

Christ commaundeth almes, not tythes, except tythes be almes.

no: commaunded the people to pay tythes, neither to priests nor to deacons. But Christ taught the people to do almes, that is, works of mercy, to poore needie men (of surplus, that is superfluous of their temporall goods) which they had, more then they needed reasonably to their necessarie liuelode. And thus (I sayde) not of tythes, but of pure almes of the people, Christ liued and his Apostles: when they were so busy in preaching of the word of God to the people, & they might not trauell otherwise for to get their liuelode. But after Christs ascension, and when the Apostles had receiued the holy Ghost, they tranapled wyth their hands, for to get their liuelode, wher that they might thus do for busy preaching. Therefore, by example of himselfe, S. Paule teacheth al the priests of Christ for to traualle wyth their hand, when for busy teaching of the people they might thus do. And thus, all these priests whose priesthode God accepteth now, or will accept, or did in the Apostles time, and after their disceale: wil do so & worlds end. But (as Cisterciensis telleth) in the thousand yeare of our Lord Iesus Christ, 211. yeare, onc Pope the v. Gregory ordeined new tythes first to be geuen to priests now in the new law. But Saint Paule in his tyme, whose trace or example all priests of God enforce them to follow, seeing the couetousnes that was among the people, desiring to destroy the soule sinne through the grace of God & true vertuous liuing and example of himselfe: wrote & taught all priests for to follow him as he followed Christ, pacyently, willingly, and gladly in hygh pouerty: wherfore, Paule sayth thus. The Lord hath ordeyned that they that preach the Gospell, shall lye of the Gospell. But we (saith Paule) that comert and buye vs to be faythfull followers of Christ, vse not this power. For lo (as Paule witnesseth afterward) when he was full poore and neede, preaching among the people: he was not chargeous unto them, but wyth hys handes he traauled not onely to get his owne lyuing, but also the lyuing of other poore and needye creatures. And since the people was neuer so couetous, nor so auarous (I gesse) as they are now: It were good counsell that al priests take hede to this heauynly learning of Paule following him heren wilful pouerty, norhyng charging & people for their bodily liuelode. But because that many priests do contrary to Paule in this foresayde doctrine: Paule biddeh the people take hede to those priests that follow him as he had geueh them example. As if Paule would say thus to the people: Accept ye none other priests then they, that liue after the forme that I haue taught you: For certain, in whatsoeuer dignity or order & any priest is in, if he conforme him not to follow Christ & his Apostles in wilful pouerty, & in other headenly vertues, and specially in true preaching of Gods word: though such a one be named a priest, yet he is no more but a priest in name, for the worke of a very priest, in such a one wanteth. This sentence approueth Augustine, Gregory, Chylostom, & Lincolne plainly.

¶ And the archb. sayde to me. Thinkest thou this wholesome learning for to sow openly, or yet priuily among the people? Certain, this doctrine contrarieth plainly & ordinance of holy fathers which haue ordeined, granted, & licensed priests to be in diuers degrees, & to liue by tythes & offerings of the people, and by other duties.

¶ And I said, sir, if priests were now in measurable measure & number, and liued vertuously, & taught busily and truly the word of God, by example of Christ & of his apostles, without tythes, offerings, & other duties that priests now chalenge & take: the people would geue them freely, sufficient liuelode.

¶ And a clerke said to me. How wilt thou make this good, that the people will geue freely to priests their liuelode: since that now by the law euery priest can scarcely constrain the people to geue them their liuelode.

¶ And I said, Sir it is now no wonder though the people grudge to geue priests the liuelode that they aske: The kyll people know now, how & priests should liue, & howe that they liue contrary to Christ & to his Apostles. And therefore, the people is ful heauy to pay (as they doe) their temporall goods to pactions and to other viaces & priests, which should be faythfull dispensatours of the parishs goddes: taking to theselues no more, but a scarce liuing of tythes, nor of offerings, by the ordinance of the comon law. For whatsoeuer priests take of the people (be it tythe or offering, or any other duty or seruice) the priests ought not to haue thereof no more, but a bare liuing: & to depart the residue to the poore men & womē specially of the parish of whom they take this temporall liuing. But & most dele of priests now wasteth their parishs goddes, and spendeth them at their owne wil after the world, in ther vain lusts: So that in few places poore mē haue duly (as they should

haue) their own sustenance, nother of tythes nor of offerings nor of other large wages & foundations that priests take of the people in diuers maners about & they neede for no full sustenance of meat & clothing. But the poore needy people are forsaken and left of priests to be sustayned or & paritishens, as if the priests toke nothing of the parishens for to helpe the people with.

And thus sir, into ouer great charges of the parishens they pay their temporall goods twice where once myght suffice, if priests were true dispensatours. Also sir, the parishners that pay their temporall goods (be they tythes or offerings) to priests that do not their office among them iustly are partners of euery sinne of those priests: because that they sustaine those priests folly in their sinne, wyth their temporall goods. If these things be well considered, what wonder is it the sir, if the parishners grudge against their dispensatours?

