Mysteries and revelations
by
Ralph Venning

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NON CIRCULATING
Mysteries
AND
REVELATIONS.
OR,
The Explication and
Application of Several
Extra-essential and bor-
rowed Names, Allusions,
and Metaphors in the
Scripture.

BY
RALPH VENNING.

MARK 4:11.
Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of
the Kingdom of God; but unto them which
are without, all things are done in Parables.

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Printed for John Routhwell at the Sunne and
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THE NEW COMMAND RENEWED: OR, Love one another.

PART I.

One and only design is, by the words of his mouth, and the works of his hands, to bring forth his own Image in all times and dispensations; and that is oneness.

When he created man, he made him the likeness and image of himself; yea, though he created Male and Female, they were not two, but one flesh. When this Image was defaced, and man confused not in his uprightness, that is, in his uprightness and oneness; that which God aimed in the restoration of man, was the restorations of his Image oneness: that God and man might be one again. Yea, that in Christ all things in Heaven and Earth, which were fallen with, and fallen away from man, upon his falling away from God, might be gathered together into one.
The New Command renewed:

Yea, all the dispensations and dispensers which God hath left in the world are to disappear and be no more, when once the Saints come in, or (more emphatically) into the unity of the faith;

That is, as I with submission conceive, when the Jews and Gentiles, the fulness of them shall be called in (and come to the knowledge) or rather the acknowledgment of the Sonne of God, unto a perfect man, or the man at age, and the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; Christ (I mean mystical) is not yet a perfect man at age, is not yet in fulness; nor be, till all his Members both Jews and Gentiles are brought forth. Now when these shall be brought into the unity of faith, which is the acknowledgment of the Son of God, &c. then is God's design of oneness accomplished.

Now to the effecting hereof, God hath promised to bestow on his people one heart, Ezek. 11.19, which is not only in relation to their being new-born, and so being one with God; but as the Jews went with one heart to Jerusalem, that they might build the Temple; so in relation to this design of the Unity of Faith, God will knit together the hearts of his people, that they shall live together like Doves to the windows: yea, and ere they are aware (I believe) they will finde their souls made like the Chariots of Amminadab, or a willing people. In a word, the & consummation of all the happiness, which Christ prays for his, is [John 17.21.] that all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us. Indeed, the glory of all our hereafter glory will be, an oneness of communion with the Father, Son, Spi-
Or, Love one another.

Mr. Love one another in God, who is one in all and all in one.

But seeing that as yet there seems to be a breach not only between the Jews and Gentiles, but between them who have attained to the knowledge and acknowledgement of the Son of God, I shall endeavour to bring the Saints to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, Eph. 4:3, 4. So for there is but one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Now that we may walk together in one way, it is requisite that we be of one heart, and that which conduceth most thereunto, is, that we be of one mind: for the more unity there is in judgement, the more there's like to be in affection (because likeness produceth liking) and the more likeness there is in affection, the more there will be in practice and conversation, the more union there is, the more communion there will be, and the better; the less union there is in judgement and affection, the less and worse will our communion be.

And seeing we can hardly live together, unless we love together, or as the Prophet saith, (Amos 3:3.) Seeing we cannot walk together, unless we be agreed, I shall (as God enables me) lay down some principles, which if read (as written,) without prejudice and partiality, will not a little provoke and undue to union and agreement.

The first Principle.

1. That we may meet to agree together, let us agree to meet together, and that's meet to of
The New Command renewed:

faith the Prophet, how can two walk together, unless they * meet and come together? so I would read that, which we read, unless they * agree together: meetings are the Pouarch or entry into agreements. And me thinks Christians should not be much interested to treat together, surely it is to be feared, that they are loth to agree, who are loth to meet about an agreement.

Ob. But what makes the Saints so backward to meet about an agreement?

Ans. These three things.

1. Self-Conceit.
2. Pride of heart.
3. Satan's policies.

A self-conceit that each of them is in the right, every man hath a good opinion of his own opinion. Every man puts it off from himself, and instead of saying as did the Disciples, (when Christ told them, one of you shall betray me) Master is it I? most are ready to say, Master *is not I.* Most men instead of confessing their blindness, aske like the scornfull Pharisees, are we blest? so loth are men to suspect their own defects. It was just so in the time of the division between the Roman and Grecian Churches, each justified themselves, and neither would acknowledge themselves to be in the error. But Christians hear a little, if you think your selves in the right, I hope you think so on good grounds, and not that you are in the right merely by thinking so; now if your grounds be good upon which your conceits are...
Or, Love one another.

built, you need not be afraid, may you may be
encouraged to produce them with boldness.
'Tis to be suspected that they who refuse to bring
forbid their strong arguments, have no strong ar-
arguments to bring forth. Christ tells us, John 3:21,
that he that doth truth (and he that holds truth)
cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made
manifest, that they are wrought in God.

If men's arguments be pure and good, they will
not be the worse, but the more confirmed by be-
ing weighed; if they be found either base metal,
or counterfeit, the discovery will engage them to
part with them, and to take their part no long-
er, lest they deceive their soul: in short, if they
be good, they may do good; they may help oth-
ers to see the light; if bad, 'twill be a mercy
they were produced; for you are losers while you
follow darkness and lying vanities.

2. The second hindrance to a meeting about
agreement is Pride of heart. Men are loth to be
the first movers, lest they should be thought ti-
erous and willing to yield; but beloved Chris-
tians, Christ Jesus did not look God and we had
never met nor had been reconciled together,
had not God come to us first. Though God were
offended by us, and had hence just reason to be
for ever offended with us, yet he founds a truce,
and makes the first tender of agreement, shall we
not walk as we have him for an example?

'Tis very observable, that while any one par-
ty is low, it pleads for moderation and recon-
ciliation; but when it hath got the staffe in its
hand, it scarce minds, much less practices ei-
ther. Ah, Christians, the very Heathens will
shame us, for Aristippus an Heathen, though
der elder than Ezechiel, who began the Atheists.
The New Commandment renewed:

First for peace: shall we not be friends, said he to aEchines? Christians, I beseech you go to one another, and say as Aristippus, shall we not be friends? And oh that every one would answer as did aEchines, yes, with all mine heart.

