

THE FIRST SERMON UPON

THE FIRST CHAPTER

- 1 Paul an Apostle, not from men, nor by men, but by Jesus Christ, and by God the father, which hath raised him from the dead,
- 2 And all the brethren that are with me, to the Churches of Galatia:
- 3 Grace be with you and peace from God the father, and [from] our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 4 Who gave himself for our sins, to deliver us from this evil world, according to the will of God our father.
- 5 To whom be glory for evermore, Amen. —
<480101> GALATIANS 1:1-5

NOT WITHOUT CAUSE doth Saint Peter so earnestly warn us to watch against our enemy who goeth about like a roaring Lion, with his mouth always open to swallow up the prey that he findeth. (<600508> 1 Peter 5:8) For although that on the one side our Lord Jesus Christ assure us, that God his father hath given him the charge of us, and that the thing which he hath in his keeping shall never perish: (<431712> John 17:12) yet doth it not follow that we should therefore fall asleep, and in the meanwhile have no care to call upon God, considering the need that we have to do so. For faith doth in such wise assure us of God's goodness, and that the same shall never fail us, that yet nevertheless we must have an eye to our own frailty, and thereby be stirred up to pray God to give us invincible constancy. It is said, that faith shall always get the upper hand of the whole world: (<620504> 1 John 5:4) but yet it followeth not that we shall not have battle. Now, on our own side we have no strength at all, but we must be fain [*obliged*] to borrow it elsewhere, and that we may so do, it standeth us in hand to pray unto God. For as I have said already, it lieth upon us to be stirred thereunto, by reason of the great need that we have of it. And therefore here is a mirror offered unto all the faithful, whereby we may fare much the better, if we can put it to our use. For Saint Paul

had preached through all the country of Galatia, which is a meetly large country, and there had reared many Churches. If ever man were filled with all the gifts of God's spirit to win men to the Gospel, we be sure that Saint Paul excelled all others, or at leastwise all that were of his company. And it is certain that he discharged his duty. Yet not withstanding he had scarcely so soon turned his back, but by and by Satan gave a push to overthrow all, and to make a horrible havoc in the whole country, and he won so great a multitude there, that the Gospel was as good as quite abolished, even among those that had been taught so faithfully. Sith [*since*] we see such an example, ought we not to cast down our eyes, and to consider that God warneth us to flee unto him, and to pray him so to strengthen us, as we may hold out to the end? Which thing we cannot do, except we be upheld by him. Ye see then that the faults which Saint Paul bewrayeth [*exposes*] here in the people of Galatia, must serve for our learning. For it is all one as if God should in their person show what our constancy would be, if he gave us it not.

Although then that we have been faithfully instructed in the Gospel, yet must God be fain [*pleased*] to work from day to day, or else we shall be so fickle minded, that we shall be carried away by and by, and for every little occasion. Furthermore (as I have said already) Satan is a dreadful enemy. And therefore it is not for us to be negligent, seeing he lieth always in wait for us, seeking on all sides to invade us, and that if he spy never so little a hole, by and by he taketh his advantage to enter, It shall not seem that there is any gap open for him, and yet we may be taken tardy before we be aware. Wherefore let us mark well, the warning that God giveth us in this text, and let us make our advantage of it. And on the other side we see how the Devil hath at all times served his own turn with the name of God, and made thereof a false cloak to disguise the truth, and to turn it into a lie, or else to sow some discord, that by little and little the Gospel might quite fade away. The Apostles (as they that were chosen by our Lord Jesus Christ to bear abroad his Gospel, and to preach it through the whole world) were well worthy to have been revered everywhere, and to have been of such renown and authority, as the things that proceeded from them should have been [*thoroughly*] received. For their calling was lawful, it was [*well*] known that they did not thrust in themselves of their own heads, but that the son of God had chosen and appointed them by his own

