

The Court of Boston, to Make That Law of Banishment &C.

by Isaac Penington

The speaker examines the grounds and causes of the law of banishment and death against the Quakers in New England, questioning the motivations and justifications behind it.

Scripture: James 2:9

Topics: "Persecution", "Obedience To God"

Description

Isaac Penington preaches about the Quakers' beliefs and practices being unjustly condemned by the authorities in New England, highlighting their obedience to God over earthly honor, their patient suffering under unjust laws, and their commitment to following Christ's example of not giving or receiving earthly honor. He challenges the misinterpretation of scriptures to justify persecution and emphasizes the importance of honoring God above all else, even if it means going against societal norms and traditions.

Transcript

AN

EXAMINATION

OF THE GROUNDS OR CAUSES

WHICH ARE SAID TO INDUCE THE

COURT OF BOSTON

IN

NEW ENGLAND

TO MAKE THAT ORDER OR LAW OF BANISHMENT, UPON PAIN OF DEATH, AGAINST THE

QUAKERS

AS ALSO

OF THE GROUNDS AND CONSIDERATIONS BY THEM PRODUCED, TO MANIFEST THE WARRANTABLENESS AND JUSTNESS BOTH OF THEIR MAKING AND EXECUTING THE SAME; WHICH THEY NOW STAND DEEPLY ENGAGED TO DEFEND, HAVING ALREADY THEREUPON PUT TWO OF THEM TO DEATH

AS ALSO

OF SOME FURTHER GROUNDS FOR JUSTIFYING OF THE SAME, IN AN APPENDIX TO JOHN NORTON'S BOOK (WHICH WAS PRINTED AFTER THE BOOK ITSELF, YET AS PART THEREOF); WHERETO HE IS SAID TO BE APPOINTED BY THE GENERAL COURT

And likewise of the Arguments briefly hinted, in that which is called, "A true Relation of the Proceedings against the Quakers, &c."

Whereunto somewhat is added about the Authority and Government Christ excluded out of his Church; which occasioneth somewhat concerning the true Church-Government

BY ISAAC PENINGTON, THE YOUNGER

[1660]

The stone the builders refused, is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. Ps. 118:22-23

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. Mat. 11:25-26

TO THE

RULERS, TEACHERS, AND PEOPLE

OF

New England

MANY a weary step hath my poor soul fetched, and many difficulties and hardships hath it met with in its pursuit after truth. The immortal seed hath deeply suffered in me through the mists of darkness, and various stratagems and powers of the enemy, which have often encompassed me, and distressed my spirit exceedingly. I have known many battles, received deep wounds; yea, and have been in deaths and graves often, where the living seed hath languished for want of the living spring. Yet this thing, to the praise and glory of the Preserver of Israel, may I speak; the sense of God, and the savor of his spirit, were never wholly taken away from me; though many times I knew it not, but was too apt to distrust it, being ignorant of the way of its appearing in me. The Scriptures I always exceedingly prized, and a deep knowledge of them, from an experimental sense of the things they spake of, was bestowed on me: but I knew not what it was which gave me the knowledge, nor how it sprang; but went about still to fix it in the letter, and so gave away the glory from the spirit, which shines above and beyond the letter, and ought so to be acknowledged.

Before this despised people appeared, I was even quite worn out, and said, My hope is cut off from the Lord; there is no such appearance of him to be looked for as my poor distressed soul wants. Live without the presence of his spirit I could not; where to meet with his spirit I could hear no news; and that precious knowledge which I had through the operation of God upon my heart from the living spring; the same hand which gave me, also break in pieces, and pulled down that inward building which was reared up in my spirit.

What a man of sorrows I became hereupon, how I mourned all the day long, and roared out after my God all the night-season, is not to be uttered. And if it might be the Lord's pleasure, oh that my misery might end with me, and that this might be the issue of all my sufferings, to fit me to be a faithful instrument in the hand of the Lord for the preserving of others therefrom!

Now this was it which undid me; namely, the getting up of the fleshly wisdom and understanding; which, though God had broken in me mightily several times, yet it still had some secret device or other to creep in again into me, and to twine about my spirit, undiscerned by me: but this effect still attended it; by degrees, like a canker, it eat out the sweetness and freshness of my life and spirit, and exalted that part in me which God hides the mysteries of his kingdom from.

At first acquaintance with this rejected people, that which was eternal of God in me opened, and I did immediately in my spirit own them as children of my Father, truly begotten of his life by his own spirit; but the wise, reasoning part presently rose up, contending against their uncouth way of appearance, and in that I did disown them, and continued a stranger to them, and a reasoner against them, for above twelve months; and by weighing and considering things in that part, was still further and further off from discerning their leadings by the life and spirit of God into those things. But at length it pleased the Lord to draw out his sword against that part in me, turning the wisdom and strength thereof backward, and to open that eye in me again, wherewith he had given me to see the things of his kingdom in some measure from a child; and then I saw and felt them grown in that life and spirit, which I, through the treachery of the fleshly-wise part, had been estranged to, and had adulterated from. And now what bitter days of mourning and lamentation (even for some years since) I have had over this, the Lord alone fully knows. Oh! I have known it to be a bitter thing to follow this wisdom in understanding of scriptures, in remembering of scriptures, in remembering of experiences, and in many more inward ways of workings, that many cannot bear to hear. The Lord hath judged me for that, and I have borne the burden and condemnation of that, which many at this day wear as their crown. And now what am I at length? A poor worm! Whom can I warn effectually? Whom can I help? Whom can I stop from running into the pit? But though I am nothing, I must speak; for the Lord draweth and moveth me: and how unserviceable soever my pity be, yet my bowels cannot but roll, both towards those that are in misery, and those that are running into misery.

Read in the fear, and in simplicity, what was so written; and the Lord open that eye in you which can see the way of life, and discover the paths of the mystery of iniquity in its most hidden workings in the heart; that ye sleep not the sleep of eternal death, and so at last be awakened in the bowels of that wrath and fiery indignation, which that spirit which erreth from, and transgresseth, the life and light within, can neither bear nor escape.

AN

EXAMINATION

OF THE

Grounds or Causes, &c.

