

knowledging to him onely all your vicious living, praying to him ever deuoutly of charitable counsel and conuinciance. Hoping without doubt, that if ye continue thus, busying you faithfully to know & to kepe his biddings, that he wil for ye onely, may forgiue you al your sinnes. And this man said to me. Though God forgiue men their sinnes yet it behoueth men to be alloyled of priests, & to do y^e penance that they enioyne them.

And I sayde to him, Sir, it is all one to alloyle men of their sinnes, & to forgiue me their sinnes. wherfore, since it pertaineth only to God to forgiue sinne: It sufficeth in this case, to counsel men & women for to leaue their sinne, and to comfort them that busie them thus to do, for to hope steadfastly in the mercy of God. And agayne ward, Priests ought to tel sharply to customable sinners, that if they wil not make an ende of their sinne, but continue in diuers sins while that they may sinne, all such deserue payne without any end. And herfore, Priests should euer busie them to liue wel and holy, and to teach the people busily & truly the worde of God, shewing to all folke in open preaching and in pryuy counseling, that the lord God only forgiueth sinne. And therfore, those priests take vpo the to alloyle me of their sinnes, blaspheme God: since that it pertaineth onely to the Lord, to assoile men of all their sinnes, For no doubt, a thousand yeare after y^e Christ was man, no Priest of Christ durst take vpon him to teach the people, neither pryuyly nor apertly, that they behoued nedes to come to be alloyled of them, as Priests now do. But by authoritie of Christs word: Priests bounde indurate customable sinners, to euerlasting paines, which in no time of their lyving, would busie the faithfully to knowe the biddinges of God, nor to kepe the. And again, al they that would occuypy al their wits to here & to slye al occasion of sinne, dreadding ouer al thing, to offend God, and louing for to please him continually: to these men & women Priests shewd, how the Lord alloyleth them of all their sinnes. And thus Christ promised to confirme in heauen, al the binding and loosing that priests by authoritie of his word, binde men in sinne that are indurate therein, or lose the out of sinne here vpon earth, that are verely repentant. And this ma hearing these words said, that he might well in conscience consent to this sentence. But he sayd, Is it not needfull to the lay people y^e can not thus do, to go hynne them to priests? And I said, If a man feele himselfe so distroubled with any sinne, y^e he can not by his own witte auoide this synne without counsel of them that are herein wiser than he. In such a case, the counsell of a good Priest is full necessarye. And if a good Priest saye as they do now commonly, in such a case S. Augustine sayth, that a man may lawfully comon and take counsel, of a vertuous secular ma. But certain, that ma or woma is ouerladen and too heauy, which cannot bying their owne sinnes into their minde, busying them night and day for to hate, & to forsake al their sinnes, doing a nigh for them after their cunning and power. And sir, full accordingly to this sentence vpo the idlentis Sunday (two yeare as I gesse now agone) I hard a Monk of Feculham that men called Morden, preache at Caisterbury at the crosse within Christ Church Abbey, saying thus of confession. What as through the suggestio of the fend without counsell of any other body, of themselves many men & women, can imagine and find meanes & ways inough to come to pride, to theft, to lechery, and other diuers vices: In contrary wile this Monke said, Since the Lord God is moze ready to forgiue sinne than the fend is, or may be of power, to moue any body to sinne: than whosoener wil shame and sorow hartely for their sinnes, knowledging them faithfully to God, amending them after their power and cunning, without counsell of any other body than of God and himselfe (through the grace of God) all such men and women may find, sufficient meanes to come to Gods mercy, and so to be cleane assoiled of all their sinnes. This sentence I sayd sir to this man of yours, and the selle words as uerely as I can gesse.

And the Archbishop said, Holy Church approueth not this learning. And I said, Sir, holy Church of which Christ is head in heauen and in earth, must needs approue this sentence. For loe, hereby al men & women may, if they will, be sufficiently taught to know & to keepe the commandements of God, & to hate & to slye continually all occasion of sinne, and to loue and to seeke vertues busily, & to beleue in God stably, and to trust in his mercy steadfastly, & so to come to perfect charitie & continue therein perseverantly. And moze the Lord asketh not of any man here now in this life. And certaine, since Iesu Christ died vpon the crosse, wilfully to make men free: Men of the Church are to hold and to bulic, to make men thall, binding the vnder y^e paine of end-

les curse (as they say) to do many obseruaunces and ordinaunces, which neither the living nor teaching of Christ nor of his Apostles appoueth.

