous secte / thynkyng that men of suche connyng and
knowledge in scripture / beyng therewith of suche vertuous behauour
45 as they seme to be / wold neuer lene to that way / but yf they knewe it
for good. And surely where it so happeneth that any symple soule is by
the good oppynyon that he hathe in his mayster led out of the ryght
byleue of the faythe / wenyng that were the very fayth whiche he

seeth his mayster (whome he rekeneth good and connyng) folowe and
lene vnto / it is a very pyteous thyng. And as that persone is lesse in
blame and more easely cured / so is that mayster double dampned / as
the cause bothe of his owne synne and his that foloweth hym / and
5 very harde is he to mende. Howe be it some tyme we deserue
wyth our synne that god for the punyshment thereof / suffereth vs to
haue lewde leders and euyll techers. And surely for the more parte
suche as be ledde oute of the ryght waye / do rather fall thereto of a
lewde lyghtnesse of theyr owne mynde / then for any grete thyng
10 that moueth theym in theyr mayster that techeth theym. For we se
theym as redy to byleue a purser a glouer or a weuer that nothyng can
do but scantely rede englysshe / as they wolde be to byleue the wysest
and the best lerned doctour in a realme. Howe be it be a man neuer so
well lerned / and seme he neuer so vertuous / yet can we with no
15 reason excuse our selfe / yf we leue the ryght byleue for the truste that
we haue in any man erthely. For our byleue is taught vs by god
surely planted in the chyrche of Cryst / and the artycles therof not
newe begon / but nowe contynued many an hundred yere in the
greate congregacyon of crysten people / as thynges certayne / sure /
20 and stable / and out of all questyon / whiche none heretyke doth or
can denye / and in the hertes of this congregacyon be they wryten by
the holy hande worke of god. And therefore accursed is he that thorowe
his truste put in any manne / byleueth the contrary of any poynt that
the chyrche of Cryst is taught to byleue by god.

25 This fayth was taught by Cryste / preched by his apostles / of this
wrote his euangelystes / and many mo thynges were taught than are
wryten. And this faythe sholde haue ben taught and fermely standen /
all thoughe nothyng had ben wryten. And the artycles of this fayth
had in mennes hertes / be the iust & sure rules of construccyon by
30 which we constre and vnderstande the holy scrypture that is wryten.
For very sure are we that who so wolde construe any texte of holy
scrypture / in suche wyse as he wolde make it seme contrary to
any poynte of this catholyke fayth which god hath taught his chyrch /
he gyueth scrypture a wronge sentence / and thereby techeth a
35 wronge byleue. And as saynt Poule sayth cursed be he and though he
were an aungell of heuen. And therefore be we not excusable yf we
byleue any man to the contrary of the fayth / howe good or how
connyng so euer he seme / whyle we se that he techeth vs a
wronge waye whiche we may sone knowe yf we be good crystens
40 and knowe the bylyef all redy.

And we may haue also a great gesse thereat / yf he teche vs
secretely as a pryuye mysterie / the doctryne that he wolde not
were vtteryd and shewed openly. For suche thyngys be they
comenly that these heretikes teche in hucker mucker /
45 agaynst the fayth that all the chyrche byleueth. Nowe wolde I
gyue this counsaile to euery vnlernd man / whan any man so
techeth the whome thou hast in greate estymacyon for vertue or
connyng / than consyder in thy selfe that he neyther hathe
more vertue nor more connyng / than had saynt Austyne / saynt

Hyerome / saynt Ambrose / saynt Gregory / saynt Cypriane
/ saynt Chrysosteme / with many old fathers and holy
doctours / whiche byleued all theyr dayes and dyed in the
bylyefe that thou byleuest all redy / whereof he techeth the
5 contrary. And so say boldely to hym. But than yf he wolde begyle
the / and saye that those holy doctours byleued not as thou dost
/ but as he sayth: bryng hym to the rekenyng before some other
good and well lerned men. And I dare be bolde to waraunt that
10 thou shalt fynde hym double false. For neyther shalte thou fynde
it trewe that he tolde the / and besydys that he shall not let to
belye the / sayeng and swerynge to that thou sayest wronge on
hym / and that he neuer tolde the so.

Mary syr quod your frende he wyll haply say that he were
peradventure in that poynt to be pardoned / because of the
15 ieopardy that he myght fall into / by the mayntenaunce of his
opnyon.

