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*Youthful Lusts inconsistent with the  
Ministry.*

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A  
**SERMON**

Preach'd before the

**UNIVERSITY**

O F

**O X F O R D**

O N

St *STEPHEN*'s Day 1729.

In which the common Translation of  
*Νεωτεριὰ Ἐπιθυμία* is defended against  
*Salmasius*, Mr *Thomas*, &c.

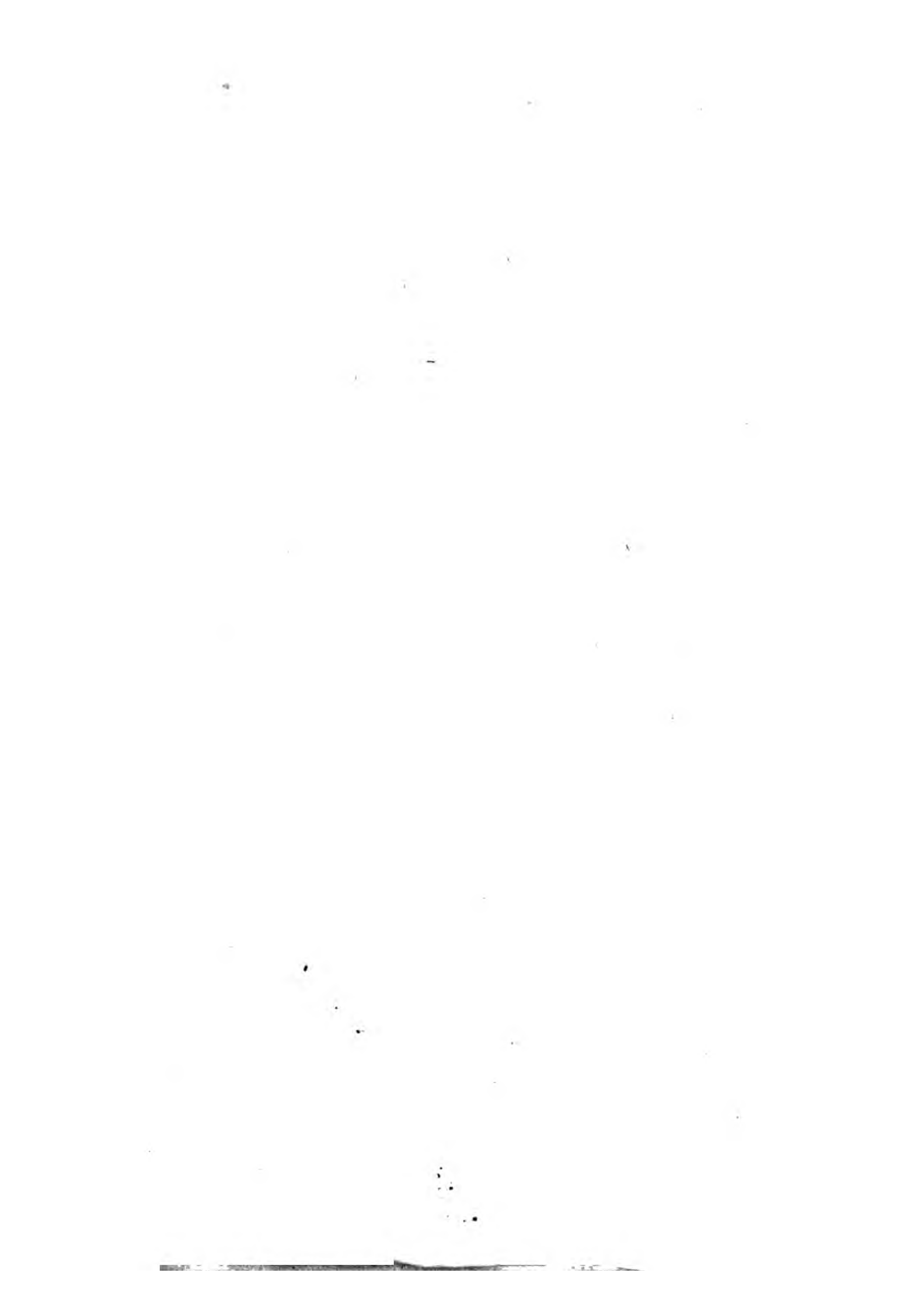
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By *THOMAS ROBINSON* M. A. Fellow  
of *Merton* College, and Chaplain to the Right  
Reverend the Lord Bishop of *Peterborough*.