mouth, yea and made them as it were new creatures, being silly souls and ignorant folk, they were so changed, as it appeared well that their doctrine came altogether of heavenly miracle. For they had not learned ought but in God's school, and he had in one instant of time so indued them with his grace and power, that they became as instruments of the holy Ghost. Yet notwithstanding, the Devil missed not to abuse their name and title, to bring store of troubles and stumbling blocks into the Church. For such as went in their company, made their brags when they came in far countries, that they had been familiarly conversant with them, and yet for all that, some of them were full of vainglory and pride, and sought nothing but their own advancement. Othersome were self-willed, and could away with nothing but that which they had seen in the City of Jerusalem, and in the land of Jewry, and they would have had the whole world subject to their lure, and therewithal would have turned all things upside down as they say. Others were led yet with a more wicked mind, so as they sought nothing else but to overthrow all that Saint Paul had builded. And all these (as I said afore) boasted that they had not learned anything of him, but that they had been taught their doctrine by the Apostles themselves. Thus ye see how Satan hath always defaced God's glory, even under the shadow of the gracious gifts which he had bestowed upon his creatures. And in good sooth [*truth*], we see how that under the names of the Apostles, and of the virgin Mary, the Idolatry is the same at this day in the Popedom [*papal government*], which it was among the Paynims [*Pagans, Heathens*] under the names of their false gods, for there is nothing changed, but only the names of them. As for the superstition, it is as filthy and detestable in the Popedom [*papal government*], as ever it was among the Heathen.

Here therefore we be warned to be wise, to the intent that if the Devil abuse God's name, we may be able to resist him, and to discern what authority men ought to have, and therewithal not to be overhasty of belief, nor overeasie to be moved and shaken with every wind. For if we have not the constancy to walk in the doctrine that hath been delivered to us, when we be once fully resolved that it is God's pure truth, it will happen to us as it did to the people of Galatia. Ye see then that the thing which we have to bear in mind, is in effect, that when God hath given us the grace to understand his word, we must always go forward in it, and not be shaken

like Reeds, nor carried to and fro, nor led up and down like little babes, but we must have the wit and discretion, to stick to the thing which we know to be offered us of God. Mark that for one point. But by the way, forasmuch as we cannot have such power in ourselves, let us pray with all lowliness and earnestness unto God, to reform us by his holy spirit, and to give us such steadfastness as we may never swarve aside, and that when we see all things turned upside down in this world, yet notwithstanding, this foundation may abide sure, namely that forsomuch as God which cannot lie hath spoken to us, and showed us his will, we may safely stand thereupon without turning any way from it. Howbeit forsomuch as the Devil hath many cunning knacks [*devices*] to thrust us out of the way, yea and that (as I have erst [*formerly*] said) he will not stick to abuse God's name to wind himself in, and to get some access to us, it behooveth us to understand that our reverencing of men must be in such wise, as God may in the mean season continue unimpeached, and that our Lord may have the whole mastery over us to himself, as he that is the teacher of the Church, and that our faith depend not, neither upon men's knowledge, nor upon any reputation that we have of their wisdom, power, or holiness, but that our Lord Jesus may always have the preeminence for us to rest and settle ourselves upon. For if our faith be not grounded upon God's pure truth, which is unvariable, certainly it will be but a leasing [*falsehood*]. This is the thing that we have to gather of the example that is set down here concerning the Galatians. But by the way a man might think it strange, why Saint Paul should deal so roughly with them as we shall see hereafter, considering that the case stood not upon the open denying of God and the renouncing of the Gospel, nor upon the blaspheming of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the setting forth of any notorious idolatry, but upon the ceremonies of the Law. For they against whom Saint Paul striveth in this Epistle, maintained none other thing, but that the ceremonies of Moyses' law were to be kept, and that men were bound to them under pain of deadly sin. Now, at the first blush it might be said that their case was favorable in that behalf. For the case stood not with them as it doth with the Pope, who during his tyranny hath forged many laws, and commanded this and that, bringing poor souls into bondage, but their saying was, that inasmuch as the law was not of men, but of God, therefore it was to be kept. Hereby it should seem, that Saint Paul had no cause to be so moved against that opinion, although it were not altogether sound and good.

