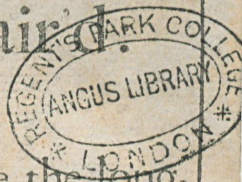


THE

Temple Repair'd.

O R,



An ESSAY to revive the long-neglected Ordinances, of exercising the spiritual Gift of Prophecy for the Edification of the Churches; and of Ordaining Ministers duly qualified.

With proper Directions as to Study and Preaching, for such as are inclin'd to the Ministry.

By HERCULES COLLINS.

Heb. 3. 13. But exhort one another daily. Heb. 5. 12. Ye ought to be Teachers of others. 1 Pet. 4. 10. As every Man hath receiv'd the Gift, even so minister the same one to another. 1 Cor. 14. 3. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto Men to Edification, Exhortation, and Comfort. 1 Cor. 12. 31. But covet earnestly the best Gifts. 1 Cor. 14. 1. Desire Spiritual Gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. Numb. 11. 29. Would all the Lord's People were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.

L O N D O N;

Printed for William and Joseph Marshal, and sold
them at the Bible in Newgate-street. 1702.

To the Churches of Christ, with all their Pastors and Teachers, and others who have a promising Gift for the edifying the Church ; Grace and Gifts be multiplied upon you, through the Knowledg of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Dearly Beloved ;

THE substance of the Matter contain'd in this Book was deliver'd at a Meeting designed for the promoting Spiritual Gifts in the Churches of Christ, but since that I have seen cause to make some considerable Additions to what was then preached. There are three principal things which induc'd me to publish these my poor Labours in this sad and careless day, wherein there is so little Provision made in the Churches of Christ for a future Ministry ; and the first thing is this, That the Churches which are the Schools of Christ may be stir'd up to see what Spiritual Gifts God hath given them, and put them into their proper Exercise. 2. That all Pastors and Teachers would look upon it as their Duty to instruct those Members who are most capable into the knowledg of Gospel Mysteries : And (as Paul said to Timothy) commit the same to faithful Men, who may be able to teach others also. My third end in making this publick is, That the Members of Churches, especially those to whom God hath given a good degree of spiritual Knowledg, would not always content themselves to be only Hearers, but to stir up those Gifts in an humble manner, and put them in use for the Churches Edification ; and in order to a regular proceeding and managing that Work, I have given some few plain Directions in this Book. And let such seriously con-

sider the Apostle Paul's Reproof to the Church of the Hebrews, who tells them, they had need be taught again the first Principles of the Oracles of God, even those very Persons who for the time ought to have been Teachers of others. Pray bear what the late Reverend Dr. Owen saith to this place in his Exercitations on the Epistle to the Hebrews. 'The Apostle doth not only say that they had enjoyed such a time and season of Instruction, as they might have been able to instruct others, but this he declares as their Duty, Ye ought to have been Teachers of others, that is, publick Teachers in the Church: For this word is not any where used (saith the Doctor) but for a publick Teacher, Preacher, or Instructor of Disciples in the Knowledg of God. And this word Teachers is the word whereby the Writers of the New Testament express Rabbi, which was the usual Name of the publick Teachers of the Law among the Jews; and for the better understanding of this Scripture, we must consider the State and Condition of the Church in those days. Every Church was then a Seminary, wherein not only Provision was made for the preaching of the Gospel in it self, but for the calling, gathering, and teaching of other Churches also: When therefore a Church was first planted by the Ministry of the Apostles, it was for a while continued under their immediate Care and Inspection, and then usually committed by them to the Ministry of some Evangelist, who instructed the Churches more in the Mysteries of Religion; and in this State did they continue until some were found among themselves to be made Overseers and Instructors of the rest; and upon their Decease others were to be call'd and chosen from among themselves to the same Work by the Church: and this course continued inviolable till the publick School at Alexandria, which became a Precedent to other places for a mixt Learning of Philosophy and Religion, which after a while corrupted both, and at length the whole Church it

self. And (saith he) out of the Churches went those who were made use of ordinarily in the Propagation of the Gospel; hence it was that when the Church of the Hebrews was persecuted not long after its first planting, the Members of it went up and down preaching the Word with great success to the Jews first, and also to the Gentiles. From whence the Doctor observes these two things: 1. That Churches are the Schools of Christ, wherein his Disciples are trained up unto Perfection, every one according to the Measure appointed for them, and their usefulness in the Church. 2. He observes, that it is the Duty of the Ministers of the Gospel to endeavour their Hearers and Members increasing in Knowledge, until they also are able to instruct others according to their Calls and Opportunities.

Some (saith he) it may be are apt to fear their Hearers should know too much; many corrupt Lusts and Affections may prompt them hereunto, which are all resolv'd into Self, with respect to Profit and Reputation: and this hath proceeded so far in the Degeneracy of the Church of Rome, as to produce the Commendation of blind Obedience, and Ignorance as the Mother of Devotion, and it is well if no other are tainted with the same Disease; nay even good Men had need to watch against Discomposures of Mind, when they find some like David, wiser than their Teachers in the things of God. Joshua himself was earnest with Moses to forbid Eldad's and Medad's prophesying in the Camp, out of no good frame, as appears by the Reply of Moses, Enviest thou for my sake? and this occasion'd the Prayer of the holy Man, Would God all the Lord's People were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his holy Spirit upon them. And the Doctor closes up all with this saying, To a faithful Minister there is no greater Crown, or cause of Rejoycing, than when he can be instrumental to carry any of his Hearers unto Perfection, as that their Gifts and Abilities may outstrip his own, especially if they

are accompanied with Humility and Holiness.

Pray see further what he saith upon the third Chapter of the Hebrews and the thirteenth Verse, and the tenth Chapter and the 24th and 25th Verses. 'It is the Duty of Members to exhort, intreat, beseech, and comfort one another: The Persons concerned in the Exhortation are any of you, any among you, any of your Society that is engag'd in the same Profession with you, and are Partakers of the same Privileges, any of you believing Hebrews; and here the Apostle extends his Direction to mutual Watchfulness, and Exhortation unto all, even unto the meanest of the Church. This Duty of Exhortation is incumbent on some by virtue of especial Office, and the other by virtue of especial Love; and this is that which is mutual among Believers, founded in their common Interest. There are several Duties belonging to this Head of Exhortation, informing those who are ignorant of the Truth; so dealt Aquila and Priscilla with Apollos, &c. And on the tenth Chapter, speaking of the Saints exhorting one another, 'These Duties (saith he) are now generally lost among us, and with them is the Glory of the Christian Religion departed. And the Doctor, to shew how he was affected with the decay of these Duties, mentions this over and over. 'This was the Practice of the Christians of old, but is now generally lost, with most of the Principles of Practical Obedience. And again he adds to the same purpose, 'This Duty is never the more inconsiderable, because the Practice of it is almost gone out of the World.