Pardon hym yf ye wyll quod I. But yet is he not than so good as
were those good fathers. For eyther is his way nought / and than
doth he nought to teche it / or yf it be good / than is he nought
20 / that for any fere forsaketh it. For he that forsaketh any trowth
of Crystys faythe / forsaketh Cryste. And than sayth our
sauyour that who so doth / shall be forsaken of hym. And he
that so doth is not to be byleued lyke those holy fathers / which
haue taught vs farre the contrary. For they dyd abyde by the
25 ryght faythe that they taught / whiche is as by theyr bokys
appereth / the selfe same fayth that we beleue. And so ferforthe
abyde they thereby / that dyuers of theym susteyned greate
persecucion therefore / and some of theym dethe &
martyrdome. So that we were more than madde yf we hadde not
30 leuer sende oure soulys to the soulys of those holy fathers / of
whose connyng / vertue / and saluacyon / we be sure / than
to caste theym away wyth these folke / whyche howe hooly soo
euer they seme / yet shewe themselfe nought / in that they teche
the contrary of suche thynges as those vndoubted holy doctours
35 taught.

I meruayle then quod your frende why they lyue so vertuously
/ fastyng and gyuyng theyr good in almouse with other
vertuous exercyse / both in forbering the pleasure of the
worlde / and also takyng payne in theyr bodyes.

40 To this matter quod I our sauyour hym selfe answereth
where he sayth in the gossell of Mathewe / Attendite a falsis
prophetis qui veniunt ad vos in vestimentis ouium /
intrinsicus autem sunt lupi rapaces. Beware of the false
prophetes that come to you in the clothyng of shepe / and yet
45 within forthe ben rauenous wolues. For syth that they by false
doctryne laboure to deuoure & destroy mennes soules / we be
sure ynoughe that wolues they be in dede / how shepysshly so
euer they loke. And ypocrytes muste they nedes be / syth they be
so denounced by goddes owne mouthe. And well may we

perceyue that he meneth not well / whan he techeth euyll. And
that euyll he techeth we may well wyt / whan we se hym teche
the contrary of the which god hath all redy taught his hole
chyrche. In whiche hath ben so many holy fathers / so many
5 connyng doctours / and so many blessyd martyrs / that so
haue bydden by the faythe to the dethe / that it were a frenesye /
yf we wolde nowe agaynst so many suche / byleue any false heretyke
& faynyng ypocryte / techynge vs the contrary.

Of those holy fathers of our fayth whom theyr bokes sheweth to
10 haue byleued as we byleue / we haue sene and knowen theyr vertuous
lyfe well proued by theyr blessyd ende / in whiche oure lorde hath
testefyed by many a myracle / that theyr fayth and theyr lyues hath
lyked hym. But neuer haue we yet sene any suche thyng by any of
15 these heretykes. Nor yet so moche as any constauce in theyr
doctryne / but & yf they were ones founde out and examyned / we se
them alwaye fyrst redy to lye and forswere them selfe yf that wyll
serue. And whan that wyll not helpe but theyr falshed and periury
proued in theyr faces / than redy be they to abiure & forsake it / as
20 longe as that may saue theyr lyues. Nor neuer yet founde I any one /
but he wolde ones abiure though he neuer entended to kepe his othe.
So holy wolde he be & so wyse therwith / that he wolde with periury
kyll his soule for euer / to saue his body for a whyle. For comenly sone
after suche as so doo / shewe theym selfe agayne / god of his
25 ryghtuousnes not sufferynge that theyr false forswerynge sholde stande
them longe in stede.

The .xvii. chapter.

30 **A**nd as for theyr luyng / the good apparence whereof is the
thyng that most blyndeth vs / as moche surty as we haue of the
godly lyfe of oure olde holy fathers / whereof the worlde hath wryten /
and god hath borne wytnes by many greate myracles shewed for
theyr sakes / as vncertayn be we of these men / with whom we neyther
35 be alway present / and lytell also can tell what abhomynacyons they
may do to some of theym secretly. Nor yet can knowe theyr entent
and purpose that they appoynt vpon and the cause for whiche they be
for the whyle content to take all the payne.

Very certayne is it that pryde is one cause wherefore they take the
40 payne. For pryde is as saynt Austyne sayth / the very mother of all
heresydes. For of an hygh mynde to be in the lykyng of the people /
hath comen into many menne so madde a mynde and so frantyke /
that they haue not rought what payne they toke wythout any other
recompence or reward / but onely the fonde pleasure and delyte that
45 theym selfe conceyue in theyr harte / whan they thynke what
worshyp that people talketh of them. And they be the deuyls martyrs
/ takynge moche payne for his plasure / and his very apes / whom he
maketh to tomble thorow the hope of that holynes that putteth

theym to payne wythout fruyte. And yet often tymes maketh theym mysse of the vayne prayse whereof onely they be so prowde. For whyle they delyte to thynke how they be take for holy / they be many tymes well perceyued and taken for ypocrytys as they be.

