

Two things required on his part that geueth popish absolution.

committed. And of his part that geueth absolution, there are two things (say they) to be required that is to say: knowledge to discern one sinne from another, whereby he ought to make a difference of finnes, & appoynt a convenient penance, according to the quantitie of the finnes: The second is authoritie to iudge, whereby he ought to ioyne penance to the offender. And further they say, that he is confessed, ought with al humilitie to submit himself to this authoritie, and wholly and voluntarily to doe those penances which are commaunded him by the priest, except the sayde penance be released by a superiour power: for all priestes (as they say) haue not equall authoritie to absolue finnes. The chief priest whome they call Peters successour hath power fully and wholly to absolue. But the inferior priestes haue power, some more some lesse. The more as they are neare him in dignitie: The lesse as they are farther from the degree of his dignitie. All this is declared by proces in the decrees, but not by the expresse doctrine of Christ or any of his Apostles. For although Christ absolued men from their finnes, I do not find that he did it after the manner of a iudge, but of a sanior. For Christ sayth, God sent not his sonne into the world to iudge sinners, but that the world should be saued by him. John chap. 3. whereupon he spake vnto him whom he healed of the palseie: Beholde thou art made whole, go thy wayes and sinne no more. And to the woman taken in adultery Christ sayd, woman where be thy accusers, hath no man condemned thee? who sayd: No man Lord. To whom then Iesus thus said: No more wil I condemne thee, go, and now sinne no more.

De vet. de Pa- nentia.

John 3.

John 5.

Math. 25.

The saintes shall iudge with Christ.

Corinth. 4.

John 20.

The ministeriall power to remit sin, belongeth as well to one priest as to another.

The keyes of the kingdom of heauen.

By which words and deedes of Christ and many other places of the scripture, it appereth he was not as a Iudge at his first coming to punish sinners according to the quantitie of their offences: but y day shall come hereafter, where in he shall iudge all men according to their workes, as in Mat. 25. where he sayth: when the sonne of man shall come in his maiesty, and all his aungels with him: then shall he sit vpon the seat of his maiesty, and all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall seperate them one from an other, as a shepheard seperateth the sheepe from y Goates, &c. Neither shall he iudge alone, but his Saintes also with him. For he sayth, you that haue followed me in this generation, when the sonne of man shall sit in the seat of his maiesty, shall sit also vpon 12. seats, and iudge the 12. tribes of Israell. If then such Christ came not as a Iudge, why doe the Priestes say that they supplie the roome of Christ on earth, to iudge sinners according to the quantitie of theyr offences? And yet not ouely this, but it is more to be manuailed at, how the Bysshop of Rome dareth to take vpon him to be a Iudge before the day of iudgement, and to preuent the time, iudging some to be saintes in heauen, & to be honoured of men, and some agayn to be tormented in hel eternally w the deuils. woud God these men wold wey the saying of S. Paule. Corin. 4. Iudge ye not before the time, vntill the coming of the Lorde, who shall make light the darcke and secret places, and disclose the secretes of hartes, and then euery one shall haue his prayle. Let the Bysshop of Rome take heede, lest that in Ezechiel he spoken by him: because thy hart is eleuate, and saydst vnto thy selfe I am God, I haue sitten in the seat of God, in the hart of the sea, when thou art but man and not God. It is manifest, that the remission of finnes principallye belongeth to God, who through grace washeth away our finnes. For it is sayd, the lamb of God taketh away the finnes of the world. And vnto Christians it belongeth as the Ministers of God. For in the 20. of John Christ sayth: Receaue vnto you y holy Ghost, whose finnes you shall remit, they are remitted vnto them: and whose finnes you shall retain they are retained. Seeing therefore, that all Christians that are baptised in the name of the Father, and of the sonne, & of the holy Ghost, receaue the holy ghost: it appereth, that they haue power geue vnto them of Christ, to remit finnes ministerially. Hath not euery Christian authoritie to baptise: and in the baptisme all the finnes of the baptised are remitted? Ergo, they that doe baptise, do remit finnes. And thus ministerially all sache haue power to remitte finnes. Therefore, to say that one man hath more authoritie to remit finnes then al other Christians haue, is to much to extol him & to place him euen in Gods seat. I pray you how are the finnes remitted him that is baptised of the Priestes (yea although he were of the pope himselfe baptised) more then if he were baptised of an other Christian? Surely I thinke no more. For seeing that before Baptisme he remaineth a sinner and of the kingdom of the deuill by sinne, after baptisme he entreteth into y kingdom of heauen: It appereth, that he ydoeth baptise, openeth the gate of y kingdom of heauen to him that is baptised: the whiche he cannot do, wout the keyes of the kingdom of heauen. There-

fore euery one that doth baptise: hath the keyes of the King dome of heauen, as well the inferior Priest as the Pope. But these keyes are not the knowledge to discern, & power to iudge, because these doe nothing auayle in baptisme. Ergo, there are other keyes of the kingdom of heauen the theier: wherefore it seemeth, that the authozs of the Canons erred in mistaking the keyes, whereupon they ground the authoritie iudiciall of the Clergy.

