

BOOK V. Word or Scripture, but forthwith their glosses<sup>1</sup> upon it are, Ch. xxii. 10. the Word "preached," the Scripture "explained or delivered "unto us *in sermons*." Sermons they evermore understand to be that Word of God, which alone hath vital operation; the dangerous sequel of which construction I wish they did more attentively weigh. For sith speech is the very image whereby the mind and soul of the speaker conveyeth itself into the bosom of him which heareth, we cannot choose but see great reason, wherefore the word that proceedeth from God, who is himself very truth and life, should be (as the Apostle to the Hebrews noteth) lively and mighty in operation, "sharper "than any two-edged sword<sup>2</sup>." Now if in this and the like places we did conceive that our own sermons are that strong and forcible word<sup>3</sup>, should we not hereby impart even the most peculiar glory of the word of God unto that which is not his word? For touching our sermons, that which giveth them their very being is the wit of man<sup>4</sup>, and therefore

<sup>1</sup> [Written *gloses*, A. C. : v. lxii. 14.] 1886.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iv. 12.

<sup>3</sup> [Chr. Letter, p. 22. "We beseech you . . . to teach us by sounde demonstration, that a man can preach the pure word of God by his owne naturall witt, without a gift supernaturall of the spirit to give him utterance, and to speak the worde as he ought to speake? If all that a man preache be the pure worde of God, what derogation is it to call such a man's sermons or preachings the strong and forcible worde?"

Hooker, MS. note. "If sermons be the word of God in the same sense that Scriptures are his word, if there be no difference between preaching and prophecy, noe odds between thapostles of Christ and the preaching ministers of every congregation, as touching that forme of delivering doctrine wh<sup>ch</sup> did exempt both the speeches and writings of thapostles from possibility of error, then must we hold that Calvin's sermons are holie Scripture. You would not have homilies read in the Church, because nothing should

"be there read but the word of God. How shall this stand with your doctrine that sermons are God's word no lesse than Scriptures? You taught before, that the Church and all men's doctrine must be tried by the word of God. Whereby if you understand sermons, it were good you told us whose sermons. Calvin's homilies read in churches. This epistle not like St. Paule's." Again, in p. 21. "Have you so long magnified the word of God to bring the matter unto this issue that your own sermons are that word? Are you not contented to have them taken for his word in regard of conformity therewith, unlesse they be honoured and held of as great authoritie as if they had come from the very mouth of Christ himself or of Christ's Apostles? If this be your meaning, let the people applaude unto you, and when you speake, cry mainly out, The voice of God and not of man."

<sup>4</sup> [Chr. Letter, p. 21. "Here, Mai. Hoo. we are hampered with your words, because they seeme to us contrarie to the judgment of

they oftentimes accordingly taste too much of that over corrupt fountain from which they come. In our speech of most holy things, our most frail affections many times are bewrayed. BOOK V. Ch. xxii. 11.

Wherefore when we read or recite the Scripture, we then deliver to the people *properly* the word of God. As for our sermons, be they never so sound and perfect, his word they are not as the sermons of the prophets were; no, they are but ambiguously termed his word, because his word is commonly the subject whereof they treat, and must be the rule whereby they are framed. Notwithstanding by these and the like shifts they derive unto sermons alone whatsoever is generally spoken concerning the word.

[11.] Again, what seemeth to have been uttered concerning sermons and their efficacy or necessity, in regard of divine Matter, and must consequently be verified in sundry other kinds of teaching, if the Matter be the same in all; their use is to fasten every such speech unto that one only Manner of teaching which is by sermons, that still sermons may be all in all. Thus<sup>1</sup> because Salomon declareth that the people decay or "perish" for want of knowledge, where<sup>2</sup> no "prophesying" at all is, they gather that the hope of life and salvation is cut off, where preachers are not which *prophecy by sermons*, how many soever they be in number that read daily the word of God, and deliver, though in other sort, the selfsame matter which sermons do. The people which have

"our Church. We therefore desire you hartilie to resolve us, what you meane in this place by . . . the being of a sermon, whether the logicall and dialecticall frame by which men contrive their matter in such and such a forme: or, &c. . . . If you meane the former, then everie declamation and formall oration in the schooles may be called sermons: for these are framed of the meere wit of man." Hooker, MS. note. "Sermons are framed by the witt of man: therefore all things framed by man's witt are sermons. If this be your skill in reasoning, let a wheelbarrow be a sermon. For it is a thing made by man's witt."