Unto this I shall add what another worthy Person saith upon the same Subject. 'A Church of Christ (saith he) is not altogether destitute of the Means of Edification, even before they have chosen and ordain'd Officers among themselves. But by virtue of the Church-Relation the Brethren stand in one towards another, 'tis their Privilege to exercise and dispense the Word of God for mutual Edification. As every one (i. e. any one) hath received

'ceived the Gift, 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. and to minister the
 'same one to another; and, if called by the Church, to
 'speak as the Oracles of God. And to justify this
 'Practice we have many Passages in Scripture; Mal. 3. 16.
 'They that feared the Lord spake often one to ano-
 'ther. Heb. 10. 25. Forsake not the assembling your
 'selves together, but exhort one another. Heb. 5. 12.
 'Ye ought to have been Teachers. 1 Cor. 14. 31.
 'You may all prophesy, that all may learn. And
 'v. 39. Covet to prophesy. 1 Thess. 5. 11. Edify one
 'another. Heb. 3. 13. Exhort one another. Col. 3. 16.
 'Teaching and admonishing one another. Jude 20.
 'Build up your selves in your most holy Faith.
 'Acts 18. 24, 26. Apollos was no Officer, nor Aquila
 'and Priscilla in Orders, as the Language now is.
 'Phil. 1. 14. Many Brethren spake the Word with-
 'out fear. From these and many other Texts of Scrip-
 'ture, 'tis manifest that this Primitive Practice was not
 'to restrain the means of Edification, nor make Teaching
 'and Instruction peculiar to Office; but the Privilege of
 'all that God hath enabled, and Providence called to ex-
 'ercise. Nor can the usual Objection import any thing
 'against so many plain Scriptures, viz. That those In-
 'stances were all extraordinary; for it was the Doctrine
 'and Practice in the settled and establish'd Churches of
 'Christ, and nothing contrary to any Divine Institution;
 'but the Reason and Usefulness of it continues fixed and
 'permanent. But tho all gifted Brethren (duly qualified
 'with Ministerial Gifts of Learning and Utterance,
 'called by the Providence of God, and appointed by any
 'Church and People of God to preach and teach) may
 'lawfully and warrantably do it; yet this liberty doth no
 'more make void the use and necessity of settled and stand-
 'ing Officers in particular Churches, than any good Man's
 'care of the Poor makes void the Office of Deacons; for
 'it is not said that any private Member must preach ex
 'dono, or obtrude themselves without a Call, or preach

ordinarily, and in a fixed stated way, if he be not chosen and ordained by the Church, for the Spirit of the Prophets is subject to the Prophets, i. e. to the Church, 1 Cor. 10. 15. Rev. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 5. 12. And therefore in this matter we ought to magnify the bountiful Care of Almighty God, for the Provisions he hath made for his Churches, in that he would not leave them to the uncertainty of a general Obligation, lest there might be some neglect in those Administrations, but hath instituted and appointed that in his Churches there should be settled standing Officers, whose stated Work, Duty and Business is to teach and exhort, take care and feed those particular Churches to whom they are made Overseers, and to them, and amongst them (ex officio) to administer all the Ordinances of Christ. And we join with this good Man in blessing God for a stated Ministry, and that it is not with us as before the Law, as Dr. Owen saith in his Book intituled, Pastor and People; so me truly it seems evident there was no determinate Minister of Divine Worship before the Law, but the chief Men among the Servants of God did every one in their own Families with their Neighbours adjoyning, perform those things which they knew to be required by the Light of Nature, Tradition, or Special Revelation, instructing their Children and Servants, as Abraham did, concerning the Goodness of God, and concerning Sin by the Fall of Adam, the use of Sacrificing, and the promised Seed, which was the Sum of their Religion.

And because there hath been a great Controversy in the Church, whether none but ordain'd Officers may preach, or whether some Men who are not ordain'd Officers, who have preaching Gifts and Graces, and are apt to teach, may ordinarily exercise those Gifts in publick Assemblies, tho they be not ordain'd Officers: The latter of these we assert with those three worthy Ministers, Mr. Martin, Mr. Peto, Mr. Woodal in their Answer to two Books, the first called, *Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici*, by the Provincial

vincial Assembly of London; the second Vindiciæ Ministerii Evangelici, by Dr. John Collins of Norwich. And tho I earnestly desire my Reader to read and consider that Book, call'd, The Preacher sent, where the whole Controversy is handled largely and plainly; yet I think it not amiss just to name those several Scripture Arguments they bring to prove that those who are taught of God, and through a Gift are apt to teach, ought publicly to exercise it when call'd by the Church.

The first Argument they bring, is from the Antecedentness of Election to Ordination. ' Election ought by ' Gospel-order to precede Ordination of Officers: A knowledg ' of futable Qualifications is prerequir'd unto a Church's ' choosing of Deacons, Acts 6.3. much more is it necessary ' to a Church's choosing one to a higher Office, to take care ' of and feed their Souls. A Church cannot in Faith elect ' or choose a Man, and commit their Souls to his Charge, ' if they have not grounds to perswade them that he is ' gifted and qualified as Christ requireth Officers should be, ' 1 Tim. 3. 1, 2, &c. and a little time will not discover ' these Gifts, therefore an ordinary preaching is prerequi- ' site to Election. And so if Election must go before Ordi- ' nation, then it necessarily follows, that some Men not ' ordained may preach. The Church chose Stephen, and ' the rest of the Deacons first, and afterwards the Apo- ' stles laid their Hands on them with Prayer; so that ' it appears that the Church chooseth Persons before they are ' ordain'd to Office, and they ought not to choose them be- ' fore they have a sufficient Proof of their Abilities, which ' a short time will not discover.

Their second Argument is from Gospel Commands, and this they found on ' Heb. 10. 25. Exhorting one ano- ' ther. Heb. 3. 13. But exhort one another daily. ' 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. As every Man hath received the Gift, ' even so minister the same one to another, as good ' Stewards of the manifold Grace of God. If any ' Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God:

‘ If any Man minister, let him do it as of the Ability
 ‘ which God giveth; that God in all things may be
 ‘ glorified through Jesus Christ. *This they call a Di-*
vine Command, and this cannot be meant of giving Alms,
because it is added, If any Man speak, let him speak as
the Oracles of God, and this is to be done by every one
who hath received the Gift.

