

Of the signs and wonders of Antichrist.

and by his Apostle doth teach vs, how the disciples of Antichrist, with they head, should shine through their great signes and wonders: But the true disciples of Christ, shall not so do, in the time of Antichrist. For as S. Hieronim sayth in his first booke, 22. De summo bono: Before that Antichrist shall appeare, all vertues and signes shall cease from the Church, that he may the boldier persecute the same, as an abiect. For this profit, shall all miracles and signes cease, vnder Antichrist, that thereby the patience of the holy me might be known, and the lightnes of the reprobate, which are offeded, may be opened, & also that the cruelty of y^e persecuters shuld be made more feare. Thus writeth S. Hieronim, & S. Gregory in his 24. booke of Morals, sayth: For why by a terrible examination of Gods secret dispensatio, shall all signes of vertue, or power be take away from the holy church, before that the Leviathan appeare, in y^e most wicked and damnable man, whose shape, he doth take vpon him. For prophesy is hidden, the gift of healing is take away, the vertue of idg abstinence, is deminshed, y^e words of doctrine is put to silence, and the wonderfull workes of miracles are extingulshed, which things, nothing can vterly take away; but onely the dispensation of God. But this dispensatio, is not so openly & manifestly declared, as it hath bene in times past, the which also is done by a maruelous dispensation, that through one onely thing, both Gods loue & iustice shoud be fulfilled. For a while y^e power of miracles, being taken away, the holy church appereth the more abiect and forsaken, and the reward of good men doth cease, which reuerced the same for the hope of beautly riches, & not for any present signes: And that the minds of euill men agaynst the same, might y^e sooner be knowne, which neglect to folow y^e inuisible thinges, which y^e church doth promise, whyles they be led with visibill signes.

Why true miracles shall cease vnder Antichrist.

Forso much then, as the humility of the faithfull is, as it were destitute of the multitude, and appering of signes, by the terrible working of Gods secret dispensation, wher by mercy is geue vnto the god and iust, wrath heaped vpo the euill. For so much then it is truly said, that before this Leviathan, shall playnely and manifestly come, pouerty shall go before his face, for before that time, y^e riches of miracles shalbe taken away from the saythfull. Then shall that ancient enemy, shew himselfe agaynst them, by open wonders: That as he is extolled through signes & wonders, so shall he be the more manly be vanquished of y^e saythfull, without any signes or miracles. Also, in his 16. booke vpon this word, which the blessed man Job sayde, who shall repchend his way before him, or who shall cast in his teeth, what he hath done, whilest he did speake of the body of all euill, he suddenly conuerted his speake vnto the head of all the wicked, for he did see, that toward the end of the world Sathan shoud enter into man whom the scripture calleth Antichrist, he shalbe extolled with such pride, he shall rule with such power, he shal be exalted with such signes, & wonders, vnder the pretence of holynes, that his doing can not be cotrolled of me, for so much, as his signes & tokens are ioined with power, & terror, & with a certain shew of holynes, wherfore he saith who shall controll his wayes before him, what man is he, that dare once rebuke or check him, whose looke or countenance, is he afraid of? But notwithstanding, not onely Enoc & Elias the which are brought as ample for his eprobation, but also all the elect do argue & reprove his way, whiles that they do contemne and by the force and power of their minde, resist his malice: But for so much as this thing is not done by their owne power or strength, but by Gods helpe and grace, therefore is it very well sayd, who shall argue or reprove his waies before him who but onely God: By whose helpe the elect are ayded, and made able to resist.

Job. xxiiiij.

The description of Antichrist out of S. Gregory.

And a little after, vpon the same booke of Job Gregory sayth, in so much as holy men do withstād his iniquity: It is not they theselues which do so rebuke his wayes, but it is he, thozowe whose helpe they are strengthened. Also, in his second booke he sayth: now the holy Church doth not regarde, but despise the signes and miracles of the heretikes if they do any: for so much as y^e Church doth sufficiently vnderstand, that it is no kind of holynes: for why, y^e profte of holynes, is not to make signes or widders, but to loue euery man as him selfe, to thinke truly of the very true God, & to thinke better of thy neighbor then of thy selfe: for true vertue & holynes, consisteth in loue, and not in shewing of miracles. Whis y^e veritie declareth, saying: hereby shall all men know y^e ye are my disciples, if ye loue one another, but he saith not, hereby me shall know y^e ye are my disciples, because ye do worke miracles, but contrary wise: if ye loue one another, declaring plainly thereby, that it is not miracles, but the mere charitie & loue of God, which maketh vs the seruants of God. wherfore

The prooffe of holynes.

the chiefest testimonny of being Gods disciple, is to haue the gift of brotherly loue. Whis thozow out doth S. Gregory write, and often times in other places, he speaketh verely much of miracles, howe that they shall cease amongst the iust, and abound amongst the wicked.

