

[4.] In¹ which consideration notwithstanding, because to fly altogether from God, to despair that creatures unworthy shall be able to obtain any thing at his hands, and under that pretence to surcease from prayers as bootless or fruitless offices, were to him no less injurious than pernicious to our own souls; even that which we tremble to do we do, we ask those things which we dare not ask. The knowledge of our own unworthiness is not without belief in the merits of Christ. With that true fear which the one causeth there is coupled true boldness, and encouragement drawn from the other. The very silence which our unworthiness putteth us unto, doth itself make request for us, and that in the confidence of his grace². Looking inward we are stricken dumb, looking upward we speak and prevail. O happy mixture, wherein things contrary do so qualify and correct the one the danger of the other's excess, that neither boldness can make us presume as long as we are kept under with the sense of our own wretchedness; nor, while we trust in the mercy of God through Christ Jesus, fear be able to tyrannize over us! As therefore our fear excludeth not that boldness which becometh saints³; so if their *familiarity*⁴ with God do not savour of this fear, it draweth too near that irreverent confidence wherewith true humility can never stand.

Prayer to be evermore delivered from all adversity.

XLVIII. Touching continual deliverance in the world from all adversity, their conceit is that we ought not to ask it of God by prayer, forasmuch as in Scripture there is no promise that we shall be evermore free from vexations, calamities, and troubles⁵.

¹ T. C. lib. iii. p. 203. "The publican did indeed not lift up his eyes: so that if by his example we should say we dare ask nothing, we ought also to ask nothing: otherwise instead of teaching true humility, we open a school to hypocrisy, which the Lord detesteth."

² [Whitg. Def. 494. "This kind of prayer doth not savour of mistrust, but rather of great confidence in the mercy of God, at whose hands we crave those things which we are of ourselves unworthy to ask or receive."]

³ Rom. v. 2; viii. 15; Heb. x. 19.

⁴ [T. C. iii. 204. "Our Saviour

"Christ will have set before us most amiable names" (of a Father and a Friend) "when we come to prayer: to engender in us a reverent familiarity with him. And the boldness that the children of God ought to have so much passeth that which we use to any of our most dearest friends, as we are more assured of his love than of theirs."]

⁵ T. C. lib. i. p. 136. [107. ap. Whitg. Def. 491.] "Forasmuch as there is no promise in the Scripture that we should be free from all adversity and that evermore, it seemeth that this prayer might

[2.] Minds religiously affected are wont in every thing of weight and moment which they do or see, to examine according unto rules of piety what dependency it hath on God, what reference to themselves, what coherence with any of those duties whereunto all things in the world should lead, and accordingly they frame the inward disposition of their minds sometime to admire God, sometime to bless him and give him thanks, sometime to exult in his love, sometime to implore his mercy. All which different elevations of spirit unto God are contained in the name of prayer. Every good and holy desire though it lack the form, hath notwithstanding in itself the substance and with him the force of a prayer, who regardeth the very moanings, groans, and sighs of the heart of man. Petitionary prayer belongeth only to such as are in themselves impotent, and stand in need of relief from others. We thereby declare unto God what our own desire is that he by his power should effect. It presupposeth therefore in us first the want of that which we pray for; secondly, a feeling of that want; thirdly, an earnest willingness of mind to be eased therein; fourthly, a declaration of this our desire in the sight of God, not as if he should be otherwise ignorant of our necessities, but because we this way shew that we honour him as our God, and are verily persuaded that no good thing can come to pass which he by his omnipotent power effecteth not.

[3.] Now because there is no man's prayer acceptable whose person is odious, neither any man's person gracious without faith, it is of necessity required that they which pray do believe. The prayers which our Lord and Saviour made were for his own worthiness accepted; ours God accepteth not but with this condition, if they be joined with¹ belief in Christ.

The prayers of the just are accepted always, but not always those things granted for which they pray. For in prayer if faith and assurance to obtain were both one and the same thing, seeing that the effect of not obtaining is a plain testimony that they which prayed were not sure they should

"have been better conceived, being no prayer of faith, or of the which we can assure ourselves that we shall obtain it." [He adds, "Whatsoever can be alleged for the defence of it, yet every one which is not contentious may see that it

"needeth some caution or exception."]