Again, there is yet another reason, namely that we must not make so much ado about outward things, as whether one day is to be observed more than an other, or whether Swine's flesh be not to be eaten as well as mutton. For whether a man observe any ceremonies, or whether he observe none, as for example, If he forbear the eating of Swine's flesh, or do any other like thing, is his so doing an utter forsaking of Christianity? {No}^{F12} Yet notwithstanding, that is all the quarrel that Saint Paul hath, yea and thereupon he crieth out, that the Galatians are backsliders, that they have forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ, and that they are become renegades. Some man would say, he useth overmuch vehemence, but herein we be still warned, that the devil will now and then find small trifles to draw us from the Gospel ere we be aware, and therefore it behooveth us to be so much the better advised, for of ourselves we shall not be so, but must in very deed be fain [*obliged*] to be governed by God. And not without cause also is the spirit of wisdom fathered upon him, (<231102> Isaiah 11:2) to the intent we should seek it in him. Therefore let us resort thither, and if any man go about to bring in a thing that seemeth not to be of any great importance, let us bethink us what a tail it might draw after it. And for proof hereof, when we be once turned from the simplicity of the Gospel, we shall become like whoremongers, according as we have seen in the last Epistle, how Saint Paul saith expressly, (<471103> 2 Corinthians 11:3) that the Devil useth Bawd's tricks and Ruffian tricks, when he cometh to turn us from the doctrine of the Gospel. He will always make some goodly and fair protestation, like as when a Ruffian intendeth to deceive a young wife or a maid, he will not use any lewd terms or knavery, for he knoweth that she would abhor them, but he will mark by little and little how he may infect her with his deadly poison. Even so playeth the Devil in that behalf. For if he should show his horns (as they say) at the first dash, and show himself openly to be God's enemy, every man would shun him, and we would abhor him. But he windeth himself slyly in, and creepeth in at small crannies, so as we shall wonder that he could prevail with us in sundry things, and we shall still bear ourselves in hand, that we cease not to hold with Jesus Christ and his Church. And yet for all that we shall be turned away, and in the end we shall perceive ourselves to be quite cut off. Therefore when we read this example, that the Devil had marred and corrupted the Churches whereof mention is made here, [and that,] under the shadow of the Ceremonies of Moyses' law, let us bethink ourselves

the better, and stand stiffly without turning aside by any means from the simplicity of the Gospel. Furthermore seeing he hath strived and disputed about the Ceremonies of the law, let us look well about us to profit ourselves by all that is here contained, and let us stand continually upon our guard, that we may find out the crafts and wiles of Satan. And whensoever he shall go about to undermine us, let us look well to our business, and stand always to that which we have learned, so as we may be out of all doubt, that we shall not find anything in the doctrine of the Gospel, which is not the pure word of God. For (as I said) that is the thing whereupon our faith must be grounded. And if any man will add never so little to it, let us not only suspect it, but also abhor it, for when there is such a mingle mangle made with God's pure truth, it can be nothing else but corruption. Now let us come to the order which Saint Paul keepeth in handling the doctrine which we shall see point by point. That he may be the better heard and also received, he confirmeth his own authority, which some men had gone about to impeach. For behold, the policy of those dogs that encountered against him, was to allege that the Apostles taught otherwise than he did. Now forasmuch as Saint Paul had not been conversant with our Lord Jesus Christ while he lived in this world, it was supposed at the first, that the Apostles were a degree above him, and ought to be preferred before him. And on the other side they inquired who had put him in that place, as though he had thrust himself in, and had done it rather of rashness than otherwise. Saint Paul therefore was fain [*willing*] to set himself against all this geer [*whimsical mockery*], and to show that he was truly sent of God. Furthermore (as I said erst [*earlier*]) the Devil stirred up others, who coming from Jerusalem, said that that was the mother Church, and the holiness of all Christendom, and they pretended to be zealous setters forth of the pureness of the Gospel. By reason whereof, it behooved Saint Paul to go forward in showing that he had not advanced himself, nor taken anything upon him of his own head, but had obeyed the calling of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, who had made him his Apostle. Yea and he compareth himself with John and James and Peter, who were (as men termed them) the pillars of the Church, (<480209> Galatians 2:9) and so taken to be among all men, showing that he was no whit inferior to them. And why [doth he so?] To the end his doctrine might be received, for that is the mark that he aimed at. Afterward when he hath prepared the Galatians to receive obediently the warnings