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**O X F O R D,**

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2 TIM. II. 22.

Τὰς ἢ νεωτερικὰς ὀπιθυμίας φεύγε.

*Flee also Youthful Lusts.*

**I**N the earliest times of the Church (a) Maturity of Age was reckon'd amongst the Qualifications for the Sacred Office, and from thence one Order of the Ministry has deriv'd it's (b) Name. But the Apostles, and their Successors did not so strictly impose this Rule upon themselves, but that they could suspend it on particular occasions, and admit (c) Younger Persons into the Sacred Fun-

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(a) Προσέειπε ὡς ἢ γέροντες ἰτάν μὴ χειροτονῆσθω. Conc. Neocæs. Can. 11. (b) Οἱ προσέειπτοι. (c) Constit. Apost. L. 2. C. 1. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. L. 6. C. 30. Ambros. Epist. 60. Socrates L. 2. C. 6. Theodor. L. 1. C. 26. Bingham Orig. Eccl. B. 2. Ch. 10.

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ction, when either they were recommended by some eminent Qualifications, or the Necessities of the Church requir'd a Dispensation. On this account it was, that when *St Paul* was oblig'd to leave *Ephesus* (a) where he had labour'd for three Years, he thought fit to appoint *Timothy* to be the Bishop of that populous City, a Person, who, tho' young in years *was wiser than the aged*, (b) who had been acquainted *with the Holy Scriptures from a Child*, and of whose Zeal, and Fidelity the Apostle had had full proof (c) because *as a Son with the Father he had serv'd with him in the Gospel*.

These were the Motives, which induc'd *St Paul* to place him in that high, and difficult Employment; yet notwithstanding these we cannot but observe, from his two Epistles, how anxiously the Apostle was concern'd for his Behaviour, and what particular Rules he prescribes for his Conduct. Now considering *Timothy's* eminent character for Wisdom, and Piety, these extraordinary Cautions would be wholly unaccountable, were it not for this, that *Timothy* was *Young*, and therefore much more liable to miscarry. In the first Epistle (d) the Apostle plainly intimates that these Reflections gave him some concern, and his earnest, and repeated exhortations seem to be founded upon them. For in his Epistle to *Titus*, who was Bishop likewise of a large Church (e) amongst a people *as*

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(a) Acts 20. 31. (b) 2 Tim. 3. 15. (c) Phil. 2. 22. (d) Tim. 4. 12. (e) Titus 1. 12, 13.

*loose, and undisciplin'd* as we can imagine the *Ephesians*, the Exhortations are neither so repeated, and strong, nor the Advice so particular for his *personal* Conduct. *Let no Man despise thy Youth*, says the Apostle to *Timothy*, *but be thou an Example to the Believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*. And in his 2 Epistle which was suppos'd to be written (a) six years after, when *Timothy* was still young, at least for a Bishop, an exhortation to the same purpose is repeated in the Words of the Text, *Flee also Youthful Lusts; but follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace*, and so on.

I might now proceed to apply what has been said to the design of this discourse; but since a different construction of these Words has been given by (b) *Salmasius*, and others, and (c) lately in an ingenious Discourse upon this Subject, in which νεωτερισμὸς ἰνδομίας are suppos'd to signify a *Desire of Novelty*, or *Novel Fancies and Conceits*; I think it but a decent respect to the Judgment of these Learned Men, to shew the reasons why I dissent from them, and adhere to our common Translation.