¹ "Oratio quæ non fit per Christum non solum non potest delere peccatum, sed etiam ipsa fit [in] peccatum." Aug. Enar. in Psal. cviii. [§ 9. t. iv. 1219.]

obtain, it would follow that their prayer being without certainty of the event, was also made unto God without faith, and consequently that God abhorred it. Which to think of so many prayers of saints as we find have failed in particular requests, how absurd were it! His faithful people have this comfort, that whatsoever they rightly ask, the same no doubt but they shall receive, so far as may stand with the glory of God, and their own everlasting good, unto either of which two it is no virtuous man's purpose to seek or desire to obtain any thing prejudicial, and therefore that clause which our Lord and Saviour in the prayer of his agony did express, we in petitions of like nature do always imply, *Pater, si possibile est*, "If it may stand with thy will and pleasure." Or if not, but that there be secret impediments and causes in regard whereof the thing we pray for is denied us, yet the prayer itself which we make is a pleasing sacrifice to God, who both accepteth and rewardeth it some other way. So that sinners in very truth are denied when they¹ seem to prevail in their supplications, because it is not for their sakes or to their good that their suits take place; the faithful contrariwise, because it is for their good oftentimes that their petitions do not take place, prevail even then when they most² seem denied. "Our Lord God in anger hath granted some impatient men's requests³, as on the other side the Apostle's suit he hath of favour and mercy not granted," saith St. Augustine.

[4.] To think we may pray unto God for nothing but what he hath promised in Holy Scripture we shall obtain, is perhaps an error. For of prayer there are two uses. It serveth as a mean to procure those things which God hath promised to grant when we ask; and it serveth as a mean to express our lawful desires also towards that, which whether we shall have or no we know not till we see the event. Things in themselves unholy or unseemly we may not ask; we may whatsoever being not forbidden either nature or grace shall reasonably move us to wish as importing the good of men, albeit God himself have nowhere by promise

¹ Numb. xi. 33: 1 Sam. viii. 7: "Nonnullis impatientibus Dominus Job i. 12; ii. 6: Luke viii. 32. "Deus quod petebant concessit iratus, sicut contra Apostolo negavit

² 2 Cor. xii. 7-9.

³ Aug. Epist. ad Probam viduam, "propitius." Ep. 121. [al. 130. c. 14. ii. 392 B.

assured us of that particular which our prayer craveth. To pray for that which is in itself and of its own nature apparently a thing impossible, were not convenient. Wherefore though men do without offence wish daily that the affairs which with evil success are past might have fallen out much better, yet to pray that they may have been any other than they are, this being a manifest impossibility in itself, the rules of religion do not permit. Whereas contrariwise when things of their own nature contingent and mutable are by the secret determination of God appointed one way, though we the other way make our prayers, and consequently ask those things of God which are *by this supposition* impossible, we notwithstanding do not hereby in prayer transgress our lawful bounds.

[5.] That Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, having no superior, and therefore owing honour unto none, neither standing in any need, should either give thanks, or make petition unto God, were most absurd. As man what could beseem him better, whether we respect his affection to Godward, or his own necessity, or his charity and love towards men? Some things he knew should come to pass and notwithstanding prayed for them, because he also knew that the necessary means to effect them were his prayers. As in the Psalm it is said, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the ends of the earth for thy possession¹." Wherefore that which here God promiseth his Son, the same in the seventeenth of John² he prayeth for: "Father, the hour is now come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee according as thou hast given him power over all flesh."

But had Christ the like promise concerning the effect of every particular for which he prayed? That which was not effected could not be promised. And we know in what sort he prayed for removal of that bitter cup, which cup he tasted, notwithstanding his prayer³.

[6.] To shift off this example⁴ they answer first⁵, "That

¹ Psalm ii. 8.

² John xvii. 1, 2.

³ Matt. xxvi. 39; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42.