that he giveth them: then he debateth the matter which was at that time in controversy, and showeth that the Gospel is beaten down, if we have not the freedom which is purchased for us by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ: which is, that the ceremonies of the law should not hold us anymore in subjection or awe. For (as we shall see hereafter) if such subjection should be admitted, all the fruit of our redemption and of the salvation which is purchased for us by the son of God, should go to wreck.

But now let us come to the order that Saint Paul keepeth for the maintenance of his authority. He saith, *that he is an Apostle, not on men's behalf, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, and by God the father, which hath raised him from the dead.* First of all, we have to mark here, that Saint Paul, to the intent to be received, groundeth himself upon the ordinance and appointment of God. For surely no man ought to take upon him any honor in the Church, save he that is called, as I have declared already. (<580504> Hebrews 5:4) Besides that, our faith should be very feeble, if it should be settled upon men, how great excellency or worthiness soever were in them: yea though they were perfecter than Angels, yet were that nothing: our faith is so precious a jewel, as it must rest altogether upon God and his truth. Seeing it is so, if a man intend to be heard, it must not be alleged, that he is witty and skillful, or that he hath seen and heard much, and is a man of great experience: all those things are but smoke, when it cometh to the leading of us to the kingdom of Heaven. For there the matter standeth not upon profound wit, and high and exquisite knowledge: all those things are but the sleights of Satan: Again, we know how it is said generally of all man's wisdom, that it is but stark folly, (<460120> 1 Corinthians 1:20) yea and that God laugheth it to scorn, and abhorreth it, because it turneth us away from the obeying of him. Therefore whensoever the case concerneth the teaching of us, all things that belong to man, or to any creature, must be laid awater, that there may be a well ordered government in the Church, and such a one as God alloweth. For if men advance themselves in that case, God is thereby plucked back, and in the end there will be nothing but utter confusion.

So much the more then behooveth it us to mark well what Saint Paul showeth us here, in that he doth not allege or bring anything of his own for the stablishing of his authority, but holdeth himself wholly to God's

calling. Mark that for one point. And herewithal we have to note, that Saint Paul boasted not himself at all adventures, as many harebrains do. For they could find in their hearts to preach with full mouth, that God hath sent them, when as notwithstanding they be but fantastical fellows, and Satan's very Champion, serving to overthrow all. But by the way, Saint Paul in protesting his calling, meant also to show by whom [he was called,] as we have seen here before. And it was sufficiently known, that he had been converted by miracle to the Gospel, that he had been taught upon the sudden, that God had by his means wrought after a strange and unaccustomed fashion, and not only that it had been openly revealed unto two or three men in the City of Antioch that Saint Paul was appointed to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, but also that he had good warrant of it in all places where he came, because God uttered his power most manifestly in him. So then when as Saint Paul told them that he was an Apostle, he presupposed that it was already sufficiently justified, that God was the author of that office of his, and that the thing which he pretended, was not a false surmise, after the manner of men, whom we see too much subject to vaunting of themselves. Therefore we must put a difference between Saint Paul, and all such as falsely boast and brag themselves to be sent of God, as the Pope doth, who to beguile the wretched world, and to maintain himself in his hellish tyranny, which he hath usurped, saith and oversaith that he is the vicar of Jesus Christ, and the successor of his Apostles. And all the cankerworms of his Clergy who name themselves Prelates, together with all the horned beasts and all the rabble of Maskers in the Popedom [*papal government*], will needs challenge that honorable title: and (if a man list [*wish*] to believe them upon their single word) they be all of them descended of the Apostles. But yet for all that, it behooveth us to consider what likeness and agreeableness they have to the Apostles: and also it standeth them on hand to show by certain and infallible record, that their calling is approved of God. In these days the Pope and all his, are too openly proved to have falsified and corrupted the doctrine of the Gospel, and that the thing which they term the service of God, is nothing but stark abomination: and moreover, that there is nothing among them, but outrageous lies and falsehoods, yea and enchantments of Satan. All this is known well enough. But behold, their shield wherewith they cast the mist that covereth all their filthiness, is that there hath been a continual succession, ever since the time of the Apostles, and that they