The third Argument is from Gospel-Promise. ‘ Mat.
 ‘ 25. 29. For unto every one that hath shall be given,
 ‘ and he shall have abundance. *Here is a Promise, He*
 ‘ that hath; *that is, if he uses, exerciseth, and improveth*
 ‘ *what Gifts he hath: To him shall be given, that is,*
 ‘ *he shall increase his Gifts, his Labour shall be followed*
 ‘ *with a Divine Blessing, when the Talent is taken away*
 ‘ *from him that hid it. We restrain not these Gifts to*
 ‘ *preaching Gifts, it is enough that these are included;*
 ‘ *neither do we say that every Christian ought publickly to*
 ‘ *preach. Many have not the Talent of preaching Gifts,*
 ‘ *but whosoever hath, it is his Duty to improve in an or-*
 ‘ *derly way.*

The fourth Argument is from Gospel-Precedents or Ex-
amples: The first they urge is from Apollos, Acts 18.
 ‘ 24—28. And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at
 ‘ Alexandria, an eloquent Man, and mighty in the
 ‘ Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This Man was in-
 ‘ structed in the way of the Lord; and being fer-
 ‘ vent in Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the
 ‘ things of the Lord, knowing only the Baptism of
 ‘ John. And he began to speak boldly in the Syna-
 ‘ gogue: And he mightily convinced the Jews, and
 ‘ that publickly, shewing by the Scriptures, that Jesus
 ‘ was the Christ. *It is not probable that Apollos was an*
 ‘ *ordain’d Officer, because it is said he knew only the Bap-*
 ‘ *tism of John, and the Baptism of John spake nothing*
 ‘ *of the Ordination of Officers; neither is it likely that*
 ‘ *he had an extraordinary Call: Let him prove it that*
 ‘ *will assert it: The Text speaketh not of any thing ex-*

'traordinary. *A Man may be Eloquent, and mighty in*
 'the Scriptures without extraordinary Gifts; and his be-
 'ing instructed by *Aquila and Priscilla* in the way of
 'the Lord more perfectly, strongly argues that he
 'was not extraordinarily gifted. Their second Scripture-
 'Example for gifted-Mens preaching, tho not ordain'd, is
 'from the preaching of the scatter'd Saints, *Acts 8. 1.*
 'At that time there was a great Persecution against
 'the Church which was at *Jerusalem*, and they were
 'all scattered abroad, throughout the Regions of *Ju-*
 'dea and *Samaria*, except the Apostles. *Ver. 4.* There-
 'fore they that were scatter'd abroad went every
 'where preaching the Word. *Acts 11. 19, 20, 21.*
 'And the hand of the Lord was with them; and
 'a great number believed, and turned unto the
 'Lord. From whence they observe that the scattered Saints
 'preach'd publicly. *Acts 8. 4.* They went every where
 'preaching the Word. 2dly. That they had Divine
 'Allowance in this their Preaching; it is said, The hand
 'of the Lord was with them, and a great number be-
 'lieved. 3dly. That these scatter'd Saints who preached
 'were many of them indeed unordained, this may appear
 'from *Acts 8. 1, 4.* The Persons who preached are said to
 'be the scatter'd Saints; and who are scatter'd is declar'd
 'v. 1. There was a great Persecution against the
 'Church: for if we ask the Question, Who were all
 'scatter'd abroad? The Answer must be, The Church
 'at *Jerusalem*, and these went every where preaching.
 'The Apostles who were the chief Officers were not scatter'd;
 'for it is said, They were all scatter'd abroad ex-
 'cept the Apostles.

Their fifth Argument is taken from Gospel-Rules about
 Prophefying. 'All that are Prophets may publicly preach,
 'is proved from *1 Cor. 14. 29.* Let the Prophets speak.
 'V. 31. For ye may all prophefy one by one. Here is
 'an universal Liberty given to all the Prophets to exercise
 'their Gifts publicly in a settled Church. *Ver. 23.* If

therefore the whole Church be come together in one place. *V.24.* But if all prophesy. *This prophesying therefore was publickly in a Church-Meeting: And not only some, but all the Prophets have a liberty of prophesying: For ye may all prophesy one by one. We do not say that (All) bath reference to every Member of the Church of Corinth, as if all the People of the Church might prophesy whether they had the Gift or no; but 'tis granted only to them who had that Gift: The word Prophesying is not limited to that which is extraordinary. Some are called in Scripture-sense Prophets by way of resemblance, who do not foretel things to come; if they have a Gift of Scripture-Interpretation or Exposition, they may be call'd Prophets by way of resemblance, as the Scripture in general, and the Gospel in special is call'd a Word of Prophecy, 2 Pet. 1. 19, 20, 21. yet a great part of the Scripture doth not contain Predictions of future Events. Prophecy is said by the Apostle to consist in Exhortation, 1 Cor. 14. 3. He that prophesieth, speaketh unto Men to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort. Now the word Exhortation signifies a stirring up to Duty, and for beseeching, intreating and comforting. So when the Apostle Paul exhorts the Church at Corinth to desire and covet to prophesy, we are not to understand it as an Office to the Church, as if they might all desire Offices; but to covet to prophesy, is to desire a Gift from God to expound and interpret the Scripture to the Churches Edification.*

Now our Brethren of the Congregational-way being so found in their Judgment about this Point, it is greatly desired that their Principle and Practice did better harmonize: For I do not think that three Instances of those Churches throughout London can be given, who have for these last thirty years past made choice of any for Pastors, but such as have had Human Learning; and there bath been too great a slight put upon such as had it not, tho no way inferiour in spiritual Gifts and Graces for the Churches Edification: and I am inclin'd to believe that

at this very time, Churches may be too negligent to call forth those from among themselves, who may be as useful as any they can find abroad. Those words of our Saviour are found true by daily Experience, No Prophet is accepted in his own Country. Luke 4. 24. O that Churches and Ministers would consider the loud Call of Necessity to stir them up to this Primitive Practice! Suppose that God should take away but a few Ministers out of some Churches in the City of London, where there is but one Gift in a Church ordinarily in Exercise, what a loss might such be at in an Eye of Reason? Therefore it is greatly desired, and would be a very glorious Work, if all the Elders of the Churches in every City in England would not only be concern'd in their own particular Congregations for a future Ministry, but that the several Elders would set apart some time every Week for the instructing young Men, Members of Churches, inclin'd to Divine Studies; and so in the Country where two or three Churches are not far asunder, that all their Elders would agree to meet once a Month, or oftner, to hear the Gifts that God hath given their Churches. And that their Gifts might be discover'd, they ought first of all to be put upon Prayer, and then to see what Gifts they have for opening the Word of God; and this to be done to the end that some may be able to teach others also, when we put off this Earthly Tabernacle. But some will be ready to say, God will take care of his Jer. 3. 15. Churches, and give them Pastors after his own Heart. But this is no thanks to the Churches who are negligent of their Duty in this respect. We argue with a great deal more Judgment about the Concerns of our Bodies, we say it is our Duty to trust in God to provide for our selves and Families: That is true, but we do not ordinarily neglect the lawful means conducing to that end. The Husbandman hopes for a good Crop in Summer, but still it is in the use of Means, he

ought to plough and sow his Seed, and not look for a Miracle, but do his Endeavour, and leave the Blessing with God: Thus should we do in the Concerns of our Souls, and the Churches of Christ. This Work is not design'd for those who have no need of this Counsel, but for such as have; but yet it may serve as a Spur to stir up some more able to give further and better Directions in so great a Work: and if any thing here mentioned may tend to the Profit of any, that God alone may have all the Glory, is the hearty Desire of your sincere Brother in the Bonds of the Gospel,

H. C.

INTRO

to say, God will take care of his Church, and give them Pastors after his own Heart. But this is no thanks to the Churches who are negligent of their Duty in this respect. The argument is a great deal more judicious about the Concern of our Brothers, we say it is our Duty to trust in God to provide for our fellow and Brethren: That is true, but we do not ordinarily neglect the things which God has provided for us. The Churchman hopes for a good Crop in Summer, but still it is in the use of husbandry, he

INTRODUCTION.