5 But suche is this cursed affeccyon of pryde / and so depe setteth in the clawes where it catcheth / that harde it is to pull them out. This pryde hath ere this made some lerned men to deuise new fantasyes in our fayth because they wolde be syngular among the peple / as dyd Arryus Faustus Pelagius and dyuers other olde heretykes. Whose false
10 oppynyons haue bene longe tyme passed openly condempned by many holy synodes and generall counsayles / & nowe god be thanked not onely theyr oppynions quenched / but also all theyr bokys clene gone and vanysshed quyt away / ere euer any lawe was made for suche bokys burnyng. So that it well appereth to haue bene the onely worke
15 of god that hath destroyed those workys / whyche wrought in theyr tymes moche harme in hys chyrche. This affeccyon of pryde hath not onely made some lerned men to bryng forth new fantasyes / but maketh also many men of moch lesse than meane lernyng so sore to long to seme far better lerned than they be / that to make the people
20 haue them in authoryte / they deuise new sectys and scysmys to the pleasure of newe fangle folke / sparyng no payne for the whyle to set forth theyr secte withall / rewardyng theyr labour with onely delyte of beholdyng what pleasure the peple haue in theyr prechyng.

And albe it that this frantyke pleasure with which the deuyll inwardly fedeth them / be the onely thyng that satysfyeth and contenteth some / yet many are there of those that euyll techeth and appere holy / whiche are both secretly more lose and voluptuous then they seme. And some also whiche waresly kepe theym selfe for the whyle /
25 entende towarde more lyberall lewdenes at length. Wyll ye se ensample thereof? Loke on Tyndall that translated the newe testament / whiche was in dede (as ye sayd in the begynnyng) before his goynge ouer / taken for a man of sober and honest lyuyng / and loked and preched
30 holyly / sauynge that yet sometyme it sauoured so shrewdely / that he was ones or twyse examyned therof. But yet bycause he glosed then his wordes with a better sence / and sayd & sware that he mente none harme / folke were glad to take all to the best. But yet ye se that
35 thoughe he dyssembled hym selfe to be a Lutherane or to bere any fauour to his secte whyle he was here / yet as sone as he gate hym hense / he gate hym to Luther strayght. And where as in the translacyon of the newe testament he couered and dyssymuled hym selfe as moche as he coulde / yet when he perceyued his cloked
40 heresyas aspyed and dystroyed / then shewed he shortly hym selfe in his owne lykenes / sendyng forth fyrst his wycked boke of Mammona / and after his malycyous boke of obedyence. In whiche bokes he sheweth
45 hym selfe so puffed vp with the poyson of pryde / malyce / and enuye / that it is more than meruayle that the skynne can holde togyther. For he hath not onely sowked out the most poyson that he coulde fynde thorowe all Luthers bokes or take of hym by mouth / and all that hathe spette out in these bokes / but hath also in many thynges farre

passed his mayster / ronnyng forth so madde for malyce / that he
fareth as though he herde not his owne voyce. He barketh agaynst the
sacramentes moche more than Luther. For where as Luther lefte yet
some confessyon / and rekened his secrete confessyon necessary and
5 profytable though he set a lewde lybertye therin / Tyndall taketh it away
quyte / and rayleth theron and sayth it was begonne by the deuyll.
Whiche thyng had vndoubtedly neuer bene obtayned amonge the
people / that folke sholde shewe theym selfe theyr secrete synnes to
another man / yf god had not brought it vp hym selfe. Nor neuer
10 coulde yt haue contynued so many hundred yeres without grete harme
growen by dysclosyng of many mannes offences / if the holy spyryte of
god had not assysted his holy sacrament as the kyniges hyghnes most
prudently wryteth. Luther also somtyme affermeth purgatory /
somtyme doubteth / and somtyme denyeth. But Tyndall putteth no
15 doubte at all / but denyeth it as vtterly / as folysshly / without
grounde / cause / or colour layde wherfore. Concernyng the holy
masse / Luther as mad as he is was neuer yet as mad as tyndall is /
whiche lyke hym selfe so rayleth thervpon in his frantyke boke of
obedyence / that any good crysten man wolde abhorre to rede it. And
20 yet wrytynge as he doth / he is not ashamed to saye that the chyrche
wyll not byleue holy saynt Hyerome / saynt Austyne / and such other
/ as though these holy doctours were on his syde. Amonge all whome
he shall scant rede one lefe wherin he shall not fynde one or other of
his abhomynable heresydes reproued. Luther hym selfe was neuer so
25 shamelesse to saye / that these holy fathers helde on his syde. But
bycause they were agaynst hym / he reiected the authoryte of theym
all. But what conscyence hath this Tyndall that thus can wryte to
blynde vnlerned peple wyth / whan hym selfe well knoweth that they
do all with one voyce proue the shryfte and confessyon is of necessitye
30 requesyte to our saluacyon / and that they lay for them the holy
scrypture plentuously for the further profe of thys parte / whiche
Tyndall wolde wykkedly wyth onely raylynge and gestyng agaynst all
theyr holesome doctryne dryue away clene & he could? He knoweth
also hym selfe that all they with one voyce teche and proue by
35 scrypture to / that there is the fyre of purgatory / which I meruayle
why Tyndall fereth so lytell / but if he be at a playne poynt with him
selfe to go strayght to hell. They teche also all with one voyce the great
profyte of the masse and honour that owght to be done thereto /
whyche Tyndall techeth to dyshonoure.