THAT in New England there hath been a law made of banishing the Quakers, so called, and of death in case of return, is well known in these parts; but what induced them hereunto, and what just grounds and reasons they had for it, many are not acquainted with, but are very much dissatisfied concerning their proceedings therein; fearing that they have dishonored God, brought a reproach upon the name of Christ and his gospel, exceeded the limits of their power, given an ill example of persecution, laid a foundation of hardening their hearts against God, and of drawing his heavy wrath upon them; all which they cannot but be guilty of, in case it should be proved that they have been mistaken, and that these people (upon a further search) should appear to them to be of God, as they have already to very many, who have been exceedingly prejudiced against them, till they came more meekly to hear and consider their case. For there are many here in Old England, and in other parts, who once reviled, reproached, and thought they could hardly do bad enough against them; who now, in the singleness of their hearts, can bless God for raising up such a people, and that they themselves were not cut off in their blind zeal against them; but, in the rich mercy of God, had a way made for the removing of their prejudices and hard thoughts, and for the opening of their eyes, whereby they came to see that these are, indeed, a precious people of God; begotten, brought forth, and guided by his power; and that it is his living truth, which they (in obedience to his living power) are drawn to bear witness to, and to hold forth unto the world. And one such testimony for them is of more weight and value in a true balance, than thousands of testimonies against them from such who are prejudiced, and have not patience to consider things in equity and uprightness of heart, and also whose interest lies another way.

Now meeting of late with a paper beginning thus: At a general court held at Boston the 8th of October, 1659. (wherein, by way of preface, there is first an account given of what induced them to make this law of banishment and death, and then grounds and considerations laid down to clear it to be warrantable and just), it was upon my heart to consider and examine these, to see whether they did arise from the seed of God, and from the true knowledge of the Scriptures by his Spirit, and so were weighty to the conscience which singly waits upon God for satisfaction about truth; or whether they did arise from the fleshly part, and from fleshly reasonings upon Scriptures, and so were but chaffy, and not able to satisfy the weighty, considering spirit, as in the sight of God.

And this I was the more induced to do, because I found bowels rolling towards them, and a sense of what might easily be their snare, which hath overtaken and entangled many: for many who have blamed others severely, and really thought how well they themselves would have amended things, if ever they came into place and power, yet have failed, and run into the very same error, when they have come to the trial. So these persons, when they were formerly persecuted in England, no doubt thought and intended, if ever they came to be free from it, to lay a foundation against it: yet when they came to the point, and felt their condition changed, insomuch as it was now in their hand to determine what was the way of worship, church-government, and order, there lay a great temptation before them to set up what they judged to be right, and to force all others to a conformity to it. Yea, now was their great danger, and time to beware, lest the same persecuting spirit did get up in them, which their being persecuted was a proper means to keep down: and if so (if the same spirit which persecuted them got up in them), then they who were once persecuted could not possibly forbear persecuting; for that spirit will persecute wherever it gets up. And having laid its foundation of persecution under a plausible cover, then by degrees it more and more veils the eye, hardens the heart, and takes away the tenderness which was in the persons before, while they themselves were persecuted. Now I cannot but pity those that fall into the snare of the enemy; especially

those who are taken in so great a snare, and come to so great a loss of their tenderness towards God, his truths, and people, and run so great a hazard and danger of the loss of their own souls.

The Grounds or Causes expressed of their making that Law of Banishment, are in Substance these three.

1. THE coming of the QUAKERS from foreign parts, and from other colonies, at sundry times, and in several companies and numbers, into the jurisdiction of Massachusetts.

Ans. This, of itself, is far from any warrant; for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." And though they claim a propriety in it, yet it is still more the Lord's than theirs; and he may send any one of his servants into it at his pleasure, upon what message or service it seemeth good unto him. So that the great question to be determined here is this: Whether these persons came from the Lord, in his will, and at his appointment; or whether they came of themselves, and in their own wills. For if they came by commission and appointment from the Lord of heaven and earth, their warrant was without doubt sufficient. But if they came in their own will, and upon their own designs, then they went out of the Lord's counsel and protection, and must bear their own burden. Now consider whether ye were tender in the due weighing of this, before your imprisoning and dealing hardly with them. For if, at their first coming, ye imprisoned them, and engaged yourselves against them, ye thereby made yourselves unfit for an equal consideration of the cause; and God might justly then leave your eyes to be closed, and your hearts hardened against his truths and people, for beginning with them so harshly and unrighteously, and not in his fear.

2. Those lesser punishments of the house of correction, and imprisonment for a time, having been inflicted on some of them; but not sufficing to deter and keep them away. Why do ye omit cutting off of ears? Are ye ashamed to mention that amongst the rest? Indeed the remembrance of it strikes upon the spirits of people here, and perhaps in New England also.

Ans. They that are sent by the Lord, and go in the guidance of his spirit, cannot be deterred from obedience to him in his service and work, either by lesser or greater punishments. Punishments deter the evil-doer; but he that doeth well is not afraid of being punished; but is taught, and made willing, and enabled to suffer for righteousness' sake. Phil. 1:29. And ye will find your greater punishments as ineffectual to obtain your end, as your lesser. For they whose lives (in the power of God) are sacrificed up to the will of God, are no more afraid of death, than they are of whips, prisons, cruel usage in prisons, and cutting off of ears. Surely it had been a sweeter, a more Christian and safer course, to have weighed the thing in God's fear and dread, before ye had begun any of your punishments. But your own late relation confesseth, that ye began with them upon reports from Barbadoes and England, from good hands, ye say; and so they of Damascus might have said, if they had received the letters from the high-priest, or relations from zealous and devout Jews. And I have heard related from many hands (which, having drunk in prejudices from reports, and begun with imprisoning of them, might easily follow) that they were never afforded a fair hearing; but at your courts, questions were put to entrap them, and they not suffered to plead the righteousness and innocency of their cause, but endeavors used to draw them to that (and a watching to catch that from them) which would bring them within the compass of some of your laws. Your consciences know how true these things are, and will one day give in a clear and true testimony, although ye should be able to bribe them at present.

3. That their coming thither was upon no other grounds or occasion, for aught that could appear, than to scatter their corrupt opinions, and to draw others to their way, and so to make disturbance.