WE read in the Books of the *Kings* in several places of the Schools of the Prophets, and the Sons of the Prophets, who were instructed by those called Fathers, or Seers, such as *Samuel*, *Elijah* and *Elisha*: 'tis not probable that they taught them any Languages, for there was no need of that, because God's Revelations to them were in their own Native Tongue; neither could they give them the holy Spirit, that being God's Prerogative alone; but 'tis very likely the aged Prophets did declare their Prophecies which they had from *Jehovah*, and open'd and explain'd the Law to them, and put them upon exercising themselves in holy Studies, with a frequent reading the Oracles of God, and meditating therein day and night, with Prayer to the Almighty: and this was done, to make them the more fit for Prophetick Revelation. These Sons of the Prophets were very many, and probably increased by the Ministry and Miracles of *Elijah* and *Elisha*.

2 Kings 2. 3. 5.
Chap. 6. 1.
1 King. 20. 35.
1 Sam. 10. 12.

From the Consideration of these things aforesaid, and the little Care that Churches take for a future Ministry, I have been stir'd up to cast in my Mite into the Treasury of Divine Counsel, hoping it may be of some use to those young Persons whose Hearts God hath inclin'd to the Ministry of the Word: And if my Heart do not deceive me, my Ends are purely the Enlargement and Perfection of the Kingdom of Christ.

That Scripture which I shall lay for the Foundation of my Discourse, is

2 Tim. ii. 15.

Study to shew thy self approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

1. **T**HE Penman of this Epistle you see was the Apostle *Paul*, he was the Writer, but the Spirit the Inditer. *Paul that was once a great Persecutor, is now become a great Preacher, Gal. 1. 23.* He that once sought the Churches Destruction, is become a Labourer in order to the Churches Salvation.

2dly. As to the time when this Epistle was written, it was but a little before *Paul's* Death, who was beheaded under *Nero* Emperor of *Rome*; and this I collect from this Epistle, where he saith, *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand*: and so it is thought to be one of his last Epistles.

3dly. The occasion of this Epistle is this. The Apostle having left *Timothy* at *Ephesus* to take care of the Church there, *Timothy* with the rest of the Elders wept very sore upon *Paul's* departure; and *Paul* supposing that *Timothy* had heard of his Sufferings at *Rome*, which might prove an additional Sorrow to him, thought therefore by this Epistle to establish and comfort him both against the Apostle's Sufferings and Martyrdom approaching, as also against all the Pressures and Persecutions of the Church.

4thly. The scope of this Epistle is more immediate in reference to *Timothy*, whom *Paul* exhorts to Courage and Constancy in his Ministerial Office; but it concerns all Ministers in their Ministerial Calling to be faithful and diligent

in their Work in the worst of times, and with *Archippus*, to take heed to their Ministry which they have received in the Lord, Col. 4. 17. that they fulfil it, and to caution the Church against evil Men and Seducers.

2. As for the Coherence of the Text, it seems to have reference immediately to the Verse before, where the Apostle signifies that there were some in that day, *That strove about words to no profit, but to the subversion of the Hearers.* 2 Tim. 2. 14.

Now as if *Paul* should say to *Timothy*, That thou mayest be of advantage to thy Hearers, and delivered from that Error of subverting any, but establishing them in the Truth, *Do thou study to shew thyself a good Workman, approv'd of God, &c.*

3. By way of Division: We consider those words are an Exhortation. (1.) The Duty exhorted unto is Study. (2.) The End and Design of it is, that he may approve himself to God, and to all good Men, as a good Workman, *rightly dividing the Word of Truth.* And then we have, (3.) The Advantage that follows it; all such will be delivered from Shame, and gain Honour and a holy Boldness in the Faith: For there is a Figure in the Text, where there is more intended than expressed. The Scripture speaks after the same manner in several places, as where it is said, *he will not break the bruised Reed*; that is, he will strengthen the Soul under all its Temptations.

4. We shall now raise some Observations, which are express'd and implied in the words.

Doct. 1. *That Study is an Ordinance of God.*

Doct. 2. *That the Scriptures of Truth are the Foundation of a Minister's Study.* Isa. 53. 1. Luk. 16. 29.

Doct. 3. *Mens great Design and End in Study should not be to get Mens Hums and Applause by quaint and eloquent Speech, but above all to please God, and win Souls.*

Doct.

Doct. 4. Those that study so as to approve themselves to God their Master, and rightly divide the Word of Truth, will be delivered from all Shame, and rather gain themselves Honour and holy Boldness.

Doct. 5. All Persons who will undertake to preach without Study, are not like to approve themselves to God their Master, nor rightly divide the Word of Truth, but rather expose themselves and the Cause of God in their hands to Shame and Contempt.

Now I shall sum up all into one Doctrine.

Doct. That it is the Duty of every Gospel-Minister so to study as they may approve themselves to God; and so divide the Word of Truth, that they may not be ashamed, but rather have the Honour that belongs to that calling.

In speaking to this Proposition I shall use this Method. 1st. I shall explain the Point. 2^{dly}. Lay down one Proposition. 3^{dly}. Shew who are good Workmen. 4^{tly}. Give the Reasons why they should so study. 5^{tly}. Improve the Doctrine.

I. By way of Explanation. When the Apostle saith *rightly dividing the Word of Truth*, you must know it is a Metaphorical Expression, a borrowed Saying, whether it be from the Priest's cutting the Sacrifices, so as all had their proper shares; *Pool*. or from the Parents dividing the Dish amongst

several Children; or from the Carpenter, who divides his Timber by a right Line: The word imports thus much, that Ministers should so divide the Word of Truth, as to give every one their due

Portion. It is prophesied of Christ, *The Isa. 50.4. Lord hath given me the Tongue of the Learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. Every one must have his Portion.*

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You must seek the Sinner's Conversion, the ignorant Man's Instruction. *The good Shepherd will seek that which is lost, raise them that are fallen, and bind up the broken in Heart with God's sweet Promises, and labour to bring them to the Fold that have been driven away, heal and strengthen those that are sick.* Thus every one is to have his Portion rightly divided to him. In a word, some must be fed with Milk, some with strong Meat : *Food for strong Men, and Milk for Babes.*

Ezek. 34. 4.

16.

Heb. 5. 12.

II. The second General Head is to lay down one Proposition, which is this ;

That it's God alone by the Inspiration of his holy Spirit can make Men able Ministers of the New Testament: This is proved by Christ's words to Paul, who said unto him, *I have appear'd unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a Minister and a Witness both of those things thou hast seen, and in those things in which I will appear unto thee.* And this St. Paul acknowledgeth, when he saith, *Christ hath made us able Ministers of the New Testament.* And tho it be granted that human Literature is very useful for a Minister, yet it is not essentially necessary ; but to have the Spirit of Christ to open the Word of Christ is essentially necessary : For altho it is possible to make an exact Translation of the Scriptures out of many learned Languages, and give an exact Grammatical Construction of the same, yet if this Man be void of the Spirit of Christ, he cannot know or understand the Mysteries contain'd in God's Word. Every rational Man will acknowledge the truth of that Sentence of the Apostle Paul, *As no Man knoweth the things of a Man, save the Spirit of a Man within him ;* even so the things of God knoweth no Man but the Spirit of God. This puts me in mind of a Saying of a

Acts 26. 16.

