

THE THIRTY-SECOND SERMON

WHICH IS THE SECOND UPON THE FIFTH CHAPTER

- 4 Christ is become unprofitable to you, to all of you that are justified by the Law, and you be fallen from grace.
- 5 For we in spirit do wait by faith for the hope of Righteousness.
- 6 For neither Circumcision nor uncircumcision is any thing worth in Jesus Christ, but faith that worketh by love. —
<480504> GALATIANS 5:4-6

WE HAVE SEEN heretofore, that such as will make a partnership between their own works and God's grace, do fully overshoot themselves: for as soon as we come to reckoning, God must needs judge us with rigor. Then if we go about to get his favor, and to purchase our salvation by our own works: we must perform Law to the uttermost without any missing. But now let us see if ever man discharged himself so perfectly. Surely we come very far short of it. Therefore we must come empty unto God, that he may receive us to mercy, and impute unto us the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, avowing it in such wise as we lay aside all our own deservings, and bring not anything of the Law with us, save only a single and pure confession, that we be damned and forlorn till God pity us, and burying all our faults and transgressions do cloth and apparel us again with the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ his son. And for that cause doth Saint Paul conclude here, *that such as will justify themselves by the law, are fallen from grace, and Jesus Christ shall profit them nothing at all.* It is not for nought that he speaketh after that manner. For the false packers that had partly corrupted the doctrine of the Gospel in the Church of the Galatians, meant to mingle the one with the other: that is to wit, that Jesus Christ is given us to supply our wants, and yet notwithstanding that we cease not to be righteous in part, by endeavoring to do well. For they did not utterly renounce our Lord Jesus Christ, neither said they that all the promises wherein God telleth us that he will of his goodness forgive

the faithful their sins, are deceit and mockery: but their intent was that men should labor to justify themselves, that is to say, to purchase favor at God's hand by their own works. And forasmuch as we be far from perfection: they meant that Jesus Christ should supply it as a second remedy: that was their surmise. Likewise nowadays in Popery, they will not with open mouth utter this blasphemy that Jesus Christ serveth us to none other purpose, but to teach us the will of God his father: they will afford to say that he hath redeemed us and purchased the ground of deserving for us, for he hath opened us the gate of Paradise to enter in at, and also that his death and passion do daily profit us, to reconcile us unto God daily when we have offended him. But howsoever the world go, they will have us to deserve or earn the kingdom of heaven in parts, and to redeem our sins by diverse means, and thereof sprang all their satisfactions, and finally that if a man cannot perform all during his life, the rest shall be fulfilled in Purgatory. Thus ye see how Jesus Christ hath but half a place with them in receiving us unto God, and yet in the meanwhile they shoulder him in such wise, that freewill, merits, works of supererogation or overplus as they term them, and such like things run away at leastwise with the one half of our salvation. But Saint Paul telleth us that God liketh no such partnership. For either we must bring such a full performance of the Law as God may be contented with: or else yield ourselves guilty. If there be never so little a fault, all the residue deserveth nothing at all. For (as I have declared) God promiseth not salvation to such as do him half service, or to such as serve him after a sort: but to such as keep his Law throughout. He that doth all the things shall live: and contrariwise he that performeth not all shall be cursed. (⁰³¹⁸⁰⁵ Leviticus 18:5; ⁰⁵²⁷²⁶ Deuteronomy 27:26) But it is so that no man doeth the things that are required and commanded in the Law. For what good zeal or will soever we have to serve God, there is always much feebleness in us, and we go to him halting and make many false steps, yea and oftentimes we happen to step aside and to go astray: and so are we all shut out from the promise of salvation as in respect of our own works, and the curse waiteth for us, which we cannot escape. For who is so far overseen, as to take upon him that he hath performed the whole Law? Then if all of us be found guilty of offense against God: we be as good as utterly undone, till our Lord Jesus Christ reach us his hand. Therefore it followeth that we must forget the righteousness of the law, and lay it under foot, so as it