Ans. Christ saith to his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world:" and they are not to lie still, and keep their light under a bushel; but to lighten and season the world, as the Lord calleth and guideth them. And if the Lord doth see that New England, notwithstanding all its profession and talk of the things of God, hath need of his salt to savor it with, and of his light to enlighten them with, and so sendeth his messengers and servants among them, they have no reason to be offended with the Lord for this, or with his people, or with the truths they bring. They have long had a form up, and it may have eaten out the power, that they may not be so savory now in their ease and authority in New England, as they were under their troubles and persecutions in Old England: and God may, in kindness to them, send among them a foolish people to stir them up and provoke them to jealousy. Now their coming thus is not to "scatter corrupt opinions;" but, by the power of truth, to scatter that which scatters from the Lord. Nor is it to draw to their way, but to the Lord, to Christ, his living way; which they are exhorted to try, and feel, and certainly to know, before they receive. Nor doth it make any "disturbance," but only to that which is at ease in the flesh, and fleshly forms of worship. And Israel of old was often thus disturbed by the prophets of God (though they still could not bear it, but were enemies to the prophets for it), notwithstanding they had received their way of worship certainly from God's hand. How much more may the Lord take liberty, by his servants and messengers, to disturb these who never so received it, but have formed up a way out of the Scriptures, whereof many that are truly conscientious, doubt whether it be the way or no; even as they themselves doubt, and are ready to contend against, the ways that others have formed!

Now those that pick a quarrel with truth, and seek matter against it to persecute it, do not call it truth, but error, corrupt opinions, the way of a sect, the making of disturbance, or such like. And persecutors, for the most part, do not only say this, but bring forth their strong arguments; insomuch as the persecutor is commonly just in his own eyes, and the persecuted is blamed as the evil-doer, and cause of his own sufferings. Were the bishops without their plea? Nay, did not he that was called Dr. Burgess (in the book) seem to carry the cause clear against the Non-conformists? And why the bishops might not establish their way by authority, or the Presbyters their way, as well as those accounted Independents their way (not regarding the Dissenters, or tender-conscienced), I confess I see not; but that they have justified the bishops by their practising the same thing, and so unjustly condemned them in words.

But how can ye say, "for aught that could appear"? when ye were so unfit (through receiving of prejudices and reports, and beginning so roughly with them) to consider what might be made appear, and also so far from giving way to them to make what they could appear, as is before expressed? And doth not this also imply that there may be a just, righteous, and warrantable cause of their coming, in relation to God and his service, though it doth not yet appear to you? And in a meeker and cooler temper, when another eye is opened in you, ye may see and acknowledge that cause, who are the Lord's servants; whether they come in his name or no; whether they are his truths or no, which they bring with them. These are things God opens to the humble, to the meek, to such as fear before him, and wait for his counsel therein; but those that can determine things by intelligence beforehand from other parts, and imprison persons as soon as they come, and so proceed on with a stiff resolution against them, how are these in any capacity to seek or receive counsel from God in a case of so great concernment? So that at last, even when they have drunk their blood, they must be forced to say, "for aught that could appear," this was their only end, work, and intent; but whether it was so or not, they do not certainly know.

Thus far is in answer to the account they give, by way of preface, to what led them to the making of this law of banishment and death. Now the grounds and considerations themselves, which they held forth to clear this to be warrantable and just, follow to be scanned, which are in number six.

1. The doctrine of this sect of people (say they) is destructive to fundamental truths of religion.

Ans. For the making of this argument forcible, two things are necessary; if either of which fails, it falls to the ground.

1. It is necessary to make manifest, that persons, for holding or propagating doctrines contrary to fundamental truths of religion, are, by Christ's institution, punishable with dismembering, banishment, or death. For Christ is the head, king, and law-giver to his church: it is he that is the foundation of religion, and the giver-forth of fundamental truths of religion: and he is the proper judge of what punishment is fit for such as either will not receive his fundamental truths of religion, or afterwards start back from them, and broach doctrines contrary thereto.

Now it is required (in his name and authority) of such powers as will take upon them to inflict these kinds of punishment upon such kind of offenders, Christ's institution for this thing. Christ was as faithful in his house as Moses, and if such a course had been necessary for the preservation of his church, surely he would not have withheld it. But Christ overcomes the devil's kingdom by his spirit: by that he wins souls, and gathers into, and builds up, his church; and by that he is able to defend them.

By his spirit he preacheth the truth, and soweth the seed of the kingdom; and by his spirit he upholds and maintains it. This is his way of overcoming all the mists of darkness and false doctrines, and not a magistrate's sword. "The weapons of our warfare (saith the apostle) are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds." 2 Cor. 10:4. Are there strong-holds of darkness? Are there false doctrines broached against the truths of Christ? Who are the warriors against these?

Are they the civil state, the magistrate, the earthly powers? or are they the ministers and servants of Christ? And what are the weapons that are mighty to overthrow these? Are they stocks, whips, prisons, cutting off of ears, banishment, death? or are they of a spiritual nature? The spiritual weapons are sanctified by God to this end, and are mighty through him, able to effect it thoroughly: whereas the carnal weapons are weak and unsanctified, and can reach only the carnal part; but the strong-hold remains untouched by these.

And it is only the carnal part which desires to have the use of such carnal weapons in the church: the spiritual man would conquer by his own weapon, or not at all. Christ came not to destroy men's lives, nor never gave order to have men killed about his truths. If his people be disobedient, and broach doctrines ever so contrary and destructive to his kingdom, he hath a spiritual way of fighting with them now, and hath appointed his servants to have his mighty spiritual weapons in a readiness for the revenging every disobedience. 2 Cor. 10:6.

And he hath likewise a time of dealing with them hereafter; but he hath nowhere appointed that his subjects (if they could get the command of the sword in a nation or country) should kill such. Abundance of blood hath been shed upon this pretence, which the Lord will make inquisition for: it should at length be seriously inquired into, what truth there is in this bloody doctrine. For, under this cover, all the persecutions and sheddings of the saints' blood shelter themselves.

Oh! consider at length, how cruel and bloody, men have made the gospel of peace by this principle; and what an advantage it gives to the carnal part in those that are persecuted, if once they can get the command of the outward sword, to forget their own sufferings, and suddenly turn persecutors of such as differ from them, though upon as weighty grounds (if not more weighty) than they differed from others

upon. But this they that are uppermost will not yield to, that the grounds of such as differ from them are sufficient; even as those that they differed from would not yield that their grounds were sufficient.

Thus still they whose arguments go forth under the shelter, or by the command of, the present authority, are looked upon as most weighty; and the others' cause is trampled upon, though ever so just, innocent, upright, and weighty in itself; and the meek of the earth, the humble-hearted, the tender-conscienced towards God, are still made the offenders and sufferers: and their enemies are still made their judges. I do think these of New England would have once thought it hard measure, that Conformists, whom they differed from, should have been the judges, whether their grounds were sufficient or not; and yet they (ever since they have had the power in their hands) have taken upon them to be the judges of the sufficiency of the grounds of such as differ from them, and have as freely condemned all that differed from them, and been as sore a curb upon the tender conscience, as ever the bishops were.

So that it is plain, that which they sought was their own liberty (they did not like to be oppressed and enthralled contrary to their judgments), but not the liberty of the tender conscience towards God, but rather the yoking and enthralling of it to their judgments and arguments and interpretations of scripture, which he that differs from, must be an offender with them, even as they were once accounted offenders for differing from the Conformists; and so are all become transgressors of the law of God, in doing that to others, which they would not that others should do to them.

2. It is requisite also to make manifest, that the doctrine of this sort of people is destructive to the fundamental truths of religion. For if it be not so, then they are injured and misrepresented; and both their banishment and death, and all other punishments inflicted upon them on this account, will prove to have been unjust.

There are four instances given, or four particular fundamentals mentioned, to which their doctrines are said to be destructive. First, The Sacred Trinity. Secondly, The person of Christ. Thirdly, The Holy Scriptures, as a perfect rule of faith and life. Fourthly, The doctrine of perfection.

Now for the making the thing clear and manifest to every sober mind, it is requisite first to consider what the QUAKERS hold in these several particulars; and then whether that which they hold in these respects be contrary to the truth of these things, as they are plainly related in the Scriptures: for if that which they hold be according to the naked voice and proper intent of the Scriptures, then they are not to be blamed; but the blame will light on their accusers, who might easily be found guilty of injuring both them and the Scriptures, both in these and many other things, were they not judges.

1. Concerning the Sacred Trinity. They generally, both in their speakings and in their writings, set their seal to the truth of that scripture, 1 John 5:7. that "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit." That these three are distinct, as three several beings or persons: this they read not; but in the same place they read, that "they are one." And thus they believe their being to be one, their life one, their light one, their wisdom one, their power one: and he that knoweth and seeth any one of them, knoweth and seeth them all, according to that saying of Christ's to Philip.

"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." John 14:9. Three there are, and yet one; thus they have read in the Scriptures, and this they testify they have had truly opened to them by that very Spirit which gave forth the Scriptures, insomuch that they certainly know it to be true, and own the thing from their very hearts: but as for this title of Sacred Trinity, they find it not in Scripture; and they look upon scripture-words as fittest to express scripture things by. And surely if a man mean the same thing as the scripture means,

the same words will suffice to express it: but the Papists and school-men having missed of the thing which the scripture drives at, and apprehended somewhat else in the wise, imagining part, have brought forth many phrases of their own invention to express their apprehensions by, which we confess we have no unity with; but are content with feeling the thing which the scripture speaks of, and with the words whereby the Scriptures express it.

Now whereas they call this a fundamental, we do not find it so called in scripture; nor do we find the disciples themselves understanding therein, but knew not the Father. John 14:8-9. And Christ going about to inform them, does not tell them of another distinct being or person: but "hast thou not seen me? And believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" ver. 10. And so the believers at Ephesus had not so much as heard there was a Holy Ghost. Acts 19:2.

So that if ye will make this a fundamental truth, yet it is such a fundamental as true faith did stand without, both in believers before Christ's death, and in believers after. This is the great fundamental, "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all," 1 John 1:5. and the great work of the ministry is to show men where this light is, and to turn men from the darkness, wherein is the power of Satan, unto this light, wherein is the power of God. Acts 26:18. And he that comes into this light, and into this power, is owned in the light and in the power, wherein is the life of all the saints, and the true fellowship both with the Father and the Son, and one with another. 1 John 1:3,7.

And the true trial of spirits is not by an assent to doctrines (which the hypocrite may assent to on the one hand, and the true believer may startle at on the other hand); but by feeling of them in the inward virtue of the light, in the spirit, and in the power. This was the apostle's way of trial. 1 Cor. 4:19-20. "I will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power; for the kingdom of God, is not in word, but in power." A man may speak high words concerning the kingdom, and get all the doctrines about it, and yet be a stranger to it, and quite ignorant of the power: and another may want divers doctrines concerning it (perhaps some of those which men call fundamentals), and yet be a citizen of it, and in the power.

But now, under the antichristian apostasy, men wanting the feeling of the life and power, wherein the true judgment is, they own or disown one another upon an assent or dissent to such and such doctrines, and so fall into this great error of disowning many whom Christ owns: and if they find persons not assent to, or dissenting from, any of those things which they call fundamentals, then they think they may lawfully excommunicate and persecute them. So, by this mistake, they cut off that which is green, they persecute that wherein is the living sap, and cherish the dry and withered.

That which is most tender towards God, and most growing in the inward sensibleness (which causeth it to startle at that which others can easily swallow) lies most open to suffering by this kind of trial.

2. Concerning the Person of Christ. They believe that Christ is the eternal light, life, wisdom and power of God, which was manifested in that body of flesh which he took of the virgin: that he is the king, priest, and prophet of his people, and saveth them from their sins, by laying down his life for them, and imputing his righteousness to them; yet not without revealing and bringing forth the same righteousness in them, which he wrought for them. And by experience they know, that there is no being saved by a belief of his death for them, and of his resurrection, ascension, intercession, &c., without being brought into a true fellowship with him in his death, and without feeling his immortal seed of life raised and living in them. And so they disown the faith in Christ's death, which is only received and entertained from the relation of the letter of the Scriptures, and stands not in the divine power, and sensible experience of the begotten of God in the

heart.

Now they distinguish, according to the Scriptures, between that which is called the Christ, and the bodily garment which he took. The one was flesh, the other spirit. "The flesh profiteth nothing (saith he), the spirit quickeneth; and he that eateth me, shall live by me, even as I live by the Father." John 6:57,63. This is the manna itself, the true treasure; the other, but the visible or earthen vessel which held it. The body of flesh was but the veil. Heb. 10:20. The eternal life was the substance veiled. The one he did partake of, as the rest of the children did; the other was he which did partake thereof. Heb. 2:14. The one was the body which was prepared for the life, for it to appear in, and be made manifest. Heb. 10:5. The other was the life, or light itself, for whom the body was prepared, who took it up, appeared in it to do the will, Ps. 40:7-8. and was made manifest to those eyes which were able to see through the veil wherewith it was covered. John 1:14.

