

The law of loue commaunded in the Gospell.

doctour of the law: what is the greatestt commaundement in the lawe? answered, Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy minde: This is the principall & greatestt commaundement. And as for the second, it is like vnto this: Thou shalt loue thy neighbor as thine owne selfe. In these two commaundements, doth the whole law and Prophets depend. And in an other place Christ sayeth: All maner of things therefore, y you would thinke that men should do to you, the same also do ye vnto them. For thus is the lawe and the Prophets. And in Iohn the 13. chap. sayth Christ. And now doe I say vnto you, I geue you a new commaundement, y you should loue eche other: as I loued you, in like maner that you also should loue one another. In this shal all men know that you are my disciples, if you shall haue loue one towards another. And Iohn 15. chapter: This is my commaundement that you loue together as I haue loued you. Greater loue then this, hath no body, that a man should geue his life for his frendes. The Apostle Peter sayth in his first Epistle 4. chapter: About all things, hauing continually charity one towards another, for charity couereth the multitude of sinnes. Be ye harborers, and intertaine ye one another without grudging: euery one as hee hath receaued grace, so let him bestowe it vpon another man, as the good stewards of the manifold graces of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the word of God. If any man doe ought for another, let it be don with singleness and vnfained desire, ministered of God to vs ward, that in all thyngs God may be honoured through Iesus Christ our Lord. James in his Epistle the 2. chapter. If ye performe the royal lawe accordingly to the Scriptures (thou shalt loue thy neighbor) ye do well: But if ye be parcial in receiuing and preferring mens personages, ye worke wickednes being blamed of the law as transgressors. And againe, so speake ye, and so do ye, as ye should nowe begin to be iudged by the law of libertie. What shall it auaille (my brethren) if a man say he haue faith, and haue no workes? Heuer shall y faith be able to saue him. For if a brother or sister be naked, and haue neede of daily foode, and some of you say to them, goe ye in peace, be ye made warme and satisfied: and if ye shall not geue those things that are necessary for the body, what shall it auaille? Euen so faith, if it haue not workes, is dead in it selfe.

Iohn. 13.

Iohn 15.

1. Pet. 4.

1. Iacob. 2.

1. Iohn. 3.

Iohn in his first epistle the 3. chap. This is the tidings whych you haue heard from the beginning, that you should loue one another. And againe, we know that we are translated from death to life, if we loue the brethren: He that loueth not, abideth in death. And againe, herein do we know the loue of God, because that he hath laide downe hys life for vs, & we ought to lay down our liues for the brethren. He that shall haue the substance of thys world, and shall see his brother haue neede, and shall shut vp hys bowelles from him: howe abideth the loue of God in hym? My little children, let vs not loue in worde nor tounge, but in deede and truth. And againe 4. chap. Most dearly beloued, let vs loue together. For loue is of God, he y loueth not, knoweth not God, for God is loue. In thys thing hath the loue of God appeared in vs, that God hath sent his only begotten sonne into the world, that we should liue by him. Where in is loue: not y we haue loued God, but that he hath first loued vs, and hath sent hys sonne an attonement for oure sinnes. Most dearly beloued, if God haue loued vs: we so ought to loue together. No man hath sene God at any time: if we loue together, God abideth in vs, & hys loue is perfect in vs. And againe, let vs loue God, for he hath first loued vs. If a man shall say, I loue God, & do hate hys brother, he is a lyar. For he that loueth not his brother whom he seeth, howe can he loue God whom he seeth not? And this commaundement haue we of God, y who so loueth God, should loue his brother also. Paule the Apostle in his epistle to the Rom. 13. chapter. Doe ye nothing to no body, sauing that ye should loue together, for he that loueth hys brother hath fulfilled the lawe. For thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not beare fall witness, thou shalt not couet thy neighbors good: and if there be any other commaundement, it is plentifully fulfilled in this word: thou shalt loue thy neighbor as thy selfe. Wherefore the fulfilling of the law is loue.

1. Iohn. 4.

Rom. 13.

2. Cor. 7.

Paule to the Corinthes 5. sayeth: If I should speake with the tonges of men and angels, and yet haue not charity, I am become as it were a peece of sounding metall or tinkling cimball. And if I shall haue all prophetic, & know all misteries, and all knowledge, and shall haue all faith, so that I might remoue mountaines, and yet shall not haue charity: I am nothing. And if I shall geue abroade all my goodes to feede the poore, and shall geue vp my body to be burned, and yet haue not charity: it profiteth mee nothing.