may be utterly abolished, and thereupon that we go naked to our Lord Jesus Christ for remedy, confessing our own poverty, and not being ashamed to be defaced with all reproach before God, that we may be clothed again with his glory. Thus ye see in effect what we have to gather upon this text, where Saint Paul saith that Jesus Christ is made unprofitable, if men hope to justify themselves by the Law. For it hath been too common an error in all ages, that at the first setting forth and first brunt, men will needs pay God all that is due to him, and in the end seek startingholes when they see no power nor ability in them to do it. Well say they, though we cannot do all, yet will we do somewhat. But in this case it is not for us to follow our own imaginations: for God will judge us according to his own word. Therefore let us not reckon without our host, as the Proverb says, by making ourselves believe that God will accept what we think good: but let us understand that Jesus Christ cannot boot us at all, except we seek the fullness of our salvation in him. For it is not said in the Scripture, that the father hath given us him as a help to obtain our salvation: but that he is given us to be our righteousness and life. It followeth then that in our own selves there is nothing but wickedness and endless death, till we have recovered the thing in Jesus Christ, which we lost and were utterly bereft of in Adam. And these two things are joined here together: namely *that Jesus Christ profiteth us not at all, and that we be fallen from grace*, according as in very truth, all the grace or favor that we must find at God's hand, is communicated to us by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is a very notable point. For every man will well enough grant that we must resort unto God, because he is the wellspring of all welfare. But in the meanwhile the most part of men wander in their own windlasses [*snare*s, *decoys*], and instead of coming unto God, do go from him, as it is to be seen in the Papacy, where wretched hypocrites and the ignorant sort say that their gadding [*wandering*] after their Saints and puppets, and their marrying of themselves in their foolish devotions, is to get God's favor. But in the meanwhile Jesus Christ is let alone, and no man makes account of him, but they rather hie them to some stock or stone which they call their Lady, than to the Son of God. And whereof cometh this? Even because they know not how God hath given us his grace, nor after what manner he will have us to seek it, nor what way and order it behooveth us to hold. Therefore when we be once thoroughly resolved that God is our father, and also know perfectly that whatsoever

we have need of he will have us to draw it from out of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is as a spring that was under the earth, and afterward is opened and floweth abroad, that every man may take his fill of it: then (say I) do we know that God's grace cannot be drained dry, but yet doth it not come at us, but by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ. To be short, let us mark that all that ever belongeth to our salvation is so put into the person of God's only son: that he alone must suffice us, and we go straight unto him, and take all our contentation there. And as I said afore, let us keep ourselves from this imagination of thinking to purchase anything by our deserts, for it separateth us utterly from our Lord Jesus Christ. Now hereupon Saint Paul addeth, *that we wait for the hope of righteousness by faith in the spirit*. It serveth to confirm that which he hath said heretofore, concerning the diversity that is between us and the fathers that lived under the Law. For how was Abraham received into favor, but through faith? Yet notwithstanding he differed from us in one thing. For inasmuch as Jesus Christ was not yet discovered: Ceremonies were given him, and many more were added at the publishing of the Law, according to the need which the people had to be so led and guided. To be short, the faithful of all ages have ever sought their whole righteousness in the grace of God. Nevertheless they were helped by the Ceremonies and shadows, because the Gospel was not yet so revealed unto them as it is unto us, nother [*neither*] was Jesus Christ (who is the very pledge of righteousness) made yet so manifest. But now let us come to that which Saint Paul saith. He setteth here the spirit nowadays among the Christians, to exclude all figures and shadows, as if he should say that it ought to suffice us that the Son of God is appeared to us for our righteousness, and therefore we must let go the Ceremonies, because the shadow were needless nowadays. And not in this Text alone doth Saint Paul match the word spirit against the shadows of the Law. Truly when God in old time did ordain Circumcision, Sacrifices, and such other things, it was not to set folk at a gaze here below: for all things that are contained in the Law are in very deed spiritual. There was a pattern of them showed to Moyses on the Mountain. (⁰²²⁵⁴⁰Exodus 25:40)