1. Then I observe, that the Word translated *Youthful* is very capable of that Sense.

The Original Word νεωτερισμὸς is not strictly a Classical Term, but seems to have been intro-

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(a) Cave's Life of Timothy — But Bp. Pearson is of Opinion that it was written but one year after the First. Vind. Ignat. Praef. ad Lect. (b) Appar. ad Lib. de primatu Papæ. (c) Mr Thomas's Consecration Sermon.



duc'd at the declension of the Greek Language; and since there are no parallel places in the Scriptures, whereby we may determine it's Sense, the only Method of fixing it's Signification is to have recourse to the Etymology of the Word, and to the Authority of Those, who are suppos'd to have wrote the Greek Tongue with less purity, and perfection.

Now the Greek Word νεωτερικὸς, which is here translated *Youthful*, is not deriv'd from Νεω-τερίζω (a) to innovate, or study Novelty, but from (b) νεώτερος, which in it's comparative sense signifies *Younger*, but in the politest Dialect of the Greek is often us'd (c) positively for a *Young Man*. As therefore the Greek Derivatives in κὸς add to the Sense of their original Theme an intimation of somewhat inherent in, or be-

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(a) Mr Thomas very rightly observes that this is the Sense of νεωτερίζω in the most approv'd Authors. But he seems to be mistaken in his Remark, that some of the Lexicographers render νεωτερίζω to *imitate the manners, and affections of Youth*, citing a passage out of Aristophanes's *Plutus*, where it is taken in that Sense. (See Serm. p. 6.) The Lexicographer here meant, I suppose, is Stephens, whose Words are these, viz. "νεωτερίζειν dicitur etiam sequi, vel loqui τὰ τῶν νέων· ut Plutus Aristophanis νεωτερίζει καὶ τὸ πλάσμα, i. e. τὰ τῆς νέας κωμωδίας ἔχει. Bud. Now in this passage there are two things remarkable. 1. That τὰ τῶν νέων do not here signify *the Manners, and Affections of Youth*, but *the Manners, and Customs of the Moderns*. 2. That there is no passage cited out of Aristophanes's *Plutus*, but Aristophanes's *Plutus* is said νεωτερίζει κατὰ τὸ πλάσμα, i. e. *to be wrote after the method of the new Comedy*. This will appear from the whole Passage, which is quoted from an Anonymous Tract, but which seems to be attributed by the Lexicographer to Budæus. "Πᾶσαν κωμωδίαν ἐμελέτησι καὶ γὰρ τὸ τέτυκτο δράμα, ὁ Πλάτων, νεωτερίζει κατὰ τὸ πλάσμα. τίω πε γὰρ ὑπόθεσιν ὡς ἀληθῆ ἔχει, καὶ χορῶν ἐστρέφεται, ὅπερ τῆς νέας ὑπῆρχε κωμωδίας. (b) Bosii *Dissertat. in Thesauro Theologico Philologico*. Vol. 2. p. 687. Pearson *Vind. Ignat. Præf. ad Lect.* (c) *Helychius*.

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longing to it, the Word *νεωτερός* must signify (a) *what is natural, or usual to a Young Person*, and is exactly render'd by the Latin *Juvenilis*, and the Word *Youthful* in the Text.

For a farther confirmation of this Sense it is to be noted, that *Josephus*, who has *νεωτερίζω*, or it's Derivatives seven times, and always in the Sense of *studying Novelty*, or of being *factions, and seditious*, uses the Word (b) *νεωτερός* in the same Sense, which our Translation gives; in which likewise (c) *Athanasius*, (d) *Chrysostom*, (e) *Aulus Gellius*, (who was a Critick in the Greek Language) and all the ancient Expositors of the Scriptures agree. (f)