2 Cor. 3. 6.

1 Cor. 2. 11.

worthy Minister at a Person's Ordination above four and twenty years ago; Tho I understood Latin and Greek, Philosophy, Logick and Rhetorick, &c. yet before Conversion I was as ignorant of Christ as a wild Ass's Colt.

III. We shall labour to shew you who are good Workmen.

1. A good Workman will lay a good Foundation for his Superstructure. St. Paul saith, *As*
 1 Cor. 3. 10. *a wise Master-builder I have laid the Foundation, which was Christ alone, and no other Foundation can any one lay for the Salvation of immortal Souls.*

All others that build upon any thing but him, are
 Mat. 7. 26, 27. *foolish Builders, and build upon the Sand; and when the Storms arise, the House falls; and great will be the Fall of any that fall into Hell for want of building upon Christ their Foundation; for they only are truly wise that build their Happiness upon Christ crucified.*

1 Cor. 2. 2. *This is that Rock upon which whosoever builds, the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against him; that is, the Rage, Malice, and Power of the Devil's Kingdom.*

2. Such are good Workmen in the Mysteries of the Gospel who build a good Structure upon this
 1 Cor. 3. 12. *good Foundation; that is, Gold, Silver, precious Stones, not Wood, Hay, and Stubble:*

We must take care that we do not build upon this Foundation bad Works, and an evil Life, and say Christ is our Foundation; neither must we build upon it unsound Doctrine, nor stuff our preaching with Human Art, Rhetorical Ornaments, Philosophical Questions or Reasons, for that is all Wood, Hay, and Stubble, and must be burnt up; but we must continue to preach the pure, divine, sound, and precious Doctrine of the

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Gospel, in a way conformable to the Substance of it, and build upon it a good Life, which is like Gold, Silver and precious Stones that will abide the Trial.

3. A good Workman in the Gospel lays his Work well together, or else it wants that Profit and Beauty that otherwise it would have; our Discourses should hang as it were in a Link or Chain. Thus it is in all our Saviour's Sermons, and *Paul's* Epistles; there is a wonderful Coherence and Dependance of one thing upon another. When we name a Text we should not take our farewell of it, as too many do, and not return to it again in our whole Discourse; but we should closely follow the Scope and Design of the Spirit of God in that Text, with that Order and Connexion of the Parts, that it may look beautiful and prove profitable.

4. He is a good Workman in the things of God, that uses proper ways and means to prove a Theme or Proposition by. A Carpenter hath his proper Tools to do his Work withal; he doth not take a Mallet when he wants a Chizel, nor a Saw when he wants a Hammer, but uses such proper Tools as will effectually do his Work: As for Example, suppose your Proposition was this, That it is the Duty of every Man to love and praise God. Now to prove this, we argue as King *David* did, from our Creation: *The Lord is our Maker, let us therefore worship and bow down before him: Because he hath made us, we should enter into his Gates with Thanksgiving, and into his Courts with Praise.*

Psal. 95. 7.
Pf. 100. 3, 4.

(2.) We ought to love and honour God superlatively, because this was the great End of our Creation: *God hath made all things (saith Solomon) for himself. The four and twenty Elders acknowledged that God is worthy to receive all*

Prov. 16. 4.
Rev. 4. ult.

Glory, Honour, and Power, because he created all things.
(3.) We not only argue from the Author of our

Being, and the End of our Being, but from the lesser to the greater: As if it be the Duty of Children to honour their Parents, and the Duty of Subjects to honour their Prince; how much more is it the Duty of a Creature to honour its Creator? Again, If Men will bestow any Pains and Cost to prevent Sickness and Death on their Bodies, how much more should we labour after the Salvation of our Souls?

5. We count them good Workmen that do their Work well, and a great deal too. Indeed there are some very good Workmen that do their Work well, but do a very little. Others again may speak a great many Words in a Sermon, who have but little Matter: He is most accepted that brings the best Bread and a full Meal. Some can deliver more Matter in half an hour to the profit of their Hearers, than others can in a whole hour. As some Persons do their Work so bad as makes some almost sick to see it, so some may preach as to make the Hearers sick to hear it: And yet some are so conceited of their own Abilities, that there is no room for Instruction. To be sure this is true, he doth the best Work and the most Work, that labours most in his Study, with a dependance upon God for a Blessing.

IV. The Reasons of the Point, in which I shall be very brief.

1. We should study to be good Workmen, because our Work is of the highest nature. Men that work among Jewels and precious Stones, ought to be very knowing of their business. A Minister's Work is a great Work, a holy Work, a heavenly Work.

Hence the Apostle saith, *Who is sufficient for these things?* O how great a Work is this! What Man, what Angel is sufficient to preach the Gospel as they ought to preach it! You work

for the highest End, the Glory of God, and the good of immortal Souls; you are for the beating down of the Kingdom of the Devil, and enlarging and exalting Christ's Kingdom: and *he that winneth Souls* (saith Solomon) *is wise*; that is, Prov. 11. 30. he that draweth them to God, and to the Love of him, sweetly gaineth and maketh a holy Conquest of them to *Jehovah*. Diodate.

2. We should study to be good Workmen, because you will be the better able to give a good account to your Master, *an Account with Joy and not with Grief*, having been faithful Watchmen over your Flocks. Paul boldly declares it, that *he was clear from the Blood of all Men, and had not shunn'd to declare the whole Counsel of God*; and it is his Counsel to the Elders at Ephesus, *To take heed to themselves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them Overseers*. And in so doing there may be expected an approving of God, and a *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of thy Lord*, that is, into everlasting Happiness. Heb. 13. 17. Acts 20. 27, 28. Mat. 25. 23.

V. The Use and Application.

1. By way of Information. If it be the Duty of Gospel Ministers to study to divide the Word of God aright, then we fairly and naturally infer, that it is their Sin that preach and neglect Study. You may easily perceive from the Pulpit whether the Man hath wrought hard at his Study the week before, or not. We may say of Sermons as some do of pieces of Work amongst Men: We say of some Work, there is no Labour, there is no Pains in it, it is a very slight thing. But it may be said of others on the contrary, this is a good piece of Work this is well wrought, here is Labour in this, this

this is substantial Work. As there are too few painful Labourers, so I fear there are too many Loiterers concern'd in this glorious Imployment; the Holy Ghost speaks of some *Watchmen sleeping, loving to slumber.*

2. This Doctrine refutes the Opinion of those that think it unlawful to study to declare God's Mind, and will contemptuously speak against it, as if we were to preach by Inspiration, as the Prophets and Apostles of old did. What can be a better Confutation of those Men than our Text? which commands Ministers to *study to shew themselves good Workmen; and to meditate in God's Law day and night.* To meditate in the Law, the revealed Word of God, the Rule of Life, so as to draw the Ground of our Faith, and the Comfort of Conscience out of the Promises of Grace.