So then it is certain that the fathers had a spiritual belief as well as we, so as they knew they were not washed and made clean by three or four drops of water: nor reconciled to God by the sacrificing of a Calf or of some

other brute beast: but that our Lord Jesus Christ was their only washing and cleansing, and that he by the Sacrifice of his death had discharged them quit, or at leastwise should, because the thing was not yet done, but the Fathers looked aloof at the thing which was not yet disclosed. And moreover it is not without cause, that the said word [Spirit] is set down here, to show that the fathers could not embrace the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, but by the means which our Lord had ordained for the time. Therefore when any man had done amiss, he came with a sacrifice, to acknowledge himself worthy of death before God: not to seek his atonement in a Calf, or in a Sheep, or in any such other thing: for that was to be had in Jesus Christ: but yet was it of necessity that the figure of him should go before. As much is to be said of the washings and of the residue of those things. In these days we have the body (saith Saint Paul) (<510217> Colossians 2:17) and therefore the shadows are not requisite anymore. If a man were present before mine eyes: would I seek to know him by his shadow? That were too darksome a dealing: and if I might behold him in the face, what doltishness were it for me to turn away from him, and to go seek some tracings to know him by? Even so is it nowadays with such as turn back again to the old figures. They turn their backs upon Jesus Christ, knowing not that the rending asunder of the veil of the Temple at his death, betokened that all the ancient figures were abolished, and that we at this day may enter into the heavenly Sanctuary, from the which we were as good as strangers before. To be short, Saint Paul meant here to declare, that his condemning of the Ceremonies of the Law, is not to condemn the fathers that used them, nor God that was the author of them, but to show that we in these days have the truth and substance of them: and consequently that the things which were shadowed heretofore, are no more so, and therefore that we must content ourselves with Jesus Christ, who hath brought all perfection with him. Thus much concerning the Ceremonies of the Law. Now whereas Saint Paul saith that we wait for the hope of righteousness in spirit: he useth a kind of speech that may seem strange: for what is meant by waiting for the hope of righteousness? Let us mark, that here Saint Paul intended to draw us away from all things that are to be seen in this world. For because we be too much inclined and subject to sticking fast here below, when we have anything for our senses to rest upon, so as we cannot lift up our minds aloft, and because that men are too fleshly: they ever covet to have all things open afore their eyes.

But God purposeth to try our obedience, by referring us to his pure and single word. And we do then honor him aright, when we shut our eyes at all these outward things, and hold ourselves satisfied with God's will which he hath showed to us, thinking ourselves to want nothing when we have that. For this word *wait* betokeneth that we perceive not by eyesight the thing that we wait for, (according as it is said in the eight to the Romans,) and so much the more, because the word *Hope* is added to it. Therefore it is as much as if Saint Paul had said: Verily my friends, if a man would go about to know the righteousness of Christians, (that is to wit that they be God's children, that they be heirs of the heavenly life, and that God accepteth them as if they were Angels without spot or blemish) I say if a man would know this after a worldly manner: he should deceive himself. For we see that the faithful are despised folk, men vouchsafe not to look upon them but askew, they bear a low sail to the worldward, and (to be short) there is nother [*neither*] pomp nor outward show in the righteousness that we obtain by our Lord Jesus Christ. For we seek not estimation when we say that before God we cannot rest upon anything but his mere mercy, and that all our deservings hang upon his mere grace, and that we must go out of ourselves to have Jesus Christ as the full perfection of all goodness and welfare. When we speak after that fashion: it is not to vaunt ourselves, but to confess ourselves to be full of all reproach, so as all our worthiness is but dung and filth, and all our works uncleanness, and that we should be loathly in God's sight like wretched Lagermen that are full of sores and botches, if we were not so washed and cleansed by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that God did like well of us by his means. Now then the righteousness which ought to reign among the faithful, is not a thing full of pomp, nor a thing that is greatly gazed at and commended [of the world]: no, but it is utter wretchedness. And therefore Saint Paul saith here, that when the world laugheth at our simplicity, because they see us hope after that fashion in our Lord Jesus Christ, and every of us humbly abase himself even to the dungeon of hell, to the end we may be lifted up by the grace of God to the kingdom of heaven: although the worldlings do mock and scorn us for it, yet must we hold on steadfastly, assuring ourselves that we shall not be disappointed. For we know with whom we have left our gauge in keeping, namely even with him that hath promised to call us to salvation. Therefore let us walk on in the said faith, and embrace Jesus Christ, and when we have him, let