¶ Then the Archb. said to me, Thou that shouldst be iudged & ruled by holy church, presumptuously thou deniest holy church to haue erred in the ordinance of tythes & other duties to be paid to priests. It shall be long or thou thine Lofell, that thou despiest thy ghostly mother. How darest thou speake this (Lofell) among the people? Are not tythes geuen to priests for to liue by?

¶ And I said, Sir S. Paule saith, that tythes were geuen in the old law to Levites and to priests, that came of the lineage of Leuy. But our priests he sayth, came not of the lineage of Leuy, but of the lineage of Juda, to whych Juda no tythes were promised to be geuen. And therefore Paule saith, since the priesthode is chaged from & generation of Leuy to the generation of Juda: It is necessary that chaging also be made of the law. So that priests liue now, without tythes & other duty that they now claime, following Christ & his Apostles in wilful pouerty, as they haue geueh the example. For since Christ liued (all the tyme of hys preaching) by pure almes of the people. And by example of him, his Apostles liued in the same wise, or els by & trade of their handes as it is layd about. Euery priest, whose priesthode Christ approueth, knoweth wel, & conselleth in worde and in worke, that a disciple ought not to be about his maister, but it sufficeth to a disciple to be as hys maister, simple, meeke and patient: and by example specially of his maister Christ, euery priest shoulde rule him in al his liuing, & to after his clyding & power, a priest should buye him to enforme and to rule, whom so euer hee might charitably.

¶ And the Archb. said to me with a great spirite, Gods curse haue thou & mine for this teaching: for thou wouldest hereby, make the olde law more free and perfect the & new law. For thou saiest, that it is lesul to Levites and to priests to take tythes in the old law, and so to enioy their priuiledgies: but to vs priests in the new law, thou sayest it is not lawfull to take tythes. And thus thou geuest Levites of the old law, more freedom than to priests of the new law.

¶ And I said, Sir, I maruell, that ye vnderstand thys plaine text of Paule thus. Ye wor well, that the Levites and priests in the old lawe that toke tythes, were not so free nor so perfect, as Christ and his Apostles that toke no tythes. And sir, there is a Doctor (I thinke that it is Saint Jerome) that saith thus. The priests that chalenge now in the new law, tythes: Say in effect, that Christ is not become man, nor that he hath yer suffered death for mans loue. wherfore, this Doctor saith this sentence. Since tythes were the hires and wages limited to Levites and to priests of the old law for bearing about of the tabernacle, and for slaying and sleing of beastes, and for burning of sacrifice, and for keeping of the temple, and for troumping of battell before the hoste of Israel, and other diuers obseruances that pertained to their office: Those priests that will chalenge or take tythes, deny that Christ is come in the flesh, and do the priests office of the old law, for whome tythes were granted: for els (as this Doctor saith) priests take now tythes wrongfully.

¶ And the archb. said to his clerkes. Heard ye euer Lofell speake thus? Certaine, this is the learning of them all, that whersoever they come, and they may be suffered: they enforce them to espugne the freedom of holy church.

¶ And I said, Sir, why call you the taking of tythes, and of such other duties that priests chalenge now (wrongfully) the freedom of holy church: Since neither Christ nor his apostles, chalenge nor toke such duties. Therefore these takings of priests now are not called iustly the freedom of holy church, but all such geuing and taking ought to be called and holden, the slanderous couetousnes of men of the holy church.

¶ And the archb. said to me, why Lofell, wilt not thou

Priests did fo than, but our priests doe not fo now.

Whether tythes are to be paid to priests doing not their duecie.

Ghostly mother? may, an vngostly stepdam, to all Gods children.

By the law none could chalenge tythes, but onely the seed of Leuy. Our priests be not of the seede of Leuy, by the law our priests cannot chalenge tythes.

As the priest-hood is chaged, so is the law chaged.

Blesse, but curse not, saith S. Paule.

He goeth nere you my Lord, when he toucheth your tythes.

The difference of the freedoms between the old and new lawes.

For what cause tythes were geueh in the olde law,

Tithes by whom and when they were first commaunded in the new law.

Paule hauing power to take, yet vied it not. Paule would nor be chargeous, if prestes were couetous than, what be they now? This rule, with the rule of begging Fricks, can not stand together

Hole some inough my Lord if your taft were to fauour it.

But it contrarieth not the ordinace neyther of God nor of his worde. If priests would not slacke in their dutie, they should not lacke in haging sufficient.

Fallax argumentum secundum non causam. The euill demeanor of the priestes, is the cause why the people be so slacke in their tythes. Priestes being content with sufficiency, and a bare liuing, ought to part the residue to the poore.