



The Christen

Knighte, teaching the Warri-
ers of God, not onely how they
may preuaile against Satan and his
wicked army in this worlde, but
also how they may liue before
God with a quiet and mery
conscience, newly set forth
vnto the great comfort of
the godly Readers
by. *Thomas Be-
con.*

Math. xvi.

Watche and praye, that ye en-
ter not into temptation.

i. Peter. v.

Be sober and watche, for your aduer-
sary the deuill as a roaring Lyon
walketh about seeking whom
he may deuour: whom re-
sist stedfast in the
fayth.

ARISE FOR



IT IS DAY.

SIR FRANCIS RUSSELL, KNIGHT, LORD RUSSELL¹,

THOMAS BECON WISHEETH THE FAVOUR OF GOD,
CONTINUAL HEALTH, AND PROSPEROUS
FELICITY.

IF I had not by daily experience these few years past proved, yea, and that within mine own breast, right honourable lord, what disquietness, trouble, fear, anguish, the alone remembrance of sin, conjoined with the contemplation and stedfast beholding of the righteous and terrible judgments of God, set forth in the holy scriptures against all ungodly and wicked persons, bringeth to weak and troubled consciences; I think verily that no man living, although very excellent in persuading and moving affects, could have brought me in belief, that so great an hell lurk or rather lie buried in the breast of any mortal man, although overwhelmed never so much with the bottomless seas of sin, and estranged from all kind of virtue and godliness.

I have in times past heard by the relation of certain credible persons, how greatly divers godly and virtuous men have been troubled in their consciences by the consideration of their former life, which hath appeared to them so horrible and sinful, that they have not only cursed the day of their birth, as we read of Job and Jeremy, but also been at the point of falling into desperation, and at utter defiance with God, recounting him not as a "Father of mercy and God of all consolation," but rather as a terrible Judge and fierce Lord, which according to his righteousness will punish, smite, slay, and condemn without mercy all those that transgress his commandment, will, and pleasure. And I myself before few years did know certain men of an honest conversation and approved judgment (of whom some be yet living, worthy and valliant champions in the court of the Most Highest), which were so turmoiled and tossed with the raging and cruel waves of desperation, that scarcely there remained any hope of salvation in their breasts; so terrible and loathsome appeared the face of their life to the eyes of their mind; such fear conceived they of the righteous judgments of God. I have also read in the holy scriptures of God, and authentic histories, of divers holy men which have been grievously vexed and turmoiled in their consciences,

[¹ Francis Russell, lord Russell, was the son of John Russell, first earl of Bedford, whose advancement was owing to his attendance on the archduke Philip, consort of Joanna of Spain. This prince having been compelled by stress of weather to land at Weymouth, was received by Sir Thomas Trenchard, a neighbouring gentleman. Sir Thomas dispatched the news of Philip's arrival to king Henry VIII., and meantime invited his relative, Mr Russell, of Kingston Russell near Burton in the county of Dorset, who had lately returned from foreign travel, to wait upon him. And so agreeable did Mr Russell prove himself to the archduke, that, having accompanied him to court, he was by him recommended to the king as a gentleman well qualified to serve him in some considerable station. Honours were accordingly heaped upon him: he was ennobled in 30th Henry VIII., as baron Russell of Cheney in the county of Buckingham, and was subsequently created earl of Bedford. He died March 14, 1555. By his lady, Anne, relict of Sir John Broughton of Tuddington, Bedfordshire, and daughter of Sir Guy Sapcoates (nephew and heir to dame Agnes Cheney,) he had a son Francis, to whom Becon has inscribed this treatise. This nobleman was distinguished for his attachment to the reformed doctrines, and appears

to have been intimately acquainted with many of the leading protestant divines. He was among those imprisoned on the accession of queen Mary; but was afterwards released, whether by any concession on his part seems not clearly ascertained. In the reign of queen Elizabeth he was frequently employed. He was more than once ambassador in France: he was also one of the peers who sat on the trial of the duke of Norfolk. He was so distinguished for hospitality and charity, that the queen used to say of him that he made all the beggars. He founded a school at Woburn; and bequeathed £20. per annum for the maintenance of two divinity students in University College, Oxford. Lord Bedford died July 28, 1585, at Bedford House, in the Strand; and was buried at Cheney, where he ordered by his will twenty godly sermons to be preached within five months after his death; for which he allowed £20. The earl was twice married, first to Margaret, the sister of Oliver, first lord St John of Bletsoe, by whom he had several children, and secondly to Bridget, daughter of lord Hussey, and widow of Sir Richard Morrison and of the earl of Rutland: by her he had no issue. He was succeeded by his grandson, Edward, the third earl of Bedford.]

and almost ready to fall into the bottomless pit of desperation, if they had not been underset with the comfortable props of God's eternal mercy: but notwithstanding these things aforesaid, if I had not proved the very same thing in mine own breast which I have both heard and known of other, I would have thought the temptations of so many godly men to be but trifles, and things of no weighty importance; such carnal security and fleshly quietness concerning any grief of conscience reigneth in the heart of natural man, which, as Jeremy saith, is both lewd and so stuffed with the Jer. xvii. dunghill of sin, that the bottom of it cannot be searched but of him alone which trieth the hearts and reins.

If such trouble, anguish, disquietness, grief, and turmoiling be in the hearts of them which earnestly profess Christ, cleave unto God's mercy with strong faith, hang wholly on his most sweet promises made to us plenteously in Christ's dear blood, repent their wicked manners, mortify their carnal lusts, walk in a new life, and so appoint their conversation that in all their life they seem to seek nothing but the glory of God and the profit of their neighbour; what is to be thought of the false Christians which, professing² Christ only in name, are very antichrists in their deeds, painted sepulchres, full of all abomination and wickedness, glistening hypocrites, outward- Matt. xxiii. ly before men righteous, but inwardly before God full of hypocrisy, feigned holiness, dissimulation, and unrighteousness? O what an hell-like fire boileth in their breasts! how are they disquieted, troubled, tormented, grieved, and turmoiled! The sorrows and pains of their hearts are unspeakable, the trouble of their consciences is nothing inferior to the raging ocean sea. So that it is truly said of the prophet: "The wicked Isai. lvii. are like the raging sea that cannot rest, whose water foameth with water and gravel: the wicked have no peace, saith the Lord God." What marvel, seeing they find nothing in their breasts but sin, damnation, death, hell, desperation, and the devil and all?

What quietness can there be where nothing is felt but the high indignation, hot wrath, heavy displeasure, and the sharp vengeance of God? If it be "a fearful thing Heb. x. to fall into the hands of the living God," which hateth all works of ungodliness, and threateneth eternal damnation to the transgressors of his law; yea, which condemneth without mercy them that willingly tread under foot Christ, his dearly-beloved Son, and counteth the blood of the testament, wherewith the faithful are sanctified, as an unholy thing, and do dishonour to the Spirit of grace; what quietness can such unfaithful and wicked people have in their hearts, seeing that God, his angels, and all his blessed saints are enemies to them? If God condemneth, who is able to save? if God casteth down to hell, who is able to lift up unto heaven? if God be an enemy, who can be a friend? Truly the wicked have against them whatsoever and whosoever is of God, not only good men, heavenly spirits, and glorious saints, but also the moon and seven stars, as they use to say.

But in this sharp agony and great disquietness of mind, as I may let the wicked pass, which, as they know not God aright, so likewise never flee they unto the throne of his gracious mercy, but continue unto the last day in the raging sea of troublous tempests, and after this life suffer much greater pains and torments; how shall the penitent sinner quiet his conscience, stablish his mind, comfort his spirit, strengthen his faith, recover his valiance in Christ Jesu, that he may be able to resist the fiery darts of Satan in the day of temptation? What shall he do? whither shall he turn him, that he may be free from the dangers of so cruel an enemy, which sleepeth not, which giveth no days of respite, which by no means will be reconciled, entreated, pacified, but "like a raging I Pet. v. lion continually goeth about seeking whom he may devour?" He feared not to tempt Gen. iii. many holy men in times past, yea, he feared not Christ Jesu, that most puissant Lord, I Chron. xxi. but sought all means possible to allure him unto his most wicked will through his subtle Job i. ii. suggestions; and is it to be thought that he will fear to assail us poor wretched sinners, Matt. iv. which, if we be not strengthened by the Spirit of God, are ready to fall at every hour? O how ready is he at all times, namely in the time of adversity, trouble, and sickness, yea, most specially at the hour of death, when our memory faileth, our wits decay, our bodies are weak, our senses wax dull, our heart fainteth, our tongue faileth, and

[² The folio has *professions.*]

whatsoever we have ceaseth to do the right office, to vex, trouble, disquiet, turmoil us, to lay before the eyes of our mind our sinful living, our wicked manners, our ungodly conversation, the breaking of God's precepts, the heavy displeasure of God against the wicked, the intolerable pains and exceeding torments of hell-fire, the eternal death and everlasting damnation, which all are prepared for the unfaithful!