3. This affords us a Use of Caution. If it be Ministers Duty to study, then be cautioned against Idleness in the great things of God, and the Concerns of immortal Souls; the Lord hath often reproved idle Shepherds. There is so much precious time spent in the World and Pleasures thereof, that there is a very small remnant of the Week left, I fear by too many, so that they have not sufficient time to improve the Talent God hath given them; and what can be expected then but a lean Discourse, if not a confused one, when the Sabbath comes?

4. This affords a Use of Consolation. If Shame will attend them that are lazy and idle in the things of God, then Honour and Praise will follow those that are true Labourers in the Lord's Vineyard.

Those that rule well, and labour in the Word and Doctrine, are counted worthy of double Honour, and to be esteemed very highly for their Works sake. Let all faithful Labourers rejoice,

2 Tim. 5. 17.

1 Thess. 5. 13.

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you shall have Peace in your own Consciences, you will have Praise of the Churches, and all Saints; and, which is best of all, God's Approbation at last, *Well done good and faithful Servants.* Mat. 25. 23.

To what I have said I shall add some further helps by way of Direction and Instruction to those that are inclin'd to the Ministration of the Gospel. Consider my whole Method in speaking, 1. To the Penman of the Epistle. 2. To the Time when written. 3. The Occasion. 4. The Scope. Not that there will be always need upon every Subject to take notice of these things, yet upon some Subjects there may be need to take notice of some or all of them. 2dly. Consider how your Text coheres and depends upon what goes before it, but stand no longer upon it than what may make your way plain to the Text: Some have spent so much time upon a Context, that by that time they came to their Text the hour was almost gone, tho they did not know whether they should preach in the same place again. 3dly. Make an exact Division of your Text, if your Text calls you to it, for that will be profitable in the helping of you to Matter. 4thly. Explain any difficult Terms, but spend not time needlessly in Explanation, if things are easily understood without it. 5thly. Raise as many Doctrines as the Text will allow, and make what good use you can of every one of them, but insist most on the chief Scope of the place. 6thly. Your Doctrine being laid down, prove it from the Word of God by two or three Scriptures at most; because *in the mouth of two or three Witnesses every Truth is established.* After you have prov'd it, then lay down the Reasons and Arguments of the Point why and wherefore it is so. You see that my third General Head is to show what a good Workman is, but that [*What*] will not come in the handling of every

Doctrine. Some Persons lay down some Propositions just after their Doctrine; but whatever is done in that, may be done in an Use of Instruction; but that is at your liberty, whether you will do it in Propositions, or an Use of Instruction. And then, what Use you make, let it be always natural from the Doctrine, and draw as many Inferences from it as it will bear; for they are generally very divine things. Mark one thing, that all Doctrines will not afford the same Uses. There is, (1.) The Use of Information. (2.) Caution. (3.) Trial and Examination. (4.) Refutation. (5.) Instruction. (6.) Reprehension. (7.) Exhortation, with its Motives and Directions. (8.) Admiration. (9.) Consolation. Now you must consider which of all these, or any other Uses, will be most naturally handled from your Doctrine.

Additional Directions and Instructions.

1st. Know ye that the Scriptures are the best Expositors of themselves; no Man, nor no Church can explain God's Word better than it doth it self: As for instance, the Psalmist saith, *There is a God that judgeth in the Earth.* Now if you would know what God is, another Scripture tells you that *God is a Spirit.* One Text saith, *Stand in awe, and sin not.* If you would know what Sin is, another Scripture saith, *Sin is the Transgression of the Law.*

2^{dly}. Give your selves to reading, above all, the holy Scriptures. This Counsel Paul gave to his Son Timothy, *Give thy self to reading; it is Christ's Counsel to the Jews, Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eter-*

nal Life, and they are they which testify of Christ, who hath brought Salvation; of which Salvation the Prophets of old enquir'd and searched diligently. It was by Books that Daniel understood the end of the seventy years Captivity in Babylon. And always make Conscience to pray with Solomon, for a wise and understanding Heart, to understand the Mind and Will of God in his Word: and also beg for great Humility; Pride and Conceit hath overthrown many a young Preacher. Two things will make us truly humble, a true knowledg of our selves, our own Foolishness, Ignorance and Impotency, with our Vileness by Nature and Act; and a true knowledg of God in his glorious Perfections, his Wisdom, Power, Holiness and Truth. I remember Luther saith in some place, three things make a Preacher, Meditation, Temptation and Prayer. A good Man told me that he had been ten times upon his Knees for one Sermon. Sometimes we have Sermons easier, and sometimes with more difficulty: but this is our Comfort, that we have always a God upon the Throne of Grace, who will help us in a time of need that humbly lie before him.

3dly. Let all you deliver be according to the Analogy of Faith; never interpret one Text so as to thwart another; abandon all private Opinions, tho they are never so taking. Peter saith, No Scripture is of any private Interpretation; that is, no particular Scripture differs from the whole, or any part of it. No Man, nor no Company of Men, no Church or publick Officers are to interpret the Scriptures of their own heads, according to their own Minds, so as to make their private sense the sense of the Scripture, but to seek the understanding of it from God, who shews the

meaning of the Word by the Word it self, as we said before; the more obscure places being expounded by the more clear. To help you in this, get a Book call'd, *The Reconciler of the Bible*.

4thly. Let your Speech be plain, as Paul's was, *Not with enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power. Use sound Words that cannot be condemned.* Rhetorical Flourishes are like painted Glass in a Window, that makes a great show, but darkens the Light; as some School-masters will flourish Letters so much as few know what they are but themselves. To have more Rhetorick in a Discourse than Logick is condemnable; What doth it signify to have a Dish daintily set off about the Brims, if no Meat be in it? Be sure you always speak plain to the Capacity of the People: Let us never speak Words we do not understand our selves, nor they which hear us. The Prophets and Apostles generally spoke in the vulgar and common Languages which the ordinary People understood: They did not only speak to the Understanding of a King upon the Throne, but to the Understanding of the meanest Subject.

5thly. Watch against vain Tautologies, and repeating the same thing over and over in other words, unless it be when you are more than ordinarily affected with what you are upon from the movings of God's Spirit, and that is hardly ever burdensome to the Hearers; for if the Minister be affected, generally the People are affected; and if the Minister be dull, generally the People are dull. Tautologies are generally for want of Matter to fill up an hour, therefore be sure you come well furnish'd into the Pulpit; you had better leave than lack: If you have not a

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Gift of Enlargement upon a Head or Particular, you must have the more Particulars in your Discourse. Some Persons if they have less than thirty Particulars in their Sermons, it is too little for an hour, and then they run into vain Repetitions; but others who have a Gift of Enlargement may preach a good Sermon from less than half. Therefore every one must preach according to their proper Gift given them of God.