2. I must observe that the Word *Ἐπιθυμία* is very rightly translated *Lusts*, or *Inclinations*, and

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(a) Τὰς νεωτέρως ζητήσεις φύλατε· Μειρακιώδεις γὰρ αἱ τριαῶνται φιλοκεικία. Clemens Alexand. Strom. L. 1. Nullibi monet Apostolus τὰς νεωτέρως ζητήσεις φύλατε; verum Timotheo scribit τὰς μωροῦς ζητήσεις παρατείν, & τὰς νεωτερόως ἐπιθυμίας φύλατε. Quæ, Clemens è memoriâ S. Scripturas recitans, commiscuisse videtur. Nota Doctiss. Potteri. (b) Joseph. Ant. L. 16. p. 746. Edit. Hudson. (c) Liber περὶ παρθενίας. (d) Orat. 1. de Sacerdot. (e) L. 13. C. 26. (f) To balance these Authorities I can find but one instance of *νεωτερός* in a Sense any way agreeable to that contended for by Mr T. The instance is in Harmenopulus, Judge of Thessalonica, who liv'd in the ninth, and tenth Centuries and publish'd an Epitome of the Civil Law. Amongst the Laws, which he collected there is one (L. 6. Tit. 7.) intitul'd περὶ νεωτερικῶν, who in the Body of the Law are defin'd to be, οἱ θορύβοις ἐν τῷ δήμῳ ποιεῖντες &c. Now as no such Law is to be found in any Code besides this, it is probable that it was made by Basilius, or Leo the fifth, in whose Reigns Harmenopulus liv'd; and it is not unlikely that this new signification might be first given to *νεωτερός* at that time, when the Greek Language was so miserably corrupted. This however is certain, that the single Authority of *so late a Writer* can be of little force, when set in opposition to the unanimous agreement of all preceding Authors.

cannot



cannot with any propriety signify *Fancies*, or *Conceits*. There is no passage cited from any Author, wherein *Ἐπιθυμία* is prov'd to be taken in that Sense. On the other hand *Ἐπιθυμητικόν*, and *λογικόν*, (which signifies *every thing pertaining to the Rational Nature*) are put by (a) Philosophers in contra-distinction to each other. And *Plato* who gives the Etymology of the word *Ἐπιθυμία* (b) would remove all possibility of applying it to any Act of the *Rational Soul*, when he restrains the Word *θυμός*, from whence it is deriv'd, to *that part of the Soul, which is the Seat of the Passions*. This certainly is the Sense of *θυμός* in the most approv'd Authors; and amongst all it's Derivatives I can find but one Word, which signifies any *Act*, or *Property of the Understanding*. This Word is *ἐπιθυμία*, the similitude of which to *Ἐπιθυμία* was probably the occasion of their being confounded with each other.

Add to this, that if a Regard to the Propriety and Elegance of Language may be allow'd to determine the Sense of the Phrase, the Word *Ἐπιθυμία* cannot be restrain'd to *one*

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(a) Διαρίζοντες λογικόν, κὴ θυμηκόν, κὴ ἐπιθυμητικόν. Arist. de Anima L. 3. C. 10. Καὶ περὶ ἐπιθυμίας, καὶ ὀργῆς, ἔ λογισμῶ ὄντα. Id. Rhet. L. 2. C. 20. Πάντα γὰρ ἢ ἐπιθυμία γίνεται τε, κὴ πλάττεται, κὴ φιναικίζου βελεται. ὁ δὲ ἀνθρώπος ἐκείνῳ, ὡ σιωπικῆς ὁ Λόγος, ἔ πικιλλεται, ἔ πλάττεται. Clem. Alex. Pæd. L. 1. C. 13. Τα περὶ τα γλοικώματα ὡδὲ πως ὁμιζίαδ ἀξίωσαν οἱ φιλόσοφοι. τὴν μὲν ἐπιθυμίας ὀρεξία ἀπειρή Λόγος. Ib. L. 2. C. 13. (b) Οὐδ' ἐπιθυμία χαλιπὸν. (the Derivation of ἐπιθυμία is not difficult) τῇ γὰρ ἐπὶ τ' θυμῶν ἐση δυνάμει δηλοῦσι τῆτο ἐκλήθη τὸ ὄνομα. Θυμός δὲ δὲ τ' ἴσσεως, καὶ ζέσεως τῆς ψυχῆς ἔχει ἀν τῆτο τὸ ὄνομα. Plat. Cratyl. p. 419. Edit. Serrani.

