

be conuictees that they in any wise liue deuoutly (for other- wise as they say the spiritues will not obey their commaunde- ments, and conuicciōs) yet the Romane conuictees do im- pute it to the vertue of the holy wordes, because they be they, which worke, and not the holynes of the conuictees. How cometh it to passe that they say, the thinges consec- rated of a curied and vicious Priest, should haue so great vertue in pronouncing (as they say) the holy and misericall wordes: as if they were pronounced of a Priest neuer so holy. But I maruell that they say so, reading this saying in the Actes of the Apostles: because the charmers pronouncing the name of Iesus (that is aboue all names) would haue healed those that were possessed with deuils, and sayd, In the name of Iesus whom I saul preacht, go ye out of the men. And the possessed with deuils answered, Iesus we know, and Paule we know, but what are ye: and they all to be heard the conuictees.

And now considering this and many such like things, I maruell wherfore the vicious Priests, do sell theyr prai- ers and blessings deare (as also theyr Masses & Tentals of Masses) then those that be deuout lay mē, and holy wo- men: which with all theyr hart desire do flee from vices, & take hold of vertue. For as much as God in diuers places of the Scripture doth promise, that he will not heare sin- ners & wicked persons: Neither should he seme to be iust, if he should sooner heare the prayers of his enemies, then of his faythfull friend. How I pray you shall a sinnefull priest deliuer an other man from sinne by his prayers, or els frō the punishment of sinne: whē he is not able to deliuer him selfe by his prayer frō sinne? what then doth God so much accept in the Masse of a vicious Priest: that for his masse, his prayer or oblatiō, he might deliuer any man either frō sinne, or from the payne due for sinne? No, but for that that Christ hath once offered himselfe for our sinnes, & now sit- teth on the right hand of God the father, alwayes shewing vnto him what and how great things he hath suffered for vs. And enery priest alwayes maketh mētion in his masse of this oblation: Neither do we this, that we might bring the same oblation into the remembrance of God: because that he alwayes in his presence seeth the same. But that we should haue in remembrance this so great loue of God, that he would geue his own soule to death for our sinnes, that he might denie & purify vs frō all our sinnes. What doth it please God, that the remembrance of so great loue is made by a prest, which more loueth sinne then God? Or how can any prayer of such a priest please God, in what ho- ly place soener he be, or what holy vestiments soener he put on, or what holy prayers soener he maketh? And where as Christ and his Apostles do commaund the preaching of the word of God: the Priests be now more bound to celebra- te the Masse, and more straitly bound to say the Canonickal houres: wherat I cannot but greatly maruell. For why, to obey the precepts of men, more then the commaundments of God, is in effect to hono- mā as God, and to bestow the sacrifice vpon man, which is due vnto God, and this is also spirituall fornication. How therefore are Priests bound at the commaundment of man to leaue the preaching of y word of God, at whose commaundment they are not bound to leaue the celebration of the Masse, or saying of Ma- tines? Therefore as it seemeth, Priests ought not at the commaundment of any man to leaue the preaching of the word of God, vnto the which they are bound both by diuine and Apostolical preceptes. with whom agreeth the wri- ting of Hierome vpon the Decretals, saying in this wise: Let none of the Bishops swell with the enuy of deuillish temptation, let none be angry, if the Priests do sometime exhort the people, if they preach in theyr Church. &c. for to him that forbiddeth me these thinges I will say, that he is unwilling that Priests should do those thinges, which be commaunded of God, what thing is there about Christ: or what may be preferred before his body and his blood &c.

Do Priests therefore sinne or not, which bargayne for money to pray for the soule of any dead man? It is well knowne that Iesus did whyp those that were buyers and sellers out of the temple, saying: My house shall be called the house of prayer, but you haue made the same a denie of theenes. Truly he cast not out such Marchaunts frō out of the Church, but because of theyr sinnes. wherupon Hierome vpon this text sayth, Let the Priests be diligent and take good heed in this Church, that they turne not the house of God into a den of theenes. Be doubtles is a thief which seeketh gayne by Religion, & by a shew of holynes studieth to finde occasion of marchandise. Hereupon, the holy Canons do make accursed, Symoniackal heresy, & doe commaund that those should be depriued of the priesthood, which for the passing or maruclous spiritual grace, do seek gayne or monye. Peter the Apostle sayde to Symon Ma-

gus, Let thy mony and thou go both to the deuill, which thou thinkest that the graces of God may be bought for money. Therefore, the spirituall graces of God ought not to be solde.

