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THE
WORSHIP OF IMAGINATIONS:

A

SERMON

BY

BISHOP ANDREWES.

EDITED BY THE

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LATE OF CLARE HALL, CAMBRIDGE;

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TO THE REVEREND
WILLIAM STANLEY GODDARD D.D.

THIS SERMON

IS BY PERMISSION INSCRIBED,

WITH FEELINGS OF THE GREATEST RESPECT

AND ESTEEM,

BY THE EDITOR.



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P R E F A C E.

THE age in which we live is peculiarly the age of a trial of principles, in which a great, and (as we believe) the *last* assault is making, by the enemy of souls, against the citadel of our Sion. We are attacked by our two most powerful foes, Popery and Dissent, from without; and we are weakened by divisions amongst ourselves from within.

In this hour of danger it becomes us not to sit down in quietness, and suffer error to maintain its onward course, unchecked and unnoticed; but to arise from the slumber of security, to buckle on our armour, and to stand in the gap against the enemy. Yet, let us remember, it is the standard of the Lord we are to lift against him; that we are not to fight with fleshly weapons, not to unsheathe the sword of persecution, nor to give utterance to the language of taunt and reviling, but to listen to the objections of

our adversaries with seriousness and sobriety; to invite, to *challenge* discussion, and to refer all our disputes, whether about Church discipline or doctrine, to the authority of Scripture and the voice of history. This is the only way to convince the gainsayers, to prevent the spread of their dangerous heresies, and to root men in the faith which was once committed to the saints. For, certain it is, that the Truth will, by God's blessing, ultimately prevail: let us use the best means by which it may be promoted, and we may safely leave the result to Him!

Under this conviction, the Editor thinks he may benefit the cause of true religion, if he give to the world, in a portable and readable form, a Sermon on the *Worship of Imaginations*, by Bishop Andrewes, a man who was the glory of his own times, and whose writings are entitled to the admiration of posterity, for the immense learning they contain, and for the deep spirit of piety and of eloquence which pervades them. "He was," says his friend and biographer, in his Funeral Sermon, "as all our English world well knows, a singular preacher, and a most famous writer. He was so singular a preacher, and so profound a writer, that you will doubt in which he did excel; whose weapons in the mouths of his

adversaries proved stones in the teeth of dogs; while they thought to withstand or answer them, they bit the stones, and broke their own teeth; and so it is true of him, '*Responsa ejus sine responsionibus,*' His answers were answerless.

“Death hath bereaved us of him; but his life, and his works of learning, and his works of piety and charity, I doubt not, but God, in His goodness, will make them a monument more lasting than brass and stone, even to the coming of our Lord Christ.”

ANDOVER,
May 25th, 1839.



A
S E R M O N,
&c.

ACTS ii. 22.

And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

THE intention of this discourse is to acquaint the reader with sundry imaginations in religion, which men in different ages have invented, and which many unstable souls have embraced, in opposition to the four points mentioned in the text.

That there are such imaginations it is evident, from Scripture. Under the law¹ Solomon complains that "mankind have found out many inventions, whereby they were drawn aside from that rectitude of soul in which they were created." Under the Gospel likewise, St. Paul² speaks of a certain "wind of doctrine," by which Christians were "tossed to and fro, and carried away from the steadfastness of the

¹ Eccles. vii.

² Eph. iv. 14.

truth." It is since the preaching of the Gospel indeed, that these imaginations have most abounded. For our ghostly enemy, seeing that "the gods of wood and stone were utterly abolished," has used his utmost endeavour to set up various idols in men's hearts, so that the people might bow down to and worship them, instead of the *material* images which they had been wont to reverence. His constant practice is, either to broach new opinions, and such as were never heard of before, or to revive and new-dress the old. These imaginations are expressed in Scripture by different names: with respect to him who inspires them, they are called "the doctrine of *devils*;" and with reference to the instruments by which he utters them, they are called "the doctrines of *men*." The men who held and taught such corruptions were, according to the classification of St. Paul, of two sorts:—"wolves which from without, entered into the Church," and men which "arose from among themselves, teaching perverse things." Those who "entered" from without were either philosophers from the Gentiles, or Pharisees from the Jews; both of which introduced many imaginations into Christianity.

Against these St. Paul gives a double warning: he bids his converts not to be seduced by the philosophy, falsely so called, of the one, nor by the human tradition and rudiments of the other. And well might the Apostle raise his voice so loudly and strongly against them.

For, from these two sources proceeded a great part of the heresies which afterwards ensued in the Church. Each of these sects esteeming their old wine good, and consequently mingling it with the new wine of the Gospel.

It appears from ecclesiastical history, that the first of all heretics was *Simon Magus*. He was a heathen philosopher, who was converted to Christianity, but afterwards, through "the gall of bitterness" in which he was, fell away from the faith, and devised many strange fancies. His followers were remarkable for doting about curious, unprofitable questions, which led to strife rather than godly edifying.

After him, arose those two great heresies, which so grievously troubled the Church: first, that of the Manichee, who brought a *necessity* upon all things, by means of his two principles of good and evil; making men careless how they lived, because it was decreed by fate, what should become of them hereafter: and, 2dly, that of the Pelagian, who ascribed to man full power to keep God's law, by his own unassisted strength, thereby making void the grace of Christ. Both these were bastard slips of corrupt philosophy: the former an imagination issuing from the sect of the Stoicks, and their fatal destiny: the latter an imagination coming from the Peripateticks, and their pure naturals.

As all curious speculation came from the philosophers of the Gentiles, so whatsoever superstitious

observations were imagined, came from the Pharisees, and sects of the Jews. As Simon Magus is reckoned the first heretic, so Ebion the Jew is accounted the *second*. From him sprang the opinion of the necessity of Jewish observances, which was the occasion of the council in Acts xv; and the opinion of worshipping angels (as mediators,) which St. Paul notices and condemns in Col. ii. 18.

Now from these two descriptions of persons have proceeded the great means, whereby (as in two moulds) all imaginations have been cast, and the truth of God's word ever perverted: from the Jew came the piecing out the new garment with the old rags of tradition; the adding to, and eking out God's word with the fancies of men, with the phylacteries and fringes of the Pharisees. From the philosopher came the wresting and torturing of the Scriptures, which St. Peter ¹ complains of, with far-fetched exposition, and newly-coined glosses, designed to make them speak that which they never meant; giving such strange senses to passages in the Bible, as the Church of Christ never heard of. And, indeed, what words are there, or can there be, that, being helped out with the Pharisees' addition of an unwritten authority, or distorted with the philosopher's twist of a double sense, may not be made to give a colour to a new imagination? Therefore the ancient Fathers thought it right, that they who

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 16.

would take upon themselves to interpret the Apostles' doctrine, should put in sureties that the senses they gave, were no other than the Church in former time did acknowledge. The Apostles spoke by the Spirit, and every word they uttered was an oracle ; but this, I take it, was *their peculiar privilege*. All that come after them speak not by *Revelation*. They can only expect to be masters of the Scriptures, by labouring in the word, and in such studies as help to the understanding of the same. And, even then, they are not to give utterance to their own fancies, and to challenge belief upon their own single and unsupported assertion ; but only on condition that the meaning they put upon any passage is not imaginative, but such an one as has been before admitted by our fathers and forerunners in the Christian faith. " Say I this thing of *myself?*" asks the Apostle ; " saith not the law also the same ?" " Give I this sense of mine own head ? has not Christ's Church always heretofore given the like ?" Which one rule, if it were adhered to, would rid our Church of many fond and foolish conceits, which are now troubling it daily, because every man, upon his own responsibility, is trusted to deliver the meaning of any Scripture ; which meaning is often nothing else than his own *imagination* !

2. From among the Christians themselves arose "men speaking perverse things," whom St. Paul well calls "brethren *unawares* brought in." These corrupted the Apostles' doctrine, both as to the

foundation of Christianity itself, and the building erected upon it. Repentance and faith are the two corner-stones of Christianity ; concerning both of which grievous errors have arisen.

“Nicolas, one of the seven,” as Eusebius testifies, “became a man of imagination, and began the sect of Nicolaitans,” whom, saith St. John, “God hateth.” After him arose Carpocrates, from whom sprang the sect of the Gnostics ; a sect which destroyed that part of the foundation, which is termed, “*Repentance from dead works.*” For they held that all things besides faith were perfectly indifferent—repentance, and every thing else ; and, that provided a man embraced certain metaphysical postulates and positions, he was sure of being saved, however bad his life might be. From their holding these sublime opinions, they gave themselves the name of Gnostics, *i. e.* Men of *Knowledge* ; and all other Christians that could not reason and discourse like them, they accounted poor, simple souls. Such is the imagination in our times of carnal gospellers ; who maintain, that so long as a man does not forget his creed, he cannot err. These are the Gnostics of our age.

The other part of the foundation called *Faith*, was attacked by Tatianus, a Christian, and a very learned man. He founded the sect of the Encratites ; who, offended at the licentious lives of the Gnostics, fell into the opposite extreme of error ; and held, that it was of no consequence how or what a man believed, if his life was honest and good ; for it was that only

which God regarded ; and that, in every sect, a man might be saved, provided he lived well. These, from their sober and temperate habits, styled themselves Encratites—*i. e. strict livers* ; and all other Christians who did not observe the same austerity with themselves, Psychicos, carnal men.

Such in our days is the imagination of the moral man, who, while he is correct and honest in his conduct, cares nothing for faith and the mysteries of the Gospel Religion. These we may call the *Encratites* of our age.

IMAGINATIONS TOUCHING THE BUILDING, *a secondary part of the apostolical doctrine, and not of the same necessity with the former.*

There were a sect, Epiphanius writes, a branch of the old Cathari, or Puritans, as he says, who called themselves "*Apostolici*," from an extraordinary desire they had, above other men, to have discipline, and all things, according to the exact pattern of the Apostles' days, which is in itself an imagination. For it were a mere apish imitation, to retain all that was in use in the first ages of Christianity, seeing many things were intended to be but *temporary*, as being suited only to the state of the infant Church.

Besides their canons in matters of knowledge, they had their dogmas or decrees, which were not of lasting importance ; as their command "to abstain from things strangled, and from blood," which no man now thinks himself bound to observe ; and their injunction

to keep the Agapæ, or love-feasts; and to celebrate the Sacrament after supper, which no Church at this day considers itself obliged to imitate. Therefore, to suppose that all is to be observed now, exactly as it was *then*, is an *imagination*!

And so it is, to suppose, that of the things which remain, and were intended to be perpetual, all are of equal necessity and importance, which was the error of the *Donatists*. For some things the Apostles peremptorily commanded; some they had no commandment for, but only gave counsel concerning. Each of which was to be esteemed according to its own value and worthiness: the commandment was not to be dispensed with, nor was a matter of necessity to be made of the counsel.

Now, respecting these matters of counsel, which for the most part are things indifferent, men have framed two *imaginations*; some say, "All things are lawful for me," and so long as the thing is not condemned as positively wrong, make no scruple to do it, which tends to all profaneness: others say, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," regarding things indifferent as actually sinful; which plainly ends in superstition.

A middle way should be kept between both these extremes; so that neither a snare be cast on men's consciences, by turning inexpediency into unlawfulness, nor our liberty in Christ be made "an occasion to the flesh," by doing away with inexpediency altogether. For the Spirit of Christ is the spirit of ingenuity, which will freely submit itself to that which is

expedient, even in things of their own nature lawful. The not observing whereof with good heed and discretion, hath in old time filled the world with many a superstitious imagination, and in our days hath changed the sin of superstition and hypocrisy, into that of riot and licentious liberty.

I take it to be a fancy, to imagine there need no ceremonies in the Church; for without them neither comeliness nor order will be observed. "Women will pray uncovered," unless the Apostle enjoin the contrary; therefore, "Let every thing be done decently and in order." Now, to prescribe what is comely and orderly in every age and place, is left in the power, and at the discretion of each church: "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us¹." And the custom of each Church is peaceably to be observed by the members of it. In a matter of ceremony, touching the veiling of women, (after some reasons alleged, which yet a troublesome person might be disposed to quarrel with), thus does St. Paul determine the question definitively. "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God²." As if he had said, in things of that nature, the custom of each church is to be paramount in authority.

It has been thought meet, (says St. Gregory,) that there should be "in unitate fidei consuetudo diversa;" that there should be a diversity of customs, *in a unity of faith*, to show the Church's liberty in such matters.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv.

² 1 Cor. xi. 16.

And, therefore, the eating of things offered to idols, which was entirely forbidden the churches of Syria and Cilicia, seems in some degree permitted to the church of Corinth, provided the conscientious scruples of any weak brother were not offended by it.

And as it has been judged requisite for different churches to have different customs, so it has been deemed no less requisite, that every person should observe inviolably the rites and ordinances of his own church, under pain of the anathema which St. Paul has denounced against all persons that are contentious and troublesome.

Then again, with regard to the mode of delivery, men must give vent to their imaginations. When they can make no exception against the matter of a discourse, they will still have it delivered after some particular manner, or they will not hear it at all; and therefore "will heap up to themselves teachers," after their own liking, "having *itching ears*." They must hear no Latin nor Greek: no; though it be interpreted. A mere imagination! For, the Apostle writing to the Corinthians, who were Grecians, has not scrupled to use terms as strange to them, as Latin or Greek is to us. (*E. g.* Maranatha, Belial, Abba.) All which words he might easily have expressed in their own language, had he not chosen to retain his liberty in this point. Nor any of the Apocrypha cited: another imagination. For St. Jude, we see, in his Epistle, (14th ver.) has quoted out of

the Book of Enoch, which book has been always reckoned apocryphal.

And, following his example, all the ancient Fathers constantly quote these apocryphal writings, esteeming them next to the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures, and preferring them before all heathen authors whatsoever.

Nor any thing alleged out of the Jewish Talmud,—a third imagination. For, from their records, St. Paul is supposed to have taken the names of the sorcerers that withstood Moses, Jannes and Jambres, who neither in Exodus, nor any other part of Scripture, are once named. Besides, from the Talmud, many other obscure things in the New Testament receive great light; and by that the Jews themselves are clearly confuted.

But especially is a Heathen example or authority objected to; a thing which the primitive Church never imagined it unlawful to introduce.

They used it, because they find St. Paul doing the same. They find him quoting Aratus, a heathen poet, in his sermon at Athens¹; and again, Menander, a writer of comedy, in his Epistle to the Corinthians².

They used it, as the Apostle did, to provoke Christian men to emulation; by showing them their own blindness in spiritual knowledge; in that they saw

¹ "As certain also of your own poets have said, *For we are also his offspring.*" Acts xvii. 28.

² "Evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Cor. xv. 33.

not so much, by revelation, as the Heathen did by the light of nature; and their remissness in well doing, in that they did not proceed so far in the path of duty, by the law of God, as the poor Pagan did by his philosophy.

IMAGINATIONS TOUCHING THE APOSTLES'
FELLOWSHIP.

The doctrine of the Apostles, when it is received, incorporates the receivers of it into a society, which is called the fellowship of the Gospel; and they that do not acknowledge such doctrine, are in no wise to be admitted into it. Which fellowship is not to be forsaken, as the manner of some in our days is, either because there are heresies, for "there must needs be" such; or because many at the Communion "come together, not for the better, but for the worse," for so they did at Corinth; or lastly, because that "many Christians walk" (of whom St. Paul wrote with tears) "*as enemies to the cross of Christ;*" for so it was at the Church of Philippi.

Now it is plain, that no society can endure without government; and therefore in this society hath God appointed governors and assistants, who have authority from Him to reject or receive accusations, and to judge those that are within, and of the Fellowship. It is an idle imagination, which some have formed, to hold the Church has not her judgment-seat, and power to censure her disobedient children. It has ever been considered good divinity, that the

Church from Christ received power to censure and separate wilful offenders, both with the heathen man's separation, who was not allowed so much as to enter into the Church-door, (which is the greater censure,) and the publican's separation, (which is the less,) who was permitted to enter, and pray in the Temple, but was avoided in common conversation, in the fellowship of the private table, and, therefore, much more in that of the Altar.

The former separation, the Apostle calls "cutting off¹," the latter "withdrawing from²." So that, to fancy there is no government in the Church, is an *imagination*. A government there undoubtedly is. Touching the form of which government, many imaginations have lately been bred, in these our days especially.

At the time when the verse in the text was written, it is certain that the government of Christians consisted in two degrees only—of the twelve, and of the seventy; both of which were "over the people in things pertaining to God," and of both of which our Saviour Christ *was the author*.

These two orders were not equal in rank, but one was superior to the other. And that the Apostles established an equality in the clergy is (I take it) an *imagination*. No man could perish in the gainsaying of Corah³ under the Gospel, which St. Jude says he may, if there were not a superiority in the clergy. For the

¹ Gal. v. 12.

² 2 Thess. ii. 3. 6.

³ Jude 11.

origin of Corah's mutiny was, because he could not be equal to Aaron, who had been appointed his superior by God. And it is very observable, that the same disposition of pride and envy, and unwillingness to submit to authority which Corah evinced, has occasioned most part of the heresies which have arisen since the promulgation of Christianity. Of these two orders, the Apostles have always been considered the chief. We find Silas, one of the Seventy, receiving *a commandment* from Paul an Apostle to come unto him; and we find Paul and Barnabas, *Apostles*, be it observed, "ordaining elders in every city¹."

Now, in the place of the Twelve, succeeded Bishops, and, in the place of the Seventy, Presbyters, Priests, or Ministers; and that by the judgment of Irenæus², who lived immediately after the Apostles' age; of Tertullian³, and of St. Augustine⁴. And this, until lately, was thought the form of the Apostles' fellowship. No other was imagined.

But not long since, some have fancied another form that should consist of "*Lay elders*, Pastors, and Doctors, and whether of Deacons⁵," too, is not fully

¹ Acts xvii. 15.

² Lib. iii. cap. 3.

³ De Præscript.

⁴ In Psalm xliv.

⁵ This was written in the year 1592, at which time the Independent form of Church government was not finally determined on.

"The first Independent Church in England was established by a Mr. Jacob, in the year 1616; though a Mr. Robinson appears to have been the founder of this sect."—*Evans's Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World.*

agreed on yet; which device is pressed now upon our Church, not as a form of more convenience than that which it has, but as one *absolutely necessary*, as the only one, indeed, that Christ instituted, which makes it the less sufferable. I am aware, that, by virtue of that twisting and wrenching of the Scriptures, which has been before remarked on, some passages may be brought which may seem to give countenance to such a system. That is, supposing we admit those new-glossed senses. But, if we inquire what meaning the Primitive Church gave to such texts, not one of them will be found to give it any support. And finding it unknown to the Fathers of our faith, I know not what to term it, but an *imagination*.

If we refer our opponents to Scripture, and ask them where this new form of ecclesiastic polity is to be found there, they pass by the two plainest and most evident texts¹ which allude to Church government; because in the one there is no mention made of pastors, and in the other nothing is said about lay-elders, and lay the foundation of it upon another passage; in which, by a strange and unheard of exposition, they pretend to find all their four offices, viz. lay-elders, pastors, doctors, and deacons². But

¹ "And God hath set some in the Church; first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Cor. xii. 28.

"And he gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." Ephes. iv. 11.

² "Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is

there is nothing whatever said about these offices in this text, unless the explanation which dissenters give of it be allowed; nor if the ancient writers may be heard, as to what the true sense of it is. There is no Epistle on which so many of the Fathers have written—six only I will name: Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Ambrose, Hierome, Œcumenius—all these have treated on it; let their commentaries upon this text be consulted. Not one of them applies it to Church government, which undoubtedly they would have done, if that had been the chief place from whence the origin of it is derived, or find those offices in these words, which our adversaries would make us believe are there.

But if the advocates of this new system cannot prove that their offices are mentioned altogether, let us see how they attempt to discover them singly. Of their elders, some both preach and govern; some govern only. These latter are called lay-elders; and they imagine they find this office mentioned by St. Paul, in his first Epistle to Timothy¹: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and in doctrine;” which words imply, as they say, that there are Presbyters who do not labour in preaching.

given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.” Rom. xii. 6—8.

¹ 1 Tim. v. 17.

Let us hear St. Chrysostom ¹, and we shall find a far different sense given to this passage: "To preach," says he, "is the office of very few; but to baptize belongs to any one, provided only he be in the priesthood." And again: "Since indeed we commit this office of baptizing to Presbyters, who are of a more common order; but the teaching of the word, only to the wiser sort. This duty requires wisdom. Wherefore he (the Apostle) says elsewhere: 'They who exercise the office of a deacon well, are worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word.'" By which it is evident, that in St. Chrysostom's time, it was not considered right that every one who administered the Sacraments, should also preach; that the inferior clergy had to do with baptizing, and those of a higher order with delivering the word. And to prove it should be so, he cites this very text ², as if, in the Apostles' days the same was thought to be wisdom. But as for lay-elders, he finds no mention made of them in the passage; nor were any such, in all antiquity, ever understood by the word Presbyter.

The preaching elders they divide into Pastors and

¹ On 1 Cor. i. 17. "Evangelizare perpaucorum est; baptizare autem cujuslibet, modo fungatur sacerdotio."

"Siquidem Presbyteris quidem, qui simpliciores sunt, hoc munus tradimus, ut baptizent; verbum autem ut doceant, non nisi sapientioribus: hic sapientia est labor.

"Quamobrem et alibi inquit: Qui bene præsumt Presbyteri, duplici honore digni sunt, maxime qui laborant in verbo."

² 1 Tim. v. 17.

Doctors, and to each of these they assign different functions; limiting the one to ~~the~~ exhortation only, and the other to points of doctrine only¹; a distinction which none of the Fathers would ever admit.

St. Chrysostom² considers them both as one, and makes no difference between them. So does St. Hierome in his two Commentaries on the same Epistle³: for “every pastor,” says he, “is a doctor.”

But St. Augustine alone may serve, instead of many authorities, to show how unknown this distinction was in the early ages of the Church. He being applied to by Paulinus, to assign the difference between a Pastor and a Doctor, thus answers him⁴: “I think that Pastors and Doctors, between whom you have much wished that I should point out the difference, are *the same*; as it appears also to you, that we should not understand Pastors and Doctors to be different persons; for he (the Apostle) has embraced them as one office under two names.”

¹ “They hold that the supreme office of the pastor is to preach the word publicly to the congregation.—That in every church there should also be a doctor to instruct and catechize the ignorant in the main principles of religion.”—*Neale's History of the Puritans*, vol. i. p. 449.

² Upon Ephes. iv. 11.

³ “Omnis enim pastor doctor est.”

⁴ “Pastores autem et Doctores, quos maxime ut discerneremus voluisti, eosdem puto esse sicut et tibi visum est, ut non alios Pastores, alios Doctores, intelligeremus, &c. Hos enim sicut unum aliquod duobus nominibus complexus est.” *Aug. Ep. 59, ad Paulinum.*

Lastly. With regard to Deacons : that they should be men of occupation, to deal with the Church-stock, and to take care of the poor only. This also, I doubt not, is an *imagination*, seeing all antiquity have considered that office as a step to the ministry¹. And that the Church's practice has been always to employ them in other functions, besides that of merely ministering to the poor, is plain from Justin Martyr², who says that part of their office was to distribute the elements at the Communion ; and from Tertullian³, who says that they used to baptize.

So that we may safely conclude, however great the number of deceived persons may be, who bow down to and worship them, that these are imaginations touching the Apostles' fellowship.

IMAGINATIONS TOUCHING THE BREAKING OF BREAD.

Breaking of bread is joined to "the Apostles' fellowship," as being the chief badge of their society. For by it is meant the Communion, as may be gathered by comparing the text with Acts xx. 7⁴; and also from the translation of the Syriac version.

¹ "For they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. iii. 13.

² Who lived A. D. 140.

³ Who lived A. D. 200.

⁴ "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to *break bread*, Paul preached unto them."

And this is the highest mystery of Christianity : as by the other sacrament in the verse immediately preceding ¹, persons are grafted into the body of the Church, so by this they are joined unto Christ, and made one with Him !

Concerning which sacrament the Church of Rome has her imaginations : first, in supposing that by privately celebrating it, as she does in the sacrifice of masses, it can benefit the souls of those for whom it is offered. For in truth it is entirely of the nature of an Eucharist, or peace-offering, which was never offered up unless it was eaten, that so there might both be a memorial of the sacrifice, together with an application of it to each individual by participation.

And, secondly, she errs when she administers the Communion, in not *breaking bread at all*. For, as she believes the material element is changed in the act of consecration into the very body of Christ, and as the body of Christ is impassable, and cannot be divided, when they break the Sacred Host they are fain to say they break accidents, *i. e.* the sign or figure of it ². In direct contradiction to St. Luke here, who

¹ "Then they that gladly received the word were *baptized* : and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

² "Fracto demum Sacramento,
Ne vacilles, sed memento
Tantum esse sub fragmento,
Quantum toto tegitur.

[" Nulla

calls the communion "*breaking of bread*," and to St. Paul, who says, "The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

As these are some of the imaginations of the Romanists respecting the Communion, so have we also our own.

For many amongst us look upon this ordinance of our religion in the light of a sacrament only, and think it strange to regard it as a sacrifice.

Whereas we not only use it as a means of spiritual nourishment, but as a means also to renew a covenant with God by virtue of that sacrifice ¹.

So our Saviour Christ, in His institution of it, tells us ²; and the Apostle ³, and the old writers, use the

" Nulla rei fit scissura,
Signi tantum fit fractura
Qua nec status, nec statura,
Signati minuitur."

Petit Eucologe, pp. 111. *Le Jour du S. Sacrement à la Messe.*

"After pronouncing the words of consecration, the priest kneeling, adores, and elevates the Sacred Host; and afterwards the priest breaks the Sacred Host into two parts, from one of which he detaches a little particle." *Rock's Liturgy of the Mass.*

¹ As the Psalmist speaks, Ps. l. 5, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a *covenant* with me by *sacrifice*."

² "And he took bread, and gave thanks; and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Luke xxii. 19, 20.

³ "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Heb. xiii. 10.

terms *Sacrifice*, as well as *Sacrament*,—*Altar*, as well as *Table*—to *offer*, as well as to *eat*,—indifferently, to show there are both these benefits in the Lord's Supper.

And, again, to many of us, the Communion is so much a mere "breaking of bread," as to be that only, and nothing besides : whereas, "the bread which we break is," as St. Paul speaks, "the Communion of *the body of Christ*." And the Church has always believed there to be a spiritual fruition of the body of Christ in that Sacrament ¹.

Further, it is an *imagination* to think that this breaking of bread can be severed from that which Isaiah calls "the breaking of bread to the needy ²." For in the sacrifice of the Passover ³, (which was a type of the Sacrament,) it was enjoined that every one should present some offering unto the Lord, which commandment was so express, that the poorest persons were not exempt from its observance.

¹ In strict accordance with Scripture, and the Primitive Church, is our Catechism.

"*Ques.* What is the outward part, or sign of the Lord's Supper ?

Ans. Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

"*Ques.* What is the inward part, or thing signified ? *Ans.* The body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken, and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

"*Ques.* What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby ?

Ans. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls, by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine."

² Isaiah lviii. 7.

³ Deut. xvi. 16.

And our Saviour's practice at this feast was to command something to be given to the poor¹. And last of all the Agapæ, or love-feasts, for the relief of the poor, which were held after the Sacrament, do most plainly express the custom of the Church in this particular. In place whereof when they became inconvenient, and fell into disuse, succeeded the Christian Offertory.

And while we are constant in the doctrine and prayers of the Church, we are too often neglectful of this Sacrament. As long as we receive it, perhaps once in the year, we think our duty to Christ is discharged, which, doubtless, is an *imagination*. For surely we should continue also in this breaking of bread, if not as often as the primitive Christians² did, yet as often as the Church now celebrates the Communion.

And those reasons which we commonly allege as an hindrance to this duty, make us no less meet to say our prayers, than to receive the Sacrament. For except a man³ abandon the purpose of sin, and

¹ "For some of them thought because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things which we have need of against the feast: or, *that he should give something to the poor.*" John xiii. 29.

² Who partook of the sacrament either thrice, or at least once in the week.

³ "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. lxvi. 18.

except he be in charity ¹, he is no more fit to pray, than he is to communicate; and, therefore, should abstain from one as well as from the other: or, rather, by forsaking the ways of sin, and by rooting all uncharitableness out of his heart, should prepare himself for both these duties: continuing no less in breaking of bread, than in prayers.

As the former of these is the most special exercise of a Christian, and chiefest in dignity; so is the latter the most general and principal in practice. Therefore does the Apostle, in the text, put it in the plural number, as if in every ordinance of religion, and in every situation of life, it had its use, as indeed it has ².