represent them and are the Church, and therefore that whatsoever they put forth must be taken for good. Well, go to, if they which do nowadays take that title upon them will be heard: they must look whither they have any resemblance of the Apostles, and whither they execute the duty of good and faithful shepherds. But seeing they be clean contrary to the order which our Lord Jesus Christ hath set in his Church, what shall men say to them? Yea (say they) but we have a continual succession from the Apostles. That would be showed first of all. They will allege some records, howbeit very trifling ones. Yet notwithstanding, it may be said on the contrary part, that there were as good successors in the Church of Galatia, as ever there was in Rome: and not only in some one Church, but in many, as well of Ephesus, of Colossus, and of Phillipos, as of other places. And where is all this succession now? If any man think himself to have any privilege, and name himself Saint Paul's successor: it were meet he should go preach the Gospel, and therewithal show good evidence why he should be received. Therefore let us mark well at a word, that when there are men to preach the Gospel, and when there are Shepherds and Overseers, it is not meant that they should diminish the authority of God, or prejudice aught [*anything*] that belongeth to him, that is to wit, that he alonly [*solely*] should not be honored, and that our faith should not rest upon his word: but that by the means of men, we should always be held under his obeisance. Mark that for a special point. And above all things our Lord reserveth that right to himself: namely that men should not thrust themselves in through their own presumption, but that they should be raised up and sent by him. Now therefore (as I have erst [*formerly*] said) there ought to be cause why, to the end we may discern and not believe at all adventure, nor at random. For Satan's champions can boast and crake [*brag*] enough and too much, and stand in their own conceit to the uttermost, to the intent to wind themselves in by their presumptuousness. But it behooveth us to try what is in them, that we may be sure of God's calling. And how doth Saint Paul speak of it here? *Not on the behalf of men* (saith he) *nor by men*. When Saint Paul saith that he is an Apostle, not on the behalf of men: it is a general point which ought to extend to all the ministers of God's word, and to all Shepherds of the Church. For (as I have said heretofore) whereas it pleased God that there should be Prophets in old time, and that afterward there should be shepherds to teach his people: he bereft not himself of his sovereignty: but rather it was

to show, that men must not govern here after their own lust, and in the meanwhile be but as Cyphers in Algorisme [*algorithms*] themselves, saving only for maintaining still the title, but that we should all of us give ear unto him, so as the men whom he setteth in office, should be as instruments or vessels of his holy spirit. Now then we see whereat Saint Paul aimed, when he said that he was not sent on the behalf of men: for thereby he showeth that he was authorized of God, and that he was his servant. The second point where he saith that he was not sent by men, belongeth peculiarly to the Apostles. For although that we be called of God, and that he allow of us: yet are we nevertheless called of men: and if that manner of calling were not agreeable to God's will, Saint Paul would not have used it. We know how Saint Paul proceeded in that case, namely how that in every place where he came, he ordained Ministers and Shepherds by election: and no doubt but that doing of his was lawful. Then let us mark well, that Saint Paul doth not indiscreetly here condemn such as were called by men's means: but only treateth of the thing that was peculiar to the charge of an Apostle. For that was the difference between the Apostles, and such as had charge of particular Churches: according whereunto the same state remaineth at this day, and shall remain to the world's end. For the Apostles were not chosen by election of men, nor by the common policy of the Church: but by the very mouth of the Son of God. Insomuch that when it behooved the Apostles to put another successor in the room of Judas, to make up the full number of twelve again: although they themselves were there present, and a great multitude of Disciples with them: yet durst they not make any election.

