



**The Solace**  
of the soule berie comfortable  
against the bytter stormes of si-  
knes and death, greatly encoura-  
gging the faythful both paciently  
and thanckefully to suffer the  
good pleasure of God in all  
kynde of aduersytye.  
set forth by *Thomas*  
*Becon.*  
(\*)

*Psal. cxix.*

It is greatly for my profyt (o lorde)  
that thou haste brought me low, that  
bi this means I maye learne to know  
thy ordinaunces.

*Prouer. iii.*

Refuse not the chastenyng of the  
Lorde neyther grudge thou, when he  
correcteth the.

ARISE FOR



IT IS DAY.

# THE PREFACE<sup>1</sup>.

VERY notable is this saying of our Lord and Saviour Jesu Christ: "He that continueth unto the end shall be safe." For it declareth unto us, that though the most and greatest part of our life seemeth to be spent both faithfully and godly, yet if we persevere not in that faith and godliness even unto the last breath, but let slip our hold that we have had heretofore of faith and godly conversation in Christ Jesu, all the labours, pains, and travails, that we have sustained in the former part of our life, are frustrate and vain. For "no man that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is meet unto the kingdom of God." And it is written in the Revelation of St John: "Be faithful unto the death; and I shall give thee the crown of life." The crown of life is promised: but to whom? verily to those that be faithful even unto death, as St Paul saith: "No man is crowned except he striveth lawfully." To strive lawfully is not to play the coward in the battle of Christ our captain, and to give place to our adversaries, but at all times valiantly to fight again them with the strong and mighty shield of faith, and so to continue even unto the end. And albeit this conflict between the faithful Christians and their enemies be at all times jeopardous and full of peril, yet in the time of sickness, and when death beginneth to draw nigh, it is most dangerous. In health and prosperity Satan's assaults seem to be but trifles and things of<sup>2</sup> dalliance; but in adversity, trouble, sickness, and death, they appear most vehement, grievous, terrible, and not able to be resisted, at which time if we give place, we are undone; if we manfully resist, the victory is ours.

We must therefore, godly reader, against this so perilous time of sickness and death, so furnish ourselves unto this battle, that we be not put to flight, ever remembering that "our strife and fighting is not against blood and flesh, but against rulers, against powers, against the lords of the world, the governors of the darkness of this world, against spiritual subtilities or wilinesses in heavenly things," I mean Satan with all his infernal army and devilish warriors. And forasmuch as our principal conflict and chief battle is in the time of sickness and pains of death, and seeing we have then most need of consolation and comfort, that we be not overcome nor subdued of our enemies, but know how we shall both take the cross of Christ, appear it to the flesh never so painful, and put our adversaries to flight, and so continue faithful to the end; I have put forth this little treatise following, wherein thou shalt find most sweet and present comfort both for thyself and other, armours or weapons to defend thyself against all thine enemies, that not they over thee, but thou over them mayest full gloriously triumph, and get the victory through Jesus Christ our grand captain.

This little work I wish to be in the hands of all the faithful at all times, but specially in the time of their sickness, that they might learn unfeignedly to rejoice in tribulation, and valiantly to strive against their enemies, the flesh, the world, the devil, hell, sin, death, and desperation. Yea, I wish that all the faithful in the time of their sickness might have this treatise read unto them, either of their curates, or of some other faithful Christians: so should they, without all doubt, find exceeding great comfort, patiently and thankfully bear the cross that God layeth upon them, and with glad hearts wish with St Paul to be "loosened from this wretched body, and to be with Christ" in glory.

Farewell, good reader, and pray that the gospel of our health, which is the mighty "power of God unto salvation for every one that believeth," may have free passage among us, unto the utter subversion of antichrist and his kingdom. Pray also that we may so lead our lives in all things conformable to the will of God, that through our godly manners and christian conversation we may garnish and beautify the doctrine of our Saviour and Lord Jesu Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all glory, praise, and honour, worlds without end. Amen.

[<sup>1</sup> It would seem that this treatise is a translation. See before, page 427.]

[<sup>2</sup> Folio, *or.*]

THE  
SOLACE OF THE SOUL.

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THOU shalt ever be at this point, O thou Christian, which art sick and diseased, faithfully to believe that thy punishment and trouble cometh not unto thee by chance or fortune, but by the appointment, counsel, and sufferance of God. Whatsoever sickness, calamity, or misery chanceth to the godly, all that come to pass at the appointment, will, and pleasure of God. "For in him we live, move, and have our being." "He hath made us, and not we ourselves." Neither shalt thou doubt but that of a right good and very fatherly mind he sendeth thee whatsoever disease thou hast, not to destroy thee, but to call thee unto repentance, and to exercise, prove, try, and stir up thy faith.

Acts xvii.  
Psal. c.