us set light by all the rest. Let us not do him the dishonor and wrong, to shrink away from him into a corner, and to make him serve our turn but in part: but let us acknowledge that we be justified thoroughly and in all points by his means. Now hereupon a man might yet make a question, and say: What I pray you, were the Ceremonies commanded in the Law without cause why? Truly Saint Paul hath answered this matter sufficiently already. Howbeit forasmuch as men are slow in resolving of matters that concern the holding fast of God's pure truth: therefore he showeth new again, that there is difference between us and those that lived before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Also he had a consideration to stop the mouths of many railers: for if a man preach God's mere mercy in Jesus Christ: by and by some Mastiff curs or other fall to barking, and cast forth store of slanders, as is to be seen yet still at this day. For if we condemn the Devilish self-trust wherewith men beguile themselves, in weening [*thinking*] to obtain salvation by their own deserts: O how so say they? that were a condemning of all good works. And after that manner do the hypocrites nowadays slander the doctrine of the Gospel which we bear abroad, as though we meant to give leave and license to do evil, that there might be no more difference betwixt vice and virtue. Again if we tell them that their Ceremonies are but pelting baggage, and that the more they take pride in them, the more abominable they be before God: O, how should that be say they? Behold, these fellows would abolish all religion: and what a thing were that? Shall God be no more served and honored? such is the speech and talk that is used nowadays by those cur dogs, which cannot abide that our Lord Jesus Christ should be the only foundation whereon to settle the trust of our salvation, nor also abide that we should be governed by the pure and alonly [*sole*] word of God. And for that cause Saint Paul saith here, *that in Jesus Christ there is neither Circumcision nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh through charity.* In saying that there is nother [*neither*] Circumcision nor uncircumcision in Jesus Christ: he meaneth that God's commanding of the Ceremonies was but for a time, and that we must always have an eye whereto he tended, namely that he meant to maintain the people in hope, because Jesus Christ was not yet appeared to the world. For if they had not had washings, and Sacrifices and such other like things: they would have been dismayed, and the frailty of man is such, that they would have quite quailed [*withered, fallen away*] a hundred thousand times. And therefore although they saw