What mortal man, being in the heavy and sharp agony of death, will not tremble at these things, and be ready to fall into desperation at the contemplation and beholding of so terrible a sight, if against so strong temptations he be not fortified with the Spirit of God, and richly enarmed with the holy scriptures?

The common people have a saying among them, that "every man before he dieth shall see the devil." What is meant by this? Verily nothing else, but that Satan in the extreme agony and bitter pains of death will put man in remembrance of his most sinful and damnable living, accuse him of unrighteousness, reprove him of abominable wickedness, lay to his charge that he hath ever been and still is an outrageous sinner, an open malefactor, a shameless transgressor of God's most holy law, prove him worthy of eternal damnation by the righteous judgment of God, and justly committed to hell-fire for evermore. Therefore shall Satan say to the sinner, Despair, die, and be damned. To consider these things in the heart, to see these things presently with the eyes of the mind, wherein is nothing but wrath, displeasure, and damnation, what other things is it than to see the devil, and to feel the pains of hell? Now is man brought unto the brink of hell-pit, and seeth in himself nothing but sin, death, and damnation; again, Satan, sweating to the uttermost of his power, not only to lay things of most high wickedness to his charge, but also ready to accuse him before the righteous throne of the divine Majesty, "in whose sight not the very stars are pure and clean:" what shall he now do? whither shall he turn him? to whom shall he flee? how shall he escape the devouring teeth of this most greedy and grievous wolf? Here are dangers more dangerous than can be expressed. How shall they be avoided? Here is salvation either gotten or lost: how shall it be gotten? O blessed is the man which getteth the victory over Satan in this most perilous conflict! If Satan be now overcome, he is driven to utter confusion, the infernal army is scattered abroad, hell-power is vanquished, the miserable afflicted Christian is preserved, brought into the haven of quietness, carried unto eternal glory: the angels rejoice, and all the blessed saints and holy company of heaven are glad: God is glorified, praised, and magnified.

How this victory over Satan and his soldiers may be gotten, it is declared in this dialogue following, wherein the godly reader shall see how Satan sweateth to bring the christian knight unto desperation; again, how the christian knight defendeth himself against his enemy the devil, and valiantly putteth him to flight. It containeth without doubt much godly doctrine and spiritual, as they may easily see which read and mark it diligently. For whatsoever Satan can object against man is here confuted by the word of God, and the sinner set in salve estate; so that in this little treatise true knowledge may easily be gotten, both how to repel Satan and his cruel darts, and also how to obtain a joyful and quiet conscience before God in this life¹, which of all treasures is most precious.

After I had finished this little treatise, your lordship came first unto my remembrance as one right worthy, to whom I might dedicate my travail in this behalf. For to whom should I offer this christian knight, but to such one as is also both in word and work a true Christian and godly knight; yea, and a lord, not only in name and dignity, but also in virtue and godliness? Your lordship's hearty good-will and unfeigned favour both toward the setting forth of the glorious gospel of our Saviour Christ, and also the promoting of the true professors and faithful preachers of the same, is more known than it needeth here to be rehearsed. The works of love and tender compassion, which your lordship also continually bringeth forth, unto the great comfort of Christ's poor members, are not without a cause in this our days bruited and remembered of very many, unto the glory of God, the immortality of your name, and the godly example of other.

[¹ Folio, *litle.*]

These, right honourable lord, are the works of true nobility. And where these works want, though the parentage be never so ancient, famous, and honourable in the judgment of the worldlings, yet is not there the true nobility, which specially consisteth in the true knowledge, faith, love, and fear of God, in favouring and following his blessed word, in loving and living the holy gospel of Christ, in well-wishing and doing good to all men, in the innocency of life, in bridling carnal affects, in mortifying old Adam, and in putting on that new man, which after God is shapen in righteousness and true holiness.

These virtues, whereof springeth the true nobility, do livishly shine in your lordship's daily behaviour. And I doubt not but that God, which hath begun this good work in you, will also finish the same in you, unto the glory and praise of his blessed name, and unto the full reward of your faith which you have in Christ Jesu our Lord.

I therefore, considering these notable gifts wherewith God hath richly endued you, thought it not unfitting to give unto your lordship this little treatise, as a testimony of my serviceable heart and ready bent good-will toward your lordship, most humbly beseeching you, according to your accustomed gentleness, to take in good part this my old enterprise². And I shall continually pray unto the Lord my God (whose blessed word you most entirely both favour and follow), to preserve your right honourable lordship in continual health, increase of honour, and prosperous felicity, unto the advancement of his glory, and the comfort of his holy congregation. Amen.

[² From the general style of this piece, as well as some particular expressions in it, it seems not improbable that it was a translation. And as above, p. 427, Becon mentions among his translations from

the Latin "The Shield of Salvation," this may be the same piece under another title. See the note on the "Policy of War," p. 238, of the former Volume.]

THE DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

THE CHRISTIAN KNIGHT AND SATAN,

WHEREIN SATAN MOVETH UNTO DESPERATION, THE KNIGHT
COMFORTETH HIMSELF WITH THE SWEET PROMISES
OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE.

SATAN.

Psal. lxi. WHEREFORE goest thou so oft unto the church? Why hearest thou so many holy sermons?
John ix. For what cause prayest thou so fervently? In all these things thou labourest in vain; for "God heareth no sinners."

CHRISTIAN KNIGHT.

Matt. xxvi. God hath commanded me to hear the gospel, to believe and to pray; and there-
John iii. fore I pray and go unto the church, and believe that God is merciful unto me for
Christ's sake, and I trust that I shall have everlasting life, which God promiseth
1 Cor. xv. "the labour which we take in the Lord is not vain nor unprofitable." And as con-
John ix. cerning this saying, that "God heareth no sinners," it ought to be understand of such
Rom. xiv. sinners as do not repent: the prayers of them God doth not hear; for their prayers
are no prayers, seeing they have not the true faith.

SATAN.

1 Cor. vi. Thou pratest nothing to the purpose. Make God's ears deaf with thy prayers so long as thou wilt,
yet canst thou never be throughly persuaded and truly believe that thou art heard and shalt be saved;
for the righteous only shall be saved: he that fulfilleth not God's commandments is a sinner and
unrighteous before God. And God saith by his apostle, that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the king-
dom of God." It is therefore in vain that thou prayest: all the labour and pain that thou takest is of
none effect, seeing thou art not righteous, nor satisfiest the law of God: wherefore there remaineth no
hope of God's favour toward thee. Thou must needs despair; for here is no refuge, no succour: thou
hast no place whither to stay, there is nothing that thou canst either lap¹ for thyself, or wherewith thou
mayest rid thyself out of my hands; for thou art wholly in my power and altogether mine, seeing thou
art unrighteous. Assay both what thou wilt and what thou art able; and yet remaineth there for thee
no help nor succour.

THE KNIGHT.

The God of all mercy forbid this! thou hast no prey here for to hunt. I am
far otherwise taught, and I know right well that the matter is much otherwise than
thou babblest.

SATAN.

Luke x. I care not what thou knowest, or what thou drest that thou knowest: hast thou not heard what
I have said? thou art utterly undone: there is no cause why thou mayest look and trust for health and
salvation; and that will I prove with open scriptures. Did not God himself say unto a certain Jew,
being a lawyer, "Do this, and thou shalt live?" He meaneth the ten commandments, for he speaketh
of the love of God and of thy neighbour, which in the ten commandments is required most pure and
most perfect. Now canst thou not deny that thy God requireth of thee here the fulfilling of all his precepts,
Matt. xix. if thou despisest² to live with him for ever, as he saith [in] the gospel of Matthew: "If thou wilt enter
into life, keep the commandments." Out of the which words of thy God it necessarily followeth that
he, which keepeth not the commandments, shall not have everlasting life, but die for ever, and be
eternally damned. Hear therefore how evil the matter goeth with thee, and in how great danger thou

[¹ Lap: secure.]