3. A third hindrance to a meeting about an agreement is Satan's policy; we may take up Paul's words when he writes to the Thessalonians, 1 Thes. 2. 18, we had come unto you once and again, but Satan hindered us. Christians, why do ye not come one to another? why are ye not in your journey, 'tis to be feared Satan stands in your way and stays you.

The second Principle:

2. Being met, labour for a right understanding, of each other's mind; there is nothing makes men stand at such a far distance as a mis-understanding: 'tis with men now as with the men at Babylon, the languages are confounded, and they understand not one another.

At your meetings, seek God about these three things for a right understanding.

1. That God would be pleased by his own Spirit to declare and make clear his truth unto you; that he would make known to you, and make you to know what is his good, perfect and acceptable Will, that so you may walk before him in all well-pleasing.

2. Intreat God, that he would deliver you to the truth, as well as deliver the truth to you; not only that he would open his truth to your hearts, but also open your hearts to his truth, that so you may close with every truthly embrac-
Or, Love one another.

... and welcoming it as your joy, though your joy should open you to never so many re- 
esthes in the world.

3. Intreat God to remove all obstacles, and to take that out of the way which stands in the way, and keeps you from understanding and seeing truth.

Such as these.

1. Self-interest in holding any opinion; nothing more hinders men from going to, or going from an opinion then the interest they have by holding it; men do not care so much for the opinions they hold, as for what they hold by their opinions. Many a man thinks (I am confident) what Demetrius said [Acts 19:19.]

This craft by which we have all our wealth is like to be set at nought, and then we are like to come to nought.

Hence they begin to fife in the face of truth, and oppose it with outrageous rage; so dearly sweet, and sweetly dear is their darling gain; they see they cannot have the Honey, unless they burn the Bees, and therefore fire them forthwith; they cannot possess the Vineyard unless Naboth be put to death, and therefore he must be dispatch’d. When once the copy-hold of gain and honour is touch’d, men begin to look about them, and will never call godliness gain, because gain is their godliness.

Blessed God, therefore that you may be unjusted, and may lay down all your interest of gain and honour.

Let the truth of God be ten times dearer, then ten thousand times, or any income of gain and honour, which
which cometh in by any opinion, for (as so far), where gold grows, no plant will prosper; for certainly no truth will be dear, nor in the heart's room, where the love of money or honour hath taken place.

1. Intreat God to keep you from passions in discourses and disputations; or from passion in discourses and disputations. For

1. So much passion as there is, so much there is to no purpose; yea to an ill purpose.

2. Passion usually ariseth more from and for self than Christ.

3. Passion hinders the efficacy of the argument; for the ringling of passion hinders the sound of truth.

4. Passion wastes a man for discourse, and confounds both memory and understanding; for that as Aristotle hath observed he who is envious or cruel or taken up in anger, they that are in passion cannot discern nor judge of truth.

5. Christ lovesth more by the passion then he gains by the disputation; for while you seek to honour him, he finds himself to be dishonoured.

πανοικαν ἐγέρον Σαμουαὶλον, καὶ μη ἐριντεύτων τοῦ λόγου, ὑπόθετα.

When two dispute, and th' one begins to rage,
The other not retorsing is more wise.

3. Intreat God to remove prejudices, for that doth very much prejudice the entertainment of truth. Ahab had such a prejudice against Michaiah, that he would not call him Prophet, but [1 King, 22: 8.] Michaiah the son of Imlah. There's one man, Michaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him, for he never speaketh good concerning me but evil; but as Ezechiel was laid to... Ahab,
The New Command renewed:

Let me say to you, Christians; let not Christians say one another, this is a rigid man; I will not hear him; or this is a Sæcarius, I will not hear him. Beg God that prejudice may not hinder us from truth.

The third Principle.

1. When God is taught, and you begin to discourse, deal faithfully as in the presence of God; use not policy and sophistry to vaunt the truth. Do not ye equivocate nor mince your meanings, hiding it under dubia terms; but propose all things clearly. Affect not novelty or nicety of language, but speak in known and familiar phrases.

Many times there’s such a do kept about terms, that before the discourse be ended, men lose themselves and the question too: therefore speak plainly and not in parables. "It’s no little vanity to speak such words as will constrain you to use twenty, and sometimes twenty times more to explain what you meant.

The fourth Principle.

4. Be as willing to hear as to speak; a man should hear twice as much as he should speak, and it seems to be intimated in his having two ears, but one tongue. Were there in times of discourse more hearers and fewer speakers, there would probably be easier and speedier determinations; much talk hinders observation, and keeps things from being weighed. A man shall gain with such talkative, as (like the
The New Command renewed.

5. Weigh not who speaks, nor how he is spoken, but what is spoken; you should not overvalue, nor undervalue a truth, because ye like or dislike the party or his manner of speaking. Sometimes (according to the Proverb) we dandle the child for love of the Nurse, and take up an opinion for his sake that brings it; * * and others refuse an opinion because such a one holds it.

But Christians, consider what you do; would a man take poison, though from a Father, or refuse a Cordial though from an enemy? It was better said, Amicus ille, and Amicus Arisoteles, sed magis amica veritas. And the Apostle rejoiced that Christ was preached, though they that preach him did it out of envy and to add to his bonds; go from any man to go to truth; but go from no truth to go to any man. As Christ said, the pollution is not from without, neither indeed (in this sense) the purity. What is the word the better for being in Paul’s mouth, or the worse for being in Apollos’? What is the Heavenly treasure the worse for being brought in an earthen vessel? or the better when handed to us by an Angel? is the word of Wisdom the better for the Wisdom of words? or is truth the less beautiful because naked and not arrayed with Satin words, and silken phrases? what though a man have neither silver nor gold to give you, is not Christ worth the receiving? Tis
Or, Love one another.