For afflictions are the sure signs and undoubted tokens of God's high mercy and singular good-will. "Whom he loveth, him he correcteth," saith Salomon. "He scourgeth every son that he receiveth." That thy most tender and heavenly Father, which so dearly loveth thee, according to his singular good appointment, and of an earnest bent good-will toward thee, with this by adversity, even as it were with bonds, doth pluck back, refrain, and mortify thy old man, that thou mayest crucify with Christ the gladder and more cheerfully thy body, and offer it as a sacrifice. This thy disease therefore, wherewith thou art vexed, is a fatherly chastisement laid upon thee, not that thou shouldst be destroyed, but that thou shouldst be amended, quickened, and made a new man.

Prov. ii.  
Heb. xii.

Rom. xii.

Peradventure God the Father seeth that thy old Adam is fierce, stubborn, froward, unruly, take his pleasure, liveth more licentiously than behoveth him, followeth his own carnal affects, and can keep himself in no good order; therefore doth he cast this as an halter upon him, snarle him with these fetters and chains, speareth him in this prison and dungeon, overcometh him with this punishment, that he may bridle him, knock him down, and keep him under awe, that he cast not into peril, deceive, and put in extreme jeopardy thy most noble and precious soul. Flesh and blood reign and bear more rule in thee than the Spirit: here is God present with thy spirit, and helpeth her striving against the fierce, unruly, and rebellious flesh, that she may overcome, subdue, and tread under foot the flesh. If thou were in good health and in bodily prosperity now, peradventure the flesh (as it is alway naturally disposed, prone, and bent unto evil) should deceive thee and cast thee into many and grievous sins against God, wherewith God being displeased, thou shouldst be in danger of cursing and damnation. That thy heavenly Father therefore, preventing this incommodity and peril, and providing for thee and thy health, bringeth under and keepeth down thy flesh, which with all main and fierceness waxeth wood against the Spirit, and is evermore contrary to it, that it be not wallowed forth into the most stinking and filthy puddle of sin, but be subject and obedient to the Spirit.

Gal. v.

Forasmuch then as this is the pleasure of thy most loving Father; again, seeing that all things turn unto thy commodity and wealth; take heed diligently, O brother, that thou dost not strive against the good-will of God, but suffer and pray that the will of thy Father may be done in thee, that he may handle thee as he thinketh best, and that thou mayest not wish, covet, or desire any thing, but that he shall think good, that all things may turn to the glory and praise of God, and that he may assist thee with his grace, that thou mayest patiently and thankfully bear the cross that is laid upon thee; for "patience bringeth experience, experience bringeth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed."

Rom. v.

Here hast thou an occasion to exercise and learn patience in all thy troubles. For

thou learnest that God of a fatherly mind punisheth thee, and this dost thou learn by experience; for except thou diddest prove in very deed how healthful it were to give over thyself wholly to God and to obey his will (as David saith, "It is highly for my profit, that thou hast punished me"), thou couldest not conceive a certain and sure hope of him, having no experience before that a mind so fatherly and wonderfully desirous of thee lieth<sup>1</sup> hid under this cross and rod. But seeing thou hast learned that before by experience, and hast now some taste of that thing, thou dost not despair in any trouble, but thy hope increaseth straightways, seeing thou hast before oftentimes proved the help of God present. And although he winketh at the matter, and sometime suffereth thee for a certain space to stick and stand fast in the mire, yet at the last he reacheth forth his helping hands, delivereth and saveth thee: he suffereth thee to swim for a certain space, yea, and to be overwhelmed with waters, but he suffereth thee not to be drowned. Hereof mayest thou gather a sure hope, that he will never leave thee succourless, nor cast thee away, seeing he hath preserved thee being so oft in jeopardy.

In afflictions and troubles therefore dost thou learn to conceive and nourish a good and undoubted hope of God, that even in the most grievous afflictions of all, where no help at all appeareth, thou mayest trust unto him, being now thoroughly taught his custom in delivering and saving his people. Thou hast learned that afflictions be sent not of displeasure, but of a fatherly love. Which thing thou believing and having experience thereof, dost patiently abide his help; neither despairest thou, but trustest stedfastly that he at the last will help thee, although he delayeth it never so long, hideth and keepeth himself secret never so much. And thus at the last dost thou know and understand that thy disease or trouble is no[t] sent unto thee for this purpose, that thou shouldest be destroyed, but that the glory of God may be set abroad, and that all things may turn unto thy health and salvation.

He that can give himself over and wholly commit himself to God on this manner, and put all his affiance and trust in his promises, truly that man never dieth; which thing Christ himself, even with an oath, because we should not doubt, affirming the same, saith: "Verily, verily, if any man keep my word, he shall never see death." John viii. And in another place he saith: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me shall live, although he be dead. And he that liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." John xi. These words of Christ, O brother, look that thou deeply repose them, and with all diligence keep them in thy mind; and whensoever thou perceivest that thy mind waver or is troubled, underprop and lift it up with these sweet and comfortable sayings: He that believeth in Christ shall not taste death: "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life," saith Christ: "This is everlasting life, to know thee, even the true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ." Everlasting life is begun in this world; for he that hath Christ hath the true life, for Christ is the life: he is also the truth, therefore will not he mock us; but "all the promises of God are in him yea, and are in him amen." John xiv. 2 Cor. i.