Also Chrysostome in his 10. Homily, sayth thus, it is a common & an indifferent worke betwene y^e ministers of God & the ministers of the deuill, to cast out deuils, bit to confesse y^e truth and to worke righteousness, is the onely worke of the saints and holy men, therefore whomsoever thou doest see casting out of deuils, if he haue not the confessio of the truth in his mouth, neyther righteousness in his hands, he is not a man of God, but if thou doest see a man openly confessing & declaring the truehe and doing iustice, although he do not cast out no deuils, yet he is the man of God. And it followeth: let vs know that like as at the coming of Christ, before him, y^e prophets, and with him thapostles wrought miracles thozow the holy ghost, for such as the thing is which is stirred, such sent & sanow wil procede fro the same. He writeth also vpon y^e beginning of Mathew, The whole world did maruel & wonder at thre things, y^e Christ rose againe after his deyth, y^e flesh ascended into heaue, & that he did conuert y^e whole world by his xi. apostles: There is iiii. causes which wrought the same. That is to say, y^e contempt of riches or money. The dispising of pomp and glory. The separation of the selues from all worldly occupation and busines, and the patient suffering of tormentes. Thus much writeth Crisostome, also saint Hieronim in his first booke and xxv. cha. De summo bono, writeth thus, like as in the apostles the maruelous effect & power of workes was much more commendable then the vertue of their signes, euen so now in y^e Church is it much more better, to liue wel the to worke any signes or miracles. And the cause why that the church of God doth not at this present worke miracles as it did in the time of the Apostles, is this. That it was necessary at that time that the worde shoud beleeue miracles, and now at this present euery faithfull beleuer ought to shine with good workes, for to this end were signes & miracles then outwardly wrought, that their sayth thereby might be inwardly strengthened and stablished, for what soeuer faithfull man he be that seeketh to worke miracles, he seeketh vaine glozy to be praysed of me, for it is written, miracles are signes and tokens vnto the infidels, & misbeleuers, and not vnto the saythfull, Thus muche wyreth Hieronim.

Signes common and indifferent to the ministers of Christ and Antichrist.

The principall miracles.

The cause why the church now worketh not miracles.

Item Saint Augustine in his Booke of confession sayth thus, there is no greater miracle amongst me, the to loue our enemies. By these wordes of these holy men, a man may easily gather that both in our dayes and in the time to come, y^e disciples of Antichrist both do & shall more flourish and shewe theselues by strange signes & miracles, the the disciples of Christ, according to y^e saying of our sa- uour Iesu Christ. There shall rise vp amongst you false prophets which shall worke strange miracles. Secondly, it is appoyed, that they are greater & stranger miracles, to confesse y^e truth & to do iustice, then to worke any other kind of miracle. Thirdly, it is gathered thereby, that what soeuer minister or deacon doth loue his enemies, contem- neth riches, despiseth the gloyye of the worlde, and flyeth fro al worldly troubles, meekely sustaineth & suffereth most terrible and cruel threathnings and strokes for y^e gos- pel sake, he worketh miracles, hauing thereby a testimo- ny and witness, that he is the true disciple of Iesu Christ. And it is euident by the saying of our sauiour Iesu Christ, Mathew. v. Let your good workes so shine before men: y^e they may see your good workes & glorify your father which is in heauen. And likewise John. x. Trust vnto your good workes, wher vpon Saint Gregory in his first booke of Dialoges, wyreth thus: the estimation of a true life, consisteth in y^e vertue of his workes, and not in y^e shewing of signes, wherby it is fourthly concluded, by y^e which is a- foresaide, that it is a more effectual testimony and witness for a priest or a deacon, that he is sent of God to confesse y^e truth and follow Christ in the foresayde vertues then to cast out deuils, or to do any other miracles. As it is euident by the saying of Chrysostome before alleged, whomsoever thou doest see to cast out deuils, if the confession, or acknow- ledging of the reuer be not in his mouth, neyther righte- outness nor iustice in his handes, he is not a man of God. Whis is also confirmed by the wordes of Christ, Math. 7. Whany shall say vnto me in that day, Lord, Lord, haue not we prophesied in thy name: haue not we cast out deuils in thy name: and haue not we also wrought many great wonders and miracles in thy name? Then I will answer & say vnto them, forso much as I haue not knowng you any time, depart fro me ye workes of iniquity, & as

A great miracle to loue a mans enemy.

The true miracles of Christes ministers.

touching