[² Despire seems to be used in both these places in the sense of *desire*.]

art. But I will set³ this matter before thee plainly in the form of a *syllogismus*, that thou mayest perceive it the better.

He that fulfilleth not perfectly the ten commandments cannot enter into life, but die the death Major. everlasting.

These are the words of thy God, which follow of those words that he answered the scribe, by an Luke x. argument of the contrary.

Thou hast not perfectly kept the commandments of God: thou art not righteous: thou hast trans- Minor. gressed God's precepts.

Therefore it followeth necessarily, that thou shalt not live with Christ, but that thou shalt be damned Conclusion. for ever.

What art thou able to answer to these things, being so strong and unable to be confuted? thou art taken, and so haltered on every part, that thou canst not escape.

THE KNIGHT.

The argument that thou hast proponed, no Jew, no ethnick, nor no unfaithful man is able to put away. But a true christian man can answer thee quickly, neither is he snarled with this thy reasoning, as thou boastest.

SATAN.

I despise² very greatly to hear what thou canst answer. Certes the two first propositions or premises are true, therefore the conclusion must needs be true; for of true premises a true conclusion doth follow: how then canst thou escape? thou must needs despair. For here is no help nor succour.

THE KNIGHT.

In this behalf I can easily set myself at liberty, and dispatch thy argument. For thou dost not dispute with a Jew, or with an unfaithful person (for I have both a faith and an hope in God, although I feel yet never so much weakness), but with a christian man, which cannot be snarled with such arguments. I answer therefore unto thy argument on this manner. As concerning the major or first proposition, which is, that he cannot enjoy everlasting life which keepeth not the commandments of God, I grant and deny not but that it is true, for it followeth of the words of Christ my God and Redeemer. Luke x. But the minor and second proposition, which is that I fulfil not the commandments of God, that I am not righteous, by no means do I grant, but plainly affirm that it is false; (for else should I do great injury and high despite to my Lord Christ, which at my baptism took me into his grace and favour:) wherefore thou canst not wrest thy conclusion against me.

SATAN.

What meneth⁴ the minor much probation? ask thy conscience. Even that doth accuse thee, and evidently sheweth that thou art a sinner, and that thou hast not kept the precepts of God. Daily also dost thou confess the same in the Lord's prayer, when thou sayest: "Forgive us our debts or trespasses;" Matt. vi. and in the epistle of John it is read: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:" 1 John i. these are the words of thy God. For the Spirit of thy God spake them by his apostles, neither do they lie unto thee, but these things are full true that they spake. But thou liest, when thou sayest that thou art righteous, that thou hast kept the commandments of God, that thou hast no sin: yea, besides all this thou art an hypocrite also, and dost trust in thyself, as though thou wast righteous; so that by this means thou art both the greater and also the more grievous sinner, as thy God teacheth thee in the example of the Pharisee, that hypocrite. Luke xviii. Therefore canst not thou escape out of my hands, thou must needs be mine. For I have proved that thou hast not kept the commandments of God, and that therefore thou art not righteous. I have proved that also out of the word of thy God, and the witness of thine own heart, of the prayer and the confession of thine own mouth. Why then dost thou cease to yield thyself unto me? despair straightways. No cause hast thou to look for salvation: for the word of God cannot lie.

Isai. xl.
Matt. v.

THE KNIGHT.

Thou art no changeling, O Satan, and this thy lying is thine old trade and accustomed property. It is no newelty unto thee: thou art "a liar, and the father of lying" John viii. from the beginning; yea, speaking the truth thou liest also. For if perchance

[³ Folio, *let.*]

[⁴ Probably *needeth.*]

Matt. iv.

at any time thou allegest any truth out of the scriptures, yet, according to thine old wont and malicious crafty and false quarrelling wit, either thou dost not speak altogether whole, or the things that thou allegest hang not together. For some things thou rehearset, some things again subtilly thou dost omit and leave clean out, or else thou corruptest and depravest the scripture.

SATAN.

How canst thou justly say this? With what face dost thou accuse me of calumniating or depraving the scriptures? have I not word for word recited the words of the scriptures, even as they are read in the bible, not leaving out any parcel, nor yet depraving one little tittle? Thou shalt not therefore escape on this manner.

THE KNIGHT.

I do accuse thee worthily of calumniating and depraving the scripture, and of not reciting the same purely and wholly. For where my God hath spoken and taught those things that do agree and ought to be joined together, these dost thou partly allege, and partly omit or leave out. Thou dost allege, and with tooth and nail set forward, that which maketh for thee, and serveth thy turn to destroy men; but the other part thou castest behind and leavest clean out, as though it pertained nothing to the matter. Is not this to calumniate and deprave the scriptures? Thou layest many things against me concerning the law, because I have not fulfilled it; but of the gospel thou makest no mention at all, as though that pertained nothing unto me. God hath not only given a law, but also a gospel. If thou, therefore, wilt recite his word purely and not corruptly, use that manner and order that the scripture useth. For that, first of all, setteth forth unto us the law, whereof we may learn our sins, and the damnation that we have deserved. But it is not contented to have set forth the law unto us: it¹ setteth forth and offereth to us also the gospel, which teacheth us how we be delivered from our sins, and that the faith which we have in Christ saveth us. In the gospel therefore we find comfort and help, and of that we learn that the law cannot condemn us, if we believe.

Law.

Gospel.

SATAN.

Thou speakest nothing to the purpose: are not these the words of thy God, "Do this, and thou shalt live"? "If thou therefore wilt enter into life, thou must needs keep the law." For this without all doubt is very true, that God gave not his precepts that they should be despised, or that a man might stubbornly and without punishment break them, but that they should be kept. And although thy fellow Paul disputeth and teacheth many things of faith, yet he concludeth and evidently declareth that the law is not abrogate or put away by the faith of the gospel, but that through the same it is rather established, that it may be performed and fulfilled. Thou knowest also that thy God throughout the gospel doth both teach his law, and also require the same to be done. Paul also saith that "upon them which do service unto unrighteousness indignation and wrath, affliction and anguishness" shall come. Here hearest thou in the gospel (if thou givest so much to the gospel, and will that any thing of that also be recited of me), here, I say, hearest thou out of that, that God will his precepts to be kept, except thou wilt run into his indignation and displeasure. And Paul to the Thessalonians saith: "God shall render vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel. All such shall be punished with everlasting damnation." And the gospel doth sufficiently bear witness in many places that no sinner can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Why then dost thou nourish a vain hope? Wherefore dost thou not despair? For doubtless thou art but cast away for ever and ever.

Luke x.

Matt. xix.

Rom. iii.

Rom. ii.

2 Thess. i.

THE KNIGHT.

As concerning these things, which thou hitherto hast alleged out of the old and new testament, and reasoned with me, all these things are the law, or else belong unto the law: thou shalt therefore have none advantage here, neither shalt thou win any thing in this behalf. For I told thee before, that God hath set forth to sinful man two things: one is the law, the other is the gospel. And I confess with all my heart that the law is the word of my God; and according to this former word, I mean the law, I do knowledge and confess both frankly and with an open voice

[¹ Folio, *is.*]

(neither will I deny it at any time), that I am a sinner, guilty of everlasting damnation. For this is very true, that I, poor wretch, through mine own works and perfection have not fulfilled the law. Therefore, if there were none other way or mean here in this world to fulfil the law than by mine own works, yea, and those perfect and clean at the full, then must I needs grant the minor in the *sylogismus*, neither could I by any means escape, but be snarled and taken, I mean perish for evermore.

But I know and also have another manner of obtaining righteousness and fulfilling the law, which thou canst not cast away from me. For God himself hath taught me this manner and way in the gospel, even that I should believe in Christ, which alone hath most perfectly fulfilled the law, and all obedience for my sake. By this faith all my sins are forgiven me, and the Holy Ghost is given to me, which purifieth my heart, and beginneth to fulfil the law in me. If any thing wanteth in me (as we want many things in this sinful life, in many things are we inconstant and unpure, through the sinful flesh that we bear about), yet that he wanteth, I mean those sins or offences, are not imputed nor reckoned us unto damnation for the merits and fulfilling of Christ which is ours. "For Christ is the fulfilling of the law for every one that believeth unto righteousness," yea, Christ is our righteousness. Now hast thou heard these things.