<sup>1</sup> [T. C. i. 126. al. 159. "It may be that God doth sometimes work faith by reading only, especially where preaching cannot be; and so he doth sometimes without reading, by a wonderful work of his spirit: but the ordinary ways whereby God regenerateth his children is by the word of God which is preached. And therefore Salomon saith, that where prophecy (which is not a bare reading, but an exposition and application of the Scriptures) faileth, there the people perish." Comp. Whitg. Def. 572.] T. C. ii. 381.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxix. 18.

no way to come to the knowledge of God, no prophesying, no teaching, perish. But that they should of necessity perish, where any one way of knowledge lacketh, is more than the words of Salomon import.

[12.] Another usual point of their art in this present question, is to make very large and plentiful discourses<sup>1</sup> how Christ is by sermons lifted up *higher* and made *more* apparent to the eye of faith; how the savour of the word<sup>2</sup> is *more* sweet being brayed, and *more* able to nourish being divided by preaching<sup>3</sup>, than by only reading proposed; how sermons are the keys of the kingdom of heaven<sup>4</sup>, and do open the Scriptures, which being but read, remain *in comparison* still clasped; how God<sup>5</sup> giveth *richer* increase of grace

<sup>1</sup> T. C. [i. 126. al. 159. "To know that the word of God preached hath more force, and is more effectual than when it is read, it is to be observed whereunto the preaching is compared. It is called a lifting or heaving up of our Saviour Christ. Like unto the displaying of a banner, as the serpent was lift up in the wilderness." Comp. Def. 571.] T. C. ii. 378, 9.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 14-16. [T. C. i. 126. ap. Whitg. Def. 571. "It is called also a sweet savour, and therefore as the spices being brayed and punned, smell sweeter and stronger than when they be whole and unbroken; so the word by interpretation being broken and bruised carrieth a sweeter savour unto the understanding, &c." Comp. T. C. ii. 379, by which it appears that in his second edition, p. 159, he substituted another figure, that of opening a door, for this of aromatic spices.]

<sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 15. [T. C. i. 126. al. 159. "The same also may be said in that the preaching is called a 'cutting' of the word of God: for as when the meat is cut and shred, it nourisheth more than when it is not so: so likewise it is in preaching and reading." Def. 571; T. C. ii. 379.]

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xvi. 19. [T. C. i. 159.

"To this also may be well referred that the preaching is called of St. Luke (xxiv. 32.) an *opening* of the Scriptures; whereby it is declared that they be as it were shut, or clasped, or sealed up, until such time as they be by exposition or declaration opened." ii. 380. "For this cause are the ministers of the word said to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven: for that without their ministry of preaching the kingdom of heaven is as it were locked."]

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 6. [Adm. ap. Whitg. Def. 580. "By this book bare reading is good tilling, and single service saying is excellent building," with a reference to 1 Cor. iii. 5; Whitgift (Answer, ap. Def. 581.) remarks on this, "Belike because there is mention made of tilling in the next verse of that chapter, therefore you quote it in the margent, missing only the line: for this is your usual manner: if you have but one word in a text which you use in your book, you quote the place, as though it made for your purpose." T. C. i. 126. al. 159. "That which is brought for the authors of the Admonition, and so scornfully hurled away of M. Doctor, that S. Paul compareth the preaching unto planting and watering, is a very notable place

to the ground that is planted and watered by preaching, than by bare and simple reading. Out of which premises declaring how attainment unto life is *easier* where sermons are, they conclude an *impossibility*<sup>1</sup> thereof where sermons are not.