And that thou shouldest doubt nothing but that God will abide by his promises, he hath bound himself unto thee with a certain peculiar covenant and sign put unto thy body. For when he, being greatly desirous of thy health, sent his Son into the world to offer himself unto death for thy sake, he did make and strike up a bargain of grace before through Christ, in whom he hath promised, if thou wilt believe and be baptized, that he will give thee everlasting life freely, and never forsake thee; yea, that he will be thy Father, and crown thee with grace and mercy: thy baptism is a sign of this covenant. Now is it necessary for thee, that thou cleavest with tooth and nail to the promise, which are added to this sign. For God hath given this sign, that thou shouldest nothing doubt of the grace or favour that he hath promised, nor yet of his faith concerning the faithful performance of the same. Thou art baptized to die with Christ, as Paul saith, that his death should be thy death, and that he should purify all things for thy sake; yea, thou hast put him on in baptism, that thou shouldest be whole in him, and he in thee. Baptism. Mark xvi. Psal. ciii. Rom. vi.

[<sup>1</sup> Folio, *desirous of the lyght.*]

Baptism therefore is a covenant, which lifteth up, cheereth, and maketh quiet thy conscience before God (as Peter testifieth), that he will never damn thee for thy sins. For thou, being justified by faith, hast peace with God: a quiet, clear, and pacified conscience is the true peace. Thou hast received a most sure sign as a certain seal of this justification and remission of sins, even baptism; that thou shouldest believe for a certainty that God for Christ's sake will have pity on thee, preserve, and deliver thee. Now, seeing then that God favoureth thee, and will be thy Father and never forsake thee; seeing also that thou hast an undeceivable sign and witness on this thing, look that thou dost commit and wholly give over to him both thyself and all that ever pertain unto thee, obey his will, and patiently suffer his hand, whether he will that thou live or die; that his will, which is ever best, may be done in thee unto the glory and praise of him; although it be impossible that thou shouldest perish, if thou dost faithfully trust on the mercy which he hath promised for Christ's sake. Therefore consecrate thyself wholly to him, obeying his most godly will in all points. For he hath promised that he will be thy Father; and, forasmuch as he is true, when thou knowedgest him to be thy Father, and dost hope and look for all good things of him, he can none otherwise but be thy Father, and save thee, although he handle thee for a certain time never so hardly.

Seeing then that he hath promised to be thy Father, and thou dost trust on his promises, without doubt he will care both for thee and thine at all times: wherefore thou shalt commend to him not only thy body, but also thy wife and children, thy kinsmen and friends, to be short, all that ever thou hast; and doubt not but that he will be a true father, a true husband, a true kinsman and friend: for he hath hitherto used thee in these things only as a steward and dispensator; but now, seeing he is minded that thou shouldest leave off the function and use of this office, he will appoint another in thy room, which, like a good steward, shall both faithfully and diligently look upon them.

If thou hopest this thing of him, and lookest for it with a full trust of heart, it is no doubt but he will do that I have spoken; wherefore put out of thy mind all sorrowful care of worldly things, and commend it to God. Rather take thought for thyself, how thou mayest provide for thy soul and send that unto God.

And seeing that God hath forgiven thee all thy sins freely for Christ's sake, he requireth nothing at all of thee for this exceeding great and inestimable benefit, but that thou shouldest again forgive, even from the very heart, them that have done thee wrong; for he promiseth that he will forgive us our offences, if we forgive men their offences: therefore, when thou hast forgiven all offences even from the very heart, yea, and that so that thou never rememberest them afterward, pray also for them that have hurt thee according to the doctrine and example of Christ, yea, and if ever thou recoverest, help so much as lieth in thy power them that have need of thy help.

If that thou hast a mind void of dissimulation, privy displeasure, envy, malice, ill-will, and wrath, thou hast also a sign and earnest token that God hath forgiven thee thy sins; for faith, wherewith thy heart is purified, stretching out herself, and bringing forth her fruits for the infinite benefits of God, can none otherwise than forgive again, and do well to her neighbour. This fruit of charity beareth thee witness and maketh thee sure, that thy faith is true and livish, seeing it bringeth forth true and good fruits. This meaneth Peter, where he commandeth that we should "make our vocation and election firm and sure" with good works. For he signifieth and plainly meaneth that these works are testimonies and signs that thou art elect of God, and purchased to be his son unto the joys of everlasting life.