This is another word which God in like manner hath set forth to me, and he will that I believe this no less than the first. This second word is called *evangelium*, or gospel, that is to say, grace, favour, and remission of sins, promised in Christ. Thou understandest the gospel only after the letter, the very words of the gospel, but thou dost not believe the gospel; therefore shalt thou be damned, and not I. If I should bring forth to thee the absolution wherewith God himself did absolve me from all my sins that I ever committed against his law, wouldest thou then also reprove and accuse me of sin? But thou canst not do so by any means, when the judge doth absolve me and set me at liberty. Then lieth it not in thy power to condemn me. This know I for a certainty: therefore hear how I shall escape.

My sin ought not to be imputed to me only, but to thee also, yea, and that most of all. For thou first of all didst blow into our nature, being well made and pure, that hell-like poison of sins in Adam and Eva, whom after thou hadst deceived through thy lying, thou threwest them headlong into sin and death. Hereof cometh it that all we are born sinners from the time of Adam: hereof cometh it that thou hast so much power and rule over mankind: thereof cometh it that our nature is miserably corrupt, depraved, perverse, and froward; so that even from our mother's womb we are evil and lewd, blind in understanding, froward in will, as Moyses testifieth in Genesis, where he calleth us flesh, that is, men altogether carnal, fleshly, and void of God's Spirit. In like manner are we described in Hieremy, where the heart of man is called wicked, froward, or lewd: yea, our daily experience teacheth us what we have received of thee through our first parents; verily none other thing than an horrible depravation and corruption of our nature, sin, and death, and that we be the enemies of God, as Paul testifieth: "They that are carnal or fleshly-minded savour those things that pertain unto the flesh:" "The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God. For it is not obedient to the law of God, neither can it be: they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

To thee do we owe this our fault and wretchedness: thou art guilty of this evil, thou art the author to us of this misery; thou through thy guile, deceit, and lying broughtest us into this sea of wretched troubles, which are thine own crafts and subtilties. For thou canst do nothing but deceive, lie, hurt, and destroy. This our wretchedness we learn to know by the law. But the scripture ministereth to us also exceeding great comfort, even true redemption, how we be purged and made clean from our sins, but nature is made whole, how we may be delivered from death and dispatched out of thy power. For our faithful God, when he saw this fault, and that we could not help ourselves, nor set ourselves at liberty from these evils; again, that our nature was

so wholly corrupt, that we did neither understand nor know the will of God, nor yet accomplish the same from the very heart, yea, rather to the uttermost of our power we did fight with the will of God; he, having pity on us, promised, and sent to us a true deliverer and valiant defender from all evils, which is both able and also will strongly and mightily defend us. This is Jesus Christ, the natural Son of God, born of the blood of Abraham and of David, of Mary the virgin, without sin, as God from the beginning had promised him by his prophets; and when the time was fulfilled, he sent him also to become man, and that for this cause chiefly, that he might "save sinners, of whom I am not the least."

This our Lord and Saviour talketh with us much more lovingly, familiarly, and gently, than Moyses his servant spake before in the law. Moyses required an high and true perfect righteousness, and all that want that absolute righteousness he threatened to condemn. But he found that perfect righteousness in no man born of the will of man, but he proved all to be sinners; yet could he not deliver them by the doctrine of the law from their sins, but only did¹ command those things that ought to be done, and forbid those things that are not to be done, and to curse and condemn sinners. But Christ Jesus our Redeemer comforteth us, and blesseth us with his gospel, and delivereth us from sin and death, yea, in his gospel he absolveth us from sin, and plainly affirmeth and recounteth us righteous.

Furthermore, thou frayest me with the words of St John, saying that we are all sinners; but thou keepest in silence, and of a set purpose passeth over the absolution which is annexed in the very same place, where he saith: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous, that he will forgive us our sins, and make us clean from all unrighteousness." Fray me, therefore, by laying the law against me so long as thou wilt; I will flee unto the gospel, wherein I find sure comfort and a way how I may scape out of thy hands. For although Moyses saith unto me in the law, Thou art cursed, because thou hast transgressed and broken the commandments of God, yet will I not despair for all that, but flee unto Christ, which saith unto me in the gospel: "Son, be on a good comfort, believe thy sins are forgiven thee. I myself have borne away thy sins in mine own body upon the tree of the cross, yea, I have offered such a sacrifice that I have made full satisfaction for them, and by this means reconciled thee to my Father. I have overcome death and Satan for thy sake. I have also perfectly fulfilled the law for thee. All these things that I have done are thine, if thou believest in me."

Hearst thou, Satan, what Christ saith? Thou layest Moyses against me: I again object Christ against thee: thou allegest the servant; but I bring forth the Lord himself. The servant accuseth me of maliciousness and unrighteousness, and will judge me to death. But the Lord himself defendeth and setteth me at liberty, and giveth me life of his own free will. I therefore set nothing by thine accusations; they cannot hurt me: thou mayest indeed lay my sins against me; but I again object and lay against thee infinite merits, even the satisfaction, the fulfilling of the law, the obedience, the death, and the resurrection of Christ my Redeemer. This now is my treasure, Christ's righteousness is my righteousness, yea, Christ himself is mine innocency and righteousness. If thou therefore canst accuse Christ of no sin, if thou canst not condemn him, neither canst thou have any power against me to condemn me, and that for Christ, which hath both fully put away and also forgiven me all my sins.

SATAN.

I neither can accuse nor condemn Christ of any sin. For he is righteous, I confess. But sinners are damned; and thou thyself hast confessed that thou art a sinner.

THE KNIGHT.

In myself I am a sinner, but in Christ, my righteous-maker, I am righteous. For he hath forgiven me all my sins, and hath taken me into his grace, favour, and tuition.

[¹ Folio, *did and command.*]

Rom. i.

Gal. iv.

1 Tim. i.

Moses.
Deut. xxviii.

Christ.

1 John i.

Deut. xxvii.

Matt. ix.

Isai. liii.
Eph. v.

Hos. xiii.
Heb. ii.
Rom. x.

Note.

He is always ready to help me, he forgiveth me the remnants of my sins, and purgeth them in me daily, till he maketh me altogether new. Wherefore go thy way unto the heathen that know not God, and to the Jews, which forsake Christ their Lord. On me thou hast no more power. For God my heavenly Father "hath delivered me from the power of darkness, and hath carried me into the kingdom of his well-beloved Son, in whom I have redemption by his blood, even remission of my sins." Behold, therefore, that thy accusation, which thou attemptest against me, cannot have place in me. For, although I fulfil not the commandments of God in the law with mine own works, yet fulfil I them in the gospel with the most perfect works and the satisfaction of Christ, in whom I believe. This faith is reckoned to me unto righteousness, although my works of themselves be imperfect. And this is the only and true manner of fulfilling the law of God, that I believe in Christ the only fulfiller of the law, and justifier, without whom the law can never be fulfilled, neither any man come unto God. Col. i. The fulfilling of the law.

All these things can I prove by the word of God. That teacher of the gentiles saith in his epistle to the Romans: "There is no condemnation in them that are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of life in Christ Jesus hath delivered me from the law of sin and death. For that that was impossible to the law, forasmuch as it was weak because of the flesh, that performed God and sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness which is required of the law might be fulfilled in us." Here do I hear other words, and another manner of justifying, than thou bringest to me out of the law. Thou dost object against me that I have sins. I grant that in the law. But as concerning that thou dost hereof conclude, Therefore art thou damned; that the Holy Ghost denieth plainly. For though I have sin in mine own person never so much, which is subject to damnation in me, yet can it not condemn me: why so? because I am in Christ through faith; so that Christ and I are now "one spirit:" we are now one body. For he is my head, and I am his member, "of his flesh and of his bones;" and therefore was he of his own free will subject to the law, or became under the law, that he should redeem me from the accusation of the law, and he was made accursed for me, that he might deliver me from the curse of the law. Rom. viii. Mark well. 1 Cor. vi. Eph. v. Gal. iii.

With this do I comfort me, I have sins indeed, but yet for Christ's sake, in whom I believe, there is no damnation in me: why then dost thou accuse me? "For the law of the Spirit," that is the regiment and governance of the Holy Ghost in me, or the faith in Christ, "delivereth me from the law of sin and death," that sin can never condemn me, nor death swallow me up. Rom. viii.