not yet fully how they should be saved: yet notwithstanding they had therein as it were lively pictures and looking glasses, where they might behold the grace of god. Thus ye see how the shadows and figures served but for a time. So then Saint Paul declareth, that he will not in any point diminish the authority of God who had stablished that Law among the Jews, nor also say that all those things were fruitless and unavailable: but that we, (now after that our Lord Jesus Christ is manifested,) are come to the fullness of time, and therefore that we must have no more veils to keep us from beholding him face to face, according as he is set forth to us in the Gospel. For whensoever the Gospel is preached unto us, it is all one as if we saw God's son crucified presently before us, or as if we saw his blood streaming down, forsomuch as we be besprinkled with it by the power of the holy Ghost, as saith Saint Peter in his first Epistle. (^{<600209>} 1 Peter 2:9) So then seeing that our Lord Jesus Christ hath by his death and passion opened us the way whereby we may come to God his father: it is not for us to busy ourselves anymore about the things that were appointed for the time of his absence. It is true that he dwelleth not nowadays in the world: but yet have we his Gospel, which is the accomplishment of all things that are needful to our salvation: and therefore it is as good as if he were crucified among us, as Saint Paul hath said already. (^{<480301>} Galatians 3:1) Now that we have the understanding of these words *in Jesus Christ*, that is to wit, that the Gospel is preached: let us come to this addition of his, that there is nother [*neither*] circumcision nor uncircumcision: that is to say, that those things must henceforth cease, and men must rest only upon charity. And wherefore doth Saint Paul add the word charity. To show that Christian folk will not be idle, and that they have enough to occupy themselves about, though they keep not the figures of the Law. For albeit that it was God's meaning to lead the people unto Jesus Christ, in ordaining the Sacrifices, circumcision, and all the residue: yet notwithstanding men being of themselves corrupt, marred all. And truly the Jews were of opinion, that they bound God to them in offering up sacrifice: but it was clean contrary. For he that offered sacrifice, did there pass a recognizance to bind himself solemnly to cursedness, as if he should say, I am worthy of death, in token whereof a poor beast is here killed and hath his throat cut: and is it the beast that hath deserved it? no, it is I. Ye see then that a man might there behold his own sinfulness, like as also it behooved him to seek his salvation elsewhere than in himself. Lo I pray

you how the figures ought to have brought folk to such a lowliness that all men from the greatest to the least should have condemned themselves, and thereupon embracing the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, have rested themselves wholly upon that. But nowadays in the Popedom [*papal government*] there is a like deceitfulness used, insomuch that men do falsify all that God hath ordained. As how? Look upon Baptism, look upon the Lord's Supper, which were instituted to the end that we should come and protest before God, that we hold all things of him. What is there in Baptism? It is showed us there, that we must die in ourselves. And why so? even because there is nothing but forwardness and cursedness in us, so as we be the children of wrath, and utter strangers unto God. Ye see then in Baptism a man is utterly rid of all his trust in himself. In the Supper we come to seek our life in Jesus Christ: and so are we stark dead both the ways. Yet for all this, the Papists ween [*think*] these things to be meritorious works. And that is the cause why they by the Hellish abomination of their mischievous Mass, have falsified yea and utterly defaced all things that our Lord Jesus Christ had appointed. For such a work even as it is done by man, or the very working of the deed, that is to say, the very doing of it as it cometh and proceedeth of man, must (say they) of necessity be meritorious. But therein we see a manifest falsehood. Howbeit Saint Paul meant to go yet further, in rebuking the hypocrisy of such as are so much given to these outward things: the like whereof is still at this day in the papacy. It is true that these miserable wretches take great pains to serve God: they trot up and down without end or measure: but what do they? They martyr themselves in vain things, and such as God never required, but utterly misliketh: and yet in the meanwhile, there is nothing but hypocrisy in all their doings. For what doth the devoutest person among them, but only make much babbling and mumbling? He must hear Mattins in the night, and two or three Masses in a day: He must gad [*go wandering*] on pilgrimage, and fast the Lent and Saints' evens: He must keep all the apes toys that have been appointed at the device of men. And what are all these things? Surely if men put their trust in them, they be devilish devices: but although there were none other harm in them saving that every man followeth his own imaginations: yet are they but gewgaws [*trinkets, showy trifle*] and Apes toys before God. And why? For he loveth obedience better than all sacrifices. But if we will obey God: we must serve him after a spiritual manner, and not with these childish