Neither is there any cause, O brother, that God should forgive thee thy sins for the grievousness of thy disease and cross; for there is none other satisfaction, none other recompence for thy sins, than the only death of Christ. God beholdeth none other thing in this cause, he accepteth none other thing here, than his dearly-beloved Son: he is "that Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." He is the sacrifice and oblation sufficient, absolute, and perfect for the sins of the whole world: thy disease and pains cannot satisfy before God for the least sin that thou hast committed, much less are they able to deserve health and everlasting salvation, as Paul

1 Pet. iii.

Rom. v.

Rom. viii.

Matt. vi.  
Matt. xviii.  
Mark xi.

Luke xxiii.

Acts xv.

2 Pet. i.

1 John ii.

John i.

Heb. x.

testifieth, saying: "I do not think that the afflictions of this life are worthy of the glory which shall be shewed upon us." Rom. viii.

No creature, neither in heaven nor earth, no angel was able to appease, mitigate, and swage the wrath of the Father, much less shall this thy disease and short trouble pacify it. For he that should assuage that wrath, and reconcile God to man, he must needs be both God and man, seeing he must be an intercessor and advocate between God, being angry, and man condemned. Therefore was it convenient for the Son of God to become man, that he should appease the wrath of God the Father by suffering pains in his own body, and so preserve us from it, as the prophet testifieth, saying: "He hath taken upon him our diseases, and borne away our sorrows." "God hath laid the unrighteousness of us all on him." "For the wickedness of my people have I stricken him." And Peter saith: "By his stripes were we made whole." Therefore for this Christ thy Lord are thy sins forgiven thee, and for none other thing neither in heaven nor in earth, nor for thy good works, nor for any affliction, although never so hard and bitter. Christ is our only righteousness, health, redemption, and satisfaction. God "made him sin for us, which knew no sin, that we might be made righteous." Wherefore if thou believest, thou art the son of God already: if thou be the son of God, then art thou also the heir of God, and fellow-inheritor with Christ. If everlasting life be inheritance and the "gift of God," as Paul calleth it, certes then shalt thou not deserve it with the sorrows of thy disease; but God would have thee punished with this sickness, that thou mightest repress, break, restrain, and mortify thy old man, that it may once cease to sin, which thing shall come to pass at the last by the death of the body. 1 Tim. ii. Isai. liii. 1 Pet. ii. 1 Cor. i. Sin, that is to say, a sacrifice for sin. Rom. vi.

And for this cause must we die, that our soul may depart hence unto everlasting salvation; for this death is a gate and entrance unto eternal life: there at the last are we delivered from all wretchednesses, miseries, carefulness, disquietness, from all errors and juggling casts<sup>1</sup> of the devil; neither shall we any more be defiled with the most stinking filthiness of sin, neither shall we be seduced and led away into heresies or errors, nor yet be thrown headlong into desperation. For an end of all evils, adversities, and incommodities, is then come; yea, then shall we rest in the Lord, and enjoy eternal life and pleasure without end. Death therefore is not to be abhorred nor feared; yea, it is rather most fervently to be desired, seeing by that we pass hence unto eternal joys. Very true is that which Paul saith: "To the godly all things work for the best." Death, in the sight of the world a thing of all things most odious, most hateful, most loathsome, and most horrible, yet to the faithful it is most sweet, most acceptable, and most pleasant. And although it be so, that our old Adam trembleth at it, escheweth and abhorreth it, yet the inward man is ready and willing to suffer it; forasmuch as he perceiveth and knoweth that by it he is delivered from all filthiness of sin, vice, and wretchedness, and departeth unto everlasting joys. What the death of the body is. Rom. viii.

## HOW THEY ARE TO BE COMFORTED WHICH ARE IN PERIL OF DEATH.

The best God and thy most loving Father, having pity on thee, O brother, calleth thee from this most wretched and miserable life, willing to remove thee unto him, and to carry thee into the perpetual joys of the heavenly life. Therefore yield, give over, and commend to him wholly thyself, and all that ever thou hast, and whatsoever his will is, let thy will be the same, and say, "Let thy will be done, O Father God," and not mine: cry unto Christ with the thief fastened to the cross, "Remember me, O Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom:" cry with the publican, "Lord, be merciful to me, wretched sinner:" cry instantly with the ethnick woman the Canaanite, "O Son of David, have mercy on me." Matt. xxvi. Luke xxiii. Luke xviii. Matt. xv.

If thou criest thus, Christ will hear thee, doubt not; he will have mercy on thee, he will forgive thee thy sins, yea, thou shalt be with him in paradise: therefore lay hand on this Christ, cleave to him with tooth and nail, commit thy soul unto him, cry with

[<sup>1</sup> Casts: contrivances.]