Verily the law is good and holy, but it can justify no man. It cannot change our stony heart, or give us a softer heart, or purify our sinful nature and renew it, or take away sins: this can the Spirit of Christ alone do. The nature or flesh of man is corrupt and bond to sin, having no strength of itself to accomplish the law of God: neither is it willing thereunto, but only prone and full bent to sin. The law.

Notwithstanding, in this behalf God helpeth our weak nature, that it may come unto the fulfilling of the law; and he sent his Son that he might be born very man, even such as we are, sin alone except. Of a maid and a pure virgin was it convenient for him to be born, that he might be made a sacrifice of a pure and everlasting price for sin. For the cause why God became man was this, that he might condemn, purge, and put away our sins in his clean and innocent flesh by the true sacrifice for sin, that is to say, by himself, and deserve remission of sins for us, that so by this most holy and most innocent and perfectly clean sacrifice of the Son of God, both God and man, that might be fulfilled that the law required. For by this sacrifice for sin offered for us on the cross, first of all, he deserved for us remission of sins, and the Holy Ghost, which giveth faith and charity; and, those being once received, our righteousness and the fulfilling of God's commandments is begun in us: and although in this life we are not yet fully clean and perfect, and through the remnants of sins and maliciousness we never perfectly fulfil the precepts of God, yet nevertheless do we receive true righteousness before God, and all things that the law requireth for us, I mean righteousness which is of valor before God through faith in Christ. For he that believeth in Christ is righteous before God. This sentence is Heb. iv. Deut. xxviii.

the *evangelion*, that is to say, our glad and joyful tidings, our gospel, and that absolution which God himself pronounceth, and all the angels in heaven and the whole church say, Amen. So be it.

Note.

He therefore that through faith hath Christ in his heart hath also the fulfilling of God's precepts, which Christ himself performed in his own person; and Christ is so become the righteousness of this faithful christian man, that that faithful Christian for Christ's sake is reputed before God righteous, as though he had perfectly fulfilled the law.

SATAN.

Rom. viii.

Thy friend Paul, in that place which thou allegest, addeth a certain thing which thou leavest out; but I have noted and marked it diligently, and that is this, that he saith, they "that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." God gave this promise or glad tidings, not to all manner of men generally, but to them only "which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." But thou walkest after the flesh. For thou art covetous, proud, lecherous, and of a spiteful stomach, ready unto anger, intemperate, and altogether given to pleasures: what wilt thou answer me here? How wilt thou escape in this behalf?

THE KNIGHT.

I confessed before that in myself I am still a sinner; but this is not to walk after the flesh. For to walk after the flesh is without all fear, stubbornly, proudly, and malapertly to fulfil the lusts and desires of the flesh, and all that our sinful nature doth desire, and of itself is bent unto; again, with high will of the mind and cheerfulness to sin without repentance, and never to lament or once to be sorry for the sin committed, yea, to delight also in sinning, and with a certain pleasure of the mind to fulfil the desire of the flesh.

Isai. xlii.

I fall indeed into sin; but yet after the inward man I hate sin, which boileth in the flesh, and I desire nothing more than to be clean and utterly delivered from sin, and I am sorry even from the very heart, that I have sinned and do sin against God. I pray God also daily, that he will increase my faith, that I may, as it were with a bit, restrain the flesh, so prone and ready unto sin. And although I be wonderfully weak, yet for that mine imbecility and weakness I am at utter defiance with myself, and I am sorry that so great infirmity reigneth in me; yet do I not therefore despair, but I put all my trust in Christ, doubting nothing at all but that he will forgive me my trespasses, and increase my faith daily more and more, that I may inhibit, knock down, quench, oppress, crucify, and kill the works of the flesh. Surely Esay wrote of him not without a cause, that he should "not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." I cannot of mine own natural strengths, without the Spirit of God, hate sin and resist it, seeing that even together with nature it is born into the world with me. He that hateth sin hath the Spirit of Christ, yea, he is Christ's, and not thine. St Paul therefore doth confess, that in all godly persons the remnants of sin do remain, against which the spirit striveth; but he addeth words full of high consolation, even that for all that there is [no] damnation in them. And this privilege and prerogative have they in Christ, that righteous One, in whom they are engrafted through faith, and whose merits they do enjoy, and by them are saved from their sins.

Rom. viii.

SATAN.

Thou hast not yet escaped, neither dost thou row in the haven, and art free from all jeopardy, as thou persuadest thyself or dreamest. For it is written: "He that continueth unto the end, he shall be saved." Many have fallen into my nets, which, notwithstanding, have with as bold courage, as thou dost now, set themselves against me in disputation, and would by no means consent unto me: first, they were very hot, but they could not continue in their purpose, so that at the last falling back they came into my hands. The very same thing shall chance to thee. After that thou hast striven against me much and a long time, yet at the last shall I overcome thee, and enjoy mine old possession.

THE KNIGHT.

The God of all mercy forbid! I know in very deed that we cannot stand, but must needs fall and decay, if God doth not give us faith, and confirm the same, yea,

and help us in temptation, that through his grace we may persevere. For to persevere or continue in goodness is no less the gift and work of God in us, than when we begin to believe and amend our life. But God hath commanded that we should ask of him perseverance and constancy or stedfastness in goodness and faith, and he hath promised me in Christ that he will both graciously hear me, and also help me; "in the which Christ all the promises of God are yea, and Amen," that is to say, ^{2 Cor. i.} highly perfect and very true: wherefore, with the help of God, I will pray that that which he hath mercifully begun in me, he may also finish in me, unto the glory of his holy name.

Here hast thou mine armours, darts, and sword. I am not able to resist thee with mine own strength and wisdom. But I can do all things through Christ Jesus, which hath overcome thee, and delivered me from thee. Even he teacheth, ruleth, governeth, confirmeth, strengtheneth, and defendeth me by his holy Spirit. Therefore ^{Rom. viii.} seeing that God himself is on my side, who shall damn me?

SATAN.

If I cannot hinder nor let thy health and salvation, yet will I so trounce, turmoil, make lean, and trouble thee, and throw thee into so many misfortunes and calamities, and handle and vex thee on such miserable and cruel sort, unto the uttermost of my power, that thou shalt be weary of thy life, and wish rather to die than to live.

THE KNIGHT.

Certes I know right well that thou art the author of all evils and mischances, and that thou dost labour and imagine in every place none other thing than to hurt good men and vex them. And I know that I, being a wretched vessel, cannot enjoy continual pleasures in this life, in this ungracious world, thy most perilous and bloody June¹, but that I must be vexed divers ways; yet will I not despair and cast away all hope. For I have very plenteous comfort and such as cannot be overcome, where-with I may confirm and make strong my mind, which neither thou nor all the whole world can take away from me. Thou art but a creature, as thou knowest right well, neither canst thou work any thing against me, nor do me more evil than my God suffereth thee. But he suffereth thee no more than is necessary unto my salvation and furtherance of godliness.

To abound with all kind of pleasures and commodities in this life is very dangerous here in this world: neither can the godly be in the danger of greater misfortunes or perils here, than when all things chance to them in every condition after their own hearts' lust, when all things flow to them even as they would have it, when they abound with pleasures, and are heaped up with all the commodities of this life. For in so great wealth of living they forget both themselves and God their Father. Misfortunes, afflictions, and perils teach us for the merciful will of God to know ourselves, our infirmity, our weakness, our nothing, our wretchedness, and to fear God, to trust in God, and earnestly to call on him; which thing when we do, God is at hand and assist us with his present help, and so we learn both to know God and ourselves: what great harm then canst thou do me, if, God so providing and suffering thee, thou causest me to have loss and wretchedness in these corruptible and transitory things, which are not my true heritage?

My true inheritance is incorruptible, unable to be defiled, and an immortal and everlasting treasure in heaven. This treasure thou shalt not be so bold as once to handle, neither shalt thou at any time be able so to do. If thou killest my body, thou doest none other thing than bring me into the quietness of that true life that is to come; and he which gave me body and soul, and which redeemed me out of thy power, even very he shall also keep both my body and soul unto the day of redemption, wherein he shall raise up my body out of the earth into everlasting life. In the mean season, my soul is kept well and safely with Christ. Thou therefore canst not hurt me, while my God keepeth me constant and stedfast in the faith of Christ, I have

[¹ June: perhaps a misprint for *Inne*, that is, *inn*.]