⁴ [Which had been alleged by Whitg. Def. 492. "Christ himself prayed to have the cup of his pas-

sion removed from him; which

"undoubtedly he knew before would

"not be granted unto him."]

⁵ T. C. lib. iii. p. 200. "Neither

"did our Saviour Christ pray with-

"out promise; for as other the chil-

"dren of God to whose condition

BOOK V. "as other children of God, so Christ had a promise of
Ch. xlviii. 7. "deliverance *as far* as the glory of God in the accomplishment
"of his vocation would suffer."

And if we ourselves have not also in that sort the promise of God to be evermore delivered from all adversity, what meaneth the sacred Scripture to speak in so large terms, "Be obedient, and the Lord thy God will make thee plentiful in every work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of the land for thy wealth¹." Again, "Keep his laws, and thou shalt be blest above all people, the Lord shall take from thee all infirmities²." "The man whose delight is in the Law of God, *whatsoever he doth it shall prosper*³." "For the ungodly there are *great plagues* remaining; but whosoever putteth his trust in the Lord mercy embraceth him *on every side*⁴." Not only that mercy which keepeth from being *overlaid* or *oppressed*⁵, but mercy which saveth from being *touched* with grievous miseries, mercy which turneth away the course of "the great water-floods," and permitteth them not to "come near⁶."

[7.] Nevertheless, because the prayer of Christ did concern but one calamity, they are still bold to deny the lawfulness of our prayer for deliverance out of all, yea though we pray with the same exception that he did, "If such deliverance may stand with the pleasure of Almighty God and not otherwise." For they have secondly found out a rule⁷ that prayer ought only to be made for deliverance from this or that particular adversity, whereof we know not but upon the event what the pleasure of God is." Which

"he had humbled himself have, so had he a promise of deliverance so far as the glory of God in the accomplishment of his vocation would suffer."

¹ Deut. xxx. 9.

² Deut. vii. 15. ³ Psalm i. 4.

⁴ Psalm xxxii. 11.

⁵ [T. C. iii. 201. "He citeth the ninety-first Psalm, that 'no evil shall come to thee.' . . It must not be understood that the afflictions shall not *touch* us; which is manifest, in that, assigning the manner of performance of these

"promises, he saith, that 'the Lord will be with him in his trouble, and deliver him;' noting that he shall be in trouble, which is contrary to that, that 'he shall be free from all trouble.' So that, to accord the Scripture with itself, the meaning of the promise must needs be, that he shall not be *overlaid* or *oppressed*, but contrarily, that the afflictions shall serve, as the Apostle saith, to his good."]

⁶ Psalm xxxii. 7.

⁷ T. C. lib. iii. p. 201.

quite overthroweth that other principle wherein they require unto every prayer which is of faith an assurance to obtain the thing we pray for. At the first to pray against all adversity was unlawful, because we cannot assure ourselves that this will be granted. Now we have license to pray against any particular adversity, and the reason given because we know not but upon the event what God will do. If we know not what God will do, it followeth that for any assurance we have he may do otherwise than we pray, and we may faithfully pray for that which we cannot assuredly presume that God will grant.

[8.] Seeing therefore neither of these two answers will serve the turn, they have¹ a third, which is, that to pray in such sort is but idly mispent labour, because God already hath revealed his will touching this request, and we know that the suit we make is denied before we make it. Which neither is true, and if it were, was Christ ignorant what God had determined touching those things which himself should suffer? To say², "He knew not what weight of sufferances his heavenly Father had measured unto him," is somewhat hard; harder that although "he knew them" notwithstanding for the present time they were "forgotten through the force of those unspeakable pangs which he then was in." The one against the plain express words of the holy Evangelist, "he knew all things that should come upon him³;" the other less credible, if any thing may be of less credit than what the Scripture itself gainsayeth. Doth any of them which wrote his sufferings make report that memory failed him? Is there in his words and speeches any sign of defect that way? Did not himself declare before whatsoever was to happen in the

¹ T. C. lib. iii. p. 201. "We ought not to desire to be free from all adversity if it be his will, considering that he hath already declared his will therein."