Psal. xxxi. this Christ crucified unto God the common Father: "O Lord, my trust is in thee, let me never be put to confusion, but rid me, and deliver me through thy righteousness: bow down thine ear unto me, make haste to deliver me. Be thou my God and stronghold, whereunto I may always flee, that thou mayest help me; for thou art my strength and refuge: thou art my defender: into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Psal. xviii. Cry also with David: "O Lord, thou art my strength, my sure hold, my refuge, and my deliverer. O my God, thou art my helper, my defender, and the horn of my health and my protection." [Psal. xxv.] "Unto thee, O Lord, lift I up my soul: O my God, my trust is in thee, let me not be driven to shame:" "Direct me in thy truth, thou art the God my Saviour." "Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies, and thy pitiful compassions, which thou hast ever used: remember not the trespasses of my youth: according to thy mercy remember me for thy goodness sake:" "For thy name's sake, O Lord, forgive my sin; for it is much: look on me, and have pity on me, deliver me from my necessities:" "Forgive me all my offences:" "Keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be put to confusion; for my whole trust is in thee."

Psal. xci. If on this manner thou wilt call for the help of God with an whole heart, God will surely help thee in time convenient, and he will say unto thee that which is in the psalm: "Forasmuch as he hath put his trust in me, I will deliver him. I will defend him, because he hath known my name: he hath cried unto me; and I will favourably hear him. I am with him in his tribulation: I will deliver him and glorify him." Wherefore, O thou Christian, fight here a good fight, strive valiantly and with a good courage, as it becometh a true christian man: take heed thou givest not over, take heed thou turnest not thy back: there is no danger; thou strivest not here alone, but Jesus Christ the King is thy guide in this agony: this thy guide and captain shall be thine avenger, and in this battle he shall defend and deliver thee from all the enemies of thy soul, from all peril and from all misery and wretchedness: follow this captain going before thee in this conflict and battle: he is a king not like to other, but of an exceeding and infinite power: he hath already overcome and thrown under the foot for thy sake death, Satan, and hell: "Death is swallowed up into victory." Heb. ii. Christ died for thee. Therefore everlasting death hath no power in thee. Christ went down for thee unto hell, that he might deliver thee from these everlasting dark-nesses. Therefore be on a lusty and bold mind, and with a valiant courage brast into the army. Put away all fear: there is no danger in this behalf: there is no cause why thou shouldest fear the fierce and strait judgment of God. Christ Jesus is a Mediator before God: the same is an advocate, yea, and thy patron, defender, bishop, and priest. He hath reconciled thee to God, and hath restored to thee his fatherly mind, which before was estranged from thee for thy sins. God for Christ's sake is now thy father: he taketh charge of thee, he entirely loveth thee as his most tender son.

1 Tim. ii. 1 John ii. Heb. x. Now seeing that so noble a King standeth on thy side, who shall put thee to any business, who shall be bold to assail thee or once fight against thee? Who, I pray thee, shall do thee any wrong? What danger can there be? Hear Paul: "If God be on our side," saith he, "who can be against us? which spared not his own Son, but gave him for us all, how is it possible that with him he should not give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that can condemn? It is Christ that died, yea, which rose again, which also is at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us: Who shall separate us from the love of God? I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor highness, nor deepness, nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesu our Lord."

Rom. viii. Therefore, seeing that Christ is given to thee, with all that ever he hath, so followeth it that his righteousness, innocency, health, and everlasting life is given to thee, as Paul witnesseth, saying: Christ "is made of God our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Therefore put all thy hope, trust, and confidence in this Christ, which is the head corner-stone. This stone is a valiant, strong, stedfast, and sure foundation, whereunto thou mayest safely trust and commit thyself. No tempest, although never so black and horrible, no showers, no storms can shake and

1 Cor. i.

Psal. cxviii.  
1 Pet. ii.  
Matt. xvi.

topple over this foundation. In this Christ, I say, let all thy hope and confidence be set. Cast thyself wholly on him, yield thyself altogether to him, cleave to him with strong faith, let no trouble or temptation pluck thee from him, although all things seem never so much to thee to go to havoc; although flesh and blood tell thee never so much the contrary, and reason thinketh far otherwise; yea, although the devil sometime whisper in thy mind that thou art utterly undone, that God is an extreme enemy unto thee, and that thou hast deserved the punishment of hell-fire, and therefore thou must needs be damned.

For "faith is a sure confidence and a looking for of those things that are to be hoped," that is to say, promised, "and a certainty and evident knowledge of those things that do not appear." With that holy patriarch Abraham thou must believe under hope against hope: thy faith and hope must needs resist and set themselves against all those things which either blind reason doth imagine, or that most subtle and crafty enemy do bring to remembrance and work against thee. Wherefore thou must thoroughly learn what custom God doth keep in saving his: whom he will lift up into heaven, him he bringeth down first unto hell: whom he will quicken, him doth he first kill: upon whom he will exercise his exceeding mercy, him will he first try, and make as though he would damn him.