Rom. viii. his word and promise. Those do not lie: "We know," saith St Paul, "that all things
 John x. work for the best unto them that love God." And my Saviour Christ saith: "I
 know my sheep: and I give them everlasting life; neither shall they perish for ever;
 nor yet shall any man pluck them out of my hand." And in the Psalm it is written:
 Psal. xci. "He that dwelleth in the help of the Most Highest, he abideth in the defence of
 the God of heaven. He saith to the Lord, Thou art my upholder and my refuge,
 yea, thou art my God in whom I trust. For he hath delivered me from the snare
 of the hunters, and from the sharp sword, or noisome pestilence." "He hath given
 his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: they shall bear thee in
 their hands, that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone." "He hath called unto
 me; and I will favourably hear him: I am with him in tribulation: I will deliver
 him and bring him to honour."

Dost thou hear how God himself do look upon and defend his people, and sendeth
 Psal. xxxiv. his holy angels from heaven to defend them? as David writeth: "The angel of the
 Lord pitcheth his tent round about them that fear the Lord, and delivereth them."
 Here hast thou on whom I trust, and wherefore I set thee¹ at defiance, and conceive
 Jer. ix. a good hope. I do nothing at all rejoice in myself, or of myself, but in my almighty
 Lord and God Jesus Christ do I glory and rejoice, yea, and that not without a cause.
 For he hath loved me and hath given himself for me, to deliver me from death, and
 that I should live and triumph with him in his everlasting kingdom without end. This
 is my comfort, and to this will I cleave by the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now assay thou, and imagine against me all that God my heavenly Father, which
 I John iv. is the self charity and goodness, doth suffer. That my Father will not leave me, his
 weak son, destitute and succourless in temptation. Christ will keep his little poor
 sheep, that it come not into the wolf's jaws. All the enemies of Christ and of the
 Christians shall be cast under our feet. This is as true as God is in heaven: where-
 fore, Satan, away, get thee hence from me. Thou hast no power on me. I pertain
 unto him, and am his for evermore, which bought me from thee with his precious
 blood, being undoubtedly a very great price, I mean my Lord Jesus Christ. He it
 is, and so will remain, which is a fiery wall unto me wheresoever I become. He it
 is that keepeth me as the apple of his eye. To him, with the Father and the Holy
 Ghost, be all glory and praise, worlds without end. Amen.

SATAN.

Thou speakest many things to dispatch thyself of me; but thou art not yet gone. Thou knowest
 that even from thy tender age thou wast always taught in the church, that it is high presumption to
 look for salvation and everlasting life without good works. But thou dost openly confess that thou
 hast not done, or do any good work, that thou art able to set against the judgment of God, or that
 can stand in God's judgment; yet (such is thy foolish rashness and extreme madness) without the
 fulfilling of the law, and the true good works, thou thinkest that thou shalt go up into heaven. What
 any other thing is this, than to make God most unrighteous? for that should be as though thou
 wouldest wallow thyself into a sink of all kind of ungraciousness, and desire of God that he would
 approve, accept, and allow that maliciousness, sinful wantonness, and thy wicked life, and that he
 should save thee, being so ungracious a fellow and lewd sinner. But this (know it for a truth) shall
 never come to pass. If thou dost think and hope that it will come to pass, thou thinkest in vain,
 and nourishest a vain hope.

Thou couldest away (so far as I hear), that thou shouldst get thee a great portion of other men's
 goods, and another man should pay thy debts; and that thou shouldst commit many robberies and
 another be hanged for thee. Thou wilt be a sinner and live naughtily at thy own pleasure, and yet,
 after this life, thou trustest to come unto heaven; but thou art clean deceived and hopest in vain:
 thou canst not go so easily and without any labour unto the stars: by this way canst thou not go up
 into heaven. God, for his infinite righteousness, cannot allow sin. If he would not have punished
 sin, for what use should he have made hell? Certes he should have laid forth and threatened the
 pains of hell in vain to ungodly and wicked persons. Thou knowest, if thou wilt know, that the
 matter is far otherwise: and yet thou thinkest that thou shalt pay to God with vain words those things
 that thou owest him, and by this mean escape from his judgment; which thing all you Lutherians and
 fellows of the new learning are wont to do, and, wresting the scriptures, ye expound them after the

[¹ Folio, *them.*]

fancies of your own brain: where the scripture requireth good works, there ye boast of your unfruitful and barren faith, and by that ye think that ye shall obtain all things. In other ye reprove sophistry, but ye yourselves use it more than any other, yea, and that in a cause which of all is most weighty. Where ye might use words that should make unto the edification of the simple, there of a set purpose do ye use manners of speaking which have not been used nor accustomed, yea, and those very slanderous; as when ye say, Faith alone justifieth: what manner of speaking, I pray thee, could be more perilous and more full of slander? For what other thing can any rude and simple man hereof understand, than that it maketh no matter how he liveth? ye, being instructed with this vain faith, do at your own pleasure what ye will, and after your hearts' lust live a pope's life, and yet nevertheless will ye be Christians and become saved; but your hope is vain and shall deceive you. This thing shall ye prove to be true and as I say in very² deed.

THE KNIGHT.

O thou most lying spirit, thou hatest the truth and canst not abide it; and, because thou canst bring nothing against it, thou assayest me another way, and dost loaden and invade us with those same reproaches, contumelies, and spiteful slanders, which we are compelled daily to hear of thine apostles, men full of venomous poison, and most unshamefaced sycophants, and unjust accusers of innocents. But lest thou shouldest think that thou hast gotten the mastery, I will answer thee to all thine objections.

And first, I confess with all my heart, that he is a very ungodly and naughty person, which continueth in a lewd and wicked life without repentance, and do not apply himself to good works, nor work no good thing, nor can be content to suffer any thing for Christ's sake, and yet nevertheless boasteth himself to be a christian man, and hopeth for salvation. This is to sin against the mercy of God; and verily that is an exceeding blindness and almost without hope of recovery, which neither perceiveth the peril and fierceness of sin, nor the mercy of God and the passion of Christ, and only dreameth to look for salvation, when notwithstanding it neither looketh for that truly, nor yet knoweth God aright. For what hope of health can there be where there is unrepentance of a self-will, where there is no fear of God, no love, no confidence in God, nor any knowledge of God? Many and all kinds of good works Good works. are to be done: we must apply our minds diligently to the study of good works, yet may we not put the³ hope of health in our works, but in Christ only. For works, be they never so good, yet are they imperfect, and if God did not accept and approve them for Christ's sake, but judge and examine them according to the rigour, hard- Note. ness, severity, and sharpness of his law, they should be found very imperfect and sinful. He that giveth not his mind to good works, he believeth not God's word, and it is evident that he believeth not in Christ, and that he loveth not God, or hopeth and believeth truly to have everlasting life. But although true faith be not without good works, and though a man worketh never so much goodness, yet, forasmuch as his flesh boileth continually with evil thoughts and lusts, and fighteth against the Spirit, he fulfilleth not the law perfectly. In the exercise only of fulfilling the law we labour in this life: we only begin the law here, we do not fulfil it: certes the words of St Paul unto Titus are plain and evident, where he saith, "God saved us, not Tit. iii. for our own works, but of his mercy," and he addeth: "By the fountain of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost:" therefore whatsoever is against the will of God, as evil works and all sin, ought a christian man to abhor and eschew, and to work well. Neither may he remain in his old trade and living, but he must put off the old man with the works of darkness, and put out of him the old leaven; yet are we not recounted righteous before God for this newly-begun and imperfect fulfilling of the law, but of mercy, for the deserving and merit of Christ, if we believe in Christ.

To the second objection I answer that all our works are not in all points conformable to the commandments of God, and that we be and remain sinners; but this prerogative have we, that by baptism we are removed from that fierce judging-place into the court of mercy or throne of grace, where God will not deal with us accord-

[² Folio, *every.*]

[³ Folio, *to.*]

ing to the rigour of justice, but according to his mercy. There is therefore sin enough, yea, and (alas for sorrow!) too much in our life; but all our sins are smothered and drowned in the wounds and blood of Jesus Christ, which hath borne them away and satisfied for them, as though they had been his own.

To the third I answer, I will not ascend into heaven without good works and without the fulfilling of the law; for I know it is impossible: but I have the fulfilling of Christ through faith. That fulfilling of Christ through faith is mine and proper to me. And I¹ also, through the grace that I have received, give my mind to the exercise and study of good works, that I may go forward and be made perfect daily more and more. But when I am far from the perfect fulfilling, and seeing in many things I stumble and fall down, therefore do I believe in Christ, and call on the name of the Lord, and by this means do I receive remission of all my sins. And for my faith's sake in Christ God accepteth me for righteous, yea, and that for the Lord Christ, author of all righteousness, which hath most abundantly satisfied the law. For this benefit do I thank this my Lord Christ.