40 They teche all the worshyppyng of ymagys and relykes / and
praynge to sayntys / goynge on pylgrymagys / and credence to be
gyuen to myracles / of all whyche Tyndall techeth the contrary.

All they teche also chastyte / and preche hygh preemynence of
vyrgynyte and wydowhed aboue weddyng / and euer haue had in
45 abhomynacyon the breche of any vowe of chastyte / where as
Tyndall agaynst theym all techynge the contrary / is therin so
shamelesse and so lytell respecte hath of his owne conscyence / that
seyng all theym to wryte agaynste hym and hym selfe agaynst them
all / and that euery man that lerned is must nedys perceyue his

shamelesse boldenes therein / letteth not yet bothe to rayle agaynst
Crystys chyrche for sayng as these olde holy sayntes sayd before /
and also to say that the chyrche wyll not here them / where as hym
selfe seeth that the chyrche and they say all one thyng / and as well
5 they as the chyrche abhorre and condempne his dedly dampnable
heresy.

Nowe wene I that we nede lytell to doute howe he lyueth / that
thus wryteth. He lyueth of lykelyhedde as euyll as he techeth / and
worse he canne not. But as I beganne to say this Tyndall in the
10 begynnyng bare forth a fayre face / & semed vnto the peple
peradventure an honest man / as some other happely do now
whom ye speke of / whych when they se theyr tyme shall yf they may
be suffred / cast of theyr vysours of ypocrysy / & shew them self at
length in theyr own lykenes as he doth now.

15 I pray you loke on luther hym self. Yf he shold in the begynnyng
haue sayd all that he hath sayd synce / who could haue suffred him? yf
he shold in the begynnyng haue maryed a nonne / wolde not the
people haue burned hym? And yet nowe by lytell and lytell he hathe
brought theym to be contente therwith. And let vs not thynke the
20 contrary but that of those heretykes that here seme so good yf there
be any suche / we se not yet theyr stomakes / but shall yf they be
vpholden a whyle se theym folowe theyr authoure in lewde lyuyng
doctur Luther with his lemman / and shall by the deuyls helpe
enduce good and symple soules so farre in to wrong wayes / that they
25 shall at lengthe well lyke and commende the thynges whiche nowe theyr
incorrupted consyence abhorreth. And therefore let all good crysten
people knocke and breke as holy scrypture counsayleth the yonge
chyldehens hedes of Babylon agaynst the stone / that is to saye let good
crysten folke suspecte / abhorre / and pursue in the begynnyng all
30 suche euyll doctryne / as is contrary to the fayth and techyng of
Crystes catholyke chyrche / whiche god and his holy spyryte bothe by
wrytyng and without wrytyng hath taught his chyrche / and whiche
hath in his chyrche contynued from Crystes dayes hytherto / as it well
appereth by the good and godly bokes of all our forefathers holy
35 doctours of Crystes chyrche myly taunt here in erthe / and nowe
glorious sayntes in his chyrche tryumphaunt in heuyn. Frome whose
ferme fayth ioyned with good workes which as two wynges caryed them
vp to heuyn / there shall but we be more than madde no fonde
heretique lede vs / seme he neuer so sayntysshe with any new
40 construccyon of Crystes holy gospell or other parte of holy scrypture /
whiche no wyse man wyll doubtte but that those holy connyng men
illumined with the grace of god / moche better vnderstode than all
the rabell of these lewde heretykes. Of all whiche that euer sprange in
Crystes chyrche / the very worst and the most beestly be these
45 Lutheranes as theyroppynyons & theyr lewde lyuyng sheweth. And let
vs neuer doubtte but all that be of that secte yf any seme good as
very fewe do / yet wyll they in conclusyon declyne to the lyke lewde
lyuyng / as theyr mayster and theyr felowes do yf they myght ones
(as by goddes grace they neuer shall) frame the people to theyr