Truely prayer is the spirituall gift of God, as is also y preaching of y word of God, or the laying on of handes, or the administration of other Sacramentes. Christ sending forth his Disciples to preach, sayd vnto them: Heale ye the sicke, cast out deuils, rayle the dead, freely haue ye receiued freely geue ye agayne. If the Priests haue power by theyr prayers to deliuer soules being in Purgatory, from gre- uous paynes: without doubt, he hath receiued that powce freely from God. How therefore can he sell his act, vntilse he resist the commaundements of God, of whom he hath receiued that authoritie: This truly cannot be done with- out sinne, which is agaynst the commaundment of God.

How playnly spake Christ to the Pharisees, & Priests saying, wo be vnto you Scribes & Pharisees hypocrites, because ye haue eaten the whole houses, of such as be wy- doues, by making long prayers, and therefore haue you re- ceiued greater danation. Wherin I pray you do our Pha- risees and Priests differ from them? Do not our Priests deuour widowes houses and possessions, that by their lōg prayers they might deliuer the soules of their husbands frō the greuous paynes of purgatory? How many Lordships I pray you, haue bene bestowed vpon the religious mē & womē to pray for the dead, that they by their prayer might deliuer those dead men from the payne (as they sayd) that they suffer in purgatory, greuously tormente and vered? If theyr prayers and speaking of holy wordes, shall not be able to deliuer themselves frō payn, vntilse they haue good works: How shall other men be deliued from payne, by their prayers, which whilse they liued here, they gaue ouer themselves to sinne? Yea peraduenture those Lordships or landes which they gaue vnto the priestes to pray for them, they themselves haue gotten by might from other faythful men, vniust, and violently. And the Canons doe say, that sinne is not forgivenē, till y thing taken away wōdfully, be restoyed. How the shall they be able (which do vniustly pos- sess such Lordships or landes) to deliuer them by theyr prayers from payne, which haue geuen to them these lord- ships or landes, seing God from the beginning hath hated all extortion in his burnt sacrifices? Not euerye one that sayth vnto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen: but he which doth the will of my father which is in heauen. And agayne, not the hearers of the law, but the do- ers of the law shall be iustified.

If therefore the wordes of him that prayth, do not deli- uer himselfe from sinne, nor frō the payne of sinne: how do they deliuer other men from sinne or frō the payne of sinne when no man prayth more earnestly for an other man the for himselfe: Therefore many are deceiued in buying or sel- ling of prayers, as in y buying of pardons that they might be deliued from payne: whē as commonly they pay dea- rer for the prayers of the proud & vicious prelates, the for the prayers of deuout women and deuout men of the laye people. But out of doubt, God doth not regard the person of him that prayth, neither the place in which he prayth, nor his apparell, nor the curiosities of his prayer, but y humi- lity and godlye affection of him that prayeth. Did not the Pharisee and the Publican goe vp into the temple to pray? The Publicans prayer for his humility and godly affecti- on is heard. But the Pharisees prayer for his pride & arro- gancy is contempned. Consider that neither the person, nor the place, nor y state, nor the curiosities of his prayer doth helpe the Pharisee: Because the Publicane not thinking himselfe worthy to lift vp his eyes vnto heauen, for y mul- titude of his sinnes, saying (O God be mercifull vnto me a sinner) is iustified by his humility, and his praier is heard. But the Pharisee boasting in his rightousnes is despised, because God thrusteth downe the proud, and exalteth the humble and those that be meek. The rich glutton also, that was clothed with purple and silke, & faced currey day daintely, prayd vnto Abraham, and is not heard, but is huried in paynes and tormentes of hell fire. But Lazarus whiche lay begging at his gate (being full of sores) is placed in the bosome of Abraham. Behold y neither the riches of his ap- parell, nor the deliciousnesse of his banquets, or the gorge- ousnes of his estate, neither the abundance of his riches, doth helpe any thing to prefer the prayers or petitions of the rich glutton, nor yet diminish his tormentes, because that mighty men in their mightines shall suffer tormentes might- rely. How dare any man by composition demand or receiue any thing of an other man for his prayers? If he beleeue y he can by his praier deliuer his brother frō greuous paine, he is bound by charity to relieue his brother with his pray- ers although he be not hired thereunto, but and if he will

Selling of prayer ab- hominable.

Religious men and women, deuourers of wydowes houses. Praying for soules in Purgatory.

Euil gotten lides as euil bestowed, for praying for soules in Purgatory.

Bying and selling of prayers in the Popes Church. Bying and selling of pardons, Parlo, place, apparell, curiositie or eloquence of prayer not regard- ed of God.

The prayer of the pharisee and of the Publican compared.

Prayer that doth more for money then for charitie disproued.

The good lyfe of a priest, a great matter to deale in Gods matters.

The prayer of a vicious priest, little auayleth before God.

Remembrance of Christes passion, needeth not to God, but to man.

Priests more bound to say Masse comma- ded by man then to preaching comma- ded of God. Spirituall fornication.

Jeronymus.

Whether priests may bargain to sing for soules departed.

Jeronymus.