

## ¶ The seventh sermon vpon the first Chapter.

*I haue obreynd mercie at Gods handes, for I did it ignorantly throughe unbeleefe.*

14 *But the grace of our Lorde abounded so muche the more, with faith and loue, which is in Christ Iesus.*

15 *This is a sure worde, and worthie by all meanes to be receiued, that Iesus Christ came into the worlde to saue sinners, of whome I am cheefe,*



E beganne alreadie to declare, why S. Paule setteth foorth his ignorance in this

place, and we saide in fewe wordes, that it was not to lessen his sinne, as we shall see anon more at large, but to y end, y such as haue bene lightened in the knowledge of GOD, and in the faith of his Gospell, shoulde walke humbly in their vocation, and take heede y they list not vp theselues against God, & against his trueth, which they know. And it is a sinne that cannot be forgiuen (as we haue shewed,) for a mortall man to come vpon a pretended malice, and shoulder against GOD, and fight against his glorie, and go about to bring his truth to naught. It cannot be, but that creature must needes be accursed, and cast away of God, when it cometh so farre. Therefore let vs thinke vpon our selues, and knowe that if GOD hath forgiuen vs our ignorance wherein we liued, wee must not prouoke him to anger. For it were to much, to prouoke

his vengeaunce, to rebell against him, and that willingly, knowing that it is he against whome wee wage battell, and not against any creature. Yet a man might aske a question here, Whether the unbeleeuers haue any suche knowledge, that they thinke to fight against GOD, knowing it is euill that they do. For holy writte saith, That infidelitie is y greatest blindnesse y can come to man: as in deede, we are without sense & reason, if wee knowe not God. If this bee so, it seemeth that Saint Paule confoundeth his matter, when he saith, that it was by ignorance, when hee was in unbeleefe. And saith moreouer also in an other place, That if y Jewes had knowen the Lorde of glorie, they woulde neuer haue crucified him. And proueth thereby, that the wildome of men cannot come so high, as to knowe the secretes of God.

But this harde matter will be easie enough to vndoe, if we compare the two sortes of ignorance whiche are in men, as wee see by experience. There are some whiche

1. Cor. 2. 8

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che are vtterly ignorant, as they that are moued with a foolish heate, and suche as want discretion: as at this day, there are many amongst the Papistes, which thinke they doe a great sacrifice to God, when they persecute the faithfull, and are hornemadde against the Gospell. And why so? For they vnderstande not what the trueth of God is: they haue their foolish deuotions so imprinted in their braines, that what soeuer is against y<sup>e</sup>, they may not abide it. Therefore, they that are so beastly, are vtterly ignorant: and suche an one was Saint Paule before he was turned to Christ: for although he had beene trayned vp in the lawe, euen from a<sup>20</sup> childe, and was of the number of Doctours: yet list he not to be ignorant for all that: as hee saith, that y<sup>e</sup> Iewes of his time had a couer before their eyes, and hauing vnderstanding in the lawe, remained alwayes ignorant in their beastlinesse, because they had not the right ende, that is to say, Iesus Christ. And this is one kind of<sup>30</sup> doltish ignorance, which, when it hath once got possession of man, moueth & pricketh him forward to euill, although he thinke to do well.

Let vs nowe come to them that sinne of malice: as there be many at this day in Papisric, whiche are not moued by their good intent, as they tearme it, to striue and<sup>40</sup> speake against the Gospell, as they doe. What then? Their kichen,

their couetousnes, their ambition, pusheth them forward, & setteth them on fire: they know well enough that they do euill, but yet they see on the other side, that if the Gospell growe on, their tyrannie shall be abated, and their purses shall not be so wel filled as they haue bene. And this it is that pricketh them forward, to lift vp themselves against Iesus Christ, and against his trueth, whiche they know. We cannot wel iudge whiche they are, that are pushed forward with such and so desperate a rage: for they, as we saide, are out of all recouerie: but yet notwithstanding, we knowe by experience, that there are a great<sup>10</sup> many of such. And yet suche as they are, cease not to be blinde. And why so? For they haue a frensie which carrieth thē away, although God maketh his brightness to shine vnto them, that they may be without excuse: yet notwithstanding, they become beastes, and are content to be carried this way and that way by<sup>20</sup> Sathan, vntil he haue wholly made them stocks and blocks. Thus are the vnbeleeuers ignorant: but yet it is not a simple ignorance. What then? It is rather (as we haue said) a frensie coupled together with a cursed rebellion, because they canne in no wise be assured, that God alloweth y<sup>e</sup> which they doe, & also they goe not about, either<sup>30</sup> to serue him, or honour him. And hereby we may easily conclude, that Saint Paule saith, not with-

cut cause, that his sinne was for-  
giuen him: yea, because hee was  
ignorant, for the time y he was in  
vnbeleefe. And thus wee haue a  
more sure meaning of this texte,  
to applie it to our profite: and it  
is this, that men are poore blinde  
creatures, vntill suche time as God  
hath lightened them, by the grace  
of his holy spirite: and whereas 10  
they thinke to doe well, they are  
rebelles both to GOD and his  
word. Let vs then consider what  
we are. Knowe we, that we can  
not keep y streight way, if we be  
guided by our owne witte and  
wildome: but the clearenesse of  
the holy Ghost must rule ouer vs.  
Let this be one lesson. Know we,  
that when GOD hath drawn vs 20  
out of the darkenesse of Papistrie,  
wherin we liued, it was of his gret  
pitie and mercie, that he did it, we  
were wretched & miserable cre-  
tures, when he powred out y infi-  
nite treasures of his goodnes vpo  
vs, when hee did not suffer vs to  
perishe in such a confused state.  
And seeing that hee hath called  
vs to the knowledge of the Gos- 30  
pell, let vs marke that wee must  
become wholly his subiectes, and  
tame all our wicked affections,  
and what soeuer fleshly sensuali-  
tie is in vs. For we can finde no-  
thing in vs but euill. And aboue  
all thinges, let vs beware, that we  
lift not vp our selues against God  
seeing hee hath opened himselfe  
vnto vs: nor resist his will, seeing 40  
wee knowe it.

Nowe let vs come to that whi-

che Saint Paule addeth. And it is  
this, *That the grace of GOD*  
*was multiplied vpon him more and*  
*more.* Wherin he sheweth plainly  
that he woulde not lessen his sin,  
as I haue already declared. For  
if it had beene a small and light  
fault, to haue in such sort fought  
ignorantly against the doctrine of  
the Gospell: he would haue con-  
tented himselfe, and saide no  
more, but this, GOD haue pitie  
on mee: but he saith, that it was  
a passing & excellent grace, whi-  
che was bestowed vpo him more  
and more. Doth hee speake dis-  
semblingly? No, no: he prote-  
steth and confesseth that his sinne  
was deadly, that it was so gree-  
uous an offence, that it was need-  
full for the grace of God to bee  
as it were a bottomlesse pitte to  
swallow vp so horrible and gree-  
uous a faulte. And this is well  
worthie to be marked: for if wee  
offende God so greeuously, when  
we knowe not what we doe, ha-  
uing onely this foolish fanisie, that  
we thinke that we doe well: what  
shall we say when we shall come  
of a wicked and rebellious will, to  
fight against him? