

greater and the sweeter smell cometh therof. And therefore, this heavenly smell of Gods word, wil not as a smoke passe away with the winde: but it will descende and rest in some cleane soule, that thirsteth thereafter. And thus some deale by this writing may be perceaued thorough Gods grace, how that the enemies of the truth (standing boldly in their malice) inforce them to withstand the freedom of Christes Gospell, for which freedom Christ became man & shed his hart blood. And therefore it is great pity & sorrow: for many men & women do their own wayward will, not busy the not to know nor to do y pleasant wil of God.

The men & women that heare the truth and southfastnes, and heare or know of this (perceauing what is now in y church) ought here through, to be the moze moued in all their wits, to able them to grace, & to set lesser price by themselves, that they without taring: forlake wilfully & boldly all the wretchednes of this life, since they know not how soon, nor whe, nor where, nor by who God wil teach them, & assay their patience. For no doubt, who that euer will liue pitiously, that is charitably in Christ Iesu, shall suffer now here in this life persecution, in one wise or another. That is, if we shalbe saued, it behoueth vs to imaginful busily: the vility and foulness of sinne, and how y Lord God is displeas'd therfore: & so of this vility of hidiousnes of sinne, it behoueth vs to busy vs in al our wits, for to abhorre and hold in our mind a great shame of sinne euer, & so then we owe to sorrow hartely therfore, and euer being all occasion therof. And then behoueth vs to take vpon vs sharpe penance, continuing therein, for to obtayne of y Lord forgiveness of our fordone sinnes, and grace to abstain vs hereafter from sinne. And but if we enioyce vs to do thys wilfully: and in conuenient time, the Lord (if he will not vtterly destroy and cast vs away) will in diuers mannes moue tyrantes agaynst vs: for to contrayne vs violently to do penance, which we would not do wilfully. And trust that this doing is a special grace of the Lord, & a great token of life & mercy. And no doubt, who euer will not apply him selfe (as is sayd before) to punish himself wilfully, neither wil suffer patiently, meekely, and gladly the rod of the Lord, howloener that he will punish him: their wayward willes and their impatience, are vnto them earnest of euellasting damnation. But because there are but few in number that do able them thus saythfully to grace, for to liue here so simply and purely, and without gall of malice and of grudging: herfore the louers of this worlde hate & pursue them that they knowe patient, meek, chaste, & wilfully poore, hating and sleing all worldly vanities & fleshly lusts. For surely, their vterous conditions are euen contrary to the manners of this worlde.

The third thing that moueth me to wyte this sentence is this, I thought I shall busie me in my selfe to do saythfully, that all men and women (occupying all their busines in knowing and in keeping of Gods commaundments) able them so to grace, that they might vnderstand truely the truth, and haue and vse vertue and prudence, and so deserue to be lightned from aboue with heavenly wisdom: so that all their wordes & their workes may be hereby made pleasant sacrifice vnto the Lord God: and not onely for helpe of their own soules, but also for edification of holy Church. For I doubt not: but all they that will apply them to haue this forsayd busines, shall profite ful mekill both to frends & foes. For some enemies of the truth, through the grace of God, shall through charitable folkes be made astonied in their conscience, and peraduenture converted from vices to vertues: and also, they that labour to know and to keep saythfully the biddings of God, and to suffer patiently all aduersities, shall hereby comfort many frendes.

The fourth thing that moueth me to wyte this sentence is this: I knowe by my sodein & vnwarned appoyning and aunswering, that all they that will of good hart without faining, able themselves wilfully & gladly after they cunning and their power, to follow christ patiently, traueling busily, pynily, and apertly in worke and in word, to withdraw whom soeuer that they may from vices, planting in them (if the way) vertues, comforting them & furthering them that stand in grace: so that ether with they be not born by in vaine glory, through presumption of theyr wisdom nor inflamed with any worldly prosperitie: but euer meek and patient: purposing to abide stedfastly in y wil of God, suffering wilfully and gladly without any grutching what soeuer rod the Lord wil chastise them with: that then, thys good Lord wil not forget to comfort al such men and women in all their tribulations, & at euery poynt of temptation that any enemy purposed for to doe agaynst them. To such faithfull louers specially, & patient followers of christ the Lord sendeth by his wisdomes fr'd aboue, them which the aduersaries of the truth, may not know nor vnderstand.