'Tis strange to see how men are led into, and led out of opinions meerly by an opinion of the man. The Philosopher, (though he were the same man and of the same minde) in his quarrel rages, could not finde admissioin, when better robe procured both an open door, and reverence. Boldness and readiness of speech with the most (though not with the most judicious) bears away the Bell. To go from Aristotle, though a man go to reason, is, or had went to be, no small disgrace in the schooles.

If Herod speake, then it is the voyce of God and not of man: but if Paul speake, then 'tis what will this babler say? Some cannot heare unless a Doctor preach, others will not heare if a Doctor preach. Surely Christian, these things ought not to be so; truth should be wellcome to us though the Devil the father of lies brought it to us; and nothing bus truth, though an Angel from Heaven be the messenger.

The sixth Principle.

6. Let not custom bear sway for or against an opinion. Let not Antiquity or Novelty make you respect or disrespect a truth; nor trust for truths sake whether old or new. Though all truth be old, yet our sight of truth may be new; why then should new light be a trouble to some, or tradition a burthen to others? why should Divine or Orthodox, or Orthodox Divine grow out of date? or why should not a Gospel-Preacher be in feacion? Some like words and practices because of custom; others have no other reason for their dislike. Never walk by what hath been done, or what is done, unless it be what
Or, Love one another.

What ought to be done. Reduce things to their primitive institution; and then see what God hath of them, as our Saviour told the Pharisees, Math. 19. 3. Though Moses for the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your Wives, yet from the beginning it was not so.

Men do now adayes by opinions, as many do by their cloaths; some will keep to their great grandfathers habit and fashion; others as changeable as the Moon, think they are never in fashion, unless they be ever changing fashions. Some cannot like a truth because 'tis not of ancient standing; others like it because it is of yesterday. Some can reverence none but grey-hair'd opinions, others like none but youthfull and smoothfaced ones. 'Tis true the multitude of yeares teacheth wisdom, and so may the few of days; 'tis truth, and nothing but the truth, and all the truth, which should have our esteem, whether it be old or young; whether the first borne of time, or the last.

The seventh Principle.

7. In all discourses and disputations, use proper Media or arguments to prove your tenets by; bring not Scriptures to your reason, but your reason to Scripture, or judge reason by reason, and Scripture by. Scripture. Moral arguments are not fit and proper to prove natural Principles by; nor in many things rational Arguments to prove or disprove Scripture by. Prove spiritual things by spiritual Arguments, as the Apostle hints to us, 1 Cor. 2. 13. which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the holy.
Or, Love one another.

Gospel teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; or judging spiritually with spiritually. The Apostle did not borrow words or Arguments from without, but fitted spiritual Arguments to prove spiritual things: Never draw Ecclesiastical conclusions from Politicall premisses.

The eighth Principle.

8. Difficult not to cavili, but to convince, or a Principle to be convinced. Many discourse & dispute more for sufficing then satisfying, and hence come so many factions;

Many yes too many, discourse and dispute to shew forth themselves more then truth; taking more care to shew what may be said, then what should be laid: ever carping and making objections, when there needs none to be made.

The ninth Principle.

9. When truth is spoken, yield to it; men think it a shame to submit and surrender themselves after they have so long and so slowly flood in the defence of their opinion: and therefore though they be convinced that their sense is at least dubious, like so many sophisters in the Schooles they study to evade by distinctions, rather then give glory to God in confessing their faith.

But Christian, tis no small conquest and victory that you obtain, when your self, error and darkness is overcome and captivated by truth. Tis an honour to be overcome by truth, but not to overcome the truth is shame. Plutarch makes it a great discovery of proficiency in virtue, when a man
The New Command revealed.

man doth not take it ill, that he is confused.

The sixth Principle.

10. When, and as far as you are concerned, please. Go together as far as you can, in what need you part till needs must; you cannot agree to preach, hear, and pray together, though in other things you differ. Have seen such sweet success upon the Prayers of Christians, who have differed in several opinions, than I cannot but beseech Christians, that they would not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is.

Let us therefore esteem, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and whereas we have already esteemed, let us walk by the same rule: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

PART II

In the mean time let us like Christians observe the foregoing Principles. They are as sure and you may judge as the nature of one woulds by them, I shall leave the application of them to the blessing of God.

1. Let us bear with one another, and forbear one another in love. We are commanded to bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6:2. That so we may fulfill the Law of Christ, and we shall undoubtedly be commanded; for 'tis according to the good will of Christ, if we bear one another's
Or, Love one another.

thers burden, I am confident is a burden to many a soul that they are not in all things like minded unto their brethren; Yea, the not with out some fear and trembling, that in any thing they displease from so many worthy and gracious men that are otherwise minded. Oh help to bear, or at least bear with the burden.

You cannot keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, except you forbear one another in love; as appears most plainly by their connection, Eph. 4:3. Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; this endeavour for unity and peace will be lost, unless God who beareth with us, teach us also to bear one with another.

Take these reasons for forbearance.

1. You all pretend, yea, I hope intend, the same end: you profess one and the same design, viz. the advancement of the Gospel of Peace, and the Peace of the Gospel. Should ye not therefore in relation to this end, rejoice that Christ is preached, though some should preach him out of envy and on purpose to add to your bonds? It was Paul's joy, Phil. 1:15, 16, 18.

Why my dearly Beloved, are ye Ephraim against Manasseh, and Manasseh against Ephraim; being both are for Judah? Oh that Ephraim might not envy Manasseh, nor Manasseh vex Ephraim any more. See that remarkable passage in Mar. 9. v. 38, saith John, Master, we saw one casting out Devils in thy name, and he followed not us; and we forbad him, because he followed not us. Christians, is not this many a man's language? Forbid him, silence him, and

with
with him, 

2. You agree in the most and the best things.

The Fundamentals and essentials of Religion (in which you to whom I write do agree) are of far more worth, and therefore of far more concernment to engage you, then circumstances and accidental things in which you disagree are to disengage you.

3. Consider that your selves also are men subject to the like infirmities with your Brethren, and subject to the like passions, and have also your failings and aberrations; in many things we offend all; who is there that sinneth not? good Lord! if thou shouldst be so soon angry with us as we are one with another, who could stand? I beseech you to read this Scripture with all lowliness.