Alcidamas the sophister<sup>2</sup> hath many arguments, to prove that voluntary and extemporal far excelleth premeditated speech. The like whereunto and in part the same are brought by them, who commend sermons, as having (which all men I think will acknowledge) sundry<sup>3</sup> peculiar and proper virtues, such as no other way of teaching besides hath. Aptness to follow particular occasions presently growing, to put life into words by countenance, voice, and gesture, to prevail mightily in the sudden affections of men, this sermons may challenge. Wherein notwithstanding so eminent properties whereof lessons are haply destitute, yet lessons being free from some inconveniences whereunto sermons are more subject, they may in this respect no less take, than in other they must give the hand which betokeneth preeminence. For there is nothing which is not someway excelled even by that which it doth excel. Sermons therefore and Lessons may each excel other in some respects, without any prejudice unto either as touching that vital force which they both have in the work of our salvation.

"to prove that there is no salvation without preaching." Def. 572. "S. Paul saith, 'I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.' Ergo 'there is no salvation without preaching:' is not this good stuff, and a strong argument to build a matter of salvation upon?" See also T. C. ii. 380.]

<sup>1</sup> "No salvation to be looked for, where no preaching is." T. C. lib. ii. p. 380. [and i. 126. al. 159. and i. 173. "Unless the Lord work miraculously and extraordinarily, (which is not to be looked for of us,) the bare reading of the Scriptures without the preaching cannot deliver so much as one poor sheep from destruction." And Petition of the Communitie to Q. Eliz. (1588.) "We pray your

"Highness most humbly upon our knees, that for the redress of this our woeful case, you would not send us to the Bishops of this land;... because by the space of this nine and twenty years their unfaithfulness hath manifestly appeared, in that they... either said we were already sufficiently provided for, or that it were an impossible thing to establish a preaching ministry; as if they should say, It were not possible for us to be saved." And the same in the leading topic of the "Complaint of the Commonalty by way of Supplication to the High Court of Parliament," which follows in the same pamphlet.]

<sup>2</sup> [Ad calcem Isocratis; ed. Aldin. p. 98-101; ed. Bekker. vii. 42.]

<sup>3</sup> T. C. lib. ii. p. 395.

[13.] To which effect when we have endeavoured as much as in us doth lie to find out the strongest causes wherefore they should imagine that reading is itself so unavailable, the most we can learn at their hand is, that <sup>1</sup>sermons are "the ordinance of God," the Scriptures "dark," and the labour of reading "easy."

First therefore as we know that God doth aid with his grace, and by his special providence evermore bless with happy success those things which himself appointeth, so his Church we persuade ourselves he hath not in such sort given over to a reprobate sense, that whatsoever it deviseth for the good of the souls of men, the same he doth still accurse and make frustrate.

Or if he always did defeat the ordinances of his Church, is not reading the ordinance of God <sup>2</sup>? Wherefore then should we think that the force of his secret grace is accustomed to bless the labour of dividing his word according unto each man's private discretion in public sermons, and to withdraw itself from concurring with the public delivery thereof by such selected portions of Scripture, as the whole Church hath solemnly appointed to be read for the people's good, either by ordinary course, or otherwise, according to the exigence of special occasions? Reading (saith Isidore<sup>3</sup>) is to the hearers no small edifying. To them whose delight and meditation is

<sup>1</sup> [Whitg. Def. 717, 18. "I make this only difference betwixt homilies and sermons, that the one is pronounced within the book, the other not so. If you object and say that the preacher is directed by the Spirit of God, I will answer that the writers of homilies be so likewise. And what can you allege in this point for the one that I cannot allege for the other? The promise of the assistance of God's Spirit is as well given to him that writeth homilies, and to those that hear them, as it is to such as study for their sermons, and such as hear them."] T. C. ii. 396. ["As if he had said, the Lord will give testimony to his word, as well by the means which men have devised, as that him-

self hath ordained."] <sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxi. 11-13. [See Def. 577.] <sup>3</sup> De Eccles. Offic. lib. i. c. 10. ["Est autem lectio non parva auditorum ædificatio. Unde oportet ut quando psallitur, ab omnibus psallatur; cum oratur, oretur ab omnibus; quando lectio legitur, facto silentio, æque audiatur a cunctis. Nam et si tunc super-veniat quisque cum lectio celebratur, adoret tantum Deum, et præsignata fronte aurem sollicite accommodet. Patet tempus orandi cum omnes orant, et patet tempus cum volueris orare privatim. Obtentu orationis, ne perdidderis lectionem."] p. 583. ed. Du Breul. Paris, 1601.]