But through their old and new vnshamefast sinnes, those tyrantes and enemies of southfastnes, shalbe so blinded & obtinate in cruill, that they shall weene themselves to doe pleasant sacrifices vnto the Lord God in their malicious and wrongfull pursuing and destroying of innocent mens and womens bodyes: which men & women, for theyr vertuous liuing, and for their true knowledging of the truth and theyr patient willull and glad suffering of persecution for righteousnes, deserue through the grace of God, to be heyres of the endlesse blisse of heauen. And for the feruent desire and the great loue that these men haue, as to stand in southfastnes and witnes of it: though they be sodeinly & vnwarnedly brought forth to be apoled of their aduersaries: the holy Ghost yet that moueth and ruleth them thorough his charitie, will in that houre of theyr aunswering speake in them and shewe thys wisdomes: that all theyr enemies shall not agayne say, nor agayne stand, iayously.

And therfore, al they that are stedfast in y sayth of God yea, which through diligent keeping of his commaundmentes, & for theyr patient suffering of whatsoeuer aduersitie that cometh to them, hope surely in his mercy, purposing to stand continually in perfect charitie. For those men and women, dyed not to the aduersities of this life, that they wil feare (after their cunning and their power) to knowledge prudently the truth of gods word, when, where, and to whom they thinke their knowledging may profite. Yea and though therfore persecution come to them in one wise or another, certes they patiently take it, knowing theyr conuersation to be in heauen. It is an high rewarde and a speciall grace of God: for to haue and enioy the euellasting inheritance of heauen, for the suffering of one persecution in so short time as is the terme of this life. For loe, this heavenly heritage & endles reward: is the Lord God himselfe which is the best thing that may be. Whis sentence witnesseth the Lord God himselfe where as he sayd to Abraham I am thy meede: And as the Lord sayd: he was and is the meede of Abraham: so he is of all his other saynts. Whis most blessed and best meede, he graunt to vs all for his holy name, that made vs of naught, and sent his onely most deare worthy sonne, our Lord Iesu Christ for to redeeme vs with his most precious hart blood. Amen.

* The examination of William Thorpe, penned with hys owne hand.

Knowne be it to al men, that read or heare this writing that on the sonday next after the feast of S. Peter: that we call Lammasse: in the yeare of our Lord, 1407. I William Thorpe being in prison in the Castle of Saltwoode, was brought before Tho. Arundel Archbishop of Cantebury and Chamcellor ther of Englande. And when that I came to him: he stode in a great chamber and much people about him: and when that he saw me, he went fast into a closet bidding all seculer men y followed hym to go forth from him soone, so that no man was left than in that closet but the Archbishop himselfe and a Schibitian y was called Galueren, person of S. Dunstanes in London, & other two persons vnknowne to me which were ministers of y law. And I standing before them, by and by the Archbishop sayd to me: William, I know well that thou hast thys xx. winters & moze, trauelled about busily in the north country and in other diuers countreyes of Englande, sowing about false doctrine, hauing great businesse if thou mightest with thine vntrue teaching and shewd will, for to infect & poyso all this land. But through the grace of God thou art now withstanding & brought into my ward, so that I shall now sequester thee from thine euill purpose, and let thee to enuening the sheep of my prouince. Therfor thes S. Paul sayth: If it may be, as much as in vs is, we ought to haue peace w all men. Therfore William, if y wilt now mekely and of good hart, without any seyning, kneele downe and lay thy hand vpo a booke and kille it, promising saythfully as I shall here charge thee, y thou wilt submit thee to my correction, & stād to myne ordinaunce, & fulfill it duely by all thy cunning and power, thou shalt yet find me gracious vnto thee. Then sayd I to the archbishop. Syr, since ye deme me an hereticke & out of beleue, will ye geue me here audience to tell my beleue. And he sayd, yea tell on. And I sayde. I beleue that there is not but one God almighty, and in this Godhead, and of this Godhead, are thre persons, that is, the father, the sonne, and the sothfast holye Ghost. And I beleue, that all these thre persons are euen in power and in cunning, and in might, full of grace and of all goodnes, for what soeuer that the father doth or can do will, that thing also the sonne doth and can and will: & in all theyr power, cunning and will, the holy Ghost is equal to the father and to the sonne.

The assistance of God neuer fayleth them that are persecuted.

Godly counsell geuen if it may be followed.

Persecution followeth the true Church.

The cause why persecution is suffered to come

The third cause.

Edification of other, necessary to be considered.

The 4. cause.

Examinatio of William Thorpe before Tho. Arundell Archb.

Loytering prelates, cannot abyde trauelyng preachers. The grace of God and of my Lord of Cant. be 2. thinges.

Your ordinaunce, and why not to Gods ordinance if it please your grace?