Gal. 6.1. Brethren, if a man (or as the margin reads it, although a man) be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, why so? considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted. If thou be tempted, this which thoufindest faults with, may be thy fault.
Or, Love one another.

The second Principle.

2. Until ye are agreed, have chitrate in Charity, thoughts, not hard and harsh censures of each other's walking. Judge it rather to be conscience than stubbornesse, which ingageth men to walk in different courses. You would have others think so of you; why will not you think so of others? who would not think but that to have every man's good will, to keep the love of relations, to enjoy their liberties, men would comply with anything, were there not an awe upon their consciences? whence it may arise, I will not question.

Love thinketh no evil, viz. of others, as well Cor. 13, as towards others. Love baniseth jealousies and suspicions, and so consequently censures.

The third Principle.

3. Draw not away your love when God draweth not away his love; dare any man deny his love to that man, where God grants his love? If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha. But is any man beloved and a lover of Christ? Oh take heed, deny him not your love. Let that of the spirit which appears in him, draw thine heart more towards him, then that of flesh which appears, take off thine heart from him.

We many times take notice of that which will divide, and not of that which will unite. A small error was soon espied in certain pictures of Apelles, when a thousand excellent touches were not at all observed. One hour of Eclipse...
The New Command renewed:
causeth the Sun to be more gaz'd on, then a thousand faire days. Those fouldiers who fol-
lowed Cesars triumph, published his vices, but concealed his virtues. But dear Christians, let
us rather lay one to another, as Queen Eliza-
beth said to the Lord Burleigh, sit down my
Lord, we make much of you, not for your bad
leg, but for your good Head. Let us make much
of each other and sit down together, not because
there is badness in the feet; but because there
is goodness in the head and heart.

The fourth Principle.

4. Censure no man's intention, till his practice,
either words or works discover his meaning.
Many times by their fears, jealousies and sus-
picions men create that in their hearts, which
had never a place in the suspected parties ima-
gination. Jacob was needlessly troubled and
cautiously afraid of his brother Esau, when no-
thing gave him occasion to suspect his brother,
but his own guilty conscience, which told him
he did delive it. Jacob fears that he came to
execute revenge, when he comes to welcome
home his brother, and entertain him honour-
ably.

Jealousie is as quick as Martial Law; and
raignes, condemns and executes all in a mo-
ment.

* Nothing doth more hurt and wrong to
friends than jealousies. Some cry out of some,
these men intend nothing but Anarchy and con-
fusion; so that shortly there will be no difference
of (not respect to) persons. Others cry out of
others, these men intend nothing but Lordship
and
Or, Love one another.

and tyranny, to enmesh all power into their own hand, and so to be Masters over our fath, and so lord it over the Lord's inheritance. But why are ye become evil judges of thoughts? are ye the searchers of hearts? you would judge more righteous judgment in this, to judge according to appearance.

The fifth principle.

5. Do nothing whereby to incense and excite one another. Provocè, one another to love one another as much as you can, but to wrath as little as you may, nay, not at all. 'Tis becoming Chris-
tians to use soft words; and they turn away wrath; but many words stir up strife. Bitter
words are like sharp swords, they pierce to the very soul. But let others' passion provoke your compassion. 'Twas sweetly said of Calvin concerning Luther, 'though he call me Devil, I will call him Saint.' Oh that Christians would learn that lesson of Christ, When you are reviled, revile not again.

Alas! do not men speak bitterly against bitter speaking; and write bitterly against bitter writings, becoming inexcusable thereby? for wherein they judge others they condemn themselves, being doers of the same things. Oh that Christians would overcome evil with good, passion with meekness, bitterness with sweetness; for a soft tongue breaks the bone, Prov. 25. 15. Oh how did Abigail adjust conquer David's passion, though heated fervor! And how did David's kindness to Saul, make Saul confesse he unkindness to David! However others carry themselves toward us, un-
becoming.
The New Command renewed:

becoming Christians, our carriage toward them should be no other then it is becoming Christians.

A Publican will love where he finds love, and salute when he is saluted; but you (do you Christians?) are to exceed and excell in love; to love when you are not loved, (though the more you love, the lesse ye be beloved) to speak faire when you are ill-spoken of, not to render railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, knowing that you are thereunto called.

Christians should be as the Angels, which are greater in power and might, yet bring no railing accusations before the Lord; Michael the Arch-angel disputing with the Devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring (beare ye Christians) he durst not being a railing acculation, but said The Lord rebuke thee. Let us do for the future, as John's disciples did by their Master, when Herod slew him, Mat. 14. 14, they took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. Let us bury, in oblivion all railings and injuries, only go and tell Jesus, and say, Lord rebuke them.

The 6th Principle.

6. Go not about to make one another odious by representing things worse then they are. Many times the picture of the Lion is more dreadful then the Lion himself. Good Lord! in what black, ugly and deformed shapes do men set forth one another, as if they were Monsters and no men?
Ox, Love one another.

Hae dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

Ab—

I blush to tell it,
Thus I can speak it,
But cannot refell it.

Tertullus never strained his Oratory against
Paul, nor Tobias and Sanballas theirs against
Nehemiah, more then Christians (if as least
they be as they are called) do strain theirs to
bring one another under disrespect and odium.

The seventh Principle.

7. Draw not conclusions from other mens Prin-
ciples, or then say they are their opinions. Wemay 7. Principle,
make the same complaint as David; they writ,
torture and wrack my words. Alas! men fret ever-
thing on the tener-books, and stretch and
twist every Principle like a note of wax.

Alas! What pity 'tis to see men invert and
pervert one another's words, and at length to
draw such conclusions as would make one think
they meant what they never meant? 'Twwere a
good thing to interpret candidly, and when a thing
will bear a double constrution, to take it in the
best sense. But we see by sad experience that So-
phistry makes more Syllogismes then Logick
doeth.