playing toys. Now let us come to that which Saint Paul saith, *Circumcision* (saith he) *is nothing: but faith that worketh by charity.* Hereby he betokeneth that although Ceremonies be laid aside, we have enough to occupy ourselves with, in doing the things that God commandeth: that is to wit, that all the perfection and holiness of the faithful consisteth in charity. That is the fulfilling of the Law, that is the end and shoot anchor whereunto God bringeth us. Therefore if we have charity, let us not think that we be unoccupied. But nowadays if a man rebuke the superstitions of Popery, and scorn them, saying, Go to, ye have much baggage amongst you: when ye come at Church ye besprinkle yourselves with holy water, ye kneel down before a puppet, ye scud from altar to altar, ye do this and that, and to be short there is an endless hotchpotch of all manner of gewgaws [*trinkets, showy trifles*] among you: and poor souls as ye be, think ye that these things will go for payment? No, for God will not allow any of them. They reply unto it again and say, why not? Shall God be no more feared? What shall we do for him? Verily it seemeth to them that unless they go to Mass, and be shriven, and pay some ransom, and do one thing or other, there is nothing at all done. And indeed we see how they leave the principal undone. For even they that are the devoutest of them, will not stick at all some to keep whores, some to blaspheme God, and some to rob and spoil other men, insomuch that if they which pretend greatest holiness can find occasion to pill and poll their neighbors, they will bite them to the bones. Their cruelty shall be so excessive, that they shall be brute beasts rather than men. Thereunto they be full of subtlety and wiliness. It is nothing with them to forswear themselves, if they may beguile any man by it. For they nuzzle themselves in all kind of lewdness, bearing themselves in hand that God must serve them for a cloak when they fall once to making of fair countenances, that it may be said they be devout or holy folk. Ye see then that this hypocrisy is as a den of thieves, as our Lord Jesus Christ himself termeth it. (<402113> Matthew 21:13) And it is an ordinary matter for men to forget the chief principal, when they give themselves to Ceremonies, according also as our Lord Jesus upbraideth them, saying: (<401503> Matthew 15:3) for your own traditions' sakes you have abolished the law of God my father. And for the same cause it is said in <195013> Psalm 50:13. Thinkest thou that I will drink the blood of brute beasts? If I be hungry (saith God) thinkest thou that all is not mine? This

is the thing that I would have thee to offer unto me, namely the sacrifice of praise.

Now we see Paul's meaning. He mocketh the hypocrites which think that all is marred if there be not store of gawdes [*playthings*], and gewgaws [*trinkets, showy trifles*] when men should go unto God, and that they may not go to him as it were with banner displayed. According whereunto we see how they prank up things with pomp of lamps, perfumes, and tapers, gay disguised coats, puppets, and such other things. When they have this geer [*whimsical mockery*] once, to their own seeming they be so well cloaked, that God knows no more what they do, and that their vices are well sheltered under such shadow: and yet for all that, they do but spite him openly. Now Saint Paul laugheth that opinion to scorn, saying, that although we have none of all those pomps, there is enough besides wherewith for God to keep us occupied, and that is charity. But to be short, Saint Paul meant to tell us here, that God's service is spiritual. For when we love our neighbors, it is a token that we love God. I mean when we love them according to God's ordinance. For it is no love to love a man for our own profit's sake, but to love even our enemies, so as we be patient to bear the wrongs that are done us, so as we strain ourselves to do good to such as have need of our help, and so as none of us be given to himself nor to his own peculiar profit, but that we endeavor as members of one body to help each other as much as is possible. If we be once at that point, then doth our life sufficiently answer for us, and witness that we love God. But we cannot love him before we know him. Therefore is charity an infallible sign and token that we be willing to serve God, not in paying him with chaff instead of corn, but by loving our neighbor truly and unfeignedly [*genuinely*]. And so let the Papists brag as much as they list [*wish*] of their gewgaws [*trinkets, showy trifles*] and gay shows wherewith they think to cozen [*deceive*] God, as it were to make a mockingstock of him: yet shall the thing that is uttered here by Saint Paul's mouth stand always sure, that is to wit, that such things are naught worth before God. And why? For if Circumcision were abolished when the time and term of it was expired: what shall become of the things that have been foolishly and malapertly forged in the shops of men's own fancies, which took upon them that which belonged not to them, nor was by any means lawful for them to do? Ye see then what we have to bear in