And this is that unfeigned purgatory and that true purging fire, into the which God casteth his servants and proveth them as gold in the fire. Wherefore, when thou feelest none other thing than most present death, when God seemeth to be most angry with thee, to be gone away most furthest from thee, and to have forsaken thee utterly, yea, when he seemeth that he hath cast thee away and will condemn thee; even then think thou most certainly that he is most nigh unto thee, that he will defend thee and deliver thee, yea, that he then most entirely loveth thee, and careth most of all for thee. For when he doth lay affliction and trouble upon thee, then doth he remember his mercy, as the prophet saith: "His anger scarcely endureth the twinkling of an eye." "He is not angry for ever." "As the father hath pity of his sons, so hath the Lord compassion of them that fear him; for he knoweth our making, and remembereth that we are but dust." "The mercy of the Lord endureth for ever and ever." "The Lord is a tender favourer and merciful, he is long-suffering and full of compassion."

Wherefore spare the eyes of thy senses, cast away the judgment of reason, and submit, yield, give over, and commend thyself wholly to Christ, and take it to good worth, howsoever he handleth thee: esteem not death and the dreadfulness and sorrows thereof after the judgment of the eyes, senses, or reason, but after the word of God. David saith: "Precious is the death of saints in the sight of the Lord." Again: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Christ also saith: "He that believeth in me shall not taste death."

Therefore, if any things come to remembrance which go about to turn thee from Christ, and to cast thee into desperation, cast them all out of thy mind: cleave to the lively word of God with tooth and nail, have thy meditation in that, and ever be whetting of that in thy mind. For thou shalt never by the perspicacity and quickness of thy own reason perceive how it may be possible, that by death thou shouldest go unto the true life; how, when thou givest up the ghost, thou shouldest depart unto a better state; how thy soul should be kept in the Lord and rest unto the last day; again, how thy body, being rotten, consumed, and eaten of worms, may rise again at the last judgment, and come forth in a new goodly form, shape, or fashion. This cannot reason comprehend. Faith alone is able to do it. Therefore call to thy remembrance continually the articles of thy faith, and boul't out every parcel of them diligently, and weigh them earnestly in thy heart.

#### HOW HE IS TO BE SPOKEN UNTO, WHICH IS READY TO GIVE UP THE GHOST.

O brother in Christ, now look that thou fightest a good fight, look that thou abidest in the faith valiantly and stedfastly. Infix and deeply engrave in thy breast



John xi. the promises of Christ thy Redeemer. "I am the resurrection and life," saith Christ: "he that believeth in me shall live and never die." Christ took the nature of man upon him, suffering many injuries and wrongs; and when he died he offered himself a sacrifice for our sins on the altar of the cross: he with his holy blood thoroughly and in all points cleansed the sins of all mankind. This Christ will not forsake thee, this Christ will not leave thee succourless, this Christ careth for thee: Christ saveth thee and defendeth thee, so that no ill or misery shall chance unto thee. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth which are his." Christ saith: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them everlasting life, neither shall they perish for ever, nor yet shall any man pluck them out of my hand: my Father which gave them to me is greater than all; and no man can pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father am one."

Wherefore, O brother in Christ, commend thy soul to God the Father, which loveth thee so dearly: cry with Christ thy brother, when he hung on the cross, "O Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." God, the Father of all mercy, mought lead thee into everlasting life, and save thee unto that most joyful resurrection at the last judgment! Amen.

Give the glory to God alone.

#### A PRAYER TO BE SAID OF THE SICK MAN, BEING IN PERIL OF DEATH.

O most merciful God, O Father of all mercy, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, be merciful to me a sinner: have pity on me, and quickly help me, poor wretch, for the most bitter and most precious passion and death of Jesus Christ thy only-begotten Son, and our alone Redeemer and Saviour. Amen.

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, handle me not according to my deserts and merits, neither reward me after mine iniquity; but for thine infinite and unmeasurable bounty and exceeding great mercy receive me. I, miserable and weak creature, am in thy hand, I am thy bond-servant and thy debtor. O most gentle God, O most favourable Father, forsake me not, cast me not away, poor wretch that I am: I am thine with all that ever I can make. No man is able to confirm me, no man is able to deliver me, no man is able to help me, but thou alone. Thou art the true helper in adversity: thou art the most sure and present comfort in all necessity: thou alone art our help, our bulwark, our fortress, and our most mighty and strongly defenced tower: thou, O God, art our refuge, thou art our strength, thou art our helper in all our tribulations. In thee, O Lord, do I trust: let me not be confounded: let me never be put to shame: let me not be deceived of my hope; but preserve me for thine righteousness. Bow down thine ear unto me, make haste to deliver me. Be my defender, O God, and my strong hold, that thou mayest save me; for thou art my strength and my refuge: yea, thou art my God; and my destinies are in thy hands. Lighten thy countenance upon thy servant, save me for thy mercy's sake, O Lord.