6thly. Let us not draw our words at too great a length, because it is not only offensive to the Ear, but spends much time, and two words may be spoken in the time of one: not but that I will give an allowance to every Man's natural Faculty; but 'tis to be feared this is often an affected way of speaking. We must also take heed of speaking too quick, for then most Hearers cannot follow us; and here we must also allow for a natural Infirmary. Perhaps *Moses* had an Infirmary in his Speech, yet he was God's Minister to one of the greatest Monarchs in the World: therefore let the Hearers rather pity than censure those who have an Impediment in their Speech. *Who made Man's Mouth?* Was it not the Lord? And it hath been observ'd of some who have wanted utterance, that it has been abundantly made up to them in a solid Judgment.

7thly. Let your Carriage and Habit in a Pulpit be grave and sober, let us have no indecent Behaviour, nor uncomely Garb. It hath been lamented by many to see Ministers, who are set by God for Examples to the Flock, with their Hair and Shoulders covered with Poudre, especially when they enter the Pulpit: Surely were the old Puritans alive, it would greatly trouble them; and it hath been no small disturbance to the Minds of some to hear such as are call'd Beau, vul-

garly Bow Preachers. To see an antient Minister gravely enter the Pulpit with his gray, hoary and white Head, 'tis his Honour and Crown of Glory, because natural; but to see young or middle-aged Men about so solemn a Work with their powder'd Hair, as if they were gray, hoary and white with Age, is not this unseemly, because not natural but artificial? But a worse sight than this is, to see aged Ministers enter the Pulpit with their Hair powder'd white, doth not this signify that they are not so well satisfied with their hoary Head by Nature, which God hath given them, seeing they seem to delight to do something may exceed Nature? Our Carriage, Habit and Deportment should be such, that we may convince the Consciences of Men, that we seek God's Glory and their Good. And that this may be the better effected, we must speak so loud as our Auditory may hear us, or else both the End of Preaching and Hearing is lost: And to be uneven in our Voice, to be sometimes very high and loud, and then presently very low, the former part of the Sentence may possibly be heard by most or all, but the latter part may not be heard by a sixth part of the People, so that they had almost as good heard nothing, if they cannot hear the whole Sentence. How is the End either of preaching or hearing answered in this? Isa. 58. 1. *Lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet.* Christ lifted up his Voice, and cried in the great day of the Feast, Joh. 7. 37. and Peter lifted up his Voice, standing with the eleven, Acts 2. 14. And take heed of an affected Tone in preaching; let your Voice be natural, or else sound Doctrine may be liable to Contempt.

8thly, We should get the Substance of our Sermons if possible for the Lord's day before Saturday, or else we may be at a loss, and have very poor and Mean

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Discourses: It hath been known by Experience, that sometimes a whole day hath been spent in Study and little done; tho at other times (blessed be God) when we have been under the Gales of the Spirit, we have done more in two hours. It is said of Mr. Charnock, that he laboured almost all the Week in his Study and amongst his Books, whence he was so well furnished on the first day. Let the last day of the Week be for the better digesting your Discourses, and treasuring them up in your Memory, and turning to your best Annotators to see what they say upon the Proofs of every Head, as well as upon the Text; and on the Lord's-day before you preach, either Forenoon or Afternoon, spend one half hour in running over your Sermon, either as written in your Study, or as it is laid up in your Memory, or as in both: in so doing it will be profitable both to Minister and People; you will be ready in your Delivery, and be deliver'd from rude and impertinent Expressions; this is the Happiness which generally doth attend a good Consideration of what we deliver.

othly. Beg of God with St. Paul for utterance, that you may open your Mouth boldly to make known the Mystery of the Gospel. Do not enter the Pulpit with an ignorant, but with an holy Boldness; and as for the want of a holy Boldness a Man's Abilities are often hid and darkened, and too much straitned, so from an ignorant Boldness others are too large, and deliver many things very offensive to a judicious Auditory: And if you would have holy Boldness, be sure you carry into the Pulpit with you a good Conscience, for a guilty Conscience will make a Man hold down his Head, and weaken holy Boldness, and so take off the Life of his Preaching. There was the same Sacrifice for the Priest as for

the whole Congregation, a young Bullock, which implies that God expected more Circumspection and Care from them than from others.

10thly. Let not your Periods be too long; tho some have a good Gift of Enlargement, yet it is better for the Hearers to have short Periods than long. It seems in former Ages that they had but one Period in a whole Oration; they had need of a good Understanding and a solid Head, that can carry along the sense of a Speech of half an hour before they come to the Period. Short Periods are better for the Minister's Memory, and the Peoples Memory and Understanding.

Perkins. 11thly. Human Testimonies are not to be brought to prove divine things, unless they may the better convince the Conscience of the Hearer. Upon this account Paul urges the Testimony of *Aratus* to prove a Divine Being, viz.

Acts 17. 28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain of your own Poets have said, For we are his Offspring. Also the Saying of

1 Cor. 15. 33.

Tit. 1. 12.

Menander, Evil Communications corrupt good Manners. And Epimenides, even a Prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always Liers, evil Beasts, slow Bellies.

12thly. Never stand too long on the Repetition of a former Sermon, seven or eight Minutes is as much as can be allowed; repeat so much as may refresh and help the Memories of your Hearers, and in an orderly way bring them down to where you left them, and there begin afresh. To take up a great part of our time in Repetition, doth too often argue the want of Matter, and is not pleasing ordi-

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narily to the Hearer, especially to them that have a good Memory. Here I would be understood of our ordinary and common way of preaching, for I do grant that it may so fall out sometimes that a Man may have a Call to repeat more than ordinary, as if the Matter be extraordinary weighty, and some may desire the whole Sermon to be preached over again, as the Gentiles did Paul, to preach the same thing the next Sabbath-day.

Acts 13. 42.

13thly. Entertain your Hearers with variety of Subjects, seeing God's Word affords variety; tho in some sense I cannot preach Christ too much, yet if I preach so as to neglect the preaching up of Duty, I leave undone a great part of the Work committed to my charge: Tho it is our Duty to preach Christ crucified the Object of a justifying Faith, yet this must not be done in the neglect of preaching up other Duties, especially the great Doctrine of Repentance, which was one of the first Doctrines John the Baptist preach'd, and one of the first which Christ preached, and is the first mention'd of the six Principles of the Doctrine of Christ in the sixth Chapter to the Hebrews. Moreover, we find Christ and his

Mat. 3. 8.

Mat. 4. 17.

Heb. 6. 1.

Apostles preach'd the Doctrine of Mortification, and Obedience to the Commands of God, and all Divine Virtues, as Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, Temperance, Patience, Knowledge, Godliness, Brotherly-Kindness, Charity: This was Paul's Comfort in his last days, that he was clear from the Blood of all Men, for he had not shunned to declare the whole Counsel of God.

Acts 20. 26,

27.

Gal. 5. 22, 23.

2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7.

14thly. If thou hast much of God's Presence in preaching, be not over confident that that Sermon

shall do most good ; and if thou art in a dull frame in preaching, so long as you preach God's Word, do not despair of a good Effect ; for some have experienced some Sermons blest which they thought were lost, and have heard nothing to their Comfort of that Sermon they expected most from, and this

1 Cor. 1. ult. *is done that no Flesh might glory in God's Presence.*

15 *thly.* Let us preach and prophesy according to the proportion of Faith and Knowledge, speak experimentally and feelingly ; that which comes from the Heart is generally carried to the Heart, then it is we preach to Edification ; and to that end let not your Sermons in common be very long ; it is better to leave the People longing than loathing. Get your Hearts sincerely affected with those things you perswade others to, that your Hearers may see that you are in good earnest, and that you deliver nothing to the People but what you are willing to practise your selves, and venture your Salvation upon.