² T. C. lib. iii. p. 201. ["I deny that at that time he made that prayer to his holy Father he 'knew he should not obtain.' For although he knew that he should suffer, yet if I answer that as touching his humanity he knew not the most infinite and extreme weight of sufferance which God

"his heavenly Father had measured unto him; or knowing them had through the unspeakable force of the pangs which he then was in forgotten them; I see not how this answer may not be maintained as a Christian and catholic answer." Cartwright finishes his paragraph with the following sentence. "He" (Whitgift) "hath much other fog to this purpose, but not worth the naming."]

³ John xviii. 4.

course of that whole tragedy? Can we gather by any thing after taken from his own mouth either in the place of public judgment or upon the altar of the cross, that through the bruising of his body some part of the treasures of his soul were scattered and slipped from him? If that which was perfect both before and after did fail at this only middle instant, there must appear some manifest cause how it came to pass. True it is that the pangs of his heaviness and grief were *unspeakable*: and as true that because the minds of the afflicted do never think they have fully conceived the weight or measure of their own woe, they use their affection as a whetstone both to wit and memory, these as nurses to feed grief, so that the weaker his conceit had been touching that which he was to suffer, the more it must needs in that hour have helped to the mitigation of his anguish. But his anguish we see was then at the very highest whereunto it could possibly rise; which argueth his deep apprehension even to the last drop of the gall which that cup contained, and of every circumstance wherein there was any force to augment heaviness, but above all things the resolute determination of God and his own unchangeable purpose, which he at that time could not forget.

[9.] To what intent then was his prayer, which plainly testifieth so great willingness to avoid death? Will, whether it be in God or man, belongeth to the essence and nature of both. The Nature therefore of God being one, there are not in God divers wills although Godhead be in divers persons, because the power of willing is a natural not a personal propriety. Contrariwise, the Person of our Saviour Christ being but one there are in him two wills, because two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man, which both do imply this faculty and power. So that in Christ there is a divine and there is an human will, otherwise he were not both God and man. Hereupon the Church hath of old condemned Monothelites as heretics, for holding that Christ had but one will. The works and operations of our Saviour's human will were all subject to the will of God, and framed according to his law, "I desired to do thy will O God, and thy law is within mine heart¹."

¹ Psalm xl. 8.

Now as man's will so the will of Christ hath two several kinds of operation, the one natural or necessary, whereby it desireth simply whatsoever is good in itself, and shunneth as generally all things which hurt; the other deliberate, when we therefore embrace things as good, because the eye of understanding judgeth them good to that end which we simply desire. Thus in itself we desire health, physic only for health's sake. And in this sort special reason oftentimes causeth the will by choice to prefer one good thing before another, to leave one for another's sake, to forego meaner for the attainment of higher desires, which our Saviour likewise did.

These different inclinations of the will considered, the reason is easy how in Christ there might grow desires seeming but being not indeed opposite, either the one of them unto the other, or either of them to the will of God. For let the manner of his speech be weighed¹, "My soul is now troubled, and what should I say? "Father, save me out of this hour. But yet for this very cause am I come into this hour." His purpose herein was most effectually to propose to the view of the whole world two contrary objects, the like whereunto in force and efficacy were never presented in that manner to any but only to the soul of Christ. There was presented before his eyes in that fearful hour on the one side God's heavy indignation and wrath towards mankind as yet unappeased, death as yet in full strength, hell as yet never mastered by any that came within the confines and bounds thereof, somewhat also peradventure more than is either possible or needful for the wit of man to find out, finally himself flesh and blood left² alone to enter into conflict with all these³; on the other side, a

¹ John xii. 27.

² "Non potuit divinitas humanitatem et secundum aliquid deseruisse, et secundum aliquid non deseruisse? Subtraxit protectionem, sed non separavit unionem. Sic ergo dereliquit ut non adjuvaret, sed non dereliquit ut recederet. Sic ergo humanitas a divinitate in passione derelicta est. [derelictam se clamabat.] Quam tamen mortem quia non pro sua iniquitate sed pro nostra redemptione

"sustinuit, quare sit derelicta requirit, non quasi adversus Deum de pœna murmurans sed nobis innocentiam suam in pœna demonstrans." Hug. [de S. Victore 1097-1140.] de Sacram. lib. ii. part. i. cap. 10. *Deus meus, utquid dereliquisti me?* vox est nec ignorantiae, nec diffidentiae, nec querelae, sed admirationis tantum, quae aliis investigandae causae ardorem et diligentiam acuat.