owne frantyeke fantasy. Whiche dissolute lyuyng they be dryuen to
 dyssemble / bycause theyr audyence is not yet brought to the
 poynte to bere that / whiche they surely truste to brynge aboute
 and to frame this realme after the fassyon of Swycherlande or Saxony
 5 and some other partes of Germany / where theyr secte hath all redy
 fordone the faythe / pulled downe the chyrches / polluted the temples /
 put out & spoyled all good relygyous folke / ioyned freres and nonnes
 togyther in lechery / despyted all sayntes / blasphemyd oure blessyd
 lady / caste downe Crystes crosse / throwneout the blessyd sacrament
 10 / refused all good lawes / abhorred all good gouernaunce / rebelled
 agaynste all rulers / fall to fyght amonge them selfe / and so many
 thousandes slayne / that the lande lyeth in many places in maner
 deserte & desolate / & fynally the most abhomynable is of all / of all
 15 theyr owne vngracyous dedes lay the faute in god / takyng away the
 lybertye of mannes wyll / ascrybyng all our dedes to desteny / with all
 rewarde or punysshment pursuyng vpon all our doynge / wherby they
 take away all dyligence & good endeouour to vertue / all withstanding &
 stryuyng agaynst vyce / all care of heuyn / all fere of hell / all cause of
 20 prayer / all desyre of deuocyon / all exhortacyon to good / all
 dehortacyon from euyll / all prayse of well doyng / all rebuke of syn /
 all the lawes of the worlde / all reason among men / set all wretchednes
 a broche / no man at lyberty / & yet euery man do what he wyll /
 callyng it not his wyll but his desteny / layng their syn to goddes
 25 ordenaunce / & their punysshment to goddes cruelyte / & fynally
 turnyng the nature of man in to worse than a beste / & the goodnes of
 god in to worse than the deuyll. And all this good frute wold a fewe
 myscheuous persons / some for desyre of a large lybertye to an
 vnbrudeled lewdnes / & some of an hye deuilysshe pryde cloked vnder
 30 pretexte of good zele & symplenes / vndoutedly bryng in to this realme
 / yf the prynce & prelates and ye good faythfull people dyd not in the
 begynnyng mete with theyr malyce.

The .xviii. chapiter

35

For as for the clergy whom they labour to bryng in hatred vnder
 that false accusacyon of cruelyte / do no more therin than saynt Austyn
 / saynt Hierom & other holy fathers haue ben wont to do before / nor
 no further than the apostle aduyseth hym selfe. For they do no more
 40 but whan one heretyke after warnyng wyll not amende but waxeth
 worse / eschewe hym than & auoyde hym out of Crystes flocke. Whiche
 is the very thyng that saynt Poule counsayleth where he wryteth to
 Tytus / hereticum hominem post primam & secundam correptionem
 deuita. And this is moche lesse the the clergy doth to heretykes /
 45 than saynt Peter dyd vnto Ananias & Saphyra for a far smaller
 matter / that is to wyt for theyr vntrewe sayng & kepyng asyde a
 porcyon of theyr owne money / whan they made semblaunce as
 though they brought to the apostles all togyder. For though they