*single* appetite or Desire, but must signify *Variety, and Number* of Affections, and Lufts. The *Desires* of Novelty has an unnatural Sound in our Language, as *νεωτεριαι Πιθημιαι* will have in the Greek, if those Words be suppos'd to mean only *one particular Inclination*. If this had been the Apostle's Intent, and he had design'd to forbid *the single Desire, or Lust of Novelty*, he would doubtless have express'd his meaning by the singular Number *τις νεωτερικη Πιθημια*, supposing that *νεωτερικη* had been capable of that Sense.

3. I observe, that no Argument can be drawn from the Context to prove the common Translation to be false.

Whoever is acquainted with the Style of our Apostle, must know that in his most Argumentative Discourses, he does not confine himself to the strictest Rules of *Humane Reasoning*, but being full of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ, or mov'd by the Holy Spirit, often introduces into the Body of his Discourse things, which to a mere Philosopher would seem very foreign to the point in hand. But there is no necessity to make this Apology in the present Case. — For *exhortatory* Writings, such as St Paul's Epistles to *Timothy* chiefly are, generally consist of *independent* Sentences, and the Authors of them do not seem to be studious of Connection between the parts of their Discourse. But to wave this advantage likewise. — I think nothing can be more visible than the Connection between the Words of the Text,

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and those, which immediately succeed; which Connection is in a great measure destroy'd by the other Interpretation. *Flee also Youthful Lusts, but follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart.* Here it has been ask'd (a) What "visible Connection is there between the former, and latter part of this Verse? What have the Faith, and Peace, and Charity in the latter part to do with the Youthful Lusts in the former? I answer, that nothing can more obstruct the practice of these Duties, than those vicious Inclinations, and Desires, which attend the Fire, and Heat of Youth. If Righteousness be taken for a general Conformity to the Rules, and Precepts of Religion, whether natural, or reveal'd; what can be more contrary to such an Observance, than Youthful, and vicious Appetites — (b) *those Lusts, which entering into us choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful?* Accordingly we find the Apostle in his Epistle to *Titus* making the same opposition between them, which is here in the Text; (c) *Teaching us that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should walk soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World. Follow Faith,* that is embrace the Doctrines, reveal'd in the Gospel, the Belief of which nothing has more obstructed, the Purity of which nothing has more corrupted than the deprav'd Appetites of Mankind. For according to the Apostle in the next Ch. Verse 8, They were Men

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(a) Serm. p. 8. (b) Mark 4. 19. (c) C. 2. 22.

of corrupt Minds, who resisted the Truth, and were reprobate concerning the Faith. Flee Youthful Lusts, but follow Charity, and Peace; for (a) whence come Wars, and Fightings amongst you, but from the Lusts, which war in your Members? With them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart, that is with devout, and pious Christians, whose Hearts are undefil'd by Vice, and Immorality; for this is not only (b) one Notion, but (c) the common Notion of Scripture Purity.

4. I would take notice that there is little stress to be laid upon another Objection, viz. that this Advice would have been altogether inconsistent with *Timothy's* Character, who was so eminent for the Austerity and strictness of his Life. For besides the Observation of Commentators that the Lusts here mention'd are to be understood of those which are incident to the mind, and not of the more gross and fleshly Appetites, it is to be consider'd that Exhortations to any particular Virtue recommended by a Pastor, a Father, or a Friend, do by no means reflect on the Person admonish'd, or infer that He is addicted to the opposite Vice. *Timothy*, no doubt, was a person as pure and uncorrupt in his Faith, as he was virtuous in his Life, and blameless in his Morals. The Apostle tells him (d) that he call'd to remembrance the unfeigned Faith that was in him. Yet in the same Chapter he earnestly exhorts him (e) to hold fast the form of

(a) James 4. 1. (b) Serm. p. 8. (c) Ps. 119—1. — 118. 26. — Prov. 20. 9 — 30. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 5 — 3. 9 — 5. 22. (d) 2 Ep. 1. 5. (e) Ib. 13. 14.