Now is not this sound according to the Scriptures? And is it not a good way to know this by unity with it, by feeling a measure of the same life made manifest in our mortal flesh? 2 Cor. 4:11. This we confess is our way of understanding things; and likewise of understanding the Scriptures, which speak of these things. And we have found it a far surer kind of knowledge; namely, to understand the Scriptures by experience of that whereof the scripture speaks, than to guess at the things the scripture speaks of, by considering and scanning in the earthly part what the Scriptures speak of them. Such a kind of knowledge as this, a wise man may attain to a great measure of; but the other is peculiar to him who is begotten of God, whose knowledge is true and certain, though it seem ever so different from his who hath attained what he hath by the search of his wisdom.

3. Concerning the holy Scriptures being a perfect rule of faith and life. The new covenant is the covenant of the gospel; which is a living covenant, a spiritual covenant, an inward covenant, and the law or rule of it cannot be written outwardly. Read the tenor of the new covenant, Heb. 8:10. "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts." If God himself should take the same laws, and write them outwardly; yet, so written, they are not the new covenant: at most they would be but an outward draught of laws written in the new covenant.

And mark; this is one difference given between the new covenant and the old; the laws of the one were written outwardly, in tables of stone; the laws of the other were to be written in the heart. That is the book wherein the laws of the new covenant were promised to be written, and there they are to be read. So that he that will read and obey the laws of the covenant of life, must look for them in that book wherein God hath promised to write them; for though in other books he may read some outward descriptions of the thing, yet here alone can he read the thing itself.

"Christ is the way, the truth, and the life." What is a Christian's rule? Is not the way of God his rule? Is not God's truth his rule? And is not the truth in Jesus; where it is taught and to be heard, and to be received even as it is in Jesus? Ephes. 4:21. Is not he the king, the priest, the prophet, the sacrifice, the way to God, the life itself, the living path out of death; yea, all in all to the believer, whose eye is opened to behold him? The Scriptures testify of Christ, but they are not Christ; they also testify of truth, and are a true testimony; but the truth itself is in Jesus, who by his living spirit writes it in the heart which he hath made living.

And so a Christian's life is in the spirit: "If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit." Gal. 5:25. The whole life and course of a Christian is in the volume of that book, as the Lord opens the leaves of it in him.

"The gift of God, the measure of faith" given him by God, that is his rule; that is his rule of knowledge, of prophesying, of obedience. Heb. 12. Rom. 1:5. 12:6. If he keep there, if he walk according to the proportion of it, he errs not: but out of the faith, in the error, in all he knows, in all he believes, in all he does.

The new creature, that which God hath new created in the heart, in which life breathes, and nothing but life breathes, which is taught by God, and true to God from its very infancy; that is his rule whereby he is to walk, the apostle expressly calls it so. Gal. 6:15-16. That which is begotten by God is a son; and the son, as he is begotten by the breath of the spirit, so he is preserved and led by the same breath; and such as are so led, are sons, and none else; for it is not reading of scriptures, and gathering rules out thence, that makes a son, but the receiving of the spirit, and the being led by the spirit.

Rom. 8:14-15. And being the whole worship of the gospel is in the spirit, there is a necessity of receiving that in the first place; and then in it the soul learns to know and wait for its breathings and movings, and follows on towards the Lord in them. The spirit cannot be withheld from breathing on that which he hath begotten; and that breath is a guide, a rule, a way, to that which it breatheth upon. Now this is most manifest, even from the Scriptures themselves, they expressly calling Christ the way, the truth, &c., the new creature, the rule, the faith, grace, or gift, given to be the rule, testifying the heart to be that which God hath chosen to write his laws in; but where do they call themselves a perfect rule of faith and obedience?

"They are they (saith Christ) which testify of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:39-40. Life cannot be received from the Scriptures, but only from Christ the fountain thereof; no more can the Scriptures give the rule, but point to the fountain of the same life, where alone the rule of life, as the life itself, can be received. The Scriptures cannot ingraft into Christ, nor give a living rule to him that is ingrafted; but he that hath heard the testimony of the Scriptures concerning Christ, and hath come to him, must abide in him, and wait on him for the writing of the law of the spirit of life in his heart, and this will be his rule from the law of sin and death, even unto the land of life.

Now if men have mistaken in the night of darkness, and put the Scriptures out of their place (even in the place of the Spirit), and so have become ministers, not of the Spirit, but of the letter, whereas the apostles were made "able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit," 2 Cor. 3:6. let them not be offended at the spirit of God for teaching us otherwise, nor at us for learning as the spirit of God hath taught us; the Scriptures also testifying that this is the rule, but nowhere setting up themselves for the rule.

And it is the same spirit, which would now fix men in the Scriptures, to keep men from Christ the living rule and only way to life eternal, as formerly kept them by tradition from the Scriptures, though it is hard for them who are entangled in this deceit to see it.

Now for the proof of these things thus barely here charged, the reader is referred to Mr. Norton's (as they style him) Tractate against the Quakers. Concerning the validity whereof, I refer the reader to Francis Howgill's answer thereto, wishing him to read both in the fear and dread of the Almighty, waiting for his counsel to guide him in the true discerning which of them savors of man's wisdom, and which of them writes from acquaintance with the truth itself. In which answer of his, he recites such errors of that Norton, as would make a great sound against the Quakers, if any such could justly be charged upon them. I shall mention only two or three of them, viz. That God is a distinct subsistence from the Son and Spirit; and that the Son is a distinct subsistence from the Father and the Spirit; and because it is said, the "Father shall

give you another Comforter," this another, he saith, is intelligible of the Essence. (Are there then three distinct, infinite Essences or Beings?) That the Spirit of God without the letter is no spirit. (He was before the letter, he was never limited to the letter, he will be after the letter, and he is what he is without the letter). That Christ's words John 17:21. give an uncertain sound. (Where have any of the Quakers cast such a blemish upon any portion of scripture?) Surely this man had more need to seek to have his own vessel cleansed, than to accuse others of errors or blasphemy. And if he have no other way to overthrow them, than by maintaining such kind of things as these against them, he will never get victory over them any other way than by the outward sword: but by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of his testimony, and not loving their lives unto the death, they will easily overcome all such kind of champions.

4. The fourth and last instance which they give of the destructiveness of their doctrine to the fundamental truths of religion, is, That opinion of theirs of being perfectly pure and without sin, which (say they) tends to overthrow the whole gospel, and the very vitals of Christianity: for they that have no sin, have no need of Christ, or of his satisfaction, or blood to cleanse them, nor of faith, repentance, &c.