To the fourth objection I answer, I confess that I can abide, when I am greatly indebted, and so endangered, that I am not of sufficient ability to satisfy the same, that another should pay for me and dispatch my debt: what should a beggarly debtor², and a miserable captive or prisoner desire more, than to be redeemed and set at liberty? Seeing then that that most merciful God and my most favourable heavenly Father hath appointed and promised me in Christ this paying of my debt, this help and redemption without my deserving, yea, and that when I was his enemy and thy prisoner, even of his mere and gracious free mercy; why should I not most entirely desire, hope, and look for that exceeding mercy, and most necessary help for me, when it is offered? Why should I not accept it and gladly receive it? What greater madness were there, than if I should refuse it? In the payment of this my debt, or in this my redemption, God did plainly and evidently declare and shew the unsearchable and exceeding great riches of his fatherly affection, faith, and love toward us, and of the grace promised in Christ; in whom only he is truly known to be righteous and a righteous-maker: in Christ also is his unoutspeakable goodness, mercy, and tender love toward man espied and known; and therefore with hearty thanksgiving are his righteousness and goodness highly avanced and magnified. He is rich in mercy, "rich toward all that call on him." But I am miserable and needy: I have therefore need of his help. Grace is promised of him: I have need of grace. Why should not I then with joy and thanksgiving receive the grace offered? He "loved the world so entirely, that he gave his only-begotten Son" for us, to deliver us from all sorrowful chances and wretchedness; which also should be our mediator, our satisfier or sacrifice-offerer³, and our mercy-stock, "that every one which believe in him may not perish, but have everlasting life through him." If it hath so pleased my God, according to his exceeding mercy, that his well-beloved Son should be "made accursed" for me, that I through him might be delivered from curse and damnation, surely I neither ought nor yet will refuse this high benefit, but, seeing it is offered, embrace it with both mine arms, and give everlasting and continual thanks to him for so noble a benefit. And although great weakness reigneth yet in me, notwithstanding, through the grace that I have received, I pray that not mine own ill will, but the good pleasure of God may be done in me; and I am sorry that I am not in all points pure and clean, and that I do not shew that obedience in all things to the commandments of God that I am bound. Neither do I doubt but that my Redeemer Christ, through his Spirit and his blood, will make me clean and a new man, so that no evil nor uncleanness shall remain or tarry in me. For he hath already begun to do that; and I know that his death, which bringeth salvation to us, and his mighty resurrection, shall not be unfruitful nor vain in me.

To the fifth I answer, I know that God will no wickedness, neither can he allow sin. For he is holy, and willeth that we also be holy. Certes he gave not his well-

[¹ Folio, *in.*][² Folio, *debte.*][³ Folio, *offerer.*]

Rom. x.

John iii.

1 Tim. ii.

1 John ii.
John iii.

Gal. iii.

Psal. v.

Lev. xix.

beloved Son unto the death for our sins, that we should remain in sin, but that we, being delivered and throughly made clean from sin, should as the holy sons of God “serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.” For God gave Luke i. not precepts in vain, neither hath he without a cause, or dallying, threatened those sinners that do not repent both temporal and everlasting pains.

In the sixth place, thou playest the right devil throughout, and according to thine old wont and fashion, even for the endless bitterness and envy of thy most malicious stomach, thou loadest us with most cruel rebukes and shameless lies, calling us Lutherians and new gospellers. Such canst not thou abide. For they teach the plenteous and exceeding rich grace of perfect redemption in Christ, whereby alone we are justified and saved: and this do they very strongly, stedfastly, and plainly, against thy damned and most pestilent error brought in by the Pelagians, which trusted to their own works, and went about with their own works and strengths in the flesh to fulfil the law, to deserve (which notwithstanding was impossible) grace, to obtain righteousness and salvation; and so did they deny Christ and wholly buried him, and obscured⁴ all his glory and benefits toward us. And this canst thou suffer. Thou canst have not greater pleasure done to thee. For with this doctrine thou fillest hell even full. But these words are not vain and of none effect, when a poor wretched sinner believeth the gospel, confesseth and knowledgeth his sins with true repentance, and, being sorry for them, laboureth to lead a better life, amendeth himself in those things wherein he hath offended, and doth not set against the fierce judgment of God his own imperfect works, but the infinite merits and works of Christ, and without presumption setteth all his trust on the grace of God promised in Christ. And this have all the true godly men ever done. In their greatest perils, in the extreme agony of death, they have even from the very heart Note: knowledged themselves to be before God wretches and sinners worthy damnation; neither have they trusted to their own merits, but have said with the prophet: “Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant; for no living creature shall be Psal. cxliii. justified in thy sight;” and have removed very far their eyes from all their own merits into the merits of Christ, having a respect only and continually unto his death and resurrection.

So did St Bernard also, which, although he had done many good works, and had St Bernard. exercised himself diligently in the obedience of God’s precepts, yet, when he should die, he trusted not to choose his own words, but called upon the tender mercy and favourable grace of God, saying: “Lord, unthriftily have I lived, and unthriftily have I spent my time; but this one thing comforteth me, that thou dost not despise a contrite and an humbled heart⁵.”

And St Austin saith: “If thou wilt not be partaker of God’s favour, boast thy Psal. xxxi. merits⁶.”

Unto thy seventh and eighth objection, where as thou saidest that we after our own fancy do expound the holy scripture, and violently wrest it to stablish our opinions, I answer, that thou, according to thine old poisonous pleasure of lying and picking quarrels, dost without all shame lie. With these venomous lies dost thou go about to make all our labour which we spend in setting forth and teaching the doctrine of the gospel suspect, and to let that it bring forth no fruit; but those thy lies, be they never so glistening and many, shall at the last be uttered and come to light: so that the truth shall have the victory and abide for ever. For it is evident that we teach not dead or unfruitful faith, but true, constant, and livish faith in Christ, “which Gal. v. worketh by love,” and bringeth forth many fruits. Where the scripture teacheth good works, there do we also teach good works; yea, and that much more diligently, more prudently, and in a better order, than the Pharisees and Sadducees, I mean the false Note. hypocrites under the pope’s kingdom, do.

[⁴ Folio, *observed*.]

[⁵ For expressions nearly similar to those in the text, used by Bernard in the near prospect of death, see Bernard. Op. Par. 1690. De Vit. Lib. I. cap. xii.

57. iv. cap. ii. 10. Vol. II. Tom. II. cols. 1084, 1154.]

[⁶ Si vis esse alienus a gratia, jacta merita tua.— August. Op. Par. 1679-1700. In Psal. xxxi. Enarr. II. 7. Tom. IV. col. 175.]

For we, first of all, lay a sure foundation, which is faith, whereof come forth and as out [of] a fountain issue all good works. When we have once laid this foundation, we teach all kind of good works, and what be the offices and duties of all men, every man in his calling. For God doth justify us through faith in Christ, for this cause, that we, being justified, may live always righteously, and defend and maintain steadfastly innocency of life. To this true faith in Christ we give all those things that the scripture attributeth unto it.

Rom. iii. iv.
Gal. ii. iii.
John i.
Gal. iii.
Acts x.

This faith justifieth us.

By this faith are we adopted and purchased into the sons of God.

By this faith we receive remission of sins.

Rom. v.

This faith bringeth peace to the conscience.

John iii.

This faith receiveth everlasting life.

Rom. x.

This faith fulfilleth the law.

For it layeth hand on the true and only doer or fulfiller of the law, and challengeth him to be her own. It layeth hand also on the Spirit of Christ with his gifts, without whom the law cannot be fulfilled or accomplished.

John vi.

This faith is the glorious and excellent work of God.

Heb. xi.

Without this faith no man can please God.

Heb. xi.

This faith is the only mean or instrument whereby, even from the beginning of the world, all holy men were justified and made acceptable to God; whereby also they wrought very great and wonderful things; again, whereby they laid hand on and did receive the promise of God.

Rom. iii.
Matt. xvi.

This alone faith is righteousness before God; yea, this alone obtaineth the kingdom of heaven.

1 John v.

This faith is the victory of the godly, wherewith they overcome the world.

Luke vii.