16 *thly.* Take not hastily other Mens Opinions without due trial, nor vent your own Conceits, but compare them first with the Analogy of Faith and Rules of Holiness, the holy Scriptures, which are the proper Tests of all Opinions and Doctrines : Meddle with Controversies and doubtful Matters as little as may be in publick Auditories, lest you puzzle your Hearers and hinder their Edification ; insist on those Points that tend to sound Belief, sincere Love to God, and a holy Conversation ; and it is good for Ministers to have a Body of Divinity in their Heads and Hearts, that they may be able to preach in season and out of season. A worthy Minister being call'd of a sudden to preach without any previous Preparation, preach'd

an excellent Sermon on the Priestly Office of Christ, and being thank'd by some after he had done for his good Discourse, having so little warning, made this Answer, It is good for a Minister to have a Body of Divinity in his Head.

17thly. If you use any Metaphor or Similitude, let it be always as short as may be convenient, and so delivered, that the Matter may be the better explain'd by it. Thus the Holy Ghost calls Christ a Rock, because he defends his Church against the Gates of Hell: So he is call'd a Lamb, that we may the better understand his Meekness and Usefulness: He is call'd a Vine, and his Members Branches, to shew that a Believer's Life, Beauty, Strength, Growth, and Fruitfulness is in Christ the Vine, and that without him they can do nothing.

18thly. Whenever God is in a Text, whether it be by a Pronoun, he, or him, &c. or by a Circumlocution or *Periphrasis*, which is the using many words for one, as where it is said, *The Strength of Israel will not lie*; that is, God; 1 Sam. 15. 29. or whether it be expressed plainly by the word *Lord, God, Jah, Jehowah*, besure you give the People some account of the Nature, Properties and Attributes of this glorious Being, that he is eternal, without beginning and ending, independent, depends on none, but all depend upon him, immense and infinite, and cannot be limited; Omniscient, and knows all; Omnipotent, and can do all; Immutable in his Counsel and Purposes, a Sovereign and Supreme Being, who is accountable to none, but all to him. This Counsel is the rather given, because it hath been the Observation of some, that few Ministers explain the word *God, Lord or Jehowah*, &c. tho the word be in their Text; it is supposed that it ariseth from hence, that

they take it for granted, that every body almost knows what the meaning of God is, because he is very often in our Mouths, when indeed nothing is known less than God is known, and yet nothing more necessary to be known than God's Nature, Perfections and Attributes, because that works Faith and great Reverence in the Object.

19thly. We are often led in Preaching to shew the Import of a word. The Apostle *John* saith to the Revel. 1. 5. *Saints in the Revelations, He hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his Blood.* The washing there imports two things principally; 1. It imports Guiltiness and Filthiness, Condemnation and Pollution, or else what need of washing? 2. Washing imports Justification and Sanctification, an imputed and imparted Inherent Righteousness; hence 1 Cor. 6. 11. *saith the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, But you are washed,* and he tells them after what that means, *ye are sanctified, ye are justified.* So we are exhorted to *seek the Lord while he may be found.* These words import, 1. That Man hath lost his God. 2. It imports, that tho he hath lost his God, yet God may be found. 3. It imports that no one can help Man to his Favour but God himself. 4. It imports that God is ordinarily found by those that seek him in his own way. And thus we are led often to the Improvement of the Word of God, in shewing what such and such words import.

20thly. You that have time, write your Sermons in your Study, and think it not enough to write your bare Heads, but make some Enlargement upon every Head, with the Scripture added that proves it, and yet have your dependance on God for further Enlargement in publick. We may say in this case, as we use to speak about Salvation, that we ought to

live so holily as if we were to be sav'd by our living, and yet when we have done all, to rely upon Christ and his Righteousness; so we should labour in Study, as if we should have no immediate Assistance in the Pulpit, and yet when we have done all, to go about our Work depending upon God for further Assistance. And it is greatly desir'd that our Ministers would do as the *Scotch*, the *Dutch*, and *French* Divines, who hardly ever carry a Note into the Pulpit with them. The Abilities of our Ministers being no way inferior to those before mention'd, and would quickly appear so if they were put into Practice and frequently used, as the others do. Mr. *Perkins* saith it was the Custom in his day for Ministers to use their Memories. Indeed upon some extraordinary occasion Notes may be better allowed of than in a Man's ordinary Ministry.

21thly. When the Holy Ghost descends to help Mens Capacities in attributing bodily Parts and human Affections to God, which are only proper to Men, you must open and display the Mind of God in it, to take Persons off from any mean and low thoughts of God, who is an Infinite Spirit. When God is said to have a Face, it signifies the Manifestation of himself to Angels and Men in a way of Favour or Anger: Eyes being ascrib'd to him holds forth his perfect knowledg of Persons and Things; his Hand and Arm signifies Omnipotency; Bowels signify his Mercy and most ardent Affection: When Feet are attributed to God, it signifies his Omnipresence, together with his Strength to crush his Enemies: And where the Church is call'd the place of his Feet, it is because there he exhibits his Grace and Glory as if he walked in it:

Joh. 4. 24.
Psal. 27. 8.
Psal. 11. 4.
2 Chro. 16. 9.
Exod. 15. 6.
Isa. 53. 1.
Isa. 63. 12.
Isa. 63. 15.
Isa. 66. 1.
Isa. 60. 13.

Isa. 63. 10.

so when Sadness, Grief of Mind, and Repentance are ascrib'd to God, it signifies his Displeasure: 'Tis Man only can properly be said to repent, who cannot know the Event of things; but it cannot appertain to him

Isa. 46. 10.

who declares the end from the beginning: God is said to repent when he doth such things as Men do when they repent. When Men repent,

1. They cease to do what they began to do: And,
2. They are ready to deface and destroy what they have done; God is said to repent, not because his

1 Sam. 15. 35.

Mind is changed. When he is said to repent of making Saul King, it is because he meant to remove him from the Throne. It is

Gen. 6. 6.

said he repented that he made the World; because his Purpose was to destroy and deface the present Beauty and Excellency of it.

22thly. The order of words in holy Scripture is always to be govern'd according to the Analogy of Faith, the Scope of the Place, and Sense of the Words. We are not to stick to the order of Words always, for tho the Apostle Paul put the word

1 Cor. 6. 11.

Sanctification before the word Justification, yet in order of Nature Justification is before Sanctification; and for not allowing this, it hath made some run into Error, that we are justified because we are sanctified, as if our Sanctification procur'd our Justification; yet we are ever to retain that order of Words, and must never part with it, where they are according to the Analogy of Faith, and the Scope of the Place, and the Sense of the Words themselves.

23thly. In holy Scripture you will sometimes find that which properly belongs to one Nature in Christ is attributed to another by virtue of the personal

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