The keyes mistaken in the Popes Chanons.

Now a little error in the beginning graunted, groweth to great inconuenience in y end, wherefore in my iudgement it seemeth, that the keyes of the kingdom of heauen are sayth and hope. For by sayth in Iesus Christ, and hope in him for the remission of finnes, we enter y kingdom of heauen. This faith is a spiritual water, springing from Iesus Christ the fountayne of wisdom, wherewith the soule of the sinner is washed from sinne. With this water were the faithfull Patriarches baptised before the lawe, and the saythfull people of the Hebrewes, and the saythfull Christians after the law. wherefore I greatly maruell of that saying in the decrees, which is ascribed vnto Augustine: that litle children that are not baptised, shall be tormented with eternal fire, although they were born of saythfull parents that wished them with all their hartes to haue bene baptised: as though the sacrament of Baptisme in water were simply necessary to saluation, when neuertheless many Christians are saued without this kinde of Baptisme, as Martires. If that kinde of Sacrament be not necessary, to one of elder yeres, how the is it necessary to an infant born of the saythfull? Are not all baptised with the holy Ghost and with fire? But yet not with materiall fire, no more is the lotion of water corporally necessary to washe away finnes, but onely spirituall water, that is to say, the water of sayth. Are not the quicke baptised for them that are dead, as witnesseth Paule. 2. Corin. 15. If the dead arise not at all why are the liuing then baptised for them? If the liuing be baptised for the dead: why then is not the infant saued by the baptisme of his parentes: seeing the infant it selfe is impotent at the time of death, and not able to require baptisme? Christ sayth, he that beleueth and is baptised, shall be saued. He sayth not, he that is not baptised: but he that beleueth not shall be damned. wherefore in the 12. chap. of John, Christ sayth, I am the resurrection and life, he that beleueth in me, yea although he were dead, shall lyue. The faith therefore is necessary which the infat hath in his saythfull parentes, although he be not washed with corporall water. How then is the infant damned and tormented with eternal fire: were not they that were before the coming of Christ, and dead before his death by a thousande yeres saued also by his death and passion? All y beleued in him, were baptised in his blood, and so were saued and redeemed from sinne and the bondage of the deuill, and made partakers of the kingdom of heauen. How then in y time of grace, shall the infat be damned that is borne of saythfull parentes, that do not despise, but rather desire to haue theyr children baptised? I dare not consent to so hard a sentence of the decrees: but rather beleue, that he is saued by vertue of the passion of Christ in sayth of his saythfull parentes, and the hope which they haue in Christ. which sayth and hope are the keyes of the heauenly kingdom. God were not iust and mercifull, if he would condemne a man that beleueth not in him, except he shewed vnto him the sayth which hee ought to beleue. And therefore Christ sayth: If I had not come and spokẽ vnto them, sinne could not haue bene layd vnto theyr charge, but nowe they haue no excuse of sinne. Therefore seeing the sayth of Christ is not manifest vnto the infat departing before baptisme, neither hath he deuyed it: how the shall he be damned for the same? But if God speakech inwardly by way of illumination of the intelligence of the infant, as he speakech vnto Aungels: who then knoweth (saue God alone) whether the infant receiueth or not receiueth the sayth of Christ?

Faith and hope be the keyes of heauen.

1. Cor. 15.

John 12.

Children departing before baptisme not condemned.

Auricular confession.

what is he therefore that so rashly dare take vpon him to iudge the infants begotte of saythfull parentes, dying without baptisme, to be tormented with eternal fire? Now let vs consider the 3. thinges which y canons of decrees affirme to be requisite for the remission of y finnes of those that sinne after baptisme: that is to say, contrition of hart, auricular confession, and satisfaction of the deed through penance extoynd by the priest for the finnes committed. I cannot finde in any place in the Gospel, where Christ commaunded that this kind of confession should be done vnto y priest: nor I cannot finde that Christ assigned any penance vnto sinners for theyr finnes, but that he willed the to sinne no more. If a sinner confesse that he hath offended God through sinne, & forgoeth hartely for his offences, minding no more hereafter to sinne: then is he truly repentaunt for his sinne, & then is he conuerted vnto the Lord. If he shall then hibly and