So some misbeok and misreported Paul, Rom.
3.8, as if he had laid that we might do evil, so
good might come thereof. So the Jews depose that
Christ laid he would destroy the Temple as Ico-
rusalem in three days and raise it again, when
he spake of his Body, as appears, Job. 2.8. what John 2.27.
words thus wrested and perverted may not be
The New Command revealed, as they said of Christ's words.

called heretic and blasphemy; when it taken as meant, and in their proper sense, may be found very found and consonant to truth. Take heed therefore of glossing or commenting upon another's Text.

The eighth Principle.

2. Præcept. Do as you would be done to.

3. Grant to others what you would have others grant to you. We are usually better at receiving than at giving; we care not how much we receive, nor how little we give: though it be more honorable to give than to receive. When our selves are inferiours and others superiours, we beg (as did the servants, Matt. 18:10) Have patience a little, have a little patience; but when our selves are superiours, and others inferiours, we have no patience at all.

Jesus Christ sums up the Law and the Prophets in this Principle, (Matt. 7:12.) Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. This is all that the Law, or, love thy Neighbour as thyself, doth require, and the doing of it is the fulfilling of the Law. 'Tis indeed a golden rule, a very Law, the standard of equity, according to which we must converse with all men.

Ah Christians! did we make other men's cases our own, we should say the case is altered. Job pleads thus with his friends, I could also speak as you, if your soul were in my mouth: I could heap up words against you, and shake my head at you; But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.

Many a great Commander have upon this ver
Or, Love one another.

...they would be glad of mercy. And indeed viliory tencorous minds is only an inducements to Moderation.

See how Adonibezek conscience flies in his face for his cruelty, when he himself was serv-ed by others as he had served others, 1 Sam. 7. And Adonibezek said, Therefore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gather'd their means under my table; as I have done to God hath required me.

The ninth Principle.

9. Do nothing in prejudice or partiality; the one will make you an enemy to good, the other will make you a friend to evil. Prejudice will take in nothing, partiality will take in any thing.

Alas! such is our misery that men part Religion, and love by parties. Men love not (as God loves) without respect of persons; but men love such, because they take part with them and their designs; and have prejudice against others, because they are not their followers.

Till we love one another according as Christ hath given us command and example, as he hath loved us, that is as he, we cannot expect to have a concord, as then we may.

The tenth Principle.

10. Accord or defend, do higher or lower, do anything (Sinne excepted) that you may agree.

Become all things to all men; if at last by any means...
The New Command renewed:

means you may winne some. No such way to win one anothers love, as by denying our selves to seek one anothers wealth.

Nature is so in love with unity, that Particular beings will forake their own interest, their elements and centres which are their rest and happiness; rather then there should be a breach or vacuity in nature; and its but reason that particulars should serve the universall, [for they who so lose, shall save] seeing that unless the vessel be preserved, their Cabins cannot.

Alas Christians! how will ye thus seek every man his own, and not the things of Jesus Christ? Oh how glad am I! my joy is now fulfilled: saith John, as Christs increase, though his increase be my decrease; and Paul would rather starve himselfe and never eat flesh while he lived, then do any thing which should offend or offend his weake Brother.

Bodies ductile and tensile (metalls that will be drawn into wires; wooll and towne, which will be drawn into yaerne or thread) have in them the appetite of not discontinuing so strong, that they will follow the force which wire draweth and pulls them out, rather then discontinue or forsake their owne bodies.

Cratisilea, the mother of Cleomenes, (when he was loth to send her for a pledge into Aegypt) laid unto him; come, come, put me into a ship, and send me whether thou wilt, that this body of mine may do some good to my Country, before crooked age consume my life without profit.

O that there were such a heart in us, but to lay aside our own particular relations and interests, that there may not be so many a breach in
Or, Love one another.

in the publick; let us be weak with the weak, as well as strong with the strong, that we may make up breaches.

III. PART.

For a further help to unity I shall lay down some other Principles to unite our judgments; and submit them to the judgment of the Saints, whether they speak according to God or no.

The first Principle.

S Heing there is nothing to be practis'd, believed or taught, which is not agreeable to the mind of God, Let us make the Word of God our Judge.

The Scriptures (as is granted by all that I write to) are the touchstone by which all religious Principles and Acts are to be tried. To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this rule, 'tis because there is no light in them, 11a. 820. Let nothing passe for currant coine, which hath not this stamp upon it.

Certainly no Christian will refuse to make the truth of God contained in the Scriptures the judge of all he holds and practiseth, it being the basis of both, if they be laid on their true foundation; 'tis the test which tries all; and therefore bring your opinions to the light, to see whether they be of God or no.

If the Scriptures write tua divium, divine right upon any opinion, 'tis then authentick.
The New Command renewed.

all other authority is not sufficient to command either faith or practice. The Bereans [Acts 17, 11.] were call'd more noble then they of the Ephesians, because they did not take things upon trust, and believe implicitly, but searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. If any man or an Angel from Heaven bring you any other Doctrine, let him be accursed, Gad. 1. 8.

Certainly these are the undoubted, perfect and infallible rule, for all matters of faith and practice; or God could not judge the world by them at the last day.

Let us do therefore as the wise men, when they law the starre, go up to Jerusalem; that is, to the Law and to the testimony, and willingly acquiesce in the Answer we receive from the Oracles of God.

The second Principle.

2. Labour for a right understanding of Scripture; for the want of this makes all our differences; we err, not knowing the Scriptures. Every one indeed brings Scripture, but most bring their own, not the Scriptures own sense, for their opinions.

For a right understanding of Scripture take these three courses.

First, Consult with the spirit of God. None knoweth the mind of God, but the spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2. 11. The Philistines by pounding with Sampson's heifer, came to know his riddle. If any therefore want wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not; yet he giveth the spirit to them that ask him.
Or, Love one another.

Secondly, Confide with the Saints; for the fear of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant; [Psa. 25. 14] converse with them who converse with God. The Saints have clearer apprehensions of the Scriptures than other men; and can give a better account of the mystery (not so perhaps of the history) than many a learned man can do: the reason is apparent; for the godly man, though illiterate, hath the Law in his heart, and the truth in his inward parts. The Bible is transferr'd within him. But the most learned man in the world (if not a Saint) hath it not in the experience, though he have it in the expression.