mind. But before we go any further, we must assoile [*refute*] a doubt which the Papists cast here. For to their seeming it maketh wholly on their side when Saint Paul saith, that faith which worketh by charity is the thing that maketh all the faithful perfect. And thereupon they conclude, that only faith doth not purchase us grace, but faith and charity matched together. Put the case it were so: whereto would it serve them? For whereupon do they ground their merits, but upon childish toys? as who should say they would appease God with a Rattle: but Saint Paul's meaning is far otherwise. For although he have hitherto showed the true way how to be in God's favor: yet notwithstanding he mindeth not to ground our righteousness or our hope of salvation upon charity.

What then? It is enough for him to show that God can find means ynow [*enough*] to keep the faithful occupied, although they have no Ceremonies, wherewith the hypocrites beguile themselves, in making that their principal. To be short, we see that Saint Paul is so far off from favoring the Papists anything at all, that he fighteth directly against them. Now under the color of that which is spoken here, they have imagined that faith is but a single knowledge that there is a God, and that his only son Jesus Christ is come into the world for the redeeming and saving of mankind, notwithstanding that the same knowledge be without any affection, more than if a man should tell us some story, and we should believe it and hold it for a certainty. After that manner do the Papists speak of faith, and say that when faith is all alone, it hath not yet her full shape before God: but when it is joined with a hearty good will and love of God, then is it full fashioned say they. But when the scripture speaketh to us of faith, it meaneth the knowledge that is given us by the holy Ghost: not which flittereth in our own brain, but which is sealed in our hearts, in such wise as God must needs have wrought wonderfully in us, before we can have been enlightened and fashioned in faith: for there is nothing but darkness in our minds. The light must come from above. Again we be utterly inclined to distrust: and therefore the holy Ghost must be fain [*pleased*] to set this seal upon us, that we be thoroughly saved by the means of our Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore it is not enough to know generally that Christ is our Redeemer: but faith importeth that every of us must acknowledge him to be his Redeemer. And is that possible to be unless our Lord Jesus do dwell in us and reign in us, and that we be inflamed with the love of him to give

ourselves wholly unto him? The Papists therefore never wist [*know*] what faith meaneth, notwithstanding that they chatter of it not altogether so well as Pyes [*dogs*] in a Cage, which do yet understand some words here and there: but they show so shameful a beastliness, as they may be gazingstocks of God's horrible vengeance, in that they have so forgotten the whole Phrase of the holy Ghost, and have no more skill of the holy scripture, than a Painim or a Turk that hath been always in heatheness, and never heard of God the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lo in what taking [*plight*] the Papists are. Now then let us mark well, that Saint Paul hath not here imagined a shapeless or unfashioned faith as they do: nor meant to set down charity as the cause of our righteousness: but only intended to show that we have enough to serve God with, without snarling of ourselves in a sort of pelting trifles. Howbeit, that we may fare the better by this text, (for we must now come to an end, and the time will not suffer us to proceed any further) if the Papists nowadays do make their brags that they have a more apparent service of God than we, and a service that hath a gayer gloss: let us on our side be well advised that we despise every whit of it. For why? God will not be served after men's likings. Mark that for one point. Besides this, the things which the Papists call God's service, are pelting trifles imagined and forged in their own brain, so that it is all rejected, notwithstanding that men do greatly delight in them and like well of them. And therefore let us have an eye to serve God as he commandeth. Wherein will he have us to be occupied? Not in needless things: but he will have a true trial of us, which deceiveth not. And what shall that be? To walk uprightly and faithfully with our neighbors, every of us to help where need is according to his ability: that no man be given wholly to himself: that we be trusty: that we deal soundly and faithfully: that we live peaceably: and that if we see any man destitute of succor and to stand in need of our help, we in that case do as it were offer a sacrifice unto God, knowing that he calleth us to it, to show what love we bear towards him. For if we love not our neighbors which are as it were visible grounds to work kindness upon, how shall we love God (saith Saint John in his Epistle) (^{<620420>} 1 John 4:20) whom we see not, and which is absent from us and hath no need of anything? Therefore if we will serve God well: let us learn to yield him such obedience as he liketh of: that is to say, let us walk in such faithfulness and friendliness, as none of us beguile, fleece, or overreach his neighbor: and moreover that we not only abstain