To the Galathians 5. sayeth Paule: For you my brethren, are called into libertie: doe ye not geue your libertie to an occasion of the flesh, but by charity of the spirit, serue ye one another. For all y law is fulfilled in one laying: thou shalt loue thy neighbor as thine owne selfe. To the 2. Ep. 4. chap. he sayth: Therefore that suffer bonds in the Lord, do belect ye, that you would walke worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called, with all humblenes and mildnes, with patience forbearing one another in loue, being carefull to kepe the vnitie of the spirit, in the bond of peace: that you be one body, and one spirit, euen as you be called in one hope of your calling. And againe in the 5. chap. Be ye followers of me, as most deare children, and walke ye in loue as Christ also hath loued vs, and hath deliuered vp himselfe for vs, an offering and sacrifice to God of a sweete sauour. To the Phil. thus hee speaketh in the 1. chap. Dearly let your conseruation be worthy of the Gospell of Christ, that euer when I shall come and see you, or els in mine absence I may heare of you, that you stand stedfast in one spirit, laboring together with one accord for the faith of the Gospell. And in nothing be ye afraid of the aduersaries, whych is to them a cause of damnation, but to you of saluation, and y of God. For to you it is geuen, not onely that you should beleue in him, but also that you should suffer with him, you hauing the lyke fight and battaile that both you haue scene in me, and also now do heare of me. If therefore there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of charity, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of compassion fulfill you my joy, that you may be of one iudgement, hauing one of the selfsame charity, being of one accord, of one maner of iudgement, doing nothing of contention, nor of vaine glory, but in humblenes, accompting other amongst you, euery one better then your selues, not euery body lookyng vpon the things that be hys owne, but those that belong vnto others. And to the Colos. 3. chapter thus he writeth: You therefore as the elect of God, holy, and beloued, put vpon you the bowels of mercy, gentlenesse, humblenes, lowlinesse, modestie, patience, bearing one wyth another, & geuing place to your selues (if any haue a quarel against any body) euen as the Lord forgave you, so do you also. As haue all things haue ye charity, which is the bonde of perfection, and let the peace of Christ triumph in your hearts, in whych peace you also are called in one body. And be ye kinde & thankfull. And to the Thessalonians thus Paule writeth in the 4. chapter. As concerning brotherly charity, we haue no neede to wyte vnto you: for you your selues haue learned of God, that you should loue one another. And the same thing ye do towards all y brethren throughout all Macedonia.

Galatians. 5.

Ephes. 4.

Ephes. 5.

Philip. 1.

Colos. 3.

The. 4.

Out of all these & many other places of the holy scripture it sufficiently appeareth, that the law of Christ is charity, neither is there any vertues commaunded of Christ, or any of hys Apostles to be obserued of the faithfull people, but that it commeth out of charity, or els doeth nourish charity.

The lawe is geuen by Moses, and the truth by Christ. Christ came not to vniolse the lawe and the Prophets, but to fulfill them. But yet many things were lawful & might haue bene obserued in the time of the law, whych in y time of grace must not be obserued. And many things were vnlawful to them that were vnder the law, which in the time of grace are lawful inough. After what sort then he did not loose the lawe, but did fulfill it, it is necessary to declare, for those thyngs which hereafter must be sayd. For amongst Christians, many things are iudged to be lawful, because in the former testament in the law, they were lawful: and yet they be expyeth contrary to Christs Gospell. But the authors of such thynges doe argue and reason thus: Christ came not to loose the law of the prophets. Now after what sort he did not vniolse them, it is manifest by the holy scripture: that the law geuen by Moses, was writen in tables of stone, to declare the hardnes of y peoples hart towards the loue of God, or of Christ. But Christ hath wyrtten his law in the harts and in the minds of his, that is to say, the law of perfect loue of God & of Christ. Which law whoso euer obserueth, he doth obserue the law of Moses, & doth much greater workes of perfection, then were the workes of y law. Thus therefore were the mozaes of the old law fulfilled in the law of the charity of Christ, and not vniolse: because they are much moze perfectly obserued, then of the Jewes. This I say, if the Christians doe obserue the commaundements of Christ in such sorte, as he commaunded the same to be obserued. Christ hath fulfilled the lawes mozaall of the old testament, because that the mozaes and iudicials were ordained, that one person should nor do iniury to another, & that euery man should haue paid him that is hys. Now, they that are in charity, wil do no iniury to others.

Many things obserued in the old lawe, which be not obserued nowe. Many things vnlawful in the old law, which be lawful nowe, How Christ did loose and not loose the lawe.