*found words which he had heard, and to keep that good thing which was committed unto him.*

Add to this, that it is not to be expected that the Apostolical writings should exactly correspond with the Circumstances and Character of those particular persons to whom they were originally directed. They were not compos'd for the private use of any single Person or Church. *Their sound was to go out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.* St Paul commands the *Colossians*, (a) that when his Epistle had been read amongst them, they should cause it also to be read in the Church of the *Laodiceans*, and that they likewise should read the Epistle from *Laodicea*.

Thus also the Epistles which we are treating of, tho' they were originally directed to one single Bishop, yet were intended as Charges to the Clergy in all succeeding times. And therefore tho' some particular precepts might be accommodated to *Timothy's* Character, yet the greater part of them was universal, and extensive as the *Dangers* to which *That Order* might be expos'd.

Many more reasons might be offer'd in support of the common Construction of this Text, but as our Time may be much more profitably employ'd by treating of it in a practical manner. I shall now proceed.

I. To make some general remarks on the malignant Nature, and pernicious Tendency of Youthful Lufts.

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(a) Ch. 4. 16.

II. To shew particularly how highly inconsistent they are with the *Sacred Function*.

I. Then, it may be needless to remark that the Passions of themselves are innocent and useful. Nothing can be otherwise, which God the Author of *every good and perfect Gift* has planted in us. Their Malignity lies in the Abuse. For they are wholesome, when us'd with Prudence and Moderation, and 'tis Excess that converts them into Poison. To prevent this is the Province of reason. But our misfortune is, that in our *Younger Years*, when the animal Nature, the Seat of the Passions, is strong and vigorous, our reason is feeble and weak, and less able to quell the Tumults and Disorders, which lawless Inclinations raise in the Mind.

To compensate the Inconveniences, which spring from this infirm State of reason, extraordinary Degrees of Diligence and Circumspection seem to be requir'd. When the Fortifications of the Soul are so weak, 'tis highly necessary that the Guard should be doubled. Yet on the contrary this unhappy Circumstance of our Affairs is so far from exciting our Care and Diligence, from *teaching the Young Man Knowledge and Discretion*, that in this very Article of Life, where Circumspection is most requir'd, we are most subject to a Levity of Spirit, to rashness and Incogitancy, to Confusion, and dissipation of Thought.

So dangerously are we expos'd in our *Younger Years*; so unequal is the Conflict with our Passions. For the Strength and Vigour of the Appetites,



tites, The Feebleness of the Understanding, The Absence of Thought, The softness of the mind, not yet hardned by Maturity and Experience, are all confederate *against the Young Man who would cleanse his way by ruling himself after the word of God*, and the precepts of reason.

Concerning the fatal Tendency of Youthful Passions in general I shall only make this obvious remark; That their malignant Influence usually extends it self to the utmost Period of our Lives; nay, it is probable that the Weal or Woe of our whole Existence may be determin'd by them. If a Young Man be plac'd *in the Way that he should not go*, when he is old he will not depart from it. Youthful Passions may be impair'd by Time, or old Age may wholly blot out the remembrance of them. But every Age has its vitious Inclinations, and the mind, which in its Youth has been accusom'd to obey its Appetites, will find it self enslav'd to one Lust or another in every Period of it's Being.

I proceed now secondly to shew That *Youthful Lusts* are highly inconsistent with the *Sacred Function*.

A Person, who presides over the rest of Mankind in any Capacity whatsoever, receives a wonderful Dignity and Grace from every *distinguishing* Qualification which he possesses, and on the contrary is mean and contemptible in the Eyes of all Men, if the Title, on which his Precedence is founded, does not consist in superiour Merit. But it is more peculiarly necessary, that every Person should excell *in that particular*

*ticular respect* in which he is appointed to preside and govern. And from thence may be deduc'd the Obligations of the Ministers of Christ to guide their Actions by reason and religion, and to *bring every irregular Appetite into Captivity*. For this is the Character in which they preside. This is the Province in which they govern; or if that Expression may be thought too arrogant, I shall not be asham'd to say, this is the *Craft* which they profess, in which therefore it becomes them to be diligent and skilful.