from all wrongful or wicked dealing: but also that all such as are called Christians, do well bethink them of our Lord Jesus Christ's saying, (^{<402323>}Matthew 23:23) which is, Cursed be you that have your several devotions along by yourselves, and occupy your heads about small trifles, making conscience of everything, and yet in the meanwhile leave the principal points of the law undone, that is to wit, faithfulness, justice, righteousness, and mercy. As if he should say, Is it not a strange thing that men should so mock with God, making a countenance to honor him, as though they took him but for a babe? God will have men to walk faithfully and uprightly, he will have every man to pity and to succor the needy, he will have no man to do his brother wrong: and behold, they on the contrary part will needs busy themselves about Moonshine in the water, and things of no value. They will be full of cruelty craft and maliciousness: and yet think to pacify God with things of nothing. Therefore let us learn to serve God with charity, that is to say, let us learn to give ourselves to the things that he calleth us to, and to hold ourselves as it were at a stay to the rule which he giveth us by his word. Furthermore when we walk uprightly after that fashion, we must not for men's sakes forget God. For (as I said afore) that is the thing wherein he trieth our charity: and by that means we show the reverence and love that we bear towards him. And therefore we cease not to call upon God when we love our neighbors, nother [*neither*] intend we to displease God under color of doing them service, but he is always our mark on whom we have our eyes fastened. Nevertheless, to conclude, like as we endeavor to live as God commandeth by his word, and pass not for the gawdies [*playthings*], gewgaws [*trinkets, showy trifles*], and Ceremonies of the hypocrites, but walk rightly in pureness of life, and in all faithfulness and upright dealing (as I said erst [*earlier*]) knowing nevertheless that when we have done all, it serveth not to justify us or to purchase us favor in his sight, and that although we be sure that he taketh in good worth the willingness which we have to honor him, yet his so doing is but because he accepteth us in our Lord Jesus Christ, (as I have declared heretofore) and because we repose the trust of our salvation in him. Even so also shall we walk in charity and labor to discharge our duty, knowing that by reason of our feebleness we be not able to come near that which God pointeth us to, but yet that we be in the way thitherward, and that he must be fain [*pleased*] to take us to mercy, whereupon we doubt not but that all our works do like him well, when

they be so dedicated to him by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ: for he is the true priest that offereth up our oblations and maketh them acceptable to God, and he must be fain [*pleased*] to step in, to make our works pleasant to God his father, specially seeing that even our prayers and the very praise which we yield unto him should be but filthiness, if they were not purified by our Lord Jesus Christ, according also as the Apostle saith, (^{<581315>} Hebrews 13:15) that it is he by whom we offer up unto God the Calves of our lips, that is to say, the sacrifices of praise whereby he is glorified.

But now let us fall down before the Majesty of our good God with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to make us perceive them more and more, and that we may be so touched with them, as it may bring us to true repentance, and that we may seek all our wants in our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there may be such humility in us, that being utterly brought down, and having put away all false presumptuousness wherewith we may be deceived, we may not tend to any other end than to be received through the mere mercy of our God, so as we may come to the everlasting inheritance, and in the meanwhile endeavor to walk in such wise in his commandments, as it may please him to bear with our frailty, till he have quit and clean rid us of it. And so let us all say Almighty God heavenly father, etc.