(^{<450124>} Acts 1:24) When there was any choosing of a Shepherd for the Church of Jerusalem, or of Antioch, or of any other people, this fashion was used: that is to say, first they prayed unto God, and thereupon chose such a man as was found meet and convenient for that office. But as for the other, they referred it wholly to the will of God, and cast lots for it, as for a thing that passed their wit. The cause (as I said) was, for that it behooved the Apostles to be chosen by special privilege from above, because they were the persons by whom the Gospel was to be published over the whole world. Now as for Saint Paul, he was chosen afterward. But howsoever it was, he had equal privilege with the residue, because there came a revelation from heaven, to show that he was admitted to the executing of that office: he was rapt [*carried away*] up into the third

heaven, (<471202> 2 Corinthians 12:2) and we have seen that he was well liked of in all things. Finally, that it might appear to be God's will to give him a larger commission, and to have marked him out for the Apostle of the Gentiles: he had the holy Ghost immediately, which spake and uttered the word from above. Ye see then that Saint Paul was not chosen by means of men. And yet notwithstanding, this manner of choosing (as I said afore) is no fault in those that are Shepherds and Ministers of the Church. But it was requisite that Saint Paul should be privileged, to the intent he might be comparable with Peter and John, and with all those that had been conversant and kept company with the son of God, while he dwelled in this world, and was in this mortal life. Now we see in effect whereat Saint Paul aimed. And hereby we be taught, that the reverence which we owe to such as carry abroad God's word and bear the name of Shepherds, serveth not to bar God from being heard continually, nor to bar our Lord Jesus Christ from being the only Schoolmaster of the Church. It behooveth us to bear this schoolpoint [*point debated in the school*] well in mind, or else our faith will always be subject to many varieties, and he that is cunningest among men, shall ever go away with the goal: and so shall we have nothing certain, but we shall be still changing from day to day, yea even every minute of an hour. Wherefore let us mark well, that if men allege the names of the Church, of Prelates, or of Bishops: we must always come back to this point, that they cannot climb any higher than to be the servants of Jesus Christ, and to be allowed of him. And how shall we know that they be allowed of him? First if they have been chosen by lawful order, with calling upon the name of God. And secondly if such be chosen as are meet, that have in them wherewith to execute their office. Lo here the marks whereby we may know and be well assured, that they be such Shepherds as God alloweth and accepteth. And herewithal it is not enough for a man to be called to that vocation: but he must also execute the charge that is committed to him, according as Saint Paul saith not singly that he was ordained {an Apostle}^{F13}: but in taking that name to him, he showeth that he is sent to bear abroad the message of salvation, and to preach the Gospel to the world. Therefore they that will be taken for Bishops and Prelates, must teach: and if they be Idols and dumb dogs, it is certain that as they do shamefully mock God's name and abuse his majesty, so also men may reject them and despise them, yea and that they ought to be held as accursed, because they pretend God's name falsely. Thus ye see what