Nor believe that I speak in dislike of learning and its use; no, I do confess that next to the Lord Jesus Christ, and Communion with God in him, there is no portion (whether riches, honours or pleasures) like unto it, in my esteem. This by the way; now to our purpose.

It is good therefore to confide with the Saints, a conjunction of Counsellors will do well, for in the multitude of them there is likely to be safety, [Prov. 11. 14]. As to depend only upon your own judgements, were so to make as if the Spirit had not come to the self, so to depend only on the own judgements, were so to make as if the Spirit of God had not come to others.

Thirdly, Use such helps as God hath made. Three other Rules useful to others for their right understanding of Scriptures,

Such as God hath made useful to me and many other Christians, I shall set before you; I speak as to wise men, judge as to what I say.
The New Command renewed:

The first Rule.

1. That the Father, Son and Spirit, as they are one, so they agree in one; Matt. 3:17, 18. they have but one designation. The Father, Son and Spirit are not like the gods of the heathen (which indeed are not gods), always quarrelling one with another, clashing against, and contradicting one another, though they will many things, their will is but one.

Therefore if you find in Scripture, that the Son's designation in Redemption, seems to be of larger extent than the Father's in Election, and the Spirit's in Sanctification, reconcile it by this rule, for there is but one and the same object of the Father's Election, the Sons Redemption, and the Spirit's Sanctification to eternal life.

The second Rule.

2. Every particular is to be interpreted by the scope of the whole; and that will free Scriptures from all seeming contradictions.

Paul faith, Rom. 3:28. A man is justified by faith, without (* or apart from) the deeds of the law; but 1 Cor. 2:4. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only, * or alone.

Now here seems to be a contradiction; but the scope of the Scripture will* untie this knot (* I understand) thus. By faith alone we are justified, but the faith by which we are justified is not alone, *is not (as I conceive) the work of faith, nor the works of faith, but a working faith whereby we are justified.

By faith the Person is justified and by works the faith is justified; and thus beloved (I hope you see clearly, that there is not concordia discord, a disagreeing agreement, but discordia concors).
Or, Love one another.

Concord, an agreeing disagreement between these two Scriptures.

One faith (to this our purpose) that to hang on any word or phrase in a Text and neglect the scope, nature of an Heretical disposition. And Luther hath a sweet saying to this purpose, Grammaticae dedit Theologiae uelere, quia subiecta sunt verbis rebus, non verbis: voces mertis sensum sequuntur et vitae spiritum. The sense in short is this: Words must give place to the matter and sense; His reason is this, because the matter is not for the words, but the words for the matter. And again Divinely, if he me know intelligendi aut interpretandi Scripturae, diversa sint, ex diversis locis decerpere est fallaciissimum habenda. eget uestt tota Scriptura ante oculos, et contraria contraria conferenda. That way of understanding or interpreting Scriptures, viz. to gather diverse things from diverse places, is most deceitful: the whole Scripture therefore is to be had before our eyes, and contraries to be compared with contraries.

Friends, I hope it will not be an offence to any to quote an Author; for I believe, 'It is as lawful to consult with the experience of dead as of living Saints.'

The third Rule.

3. The place is not truly interpreted, nor consequence, etc., well inferred, the consequence whereof is an absurdity, and speaks anything to the disparagement of the God of grace, or the grace of God, as Luther, Divine Luther, Omnis Scriptura est pro Christo interpretanda, ex gr. Seruus mandata, fecit in Christo, quae sine Christo nihil potest: All Scripture is to be interpreted for Christ, viz., keep the Commandments, viz., in Christ; for without him ye can do nothing.

And again, fully excellent and excellently full: si adversarii urgent Scripturam contra Christum,
The New Command renewed.

Ourselves Christiæ contra Scripturæ. If our adversaries urge Scripture against Christ, let us urge Christ against Scripture.

If the interpretation of any Text, draw such inferences after it as these, viz. That God is unjust; that God is mutable; that God cannot do all things; that Christ is not able of and by himself to save to the most, that the Saints shall not be kept through Faith by the power of God to salvation: I lay if such inferences follow the interpretation of any Scripture, 'tis not truly interpreted: for they cannot speak against the truth, but for the truth.

The fourth Rule.

4. Take heed of distinctions; though there may be use of them, yet for the most part, the most part of distinctions arise from darkness and ignorance, or from wilfulness: Therefore take heed of them, and admit not of any which are not well grounded on the Scripture. Did we speak more punctually to all points, and more distinctly, there would be fewer distinctions.

It is a common thing with many men, that cannot or will not (Oh that there were not such as will not.) understand the truth, to raise distinctions and evade that way. When men know not what to say, then like Sophisters they cry distinguishing, we must distinguish. And then Materialiter and formaliter, strictly and last (poore threadbare terms) are tossed up and dowe like Tennis-Balls.

The fifth Rule.

5. Parables and similitudes hold not in the particulars; but in the whole; not in every sentence, but in the scope.

They runne not on all source, as we say, they are of more use for Illustration then Demonstration. And
O, love one another.

I believe there is not a truth held out in a parable, but it's held forth also in some other place of Scripture, which will be better to ground on, being usually more clear.

The sixth Rule.

6. Seeing God in Scripture speaks much in a little, interprets Scripture in the largest sense, Scripture is like Law of favour, which are to be extended as far as may be. We wrong many a Text of Scripture by confining, bounding and limiting it in a narrow compass.

The Evangelists look upon several Texts as fulfilled in their days, which were fulfilled long before; as Matt. 3:17. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Prophet Jeremiah, saying, &c. Now this was fulfilled literally in Jeremiah 31:15. When Ephraim (which came from Rachel) was in captivity, and fulfilled here by allusion as much as if it had been said, we may now take up the words of the Prophet, as if that place was not fulfilled till now. And so you shall often finde several Texts upon several occasions applied to several uses, which shews that the sense should not be confined. As for instance, that Text [Hab. 2:4. The just shall live by Faith] is applied in several senses as appears by comparing it with Romans 1:7, Gal. 3:11, Heb. 10:38, in all which places 'tis quoted.