And a Clerke said the to me: Thou shewest plainly here thy deceit, which thou hast learned of them that trauell to low popple amdg y^e wheat. But I coulde thee to go away cleane fro this learning, & submit ther lowly to my lord, and thou shalt finde him yet to be gracious to thee.

And as last then, an other Clerke said to me: How wast thou so bold at Isaules Crosse in London, to stande there hard with thy tippet bounde about thine head, and to reproue in his Sermon the worthy clerke Alkerton, drawing away al that thou mightest: yea, & the same day at afternone, thou meeting the worthy Doctour in waiting Brece, calledst him false flatterer and hypocrite.

And I said: Sir, I thinke certainly that there was no man nor woma that hated verely sinne, & loued vertues (hearing y^e Serms of the clerk at Oxford, and also Alkertons Sermon) but they sayd, or might iustly say, that Alkerton reprovod that clerke vntrue, and slandered him wrongfully and uncharitably. For no doubt, If the living & teaching of Christ chiefly, and of his Apostles be true, no body that loueth God and his law, wil blame any seneie that the clerke then preached there: since by authoritie of Gods word, & by approued Saints & Doctours, & by open reason, this Clerke approued all thinges clearly that hee preached there.

And a Clerke of the Archbishops saide to me, his Sermon was false, and that he sheweth openly, since he dare not stand forth and defend his preaching that hee preached there.

And I saide: Sir, I thinke that he purposeth to stande steadfastly thereby, or els he scanndereth foully himself, and also many other that haue great trust that he will stand by the truth of the Gospel. For I wote wel, this Sermon is written both in Latin and English, and many men haue it & they set great price thereby. And sir, If ye were present with y^e Archbishop at Lambeth when this Clarke appeared and was at his aunswere before the Archbishoppe, ye wote wel that this Clerke denied not ther his Sermon, but two daies he maintained it before the Archbishop and his Clerkes.

And then the Archbishop or one of his Clerkes said (I wote not which of them) that harlot shall be met wyth, for that Sermon. For no man but he and thou, and such other false harlots, prayeth any such preaching.

And then the Archb. said, Your cursed sect is busie, and it loyeth right greatly to contrary & to destroy y^e priuilege and freedom of holy Church.

And I said: Sir, I know no men that trauell so busily as this sect doth (which you reprove) to make rest and peace in holy church. For pride, couetousnes, and simony, which distrouble most holy Church: this sect hateth & detesteth, and traunpleth busily to moue all other men in like maner, vnto meekenes and wilfull pouerty, and charitic, and free ministring of the Sacraments: this sect loueth & vberth, and is full busie to moue all other folkes thus to do. For these vertues, owe all members of holy church, to their head Christ.

Then a Clerke said to the Archbishop: Sir, it is farre dayes, and ye haue farre to ride to night: therefore make an end with him, for he wil none make. But the more sir, that ye busie you for to draw him toward you, y^e moze certunly he is made, and the farther fro you.

And then Maluccen said to me: William, kneele down, and pray my Lord of grace, & leaue al thy phantasies, and become a child of holy church.

And I said: Sir, I haue prayed the Archbishop oft, and yet I pray him for the loue of Christ, that he wil leaue hys indignation that he hath against me: and that he wil suffer me after my lining & power, for to do mine office of priest hode, as I am charged of god to do it. For I couet thought els, but to serue my God to hys pleasing in y^e state that I stand in, and haue taken me to.

And y^e Archbishop said to me: If of good hart thou wilt submit thee now here meekely, to be ruled from this time forth by my counsell, obeying mekely and wilfully to mine ordinaunce, thou shalt finde it most profittable & best to thee for to doe thus. Therefore tary thou me no lenger, graunt to do this y^e I haue sayd to thee now here shortly, or denie it vtterly.

And I said to the Archbishop: Sir, owe we to beleue that Iesu Christ was and is, very God and very man?

And the Archbishop sayd yea.

And I said: Sir, owe we to beleue that al Christs teaching and his teaching is true in euery point?

And he sayd, yea.

God onely forgiueth sinne, man onely can counsell to leaue sinne.

Shrift & confessio to priests.

A good secular man may be counsellor, where a priest faileth by S. Augustine.

Morden Monke of Feculham preaching of confession.

Harty repenace to God, needeth no confession to a priest.

No nor nothing els that is good.

Christ geueth freedom, the pope geueth thraldome.

The true freedom of holy church not destroyed but increased by true preachers.

Take my Lords blessing & stand vp.

My Lord hath, for being benighted.

And