we have to mark upon this strain. Now Saint Paul saith purposely, *that he was sent of Jesus Christ, and of God his father who raised him from the dead*. Whereas he saith that he was sent of Jesus Christ, it is to bring us back to the thing which I have touched already: that is to wit, that if we covet to obey God and to be subject to him, we must embrace our Lord Jesus Christ, and give ear unto him as to the only schoolmaster: and both great and small must submit themselves to him and to his doctrine: for he that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the father, as it is said in the fifth of John. (^{<430523>} John 5:23) And this is well worthy to be marked: for every man will needs be thought to honor God, and to desire nothing so much as to hold himself under his yoke. But in the meanwhile, we see that the world fighteth against the Gospel, and no man can willingly find in his heart to yield to it. When it cometh to the point that Jesus Christ calleth us to him, every of us plays the rebel: we be so wild that he cannot tame us: whereby our faithlessness is too plainly proved, and we show ourselves to despise God, how goodly protestations soever we have made before. For he sendeth us back to his Son, and willet us to stoop to him to do him homage. (^{<190212>} Psalm 2:12) Yet notwithstanding, as we see and as experience showeth too much, every man would shrink away from subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ. Saint Paul therefore showeth what a majesty there is in Jesus Christ: that is to wit, that we ought to tremble at his word, and to hold our peace when soever he speaketh, and to receive without any gainsaying, whatsoever he teacheth, or proceedeth from him. And without that, it is certain that God rejecteth all the protestations that we can make of our desirousness to serve and honor him. Thus are we exhorted in this strain, to give ourselves wholly over unto our Lord Jesus Christ, seeing he is our [only] Shepherd, thereby to show that we be his true sheep, and that we hearken to his voice, and discern it from the voice of strangers. Now seeing that God showeth himself in such wise unto us, as we know that our Lord Jesus Christ calleth us to him: let every of us follow him, and show that we be of his flock indeed. Thus ye see what we have to bear in mind. Howbeit forasmuch as there is such unthankfulness in a great number, that they cannot find in their hearts to submit themselves even to the Son of God: Saint Paul doth here set down the name of God the father as an Overplus [*surplus*]. True it is that the whole fullness of the Godhead dwelleth in Jesus Christ, (^{<510119>} Colossians 1:19; ^{<510209>} Colossians 2:9) and cursed be he that seeketh any other God. But

yet for all that, forasmuch as our Lord Jesus Christ appeared unto us in the shape of man, and was conversant in this world, and there despised yea and abased even to a most shameful death, wherein he received all the curses that were due unto us: therefore it is said that if we give not ear to the Son of God, the father is prejudiced thereby, according also as our Lord Jesus himself declareth in that he saith, He that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that rejecteth me rejecteth the living God that sent me. (<421016> Luke 10:16) Mark then whereunto the order tendeth which Saint Paul keepeth: namely that if we do not willingly honor our Lord Jesus Christ, by accepting his doctrine for certain and infallible: God is set at naught, and we cannot say that our intent is to worship him, for he will reject all our doings. And why? For (as I said afore) it is enough to prove us rebels, if we separate the Son from his Father. And Saint Paul addeth expressly, *that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead*, to the end that his Apostleship should not be the less esteemed, and also that men should match him with the number and company of the other Apostles, according also as he was added to them after that Jesus Christ ceased to be anymore upon earth. For (as I have touched already) the thing wherewith the false Apostles which came to overthrow all, upbraided him, was this: How now [said they]? He hath not been the Disciple of the Son of God as Peter and John were: he is a thing born out of season. And how can he show that he hath received his doctrine of Jesus Christ? Saint Paul declareth that if they will needs inquire of the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, his rising again ought not to have diminished it. Surely though our Lord Jesus Christ were brought low while he had the veil of man's nature upon him, whereby his glory was after a sort hidden: yet was he not abased in himself. For we know that the Angels acknowledged him for their sovereign king, (<420213> Luke 2:13) and although he were [born] in a stable and laid upon the ground as a creature destitute of all help: yet we see that the Stars of the sky bear record of him. (<400202> Matthew 2:2) To be short, the majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ was always sufficiently avouched, as long as he was in this world. But yet for all that, there was a much excellenter glory in his resurrection, according as it said in the first to the Romans, (<450104> Romans 1:4) that then he was showed to be the Son of God. And we also have seen in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, (<470414> 2 Corinthians 4:14) that as he suffered under weakness of the flesh, so he was raised again through the wonderful power of God's spirit. So then,