were not kylled by his owne hande / yet appereth it well that god
kylled them bothe twayne by saynt Peter his meanes as gouernoure of
his chyrch / to the ferfull example of all suche as wold after the breke
theyr promyse & vowe to god wyllyngly made of them selfe or theyr
5 owne good. Which thyng Luther & Tyndall wolde haue all men do
now. Dyd not saynt Poule wryte vnto the corynthyes / that they sholde
delyuer to the deuyll hym that had defoyled his fathers wyfe / to the
punysshment of his body that the spyryte myght be saued in the day
of iudgement? What say we of Hymyneus & Alexander / of whom he
10 wryteth vnto the corynthyes also / Hymineum & Alexandrum tradidi
sathane / vt discant non blasphemare. I haue quod he betaken
Hymyneus & Alexander to the deuyll / to teche them to leue their
blasphemy. In whiche wordes we may well lerne / that saynt Poule
as apostle & spyrytuall gouernour in the countre fyndyng them
15 twayne fallen from the fayth of Cryst in to the blasphemy of that
they were bounden to worshyp / dyd cause the deuyll to tourment
& punyssh them theyr bodyes / whiche euery man may well wyt was no
small payne / & peraduenture not without deth also. For we fynde
nothyng of theyr amendement. And this bodyly punysshment dyd saynt
20 Poule as it appereth vpon heretykes / so that yf the clergy dyd vnto
moch more blasphemous heretykes than I wene they twayne were /
moche more sorow than saynt Poule dyd to theym / they sholde neyther
do it without good cause nor without grete authoryte & euydent
example of Crystes blessyd apostles. And surely whan our sauour
25 hym selfe calleth suche heretykes wolues cloked in shepys skynnes /
and wolde that his shepherdes the gouernours of his flocke sholde in
suche wyse auoyde them as very shepherdes wolde auoyde very
wolues / there is lytell doute but as an honourable prelate of this
realme in his most erudyte boke answereth vnto Luther / the
30 prelates of Crystes chyrche rather ought temporally to destroy
those rauenous wolues / than suffer them to wyrry & deuoure
euerlastyngly the flocke that Cryst hath commytted vnto theyr cure
/ & the flocke that hym selfe dyed for to saue it from the wolues
mouth. But now though it well appere (as me thynketh it doth) that
35 the clerge might in this case ryght sore procure agaynst heretykes
/ yet do they in dede no further than the olde holy fathers dyd in
theyr tyme / & the blessyd apostle counsayleth them to do. But
all the sore punysshment of heretykes wherwith such folke as
fauour them wold fayne diffame the clarge / is & hath ben for the
40 grete outrages & temporall harmes that suche heretykes haue ben
alway wont to do / & sedycious commocions that they be wonte to
make / besyde the far passyng spyrytuall hurtes that they do to
mennes soules / deuysed & executed agaynst them of necessaryte by
good crysten prynces & polytyke rulers of the temporalty / for as
45 moch as theyr wysdomes well perceyued that the people sholde not
fayle to fall in to many sore & intolerable troubles / yf suche
sedycious sectes of heretykes were not by greuous punysshment
repressed in the begynnyng / and the sparcle well quenched ere
it were suffred to growe to ouer grete a fyre.

Forsoth quod your frende it appereth well that the clergy is not
in this matter to be blamed as many men reken. For it semeth
that the sore punyshment of heretykes is deuysed not by the
clergy / but by temporall prynces and good ley people / and not
5 without grete cause.

Well quod I and to the entent that ye shall perceyue it moch
the better / and ouer the byleue your owne eyen and not my
wordys in many thyngys that ye haue herde of my mouth / we wyll
not parte this nyght but I shall delyuer into youre handys here mo
10 bokys than ye wyll rede ouer tyll to morowe. But for that ye shall
neyther nede to rede all / nor lese tyme in sekyng for that ye
sholde se / I haue layd you the placys redy with ryshes bytwene
the leuys / and notes marked in the mergentys where the matter
is touched.

15 So caused I to be borne into his chamber a boke of decrees
/ and certayne workys of saynt Cypryane / saynt Austyne /
and some other holy doctours / and therewythall a worke or
twayne of Luther / and as many of Tyndall. And in this wise
went we to souper / and on the morowe forbare I to speke
20 with hym tyll nere dyner tyme. At whiche our metynge / he
shewed me that in the decrees where the ryshes lay / namely
in causa .xxii. questione quinta / & dyuers other of the
questyons consequently folowyng / he had sene at full that the
clergy dothe at this day no further for the punyshment of
25 heretykes / than dyd the olde fathers and holy doctours and
sayntys in tyme passed / as by theyr own wordys there
alledged doth open and playne appere. And that as well the
clergy in the persecucion of heretykes lawfully may do / as
the temporall pryncys in warre agaynst infydelys be depely
30 bounden to do / moche more than they nowe do / or of longe
tyme haue done / or yet as it semeth go aboute to do. And
ouer this he sayd that he had sene of Luthers owne wordys
worse than he had euer herde rehersed / and in Tyndall
worse yet in many thyngys than he sawe in Luther hym selfe.
35 And in Tyndals boke of obedyence he sayd that he had
founden what thyng Tyndall sayth agaynste myracles and
agaynst the prayenge to sayntys.

Mary quod I and these two matters made vs two moche
besynes before your goynge to the vnyuersyte. I wolde it had
40 happed you and me to haue red ouer that boke of his before.
How be it in good fayth yf ye wyll / we shall yet peruse ouer
his reasons in those poyntys / and consyder what weyght is
in them.

Nay by my trouth quod your frende we shall nede nowe to
45 lose no tyme therin. For as for myracles / he sayth nothyng
in effect but that whiche I layd agaynst them before / that the
myracles were the workys of the deuyll. Sauyng that where I
sayd that it myght peradventure be sayd so / he sayth that in
dede it is so / & preueth it yet lesse then I dyd. And therefore

as for that worde of his without better profe is of lytell weyght.