For it is not the Garments which they wear, the Titles which they enjoy, the Powers with which they are invest'd, that will procure them Credit from the rest of the World, or *make them able* and successful *Ministers of the Gospel*. It must be a superiour Skill in governing their Passions, it must be Innocence and Purity of Life, that must conciliate the respect and Veneration of Mankind, *and draw Disciples after them*.

But these Reflections will appear in a fuller and stronger Light by comparing some particular Youthful Lusts with some particular Duties, and Obligations of the Ministry.

1. Then, Tho' I cannot allow that a *Desire or Love of Novelty* is the only Appetite intended in the Text, yet I readily grant that *a Desire or Love of Novelty is a Youthful Passion*. Whatever is *new and uncommon* is eagerly embrac'd by Those, whose Fancy is stronger than their Reason. There is a childish Curiosity in unexperienc'd Minds, which makes them fond of every  
 Novel

Novel Opinion. Besides that the Judgment when not founded on a thorough Insight into the real Nature of things, is less tenacious of Truth, *and apt to be carry'd about with every Wind of Doctrine.*

Now it is easy to conceive how inconsistent this Temper is with the Sacred Character. A Minister of this fickle and unsteady Disposition is the most likely of all Men to be the Father of new Sects, the Author of Heresy and Schism. Or if his Judgment should be settled in *essential* Points, yet it is much to be fear'd that he would be chiefly employ'd about matters that were liable to Doubt or Difference. — Thither would the main stream of his Doctrine run, and overflow in Dispute and Controversy. Hence it is that the Study of Divinity is become so perplex'd with Controversial writings, and that the plainest Book, that ever was written, I mean the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*, has been the Foundation of the most numerous and inconsistent Comments. It is the Opinion of one Sect of Christians, that it is essential to the Catholick Church, that it's chief Bishop should be infallible. — How absurd soever this Notion may be, thus much is indisputable and certain, That a *steady mind*, and *settled Judgment* in the Ministers of the Gospel are highly necessary to the Welfare of Christianity. For if They, who are appointed the Instructors of others, be themselves doubtful and fluctuating in their Opinions, will not the Faith of their Disciples be much more wavering, and the common People tempt-

tempted to suspect that Religion it self has no fix'd or solid Foundation?

2. The next Passion, which I beg leave to produce, is *Ambition*; a Desire of Fame and Glory; a Thirst of Distinction, Preeminence and Power; a Passion chiefly incident to *Youthful minds*, which are apt to be struck with the first Appearance of things, and are unacquainted as yet with the Toil, the Anxiety, the meanness of Soul, which too frequently cleave to Humane Grandeur.

Now of all Youthful Passions, none seems to be so opposite to the Sacred Character as *Ambition*. How must it lessen the Respect and Veneration of Mankind for this *Religious Order*, if whilst they are preaching Mortification, and self Denial, and the Renunciation of the Poms and Vanities of this World, these Ministers of God should themselves appear to be the Ministers of a Faction, involv'd in every Scheme, and practising every Artifice, from whence they imagine, but *vainly imagine*, that Promotion comes? For I am verily persuaded, that since the foundation of Christianity there never was Age so Degenerate, or Court so corrupt, where a learned, a modest, and conscientious *Clergyman* was not more likely to be advanc'd to *Dignity* and *Honour*, than they who were ready to prostitute their Character to the *implicite* Service of a Party, to the furtherance of their Ambitious and worldly Designs. But should the Case be otherwise (which we are far from having any reason to apprehend) who is there that

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has



has a *true* notion of the *Dignity* of his Function, but would choose one of the meanest Offices in the Church of Christ, and *rather be a Door-keeper in the House of his God, than dwell in the Tents of Ungodliness?*

*Ambition* shews it self in numerous instances in *common* Life, and may be equally various in the *ministerial* Character. — It takes a pernicious Turn, when it prompts the Ministers of Christ to be perpetually insisting on the *Dignity of their Office*, on their Spiritual and secular Powers, and to practise what the Apostle so much condemns, *the preaching themselves, and not the Lord Jesus.*

It is easy to conceive what will be the Effect of this injudicious Practice. The world is very unwilling to allow any Privileges to those, who *magisterially* insist upon them, and therefore they will be tempted nicely to sift the Pretensions of such Men, and to reject every thing wherein they can find the least room for Exception. Or if they should fail in this Attempt, they would then proceed to examine the personal Characters of those *bold Men*, who arrogate to themselves such high Titles, and superiour Powers, and there it is much to be fear'd they would always find an unlimited *Ambition*, usually joyn'd with a great Degree of *Ignorance* and *Folly*.