This faith in the evangelical history Christ doth very highly commend, where he saith: "Thy faith hath saved thee," &c.

Mark ix.

Here thou seest, O most lying spirit, that we teach no dead, vain, and unfruitful faith; but that very same faith which the prophets taught, which Christ so highly commended, which the apostles preached, whereof St Mark also saith: "All things are possible to him that believeth." And even from the very beginning the true church both did and believed (which thou canst not condemn) even as we now do and believe, both as concerning the fulfilling of the law, and of good works and faith. Neither do we wrest the scriptures unto our fancies, nor do them any injury; but we understand and expound the scriptures according to the right trade of faith, that the sentence may be godly, and as the true church doth understand and take them.

Tract. iii.
cap. i.

Austin, writing upon John, agreeth with us, where he saith: "All that are justified by Christ are righteous, not in themselves, but in him. For in themselves, if thou dost ask what they be, they are Adam; in him, if thou dost ask, they are Christ's." And again he saith, according to the mind of the holy letters: "All the commandments are counted done and perfectly fulfilled, when whatsoever is not done is forgiven²." Thou seest that our justification in this life can be no personal perfection and full accomplishment of the commandments of God, but a free merciful forgiving of our disobedience, and an imputation or reckoning of righteousness for Christ's sake.

1 Retr. xix.

And Ambrose saith: "He fulfilleth the law that believeth in Christ³."

In Rom. cap.
iii.
In Psal. iv.

Also Gregory saith: "Faith is righteousness; without the which faith no man can be righteous⁴."

[¹ Omnes qui ex Adam, cum peccato peccatores: omnes qui per Christum, justificati et justii, non in se, sed in illo. Nam in se si interrogas, Adam sunt: in illo si interrogas, Christi sunt.—Id. In Johan. Evang. cap. i. Tractat. III. 12. Tom. III. Pars II. col. 309.]

[² Omnia ergo mandata facta deputantur, quando quidquid non fit ignoscitur.—Id. Retract. Lib. I. cap. xix. 3. Tom. I. col. 29.]

[³ Hic ergo servat legem, qui credit in Christo.—

Ambros. Op. Par. 1686-90. Comm. in Epist. ad Rom. cap. ii. v. 25. Tom. II. Appendix, col. 41.]

[⁴ Justitia Dei fides est, sicut scriptum est: Creditit Abraham Deo, et reputatum est illi ad justitiam; quia justus ex fide vivit. Si ergo justii vita fides est, consequens est eandem fidem esse justitiam, sine qua quisque esse justus non potest.—Gregor. Mag. Papæ I. Op. Par. 1705. In Psal. iv. Penitent. Tom. III. col. 504.]

Again Hierome: "They shall seek righteousness, which is none other than Christ himself⁵." In Sophon. cap. ii.

This without doubt was at that time the faith of the true godly men, when they, whom I have alleged, were the chief doctors of the church.

On this manner writeth Haymon upon Habacuke, where he giveth all the glory of our justification unto Christ, saying: "Christ is all my strength or virtue: Christ is all my righteousness, which is my God⁶." Cap. iii.

Thus do we understand the scripture as touching the justification of a sinner, even none otherwise than the holy church hath always understand and expounded it.

Unto the ninth objection I answer, If in these articles our doctrine be sophistical, as thou falsely layest against us, then did the holy doctors of the church at that time use sophistry or crafty dissembling with the scriptures, whom in this point thou dost also condemn, seeing for the very same matter thou condemned us. But thou dost falsely so accuse us; and when thou sayest that we use sophistry, thou liest full wickedly: when we will speak truly and rightly of the grace of God justifying us in Christ, then neither can nor ought any man speak of it otherwise than St Paul and other the chief doctors of the church have with one consent spoken of it. St Paul testifieth that a sinner is justified, not by works, but by faith; that is to say, by his trust and confidence that he hath in the grace of God promised in Christ; and that is as though he should say: A sinner is only saved and justified by the grace and mercy of Christ, and not for the worthiness of his good deeds, or of his own merit. This doctrine of Paul the old doctors [of] the church did right well understand, and therefore wrote they, the faith alone in Christ justifieth. For so speaketh Austin, Ambrose, Hilary, Chrysostom, Origen, Theophylact, Didymus Alexandrinus, with many other of the ancient doctors. And this manner of speaking of our justification was in times past so greatly used in the church, that the new or later doctors of the church have many times used the same, as Sedulius, Thomas Aquinas, Cricamus⁷, Cardinalis, Bruno Carthusianus, Nicolaus Gorranus, and other. Rom. iii.

Therefore if this manner of speaking, where as we say that faith alone justifieth, were so slanderous and full of offences as thou sayest, surely those ancient catholic doctors and bishops would not have used the same. But seeing that they taught and wrote so unto the edifying and health of many men, why should not we then also use the same? But this is the matter: thou canst not abide any thing at all to hear of the free grace of God, neither is there any thing that doth more offend thee than when that is preached; therefore dost thou overwhelm us with picking^{*} of quarrels and slanderous reports. Hereof come those thy lamentations. This is it that troubleth and grieveth thee. Truth it is, if by this manner of speaking we would let or hinder the study of good works, we should not then so speak without grievous offence, yea, we should also teach very ungodly, and be heretics in deed; but we so speak for very weighty and most necessary causes. For it is our duty to keep unspotted above all things and in every place the grace of God, which we have in Christ, and royally to extol and set forth that even unto the uttermost. And that is done very goodly and most aptly by this manner of speaking. Neither is this our mind, when we use this manner of speaking, that faith ought to be or remain in a man alone or without fruit, but that it ought straightways to work by love and all kind of good works, unto the glory of God and the health of our neighbour. Therefore it is all one, whether we say, Faith justifieth without works, as Paul saith, God saveth us through his mercy, and not for our works; and as Peter saith, "We believe to obtain health through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ;" or if we say with the ancient catholic doctors, Faith alone justifieth or saveth. For we mean none other thing by Note.

[⁵ Juxta Septuaginta autem præcipitur humilibus terræ, de quibus supra dictum est, ut operentur iudicium, et quærant justitiam: quam non puto aliam esse præter Christum.—Hieron. Op. Par. 1693-1706. Comm. in Soph. Proph. cap. ii. Tom. III. col. 1659.]

[⁶ *Deus Dominus fortitudo mea.* Omnis mea vir-

tus, omnis justitia Christus est, qui est Deus meus.—Haym. in XII Proph. Min. Enarr. Col. 1529. In Abac. cap. iii. fol. t. iii.]

[⁷ The punctuation of the folio is retained here, as there seems to be some error. Is *Cricamus* a misprint for *Ochamus*?]

Rom. iii.
Tit. iv.
Acts xv.

these words, than that our righteousness and everlasting health cometh of the free and mere grace of God promised in Christ; that Christ hath deserved these so great benefits for us, and not we ourselves; that we can none otherwise than by faith lay hand on the mercy of God or on Christ. And this is the confession and faith of all the catholic church.

For we have alway taught, and do teach, that the study of good works ought to be exercised with all main: we also are very earnestly diligent to shew how greatly we are bound to work well, and how large gifts the study of good works have; again, how grievous pain, affliction, and all kinds of plagues do follow an ungodly and wicked dissolute life. Here seest thou that we and our cause do not lean on a vain and false trifling faith, but on a true, and such faith as worketh by charity and all good works, reneweth a man on such wise, that with high diligence he goeth about and covet to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

Thou hast now my foundation whereunto I stick, and may safely so do. I grant thee, that the law hath worthily made me bond to malediction and cursing, because I have not shewed such obedience to the law as I ought, yet nevertheless I hope for salvation. For "Christ my Redeemer hath delivered me from the curse of the law, when he became accursed" on the cross for my sake, and gave and brought to me everlasting blessing; so that now through him I have remission of all my sins, and am righteous before God, for he is become my righteousness before God. And the word of God saith unto me, that no man shall be confounded that believeth in Christ. To this do I cleave, and still will cleave with tooth and nail, even unto the very death. I will lean on faith and hope, and I will fasten myself hard to this my rock, Jesus Christ, against whom "the very gates of hell shall not prevail."

Take these things for thine answer, which I know right well thou shalt never be able to confute. Get thee hence therefore from me. Where the Lord and my God Christ is and dwelleth, there shall I dwell also for evermore.

Which mought vouchsafe to increase and keep my faith unto the glory and praise of his blessed and glorious name! Amen.

Give the glory to God alone.