Forsothe quod I Tyndals worde alone ascrybyng all the myracles to the deuyll / owght not to wey moche among crysten men / agaynst the wrytyng of holy saynt Austyne /
5 saynt Hyerome / saynt Ambrose / saynt Chrysosteme / saynt Gregory / & many an other holy doctour / wrytyng many a great myracle done at holy pylgrymagys and sayntys relyques / done in open presence of many substancyall folke / and dyuers done in theyr owne syght. All which myracles all those blessyd sayntes do ascrybe
10 vnto the worke of god / and to the honoure of those holy sayntes that were worshypped at those pylgrymages. Agaynst all whom when Tyndall ascrybeth them all to the deuyll / he playnly sheweth hym selfe as faythfull as he wold seme / very nere sybbe to the infydelyte of those Iewes that ascrybed crystes myracles to the deuyll / sayng that he
15 dyd cast out deuyls by the power of Belsabub prynce of deuyls.

Surely quod your frende & as for that he reasoneth agaynst prayng to sayntes is very bare.

It must nedes quod I be bare / excepte he well auoyde the myracles. Wherto when he hath nothyng to say but to ascrybe goddes workes to
20 the deuyll / he sheweth hym selfe dryuen to a narowe strayte. For he & his felowes as touchyng myracles / neyther haue god wyllynge / nor the deuyll able to shewe any for the profe of theyr parte / nor I trust in god neuer they shall.

In faythe quod your frende as for reasonyng the matter of prayng to sayntes / he is not worth the redynge now. For all the substaunce in
25 effecte that ye proue it by / is by hym clene vntouched.

That is quod I no meruayle for he hath not herde it.

In fayth quod your frende & of his owne makynge he layeth argumentes for it such as he lyst / which he layeth forth fayntly / &
30 than doth answeere them so slenderly / & all his hole matter in those poyntes & other so playnly confuted by the old holy fathers / that if I had sene so moch before / it had ben lykely to haue shorted moch parte of our long communycacyon.

For by my trouthe quod he whan I consyder bothe the partes well /
35 & rede Luthers wordes & Tyndals in some places where ye layde me the rysshes / I can not but wonder that eyther any Almayne coulde lyke the one / or any englysshe man the other.

I can not moche meruayle quod I though many lyke them well.

For syth there is no countree wherin there lacketh plenty of suche
40 as be nought / what wonder is it the vycyous folke fall to the fauoure of theyr lyke? And then as for such / when theyr hertes are ones fixxed vppon theyr blynde affeccyons / a man may with as moche frute preche to a post / as reason with them to the contrary. For they nothyng ponder what is reasonably spoken to them / but wherto theyr
45 fonde affeccyon inclyneth / the thyng they lene to / & that they byleue / or at the lest wyse that way they walke and say they byleue it. For in good fayth that they so byleue in dede / theyr maters be so madde that I byleue it not. And yet make they semblaunce as though they byleued that no man were able to confute Luther or Tyndall / where me