The seventh Rule.

7. No place must be interpreted so as to make the two Commandments, love God and love your Neighbour, to prejudice each other. As the Proverb is, we must not rob Peter to pay Paul. We may not take from God, to give to our Neighbour, nor take from our Neighbour, to give to God.  

C 2 As
The New Commandment.

As honour thy Father and thy Mother: now we must not under pretence of honouring our Parents displease God; nor is obedience to disobey them, wherein we cannot obey them, unless we disobey God. Neither may we under pretence of Corban or a gift, refuse to do ought for our Father and Mother; so God commands as left we make the word of God of none effect.

The eight Rule.

8. Distinguish between things spoken properly, and things spoken figuratively, as also between things meant literally, and things meant spiritually. The Prophet Malachi said, Mal. 4.9. that Elias must first come, which was spoken of John the Baptist, as Christ clearest it. Mal. 17.13. So those words Mar. 16.6. Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees, are not meant properly, but figuratively.

If a man should take that place [Mat. 5.29. If thine eye offend thee, pull it out] literally, he might be guilty of Self-murder. Therefore it is to be understood spiritually, viz. of any thing that is as near, dear, and tender as our eye to us. Origen, who interpreted all, or almost all other places of Scripture mythically, understood this place literally [Mat. 19.13. Some make themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom of God] and thereupon gilded himself: but surely Origen had not that ab origine, for from the beginning it was not so; it was not instituted by God; therefore must not be executed by man.

The ninth Rule.

9. All places which speak of Administrations and Administrators, are best understood and interpreted, the nearer the sense comes to God's design. God's design is, Eph 4.11,12,13, by all Administrators and Administrations to bring about the perfecting of the Saints, the works of the Ministry, and the effi-
Or, Love one another.

ing of the Body of Christ, till we all come, &c.

Now all Administrations and Administrators being to help on this, the places of Scripture speaking of such things, are undoubtedly best understood in the sense which doth promote that work.

The tenth Rule.

10. If Scripture speak is, believe it, though Reason to Rule cannot finde out the reason of it. The Scripture faith in Job 26. 7. That the earth hangeth on nothing. The Scripture faith that one is three, and three are one. 1 Job 5. 7. How can reason think this true? and yet is truest for God who is truth, and speaks nothing but truth, faith "tis so.

Yes, let me add, that could God be comprehended by our reason, we might think it reason so think he were not God.

The third Principle.

3. If after all these endeavours, to attain and obtain the right understanding of Scripture, they yet seem in any particular to speak darkly: and as to external dispensations, thou know not with which to cloke, make beliness thy Rule.

That way which conduceth most to self-abasing and Christ's advancement, is the safest: and if Christians judge of opinions and practices by this Rule, they would better discern between things that differ.

You hear men say, this is Christ, and here is Christ: and both may seem probable to you; but you know not how to determine: there are strong arguments on both hands. Now consider, and in good earnest weigh, and that without partiality, which makes most for a most exact walking with God, and building up one another in the Faith and fear of Jesus Christ, and accordingly inge.
The New Command renewed.

The fourth Principle.

4. Make not that common to all, which God hath made peculiar to some, nor make that peculiar to some, which God hath made common to all: do not ye infringe when God hath straitened, nor straiten when God hath enlarged. Cast not Pearls before Swine, nor give the Children's Bread to Dogs: neither refuse to give the children bread, and deny not Pearls to them whom God hath made his Jewels.

Give every one his due; tribute to whom tribute, love to whom love, honour to whom honour. Be not you thy of joying your selves when God will joine himselfe; left you call call that common and uncleane which God hath sanctified. be sure also to make a difference between the precious and the vile, then God will make you unto this people a fenced brassen Wall, and though they fight against you, they shall not prevail: for the Lord will be with you to save you.

The fifth Principle.

5. Confine not God to any, nor deny to God any way of working; know this, that be worker, when, where, how, and by whom be please. Because the first Gospel Ministry was with miracles, can there be none now without miracles? why will ye limit the holy one of Israel?

If he bring about his end, that is, by the Gospel to bring in poore sinners to himself what matters it whether it be done by the Work of his Hand, or by the Word of his Mouth?

And yet who knoweth but God who did, will again appeare in working miracles, especially at the calling in of the Iewes, as he did then at the calling of the Gentiles. But whether he will or no, let not us limit the holy one of Israel.
Or, Liebe one anotber.

The sixth Principle.

6. Do not divorce what God hath married, nor separate what God hath joined together. The fulfilling of the righteousness of the Law without us, doth not hinder the fulfilling of it within us; nor the fulfilling of the righteousness of the Law in us, deny the fulfilling of the Law without us.

Why should some (like the Corinthians) cry up Paul and Apollo, and Cephas, and neglect Christ? and others cry up Christ, and neglect Paul and Apollo? Surely Paul, Apollo, Cephas, and Christ are very good friends. Christ is not included in Paul; nor excluded from Paul, but is within him, and without him.

Some cry up Christ in the flesh, others Christ in the spirit; but beloved, is Christ divided? Surely Christ in the flesh, and Christ in the spirit, do not oppose one another; why then should any oppose them one to another?

Some are altogether for the letter, others for the spirit and meaning of the word. Beloved, why should ye not be for both in one, seeing they agree in one? Letter and spirit, Word and meaning, do not disagree nor oppose one another. The lesson when the Scholar hath learned it by heart, doth not differ from that in the Book, they are still one and the same lesson.

The Word is the meaning expressed, the meaning is the Word explained. Only let me add, that though the word includes the meaning fully, yet it doth not fully express the meaning, as appears by Christ's exposition of the Law, Matt. 5.

Some look but little to the outward conversation, as if all Religion consisted in an inward retirement and contemplation; others look as little to the inward, as if all Religion were in the outward man; but beloved, the inward and outward man

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The New Commandment required:

make but one man; the inward and outward conversation but one conformity to the Will of God. He doth not enjoy much of God with his own soul, with God without; nor doth he walk much with God without, who enjoys not much of God within.

The seventh Principle.