in the law seeing that happiness and bliss belongeth<sup>1</sup>, it is not in us to deny them the benefit of heavenly grace. And I hope we may presume, that a rare thing it is not in the Church of God, even for that very word which is read to be both presently their <sup>2</sup>joy, and afterwards their study that hear it. St. Augustine<sup>3</sup> speaking of devout men, noteth how they daily frequented the church, how attentive ear they gave unto the lessons and chapters read, how careful they were to remember the same, and to muse thereupon by themselves. St. Cyprian<sup>4</sup> observeth that reading was not without effect in the hearts of men. Their joy and alacrity were to him an argument, that there is in this ordinance a blessing, such as ordinarily doth accompany the administration of the word of life.

It were much if there should be such a difference between the hearing of sermons preached and of lessons read in the church, that he which presenteth himself at the one, and maketh his prayer with the Prophet David, "Teach me O Lord the way of thy statutes, direct me in the path of thy commandments<sup>5</sup>," might have the ground of usual experience, whereupon to build his hope of prevailing with God, and obtaining the grace he seeketh; they contrariwise not so, who crave the like assistance of his Spirit, when they give ear to the reading of the other. In this therefore preaching and reading are equal, that both are approved as his ordinances, both assisted with his grace. And if his grace do assist them both to the nourishment of faith already bred, we cannot, without some very manifest cause yielded, imagine that in breeding or begetting faith, his grace doth cleave to the one and utterly forsake the other.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm i. 2.<sup>2</sup> Psalm cxix. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Aug. in Psal. lxvi. [t. iv. 657. "Vide formicam Dei: surgit quotidie, currit ad ecclesiam Dei, orat, audit lectionem, hymnum cantat, ruminat quod audivit, apud se cogitat, recondit intus grana collecta de area. Hæc ipsa quæ modo dicuntur qui prudenter audiunt hoc agunt, et ab omnibus videntur procedere ad ecclesiam, redire de ecclesia, audire sermonem,

audire lectionem, invenire librum, aperire et legere: omnia ista videntur cum fiunt. Formica illa est conterens iter, portans et recondens in conspectu cernentium."]

<sup>4</sup> Cyprian. lib. ii. Epist. 5. [t. ii. p. 75. ed. Fell.] "Lector personat verba sublimia, evangelium Christi legit, a fratribus conspicitur, cum gaudio fraternitatis auditur."

<sup>5</sup> Psal. cxix. 33, 35.

[14.] Touching *hardness* which is the second pretended impediment<sup>1</sup>, as against Homilies being plain and popular instructions it is no bar, so neither doth it infringe the efficacy no not of Scriptures although but read. The force of reading, how small soever they would have it, must of necessity be granted sufficient to notify that which is plain or easy to be understood. And of things necessary to all men's salvation we have been hitherto accustomed to hold (especially sithence the publishing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whereby the simplest having now a key unto knowledge which the <sup>2</sup>Eunuch in the Acts did want<sup>3</sup>, our children may of themselves

<sup>1</sup> T. C. lib. ii. p. 383. ["Where confessing the word preached and read all one, I shew notwithstanding that as the fire stirred giveth more heat, so the word as it were blown by preaching flameth more in the hearers then when it is read; he answereth that this is to join with the Papists in condemning the Scriptures of obscurity: but reason he can shew none; and it is all one as if one should be charged to have said that the sun is dark, for that he affirmeth it lighter at noonday than at the sunrising. Then he must understand that we place not this difference of light-someness in the word, which is always in itself most lightsome, read and preached; but partly in the ordinance of God... making that the special means; partly in the darkness of our understanding, which without the aid of preaching cannot come to sufficient knowledge of it."] 384. ["The cause why the eunuch" (in Acts viii.) "could not understand, is assigned: for that he had no teacher to shew him the way. Whereby followeth... that a man cannot ordinarily not only come to salvation, but not so much as to sufficient knowledge of it without preaching."] 392. ["That he saith of dissent with myself" (Def. 784.) "for that saying somewhere" (T. C. i. 173. al. 216.) "that bare reading without a miracle cannot save from famish-

ment,' I say in another place, (i. 158. al. 197.) 'that the word of God is easy, giving understanding to idiots,' is frivolous. If it be easy and give understanding by preaching and reading together, although not so by reading only, that standeth which I have set down.]"