And forasmuch, O sweet Father, as it is thy godly pleasure to call me from this miserable life and wretched world, I most entirely beseech thee so to defend me in this agony of death, that neither Satan nor his ministers prevail against me; but that I continue faithful and constant unto the end in the confession of thy holy name, looking for full remission of all my sins in the precious blood of thy well-beloved Son and my Saviour Jesus Christ, and that I, departing in this faith and perfect trust, may be placed among thy blessed saints and heavenly spirits, so for ever and ever to remain with thee in glory. Grant this, O most merciful Father, for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake.

Lord, receive my spirit. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; for thou that art the God of truth [which] hast redeemed me. To thee be all glory and honour. Amen.

*Give the glory to God alone.*

FIRST, I believe in one God, Father of our Lord Jesu Christ, Judge of heaven and earth, and Creator of all creatures; which also is our Father, and hath elected us to be his children through Jesu Christ; and therefore ought we all to worship him only, and besides him to have none other gods; again, to fear him as an Almighty God, and to love him as a merciful Father with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all the powers both of body and mind. Upon him also must stand all our hope. For he is the Father of light, through whom all mankind liveth, and receiveth both bodily goods and everlasting salvation, with all other good and perfect gifts, which come down from him alone.

Furthermore, I believe in Jesu Christ, the Son of the living God, our Lord: Christ is the very brightness of his Father's glory, and the very image of his substance, the only-begotten Son of the Father, came forth of the mouth of the most highest God, first-born before all creatures, through whom all things were created; in whom we have redemption, namely remission of sins through his blood, with the which he hath washed us, and reconciled us again to his most holy and glorious Father, which tofore were enemies to God. For after that God had made man like unto his own similitude and image, he placed him in paradise, licensing him to eat of all the fruits in that garden of pleasure, the tree of knowledge of good and evil only excepted. But man disobeyed the Lord his God, and transgressed his holy commandment; through the which disobedience and transgression of God's commandment, death and curse came over all mankind. And when there was no help nor comfort for man, whereby he might have been redeemed and delivered out of Satan's power, then God, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, had pity upon mankind, and promised them a seed, even Jesus Christ his only-begotten Son, which should tread down the head of the serpent, and overcome the devil, yea, and restore us to life again. And likewise, as God is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works, and true in all his words, so hath he kept all his promises truly; so that, when the time was fulfilled, God let his Word descend into the womb of the virgin Mary, and by the working of the Holy Ghost to become flesh, as St John witnesseth, saying: "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, as the glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father, full of all grace and truth." This only-begotten Son of God became also like unto us in all things, sin alone except.

Moreover, he hath suffered death for our sake, and hath taken away Satan's power, and restored life again; yea, he is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctifying, and redemption. And likewise as he died for our sins, so is he risen again through the power of his Father for our righteousness. And as he oftentimes shewed himself after his resurrection unto his disciples, so likewise ascended he unto heaven in their presence, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty, above all rule, and might, and dominion, and above all that may be named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come, and hath subdued all things under his feet. To be short, he is a Lord above all lords, and a King above all kings: yea, he is Almighty God with his Father, and yet nevertheless he is our Advocate, Mediator, and Intercessor, and our only High Priest. The sacrifice that he hath done for our sins abideth in full strength unto our salvation for evermore. Furthermore, as Christ is ascended up into heaven, so shall he come again from heaven with the dominion of his Father, and with the angels, to give to every man reward according to his works, yea, to judge the quick and dead.

I believe also in the Holy Ghost, equal God with the Father and the Son; which Holy Ghost is the teacher of the faithful to lead them into all truth, and he doth clothe them with his gifts, and giveth every one the measure of faith according to his own godly will, and keepeth them unmoveable in one faith. For he is the ruler of the christian congregation. He is also the anointment wherewith all true Christians are anointed, and hereof are called "The anointed of the Lord." This Holy Ghost is given unto the Christians as an earnest of their inheritance unto their redemption; and they again be his own unto the praise of his glory. To be short, it is impossible without this Holy Ghost to know God truly, or with a faithful heart to believe on

Deut. vi.  
2 Cor. i.  
Luke xii.  
Heb. i.  
Eph. i.  
Deut. vi.  
Psal. xxxiv.  
Matt. xxii.  
Jer. xvii.  
James i.  
Acts xiii.  
Prov. x.  
Psal. xxxvii.  
James i.

Matt. xvi.  
1 Cor. viii.  
Heb. i.  
John i.  
Eccelus. xxiv.  
Col. i.  
Heb. i.  
Col. i.  
Rev. i.  
Eph. ii.

Rom. v.  
Gen. ii.

Gen. iii.  
Rom. v.

2 Cor. i.  
Gen. iii.

1 John ii. iii.  
2 Tim. i.

Psal. cxlv.  
Psal. li.  
Tit. i.  
Gal. iv.

John i.  
Heb. iv.

Isai. liii.  
1 Tim. vi.  
1 Cor. i.  
Heb. ii  
Rom. vi.  
Rom. iv.

Acts i.  
Rom. viii.  
Mark xvi.  
Luke xxiv.  
Eph. i.