7. What ever was either rule or privilege, under the Law, is still so under the Gospel, unless we can show its abrogation. What was once discovered to be the will of God, continues to be so till he himself do disannul it. We see indeed that many things are revoked, and though they were once his will, are his will no longer; for God doth not speak the word because the word is right, but the word is right because God speaks it.

Let us not therefore think that the Old Testament's authority is not proof sufficient; surely as far as I understand, his will there, is not abrogated in the New Testament, abides still in its full force.

The eighth Principle.

8. His sweetness rather than violence, words rather than swords to convince one another; wise words rather than words, Argumenta Aristotelica, rather than Bacillitis rationalis, rather than sublum Law, to win upon each other.

Certainly, if reason and Scripture will not prevail, imprisonment, &c. are not like to do it. I am sure the first is more fit for man, who cares not to be bound but with the cords of a man, viz. love; cords may bind up his hand so he cannot hurt, but love binds up his heart that he will not hurt.

A Cart may break yee, but it doth abide yee still, but the Sun doth melt it out of its self.

I beseech you Beloved, let us rather pray one for another,
Or, Love one another.

"Love one another, then make a prayer of another: if Christ come and find us beholding our fellow-sorrows, how shall we look him in the face? Oh that every one that reads, would ask his heart concerning every Rule, and Principle, how far it doth concern himself, and not put off, as if others, and not himself were spoken to. Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

PART IV

I shall add some Arguments to provoke us to mutual love.

The first provoking Argument.

1. Is the will and command of the Lord Jesus Christ that we love one another. And oh with what willingness should Christians embrace the will of Christ? Certainly his command be grievous to us, the love of God is not in us, 1 John 5:3.

Also! how little is love your enemies observed, when love one another is so little regarded! Surely you would have been both to have dealt so kindly with a dead friend as not to observe his last Will and Testament; and will ye deal thus with Christ? are these the effects of your affection? How can you prove what you profess, that you are his friends, when he saith, John 15:14, ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you? never talk of friendship unless you obey him.

Read over that place (not overly, but seriously) 1 John 4:20. If a man say I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar. Do ye see this Christians? Who speaks truth? God or you? You say you love God; God saith you lie, for you love not one another.
The New Command renewed:

Meane ye to mock God, when ye call upon him and pray, why will be done? is not this his will, that ye love one another? what would you have God say Amen, and you will not say so be it?

The second provoking Argument.

Secondly, We have Christ for an example, he lived and loved as well as suffered and died, leaving us an example, This is all we have to do in the world, to shew forth the virtues of Christ, and to walk as we have him for an example. We write not after our copy, unless we live and love as Christ did.

See that remarkable inference, 1 John 4, v. 10, 11. Herein is love, that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Sonne to be the propitiation for our sins, v. 11. He draws this inference, If God so loved us, what then? must we love God again? may this be not all; but, how ought we to love one another, God having given us such an example?

Christ told the Jews, that if they had made Abraham their example, they would do as Abraham did; and surely did we propole Christ for our example, we should walk as Christ. If a Painter tell me he is about to draw the Picture of a man, and it prove to be like a beast, I shall hardly believe that he had the Idea of a Man as an example in his fancy.

Surely, while the products and results of our undertakings be so brutish and disabolical, how can any man think that we have Christ as a pattern, unless they judge Christ by us to be according to us, viz, malicious and envious as we are?

Ah my Brethren! tender the honour of Christ more, he hath told the World that they may read him in you; and your obedience to his commands will give all the world to understand that ye are his Disciples: alas, what will men think of Christ, when
Or, Love one another. 
when they see his Disciples walk in strife and bitter enyings?

You are his Epistle to be known and read of all men, and if the copy contain such bitter things, will they not think that the original contains the same? Ah Beloved! why do you bring up an evil report upon the Lord Jesus?

When the streams are bitter, will any think the fountain sweet? The Academicks, the Peripatetickes, the Stoicks, and Epicureans, and all the sects of the Philosophers, were more careful to follow their leaders, then Christians are to follow Christ.

But as Alexander said to a cowardly souldier of his called Alexander, Leave off thy name, or fight better; never call your selves Christians, and pretend to walk as you have Christ for an example, unless men may read that in you, which was read in Christ, viz. love.

The third provoking Argument.

Thirdly, Love is debt. You owe love, * and a Argument.

No man ought to love another man in a false manner, for such love is nothing else than that which consists in affection, or that which is done to please another.

Is it not strange that Christians should be such Antinomians? this is Christ's Law, Love one another; now you are Antinomians if you love not one another, certainly a man that is for love, is no Antinomian: for the Law is fulfilled in this one word, viz. Love. Look to it Christians, you will never be out of the danger of being arrested one by another, till you pay your debt, and love one another.

The fourth provoking Argument.

Fourthly, Your union and communion one with another.
The New Command renewed.

...other, your loving one of another, will remove the scandals which your divisions bring upon the truth of God. There is no such stumbling block which causes the world to wave the way of God, as the division of Saints.

It is bad like (faith the World) that they can teach us the truth, when they cannot agree among themselves. Blessed God! what a reproach is this? Oh that this should be published in Askalon, and spoken in Gath!

Christians, would it not make you blush, if you should hear poor souls (as I have heard the Lord knows) with a sorry heart come and tell you, that there is nothing keeps them so much in doubt, nothing fills them so full of fears, as the division of Saints.

Alas faith a poor soul, my soul is in a strait between two, and what to do I know not; one tells me this is Stygias; another tells me that's Charybdis; one tells me that in that way there's a Lion, another tells me that if I lean on that wall a Serpent will bite me, and this faith the poor soul, even rends my heart to pieces.

Ab Christians! let the sighing of these poor Babes and Infants trouble, prevail with you; yea, let them who are yet are unborne (being not newborne) fee your sweet and loving conversation, that they may be won by it.

The fifth provoking Argument.

Fifthly, Your living in love will midwife into the World, that long looks, and longed-for man-child of Reformation, with which we travel in birth to this very day.

Alas! we are like Jacob and Esau, struggling in the womb for priority and Eldership, and to prove our