Ans. That the Lord God is able perfectly to redeem from sin in this life; that he can cast out the strong man, cleanse the house, and make it fit for himself to dwell in; that he can finish transgression and sin in the heart, and bring in everlasting righteousness; that he can tread down Satan under the feet of his saints, and make them more than conquerors over him; this they confess they steadily believe. But that every one that is turned to the light of the spirit of Christ in his heart, is presently advanced to this state, they never held forth; but that the way is long, the travel hard, the enemies and difficulties many, and that there is need of much faith, hope, patience, repentance, watchfulness against temptations, &c., before the life in them arrive at such a pitch. Yet for all this, saith Christ to his disciples, "Be ye perfect;" directing them to aim at such a thing; and the apostle saith, "Let us go on unto perfection;" and Christ gave a ministry "for the perfecting of the saints:" and they do not doubt but that he that begins the work, can perfect it even in this life, and so deliver them out of the hands of sin, Satan, and all their spiritual enemies, as that they may serve God without fear of them any more, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their lives.

Now how is this doctrine, or how is this people, because of their believing and holding forth this doctrine, guilty of all this great and heavy charge that is laid upon them here; as that they have no need of Christ, his satisfaction, his blood, nor of faith, repentance, growing in grace, God's word and ordinances, nor of watchfulness and prayer, &c.? Let us consider the thing a little further.

First, The doctrine of perfection, if it should be granted to deny all this, yet it cannot be supposed to deny the need thereof, until the state of perfection be attained. Nay, they that truly believe that such a state is attainable, cannot deny the use of those things which are proper to lead to that state, but will conscientiously apply themselves thereto, and press all others thereto, who desire to attain that state. And they that have either heard them speak, or read their writings with any equality of mind, may abundantly testify for them against the unrighteousness and injury of this charge. Their life lies in Christ, their peace in his satisfaction for them, and in a sensible feeling of his blood sprinkled in their consciences, to cleanse them from sin; and by that faith, which is God's gift, they feel, and wait further to feel, the righteousness of Christ imputed to them for justification. And as for being perfectly just in themselves, it is a very unrighteous charge upon them; for their justice and righteousness is in Christ for ever, and not in themselves; but in the denial and crucifying of self are they made partakers of it, which is bestowed by the free grace, mercy, and power, of him who hath mercy on them, and not by any willing or running of theirs. And as for repentance, they feel the need of it, and find a godly sorrow wrought in them, and a bitter

mourning over him whom they once pierced, and still pierce, so far as they hearken to the tempter, and follow the motions and lusts of the transgressing nature. And they do both watch and pray against sin, and feel what a bitter thing it is to have the watch so slackened, whereby the temptation prevails, which would lead to sin. And as for purifying themselves daily, and putting off the old man, and putting on the new; it is that which their hearts delight to be continually exercised about; and all this with a hope that it may be effected, that the vessel may be made holy to the Lord, a fit spiritual temple for him to dwell in, that he may display his life, glory, power, and pure presence in them. But if the belief that this may be attained, in the way wherein God leadeth them towards it, and a hope to attain it, with an acknowledgement of it so far as it is attained; I say, if this make them guilty of so great a charge, then they are indeed guilty; for they cannot but believe it, wait for it, hope for it, and acknowledge it, so far as they feel it wrought in them. But how can this possibly make them guilty of denying these things, seeing the exercise of these things not only standeth with, but is increased by, such a belief and hope?

Secondly, The state of perfection itself, doth not exclude these things, in such a way as this charge seems to intimate. For in the state of perfection, the blood is not laid aside as useless, but remains to keep pure for ever. It is the blood of the everlasting covenant, Heb. 13:20. both the covenant and the blood last for ever, and are useful even to them that are perfect. And there is need and use of the faith in the blood, to believe the preservation. As the covenant itself lasts, so that which lets into, and keeps in the covenant, lasts also. That which unites and ties the soul to Christ, the life, abides in the soul for ever, even as the union itself abides. And there is a growing in the life, even where the heart is purified from sin, even as Christ did grow and was strong in spirit; for a state of perfection doth not exclude degrees. And so there is also a need of watching against temptations in a perfect state; for Adam was perfect, and yet he needed a watch: and Christ was perfectly pure and without sin, and yet he did both watch and pray. So that if any were brought to the perfect state of a man, even unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, which the ministry was given to bring all the saints unto, Eph. 4:11-13. if any were taught and enabled so to walk in the light, as to be cleansed by the blood from all sin, and to have such fellowship with the Father and the Son, as might make their joy full, 1 John 1:3-4,7. if any were brought to that state of glory, as to be chaste virgins, 2 Cor. 11:2. without spot or wrinkle of the flesh, but holy and without blemish, Eph. 5:27. if any should be made perfect in every good work to do his will, which was a thing the apostle prayed for, Heb. 13:21. if any should have so put off the old man, and have put on the wedding garment, as to be made ready and fit to be married to the Lamb, Rev. 19:7. yet this would not exclude faith in the blood, or prayer, or watchfulness, to keep the garment pure, &c., nor growth in the life. And this we are not ashamed to profess, that we are pressing after, and some have already attained very far, even to be made perfect as pertaining to the conscience; being so ingrafted into Christ the power of God, so planted into the likeness of his death and resurrection, so encompassed with the walls and bulwarks of salvation, as that they feel no condemnation for sin, but a continual justification of the life; being taught, led, and enabled to walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. Rom. 8:1.

From what they have said concerning this opinion of perfection (as they call it) they draw an argument against their other doctrines in these words. Such fundamentals of Christianity are overthrown by this one opinion of theirs, and how much more by all their other doctrines?