Heb. ii.  
Rev. xvii.  
xix.

1 Tim. vi.  
Rev. xxii.  
John x.  
1 John ii.  
1 Tim. ii.  
Rom. viii.  
Heb. v.  
Heb. x.  
Acts i.  
Matt. xxv.  
Acts x.

John xiv. xv.  
xvi.  
1 Cor. xii.  
Acts xx.  
1 John ii.  
Psal. cv.  
Eph. i.

1 Cor. ii.

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Rom. viii.  
Gal. iv.

him, or to call upon him as a Father. And therefore doth God pour this his Holy Ghost upon his children, whereby they may truly know him, truly believe on him, and faithfully call on him as a true Father. This is my belief in the Father, in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, which three I know to be one God, whose seat is the heaven, and whose footstool is the earth, which is an everlasting and almighty God, alone worthy all honour and glory, forasmuch as he alone helpeth his and saveth his; which thing he doth for his name's sake, and not for our righteousness' sake.

Deut. vi.  
Isai. lxvi.  
2 Macc. i.  
Psal. cxlv.  
Rev. iv.  
Isai. xliii.

Furthermore, as I have said, that all they that do believe are joined together, and through<sup>1</sup> the Holy Ghost knit in unity, so is there a living christian church which is builded of living stones, which church<sup>2</sup> is the house of God, and the house of God is the congregation of God, and the congregation of God is the body of Christ. And forasmuch as they which are true Christians are one body, in the which they all through one Spirit are baptized; so must it needs follow that there is also a communion of saints, that is to say, a congregation or company of true believers, which are so joined together in one faith, religion, and doctrine, as members in one body. And in this communion or company of saints is remission of sins, and without it is no sin forgiven, nor any hope of salvation. Yea, as it is impossible that a member can live which is not in the body; so is it impossible that any man may live in his soul, and be released out of death by remission of sins, which is not a member of the body of Christ; for Christ hath reconciled us all unto God his Father in one<sup>3</sup> body: and therefore must they all be out of the state of grace, that are no members of this body, of the which Christ is the head, to the which also he giveth salvation.

1 Pet. ii.  
Heb. iii.  
1 Tim. iiii.  
Eph. i.  
1 Cor. x.  
1 Cor. xii.  
Rom. xii.  
Eph. ii.

Eph. ii.  
Eph. i.  
Eph. v.  
Isai. xliiii.  
Mark ii.  
Luke v.

Matt. xvi.  
John xx.

Now must we also know that, albeit God alone at all times forgiveth sins, yet hath Christ given to his congregation power to bind and to loose; which shall not be understand after antichrist's doctrine of the bishop of Rome, and of his adherents, which challengeth power to forgive sins, and to deliver such as buy his pardons, *a poena et a culpa*; but of the christian congregation, whose head Christ is, and not that Romish antichrist; which also is ruled by the Holy Ghost, and not by that whorish spirit of the prophetess Jesabel. This christian congregation, I say, hath power to bind and to loose, that is to say, by the word of God to pronounce and declare to the impenitent and unfaithful the wrath of God and everlasting damnation; but to the penitent and faithful the favour of God and everlasting salvation. And whatsoever this holy congregation bindeth or looseth, it is altogether done by the power of our Lord Jesu Christ, and through the Holy Ghost, which is the ruler of the christian congregation; so that we may undoubtedly hope and look for remission of sins in this holy company of the faithful.

Eph. i.  
Col. i.  
Acts xx.  
Rev. ii.  
Matt. xvii.  
Luke xxiv.  
John xx.

1 Cor. v.  
Acts xx.

Dan. xii.  
Matt. xxv.  
John v.

There shall be also a general resurrection of the flesh at the last day; I mean, all they that are dead shall rise again, some to everlasting life and salvation, some to everlasting pain and damnation. And they that shall live and remain until the coming of our Lord Jesu Christ, shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye at the time of the last trumpet. "For the trumpet," saith St Paul, "shall blow; and the dead shall rise uncorruptible; and we shall be changed. For this corruptible body must put on uncorruptibility, and this mortal body must put on immortality."

1 Cor. xv.

John xvii.  
John vi.  
Roin. ii.

Finally, there is also an everlasting life, which all they shall receive that believe on Jesu Christ, and stedfastly abide in good works, seeking praise, honour, and immortality.

Hab. ii.  
Heb. ii.  
Eph. ii.

This is the sum of the christian belief, through the which faith all righteous live, and without the which belief no man can please God. Blessed therefore be the everlasting God, which of his unmeasurable mercy and bounteous grace giveth us this faith, and with the same faith everlasting life, through Jesu Christ our Lord and alone Saviour, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all glory, praise, and honour, worlds without end. Amen.

*Give the glory to God alone.*

[<sup>1</sup> Folio, *though.*]

[<sup>2</sup> The folio here reads, *Christ.*]

[<sup>3</sup> Folio, *our.*]