I cannot propose a better Example to the Imitation of my Hearers than that of the great Apostle *St Paul*. When he was gone from *Corinth*, where by his unwearied Labours He had planted a considerable Church; *False teachers*  
crept

crept in amongst the Converts, who set up in opposition to him, and seem not only to have traduc'd his *personal* Qualifications, but to have decry'd and ridicul'd his *Apostolical Powers*. In opposition to these Seducers, and in the just Vindication of his Character, He writes his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, and begins one part of his Apology with this remarkable Preface, that (a) *doubtless it was not expedient for him to glory.* But when He was driven unwilling to that necessity, of what Privileges does He boast? Very sparingly (b) *of the Authority which the Lord had given him for Edification, and not for Destruction*; very modestly (c) *of the Visions, and Revelations of the Lord*; (d) *but he most gladly glories in infirmities in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in Distresses for Christ's sake.* This was (e) *the boasting of that great Apostle in the regions of Achaia*; and let every Minister from his Example thus repell the injuries and reproaches of irreligious Men, and shew how unworthy he is of such inhumane Treatment by what he has *done*, or *suffer'd* for the sake of Christ.

3. Another Instance in which a Youthful Disposition frequently appears is in *too gay and ludicrous a Behaviour*; and this wherever it is common, and become habitual, is very opposite to that *Gravity and Sedateness* of Temper which the *Sacred Ministry* seems to demand. The *Holy Offices*, in which we are daily employ'd,

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(a) 2 Cor. 12. 1. (b) Ib. 10. 8. (c) Ib. 12. 1. (d) Ib. 12. 10. (e) 11. 10.



cannot fail of striking a well dispos'd mind with Awe and Reverence ; and the *Studies* which our Profession obliges us to pursue, are such as would naturally infuse *a serious Habit*. It may be too obvious to observe, that a Dignity of Behaviour in the person who officiates frequently conciliates Respect, and veneration to the Offices which he performs ; and on the contrary, that the Vulgar are too apt to despise the publick worship it self, when it is directed by one, whom they are accusom'd to see in *Circumstances vastly different*.

For these and many other reasons it will appear that it is highly prudent in a Minister of the Gospel to debar himself from many Grati-fications which the rest of the world may innocently pursue, *to keep his Mouth as it were with a Bridle, and to set a Watch before the Door of his Lips*, and rather to abstain from many things which are *lawful*, than to indulge himself in one, which is *not expedient*.

4. I shall conclude by taking notice of another Passion, which is chiefly incident to *Youthful Minds* ; and that is a *Hatred of Instruction*, and *impatience of reproof*, which wherever it is found, is a certain mark of a mind disingenuous, or conscious of Guilt ; but it is *widely* opposite to the Character of those, who require from the rest of the world a Submission to their Doctrines. We may with Confidence press the *word of Exhortation* upon our Hearers, when we our selves are willing to receive it in our Turn ; but when we *set at nought all Counsel ;*  
and

*and think our selves superiour to all kind of reproof, I see not how it is possible for us to speak, and to exhort, and to rebuke with all Authority. To conclude — As we are subject to like Passions with the rest of the World, Let us not be ashamed to be treated like Men. Let no Truth whatever be unwelcome to us. Let us Learn to distinguish a Flatterer from a Friend.*

Then shall we be heard with Candour and Submission; if the necessity of the Times, and the *gainsaying of unreasonable and foolish Men* shall call upon us to *magnify our Office*; and every Lover of *Truth and Virtue* will bear witness of our impartial dealing, tho' the *Enemies of Religion* cease not to cry aloud, *Ye take too much upon You, Ye Sons of Aaron.*

F I N I S.





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