Ans. To which I shall say this: If their grounds and proofs against any other doctrines of the Quakers, be no more weighty and demonstrative, than those they have here brought forth against the doctrine of perfection, they may spare entertaining prejudices against them and condemning them; and in the first place weigh them in a more equal balance than they have done this. And I dare appeal to any naked and

unbiased spirit, who shall fairly consider what is above written, whether the doctrine of perfection be such a hideous error as they have represented it. Nay, whether it be not a precious truth of the gospel of Christ, and a great encouragement to him who shall follow the command of Christ; who saith, "Be ye perfect;" to believe that (in the way of faith and obedience) he may be wrought up to such an estate by the free grace, mercy, love, and power of God. Yea, let me add this word more; he that feeleth the everlasting arm working one sin out of his heart, cannot but believe that the same arm can work out all, and pluck up every plant which the heavenly Father hath not planted; which hope and belief causeth him with joy to follow this arm through the regeneration. But if I did believe there were no perfecting work of redemption in this life, but I must still in part be a slave to Satan, still crying out of the body of sin and death, and never have my heart purified for the Holy One to inhabit in, but remain in part unconverted, unchanged, unregenerated, unsanctified; oh, how heavily should I go on! I am sure it would be as a weight upon my spirit in resisting of sin and Satan. This is not the glad tidings of the everlasting gospel, but sad news from the borders of death, which would keep the creature not only in the bonds of death, but without hope of deliverance in this life; and refer the hope to that day wherein there is no more working out of redemption, but the eternal judgment of the tree as it falls.

Now having, after this manner, proved that the doctrines of the Quakers are destructive to the fundamental truths of religion, they lay down their argument whereupon they conclude that it is lawful for them, nay, their duty, to put them to death, in these words: "Now the commandment of God is plain, that he that presumes to speak lies in the name of the Lord, and turns people out of the way which the Lord hath commanded to walk in, such a one must not live, but be put to death." Zech. 13:3. Deut. 13:6-9. 18:20.

Ans. 1. By what hath been said against them, it is not manifest that they have spoken lies in the name of the Lord. Nay, if they themselves, who thus charge them, could but soberly and mildly, with a Christian spirit, weigh the thing, would it not rather appear that they, in thus falsely charging them, and managing such untrue and unrighteous arguments against them, have spoken lies, both concerning them, and against the Lord and his truth? And as for turning men out of the way, that cannot be justly charged on them, who turn men to Christ, the living way, and deliver the same message the apostles did, that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all;" and who point them to that place where God hath said this light is to be found, which is the heart, where God writes the new covenant, and the laws thereof, Heb. 8. where the word of faith is nigh. Rom. 10. Surely they that direct hither, do not turn men out of the way. But they that point men to guess at the meanings of scriptures, and to gather knowledge, and form rules to themselves out of them, by their own natural wit and understanding, which can never reach the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and which God hides the true knowledge of the Scriptures from, these are those that turn men out of the way. For they that rightly understand the Scriptures, must first receive a measure of the Spirit to understand it with; even as they that wrote any part thereof, did first receive a measure of the Spirit to write it by.

2. It is not manifest by these places quoted, that the governors of New England have received authority from the Lord to put the Quakers to death, if their doctrines were such as they accuse them to be. That of Deut. 13:6-9. is a manifest case concerning one that should tempt to the following of other gods, of the gods of the people round about, nigh or far off; in such a case the offender was to be stoned to death, ver. 10. but is this applicable to cases of doctrine? That of Deut. 18:20. gives a clear note how the prophet may be known that speaks a lie in the name of the Lord, and what kind of lie it is, for which he is to be put to death, ver. 22. but it doth not say that every man in the commonwealth of Israel, that holdeth any doctrine contrary to what some of them might call the fundamental doctrines of the law, should be put to death.

That of Zech. 13:3 is a prophecy, not a command, and is not to be understood in man's wisdom, nor to be fulfilled in man's will. It were better to wait for the true openings of prophecies in the Spirit, than to let the carnal part loose, to gather somewhat out of them for the satisfying of the flesh, and making its thirst after the blood of God's lambs appear more plausible. I would but put this question to your consciences in the sight of God; whether in a conscientious submission to the will of God in this scripture ye put them to death; or whether from this scripture ye seek a shelter and cover for the thing, having already done it, or fully purposed to do it.

So that the case is not here the same with any of the cases mentioned in those scriptures: for if some of their doctrines were lies (which ye have been very far from proving), yet it was not for such kind of lies that death was appointed in the commonwealth of Israel. And yet there is a large difference between what was lawful to be done in the kingdom or commonwealth of Israel, and what is now lawful to be done. The kingdom or commonwealth of Israel was a state outwardly representative of what was inwardly to be done in the state of the gospel, by Christ the king thereof. He is the king and law-giver to his people, and he is their judge concerning their receiving or rejecting them; concerning their obeying or disobeying them; concerning their holding the faith, or their letting go the faith; and maintaining things contrary thereto. And he doth judge his people here in this life, so far as he thinks fit, Heb. 10:30-31. reserving also what he thinks fit for another time of judgment. Acts 17:31. And who is he that shall take his office out of his hand, and judge one of his servants in the things of his kingdom? Rom. 14:4. Is not this an intruding into Christ's kingly office? He gave authority to, and command for, the doing of such things outwardly before his coming, as might represent what he would do inwardly after his coming; but where hath he given authority since his coming, to do such things any more? Doth not the typical king, with his typical government, cease, after that king, with his government which is figured out, is come?

O governors of New England! to take away the life of a man is a weighty thing; and the Lord will not hold him guiltless, who either doth it in a violent manner, or who maketh an unjust law to do it by. But "how precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints!" Oh, how will ye be able to bear the weight of their blood, when the Lord maketh inquisition for it! Ye had need have a very clear warrant in this case. Oh, how will ye answer this thing at the judgment-seat of Christ! Alas! such arguments as these will stand you in little stead: but ye have done it, and now must maintain it; and it is exceeding hard for you (being thus deeply engaged in the sight of the nations) to come to a sober and serious consideration of the state of the case, as it stands before the Lord.

2. The second ground or consideration which they hold forth to clear their law of banishment and death against the QUAKERS to be warrantable and just, is this: "Because they are far from giving that honor and reverence to magistrates which the Lord requireth, and good men have given to them; but, on the contrary, show contempt against them in their very outward gesture and behavior; and some of them at least, spare not to belch railing and cursing speeches," &c.

Ans. That we do not give that honor and reverence to magistrates, which the Lord requireth, deserves a weighty proof. For what we do or forbear in this kind, we do as in the sight of the Lord; as persons who are not only liable to suffer from men, but also to give an account to HIM at the last day. Now towards magistrates our carriage is thus, as in the presence of the Lord.

1. We observe their commands in all things that are according to God. We submit ourselves to the government that is supreme, and to the governors under the supreme, for the Lord's sake, who in their several places ought to be for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well,

according to 1 Pet. 2:13-14. This is God's ordinance, and here magistracy is in its right place, namely, in punishing the evil-doer for his evil deeds; but not make a man an offender for a word, or for a gesture, which is neither good nor evil in itself, but as it is done. He that pulleth off his hat, or boweth in flattery, or to please man, in him it is evil: he that forbeareth to do it in obedience to God, and in the fear of his name, in him it is good.