And in this we want not for imaginations; particularly in this age wherein an idle conceit is taken up, that never once entered into the heads of any of the old heretics, however mad they were; which is this, that the Lord's Prayer ought not to be used. Yes, notwithstanding our Saviour commands us, "When we pray to say, Our Father, which art in heaven:"

¹ "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Matt. vi. 14.

² "I exhort therefore, that, *first of all*, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men." 1 Tim. ii. 1.

"*In every thing give thanks*, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thess. v. 17.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Eph. vi. 18.

the imagination of some in our time is, that we are in no case to say that form, with which, (if St. Augustine is to be believed as a witness of antiquity) the universal Church of Christ has always been accustomed to begin and end her prayers; striving, indeed, by various other forms, more largely to express its sense; but not being able to come near the high art, and most excellent spirit of perfection in that pattern, they always conclude with it, being confident that by so doing, they shall be certain to beg all things necessary at God's hands.

Besides, as the Church of Rome has *her* imaginations respecting prayers; first, in setting the people to pray they know not what, in opposition to St. Paul's words, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the *understanding* also:" and again, in making them repeat whole rosaries and psalters, as if much babbling after the heathen manner were acceptable to God; contrary to our Saviour's command, "When ye pray use not vain repetitions as the heathen do." So likewise do others amongst ourselves err no less than the Romanists on this point, and that against the same places in Scripture—against the Apostle's practice, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding;" by finding fault with a set liturgy, and by using only extemporaneous prayers, in which they so occupy their minds with devising still what they shall say next, as to make it evident that their spirit is unfruitful, no less than their hearers' understanding.

And both these, the understanding of the mind, and the affection of the spirit, are indispensable requisites in prayer.

And against our Saviour's command, not to use vain repetitions—by using, (instead of the rosaries and psalters of the Roman Catholics,) *great length of prayer*. And this they take to be a proof of the power of godliness; but indeed it is nothing but the former superstition reversed. In which extempore delivery, whoever marks it, will find that the dissenters commit two faults—that of the Pharisee in tedious length, occasioning often a nauseousness and weariness of spirit, and that of the heathen, in vain repetitions, tautologies, irrational conclusions, and all the other absurdities which belong to this description of prayer. St. Cyprian says, “It was always considered a vain thing in the Church, (which some count their glory), to breathe out prayers with undigested words¹.” The absurdity whereof would better appear, if, seeing under the word “prayers” here, psalms and spiritual songs are contained, both being parts of invocation—those who object to written prayers were to use no written *psalms*, but conceive their songs too, as well as their prayers, from the momentary inspiration of the Spirit, and so sing them. For to say the truth, there is no more reason for the one than for the other.

In defence of having a set ritual for public devotion, we maintain that Christ's Church has always

¹ “Ventilare preces inconditis vocibus.”

had a form of prayer¹, as well as of doctrine, which the Fathers in all ages have called a liturgy or service of God.

These are some out of many imaginations which have been set up and adored, under the names of the *Apostles' doctrine, government, sacrament, and prayer.*

St. Stephen² tells us, out of the 5th of Amos, that if we do thus make to ourselves tabernacles and figures to worship them, our punishment shall be, to be carried away beyond Babylon; and good reason there is that we should. For these idle fancies, which have been named, come not from Christ's Church, from Sion, the abode of unity and peace, but from Babel, the city of confusion; and, if we delight in them, thither shall we be carried. And certain it is, that we are already a good distance on our way there. For, as in that city, any philosopher

¹ "As they *ministered** to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and *prayed*, they sent them away." Acts xiii. 2.

² Acts vii. 43.

* The word in the Greek, is *λειτουργούντων*, so it was a *liturgical* service which they performed.

It is the opinion of Mr. Palmer, in his *Origines Liturgicæ*, that the four earliest Liturgies in the Church, had all one common source, which was probably of apostolical origin. At any rate, certain it is that the majority of our Collects have been in use upwards of 1400 years.

might set up and dispute as he pleased without molestation, so amongst ourselves every founder of a sect may broach whatever opinions he pleases with impunity.

And sure it is, as the Prophet tells us, that if the confusion of Babylon does thus go before, the captivity of Babylon is not far behind. From which captivity may Almighty God deliver us, and enable us so to continue in the Apostles' Doctrine, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread, and in Prayers, that we neither bow down to nor worship any of these imaginations. Amen!



THE END.