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 31.  
<sup>3</sup> [Referring to T. C. i. 126. "Of infinite examples take one, of the eunuch, which... was reading of the Prophet Esay, yet he believed not until Philip came and preached unto him." See also Sampson's Preface to a Supplication, &c. (1584) in Strype, An. iii. i. 327. "We do now complain of the danger of the loss of our souls, and of salvation, through this want of teaching which we now do suffer. There are whole thousands of us left untaught: yea by trial it will be found, that there are in England whole thousands of parishes destitute of this necessary help to salvation; that is, of diligent preaching and teaching. Salvation is promised to them only which do believe; but we cannot believe on him of whom we do not hear; we cannot hear without a preacher, as the Apostle doth say. It is preaching, and not simply reading, which is required for having of faith. The reader may himself read without understanding, as the eunuch did; and likewise may the hearer hear the thing read, and not understand it. That eunuch had not

by reading understand that, which he without an interpreter could not) they are in Scripture plain and easy to be understood. As for those things which at the first are obscure and dark, when memory hath laid them up for a time, judgment afterwards growing explaineth them. Scripture therefore is not so hard, but that the only reading thereof may give life unto willing hearers.

[15.] The "easy"<sup>1</sup> performance of which holy labour is in like sort a very cold objection to prejudice the virtue thereof. For what though an infidel, yea though a child may be able to read? There is no doubt, but the meanest and worst amongst the people under the Law had been as able as the priests themselves were to offer sacrifice. Did this make sacrifice of no effect unto that purpose for which it was instituted? In religion some duties are not commended so much by the hardness of their execution, as by the worthiness and dignity of that acceptation wherein they are held with God.

We admire the goodness of God in nature, when we consider how he hath provided that things most needful to preserve this life should be most prompt and easy for all living creatures to come by. Is it not as evident a sign of his wonderful providence over us, when that food of eternal life, upon the *utter want* whereof our endless death and destruction necessarily ensueth, is prepared and always set in such a readiness, that those very means than which nothing is more easy may suffice to procure the same? Surely if we perish it is not the lack of scribes and learned expounders that can be our just excuse. The word which saveth our souls is near us; we need for knowledge but<sup>2</sup> to read and live. The man which readeth the word of God the word itself doth pronounce blessed, if he also observe the same.

[16.] Now all these things being well considered, it shall be no intricate matter for any man to judge with indifferency, on which part the good of the Church is most conveniently sought; whether on ours whose opinion is such as hath been shewed, or else on theirs, who leaving no ordinary way of

full faith wrought in him, but by hearing Philip's preaching to him, and opening to him the meaning of the Scripture, which he had read before: for then the Holy

Ghost did work faith in his heart."<sup>1</sup> [See hereafter, ch. xxxi. § 2. 3.]<sup>2</sup> Apoc. i. 3.

BOOK V. salvation for them unto whom the word of God is but only  
Ch. xxii. 17. read, do seldom name them but with great disdain and contempt who execute that service in the Church of Christ<sup>1</sup>. By means whereof it hath come to pass, that churches, which cannot enjoy the benefit of usual preaching, are judged as it were even forsaken of God, forlorn, and without either hope or comfort: contrariwise those places which every day for the most part are at sermons as the flowing sea, do both by their emptiness at times of reading, and by other apparent tokens, shew to the voice of the living God this way sounding in the ears of men a great deal less reverence than were meet.