Saint Paul showeth, that although our Lord Jesus Christ be not conversant with us nowadays, yet must not his Majesty therefore be diminished nor defaced, that we should not yield him his due and deserved obedience, and receive his word reverently without all gainsaying. This warning is very behooveful for us. For what a number of lightheaded persons do we see, which would have Jesus Christ to be here in visible shape? Their saying is, that they would fain [*happily*] see Jesus Christ conversant here beneath, and that [then] they would at the first push accept whatsoever he spake to them, so as there should need but one word of his mouth to ravish them, and there should need none other teaching, nor any other man to be much with us. Yea, but the Son of God, which came down, hath performed his charge which was committed to him of God his father: that is to say, he hath preached the Gospel, and sufficiently confirmed it by his death and passion. Afterward being risen again, he sent forth his Apostles. And now that he hath all sovereign dominion, so as the Angels bow their knees before him, and that he hath such a majesty as surmounteth all glory both in heaven and earth: ought not all that which he hath done, to suffice us thoroughly When it pleaseth him to send us mortal men, and to send forth the message and inestimable treasure of his Gospel in brittle vessels, and yet notwithstanding will have us to receive them: is it not a mockery to say, that if Jesus Christ were with us and in our company, we would obey him For if heaven and earth must be fain [*obliged*] to quake under him, and his Majesty be known even to the Devils of hell: and yet for all that, we continue blockish, and pretend that he is too far off from us: yet notwithstanding our Lord Jesus showeth sufficiently that he hath not forsaken us, seeing we have the Gospel preached unto us: And that although he dwell not with us here below in visible shape, yet notwithstanding we shall be continually joined with him, and that forasmuch as he is our head, he will govern his body, and there shall be one unseparable bond between him and us. Now seeing it is so, we ought of right to yield him obedience, and his resurrection ought to touch us to the quick, and to work such a reverent awfulness in us, that whensoever the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of, we may be sure that it is the name whereof the Prophet speaketh, (<²³⁶⁵¹⁶> Isaiah 65:16) whereby all men ought to swear, and whereat they ought to bow their knees. Thus ye see in effect that the thing which we have to bear in mind, is, that we should not measure the Gospel after the respect and reputation of those

that speak unto us, for why, they be frail men. Nother [*Neither*] is that the thing whereon we ought to stay: for that were as much to say, as we should settle our salvation upon the credit of men, which might cause us to rest upon the world: but we must understand, that it is Jesus Christ which speaketh. And how? In the Majesty that is given him by God his father: for the power of the holy Ghost was then showed to the full, when he was raised from the dead. Then seeing our Lord Jesus Christ hath obtained such authority when he was lifted up into heaven, as to have superiority over all creatures: let us learn to submit ourselves to him, and let the same serve to hold us in awe, that his word may be received of us, and we assure ourselves that he governeth us, and that it becometh us to suffer ourselves to be taught in his name, and [to understand] that although the word which is preached unto us proceed out of the mouth of men, yet notwithstanding it is by the authority of God, and our salvation must be grounded thereupon, as well as though heaven opened an hundred thousand times to show us the glory of God. Lo (say I) how it behooveth us to be taught in this world, until God have gathered us into his everlasting heritage. And that is the thing which we have to bear in mind, concerning that the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ is expressly set down in this place.

Now let us fall down before the Majesty of our good God with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to vouchsafe to make us to feel them, that he may draw us to repentance the better, and that we may always hope that if we be once renewed by him, we shall thoroughly perceive that it is he which ruleth us by his holy spirit, so as having that record imprinted in our hearts, we may boast without hypocrisy that we be not tied to this world although we be in it, and that we dwell in it but as pilgrims and strangers, because we have a better dwelling place in heaven, where our heritage is thoroughly assured unto us by faith, although we possess it not presently. That it may please him to grant this grace, not only to us but also to all people and nations of the earth, etc.