³ Matt. xxvii. 46.

world to be saved by one, a pacification of wrath through the dignity of that sacrifice which should be offered, a conquest over death through the power of that Deity which would not suffer the tabernacle thereof to see corruption, and an utter disappointment of all the forces of infernal powers, through the purity of that soul which they should have in their hands and not be able to touch. Let no man marvel that in this case the soul of Christ was much *troubled*. For what could such apprehensions breed but (as their nature is) inexplicable passions of mind, desires abhorring what they embrace, and embracing what they abhor? In which agony "how should the tongue go about to express" what the soul endured? When the griefs of Job were exceeding great, his words accordingly to open them were many; howbeit, still unto his seeming they were undiscovered: "Though my talk" (saith Job) "be this day in bitterness, yet my plague is greater than my groaning¹." But here to what purpose should words serve, when nature hath more to declare than groans and strong cries, more than streams of bloody sweats, more than his doubled and tripled prayers can express, who thrice putting forth his hand to receive that cup, besides which there was no other cause of his coming into the world, he thrice pulleth it back again, and as often even with tears of blood craveth, "If it be possible, O Father: or if not, even what thine own good pleasure is," for whose sake the passion that hath in it a bitter and a bloody conflict even with wrath and death and hell is most welcome².

[10.] Whereas therefore we find in God a will resolved that Christ shall suffer; and in the human will of Christ two actual desires, the one avoiding, and the other accepting death; is that desire which first declareth itself by prayer against that wherewith he concludeth prayer, or either of them against his mind to whom prayer in this case seeketh? We may judge of these diversities in the will, by the like in the understanding. For as the intellectual part doth not cross itself by conceiving man to be just and unjust when it meaneth not the same man, nor by imagining the same man learned and unlearned, if learned in one skill, and in another kind

¹ Job xxiii. 2.

² [Compare Pearson on the Creed, p. 190, 191. ed. 1692.]

of learning unskilful, because the parts of every true opposition do always both concern the same subject, and have reference to the same thing, sith otherwise they are but in show opposite and not in truth: so the will about one and the same thing may in contrary respects have contrary inclinations and that without contrariety. The minister of justice may for public example to others, virtuously will the execution of that party, whose pardon another for consanguinity's sake as virtuously may desire. Consider death in itself, and nature teacheth Christ to shun it; consider death as a mean to procure the salvation of the world, and mercy worketh in Christ all willingness of mind towards it¹. Therefore, in these two desires there can be no repugnant opposition. Again, compare them with the will of God, and if any opposition be, it must be only between his appointment of Christ's death, and the former desire which wisheth deliverance from death. But neither is this desire opposite to the will of God. The will of God was that Christ should suffer the pains of death. Not so his will, as if the torment of innocency did in itself please and delight God, but such was his will in regard of the end whereunto it was necessary that Christ should suffer. The death of Christ in itself therefore God willeth not, which to the end we might thereby obtain life he both alloweth and appointeth. In like manner the Son of man endureth willingly to that purpose those grievous pains, which simply not to have shunned had been against nature, and by consequent against God.

[11.] I take it therefore to be an error that Christ either knew not what himself was to suffer, or else had forgotten the things he knew. The root of which error was an over-restrained consideration of prayer, as though it had no other lawful use but only to serve for a chosen mean, whereby the will resolveth to seek that which the understanding certainly knoweth it shall obtain: whereas prayers in truth both ours are and his were, as well sometime a presentation of mere desires, as a mean of procuring desired effects at the hands of God. We are therefore taught by his example, that the presence of dolorous and dreadful objects even in minds most perfect, may as clouds overcast all sensible joy; that no

¹ Isa. liiii. 10; John x. 15.