[17.] But if no other evil were known to grow thereby, who can choose but think them cruel which doth hear them so boldly teach<sup>2</sup>; that if God (as to Him there is nothing impossible) do haply save any such as continue where they have all other means of instruction, but are not taught by continual preaching, yet this is miraculous, and more than the fitness of so poor instruments can give any man cause to hope for; that sacraments are not effectual to salvation, except men be instructed by preaching before they be made partakers of them<sup>3</sup>; yea, that both sacraments and prayers also, where sermons are not, “do not only not feed, but are ordinarily to

<sup>1</sup> T. C. lib. ii. p. 363. [“These wooll readers . . . Non-residence would bring little either to filling of coffers, or bathing of them in the delights of the world, or to what other thing soever they in their absence propound, unless there were such *hungry knights*, as would for a crust of bread supply their absence. Now for removing of *these sweepings* out of the church ministry,” &c.] *ibid.* 373. [see above, § 10.]

<sup>2</sup> Pag. 364. [“Bare reading is not able, without God’s extraordinary work, to deliver one soul.” Prayers and sacraments, forasmuch as they take effect by the preaching of the word, where that is not these do not only not feed, but are ordinarily to further condemnation.”] 375. [“It is not denied but the Lord may *extraordinarily* give faith by reading only.”] 380. [“Some of these” (planting, water-

ing, &c.) “in some degree, or all *extraordinarily*, may be done by bare reading.”] 383. [see above, § 3, p. 90, note 4.] 384. [see above, § 14, p. 106, note 1.]

<sup>3</sup> Page 392. [Whitg. Def. 784. “You say that there is not enough in the reading of the Scriptures to keep the people from famishment. . . . It is a popish and an ungodly opinion, contrary to the worthiness and profitableness of the Scriptures.” T. C. ii. 392. “It is well with us, and the Scriptures keep their honour, if they bring to the elect salvation, used and applied as the order which the Lord hath set requireth. Unless peradventure he will say that the holy Sacraments lose their honour, when it is said *they are not effectual to salvation, without men be instructed by preaching before they be partakers of them.*”]

“further condemnation<sup>1</sup>?” What man’s heart doth not rise at the mention of these things?

It is true that the weakness of our wits and the dulness of our affections do make us for the most part, even as our Lord’s own disciples were for a certain time, hard and slow to believe what is written. For help whereof expositions and exhortations are needful, and that in the most effectual manner. The principal churches throughout the land, and no small part of the rest, being in this respect by the goodness of God so abundantly provided for, they which want the like furtherance unto knowledge, wherewith it were greatly to be desired that they also did abound, are yet we hope not left in so extreme destitution, that justly any man should think the ordinary means of eternal life taken from them, because their teaching is in public for the most part but by reading. For which cause amongst whom there are not those helps that others have to set them forward in the way of life, such to dishearten with fearful sentences, as though their salvation could hardly be hoped for, is not in our understanding so consonant with Christian charity<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Page 364. [See above, p. 108, note 2. See also Penry’s “Exhortation unto the governors and people of her Majesty’s country of Wales, to labour earnestly to have the preaching of the Gospel planted among them,” 1588; p. 5. “If you will embrace Christ, and have pardon of your sins by his passion, you must have that brought to pass by preaching. Christ, I grant, may be otherwise taught, but, as the Apostle saith, not as the truth is in Jesus: and therefore without comfort, and without salvation.” And p. 12. “Enquire now of the days of heaven, which are past, which were before you, since the day that Adam fell from his integrity; demand from the one end of heaven unto the other, and all with one consent will answer, that from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Moses, from Moses unto Jesus Christ, from his blessed appearing in the flesh unto the present hour, no face of a true Church apparent without preaching; no ordinary salvation without preaching: and

“this decree shall never be changed. I do not say but that the Lord may if he will save those, who never heard nor shall hear a sermon in all their lives. But, wretches as we are, what is that to us? We have no warrant to hope for any such salvation.”

And p. 14. “Verily, the Devil himself may as well hope to be saved as you can, who never saw the beauty of their feet that bring salvation.”

And p. 60. “The people living under our readers, though they faithfully execute their ministry, cannot hope for eternal life.”

<sup>2</sup> [“If ever we mind such a reformation, as God shall thereby be glorified, and his Church edified, we must utterly renounce all the unlearned pastors, as men by no means to be tolerated to have any charge over the Lord’s flock.” Learned Discourse of Eccl. Government, quoted in Bridges’ Defence, p. 478; who produces also the following passage from Harrison (the Brownist) against Cartwright; “I