2. When any magistrates punish us for well-doing, for our obedience to the Lord's spirit, though we know God never gave power to any magistracy to punish therefor; yet we patiently suffer under them; referring our cause to him that judgeth righteously, and waiting on him for strength to carry us through our sufferings for his name's sake.

3. When we appear before them, we appear as in the Lord's presence, desiring his guidance, that we may give due honor and respect to all that is of him in them; and may be kept from honoring or pleasing that which is not of him, and which he would not have us honor. This is the temper of our spirits, and accordingly is our carriage as in the sight of the Lord, whatever men deem of us.

But the great matter is, because we do not pull off our hats, and bow to them, or that we use plain language to them (as thou and thee to a particular person), which some of them will needs interpret to be contempt; though others of them, who are more sober and considerate, can clearly discern that it is not at all in contempt either to their authority or their persons; but in a mere single-hearted obedience to God. Now to drive this a little towards a fair trial, consider in meekness, and in God's fear.

1. What kind of honor this is which is thus much stood upon? Is it the honor which is from above, or the honor which is from below? What part springs it from in man; from the new birth, or from the earthly nature? And what doth it please in man? Doth it please that which is begotten of God? Doth it please the meekness, the humility, the lowliness, the new nature? Or doth it please and help to keep up the old nature, the lofty spirit, even that part which is prone in every man to be exalted out of the fear of God? For this I may freely say, that whatsoever is of the earth, hath an aptness in it to feed the earthly part; and particularly this of outward bowing to the creature, is apt to hurt him that receiveth it. In man's giving and receiving honor, God hath been forgotten. They have forgotten God, who have been giving honor to one another; and they have forgotten God, who have been receiving honor from one another. And what if the Lord, who hath made us sensible of the evil herein, hath laid a restraint upon us? Can any forbid the Lord from laying such a thing upon us? Or is it lawful for any to go about to hinder us from obeying the Lord therein? Thou who art thus eager in contending for honor, art thou sure it is not the evil part in thee, which doth desire it? If it be the good part in thee, thou wilt desire it in meekness and gentleness; yea, and wilt be able to bear the want of it with joy, where it is denied thee upon such an account, that it may run more purely towards the Lord.

Now if it be earthly honor, it is of a perishing nature: it is not always to last; but is one of the fashions of this world which is to pass away (how long a time soever it hath had); and God may call his people from it at his pleasure; and if he calls from it, they must leave it off, though the earthly nature and power be never so angry thereat. The Lord hath let men have a long day, wherein man hath been lifted up, and appeared great, by receiving that honor which is of the earth, not of the faith: but at length the Lord will bring forth his day, wherein he will be great, and have every knee bow to him, and every tongue confess to him: and then man shall be little, and his honor fall, and the Lord alone be exalted. Isa. 2:17.

2. Doth not the image of God grow up into the likeness of God? Doth God respect men's persons? Did Christ regard any man's person? Did not James say, "If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law, as transgressors?" James 2:9. Of what law? Of the law of faith, which exalteth the new birth, and layeth flat the creature in its transgressing nature, estate, and honor. For, saith Christ, who received not honor from men, nor gave honor to men, "How can ye believe, which received honor one of another?" John 5:44. That which receiveth earthly honor, is of the earth, and cannot believe; and that which giveth earthly honor, is of the earth, and so not of the faith. The faith is a denying of the earth, a taking up of the cross to the earthly honor, which is as a block in the way of faith. How can ye believe, when ye cherish that part in you which is against the faith? The immortal seed of life, in the day of the gospel, grows up out of the earth, leaving it, with its customs, fashions, honors, and its nature and worship too, behind it.

So that look into the ground of the thing with the eye which seeth over the transgressing state, and over all things which have sprung up from the transgressing part, and which please that part which is out of the faith, out of the life and power, drawn from God into the earth, and it will be manifest that earthly honor hath its root, foundation, and service there; but falleth off like a shackle from man's spirit, as the life riseth in him, and as he is redeemed out of the earth.

Now as for Abraham's and Jacob's bowings, &c., those things had their season under the law (which made nothing perfect), as other things had; but now God calleth every man to bow to the Son, and will not permit so much as a bowing to an angel, who is far more honorable than any magistrate. And the Son calleth to honor the Father, and to seek the honor which cometh from God only; and he that will be his disciple, must take up his cross to the earthly part, and follow him, who neither gave earthly honor, nor received earthly honor, but condemned it. John 5:44. Therefore let men consider the ground of the thing, and the different state between Jews under the law, and Christians under the gospel; and not think the bringing of instances from them of old time can excuse us from following Christ according to the law of faith, who gave us this pattern of not receiving or giving honor to men's persons; and let not the weight of our plea (it having so great impression on our hearts) be despised by any that pretend relation to our Lord and Master, which I shall briefly thus recite.

1. It is the single and sincere desire of our hearts to give all the honor and obedience to magistrates, which is due unto them according to the Scriptures.

2. It is manifest that we are careful of observing all just laws; and patient in suffering through unjust laws, or where the magistrate doth persecute us without or against law.

3. This kind of honor of pulling off the hat, and bowing to the person, we do not find commanded in scripture; but we find Christ's command against it, who saith "follow me;" who both denied to receive it, and did not give it; but condemned it. And we find its rise to be from the earthly part, and to the earthly part it is given; which it pleaseth, being given to it; or is offended at being denied it: and this part we are taught by the Lord to crucify in ourselves, and not to cherish in others.

4. The bowing of persons under the law (which was an earthly state, wherein many things were permitted, which are not permitted under the gospel) doth not bind Christians under the gospel; and doth not limit the spirit of God from taking of any one or more, or all of his people, from giving that which the earthly part calleth honor, to that which is of the earth.

5. We do appeal to the Lord our God (who is our judge and law-giver) that he hath laid this upon our spirits; and hath smitten several of us, when there hath arisen so much as a desire in us to please men in this particular: and in the fear of his name, and in obedience to him, we do forbear it; and not either in contempt of authority, or of the person in authority.

6. We find by much experience, that the forbearing of this is a service to our Lord and Master, and a hurt to his enemy. It offendeth the passionate, it offendeth the rough, it offendeth the proud and lofty; that spirit is soon touched and stirred by it: but that which is low, that which is meek, that which is humble, that

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