thynketh for these matters of theyr heresyces that they so set forthe (yf
 the audience were indyfferent) there were not in this world a man more
 mete to matche them bothe twayne in dyspycyons / then were mad
 Colyns alone / yf he were not of the same secte. For he lasheth out
 5 scrypture in bedeleem as fast as they bothe in Almayne. And in good
 fayth they bothe expowne it as maddely as he. And so helpe me god as
 me thynketh that man is as madde as any of all thre / whiche when he
 seeth the ryght fayth of Cryste contynued in his catholyke chyrche so
 many hundred yerys / & on the syde so many glorious martyrs / so
 10 many blyssed confessours / so many godly vyrgynes / And in all that
 tyme vertue had in honoure / fastyng / prayer / and almouse had in
 pryce / god and his sayntys worshypped / his sacramentys had in
 reuerence / crysten soulys tenderly prayed for / holy vowes kept and
 obserued / vyrgynyte preched and praysed / pylgrymages deuoutly
 15 vysyted / euery kynde of good workes commended / And seeth now
 sodenly start vp a new secte setting forth clene the contrary /
 destroyeng crystes holy sacramentys / pullyng downe crystes crosse /
 blasphemying his blyssed sayntys / destroyng all deuocyon /
 forbedyng men to pray for theyr fathers soulys / contempnyng
 20 fastyng dayes / setting at nought the holy dayes / pullyng downe the
 chyrches / raylyng agaynst the masse / vylanously demenyng the
 blyssed sacrament of the auter the sacred body of our sauour Cryst /
 And seeth the one syde & the continuaunce therof so clerely proued by
 many a thousand myracle / so clerely testyfyed by the vertuose &
 25 erudyte bokys of all the olde holy doctours from the apostles tyme to our
 dayes / and seeth on the other syde a fonde frere and hys felowes
 without wyt or grace bere vs in hande that all those holy fathers neuer
 vnderstode the scrypture / but onely these bestys that teche vs vyce as
 fast as euer the other taught vs vertue / & that seeth on the one syde
 30 saynt Cypryane / saynt Hyerome / saynt Ambrose / saynt Austyne /
 saynt Basyle / saynt Chrysostem / saynt Gregory / & all the vertuous.
 & connyng doctours by row from the deth of Cryst & the tyme of his
 apostles tyll now / & seeth among all these neyther preste monke nor
 frere that euer dyd after hys professyon made / mary & take a wyfe / or
 35 any suffred to breke theyr vowed chastyte in all theyr tyme / & seeth on
 the other syde none other doctours of this new secte but frere
 Luther & his wyfe / prest Pomerane & his wyfe / frere Huiskeyn and his
 wyfe / prest Carlastadius & his wyfe / dan Otho monke & his wyfe /
 frere Lambert & his wyfe / frantyke Colyns / & more frantyke Tyndall
 40 that sayth all prestes monkes & freres must nedes haue wyues / that
 man were I say as frantyke as they bothe / that wold rather sende his
 soule with suche a sorte as these be / then wyth all those holy sayntes
 that euer synce crystes dayes haue testyfyed by theyr holy hand
 wrytynge / that they dyed in the same fayth that the chyrche byleueth
 yet / And all this .xv.C. yere hath done / & shall do tyll the worldes
 45 ende / go there neuer so many heretykes out therof / & leue it neuer
 so lytell / yet shall it remayn and be well knowen alway by the
 professyon of the fayth / and those holy sacramentys that haue
 contynued therin from the begynnyng thereof / and the holy doctours

therof euer had in honour and reuerence / and theyr acceptacyon with
god incessauntely testyfyed by myracles / whiche neuer one sorte of so
many sectys of heretykes coude yet allege for any doctoure of theyrs /
nor neuer shall I thynke tyll the grete indygnacyon of god prouoked by
5 our synne & wretchednes / shall suffer the hed of all heretykes
Anticryst (of whom these folke be the fore walkers) to come in to this
wretched worlde / and therin to worke suche wonders / that the syght
thereof shall be able to put ryght wyse men and good men in grete
doubte of the trouthe / seyng false Anticryst preuyng his prechyng
10 by myracles / where as now neyther good man nor wyse man can haue
any coloure of excuse / yf men were so mad to byleue these mad
maysters of whom they se the pryncypall archeheretykes and fyrst
authours of the secte / neyther shewe myracle for the profe of theyr
doctryne / & yet theyr techyng & theyr lyuyng all set vpon synne &
15 bestely concupyscence / & so clene contrary to the doctryne of all the
olde holy doctours / for whom god hath and doth shewe so many
myracles in his chyrche / which as I sayd shall not fayle to be
conserued & his ryght fayth therin to be preserued / in dyspyte of all
the heretykes that euer shall spryng Anticryst & all / & in spyght of the
20 deuyll the grete mayster of them all / whom Cryst shall at the last
restrayne & destroy his Idoll Anticryst with the spyryte of his holy mouth
/ repayryng & delatyng his chyrche agayne / & gatheryng therinto as
well the remenaunt of the Iewes / as all other sectes abrode aboute the
worlde / shall make all folke one flocke vnder hym selfe the shepeherde
25 / and shall delyuer a glorious kyngdome to his father of all the saued
people from our foremare father Adam to the last day / from thens
forth to reygne in heuyn in ioy & blysse incogyttable one euerlastyng day
with his father hym selfe & the holy goost / which sende these
sedycyous sectes the grace to ceace / & the faouurers of those faccyons
30 to amende / & vs the grace that stoppyng our eres from the false
enchauntementes of all these heretykes / we may by the very fayth of
Crystes catholyke chyrche so walke with charyte in the way of good
warkes in this wretched worlde / that we maye be parteners of the
heuenly blysse / whiche the blood of goddes owne sonne hath bought
35 vs vnto. And this prayer quod I seruyng vs for grace / let vs nowe
syt downe to dyner. Which we dyd.

And after dyner departed he home towarde you / and I to the
courte.

40

Finis.
Cum priuilegio regali,
Anno domini .M.v.C.xxxi. mense Maii.

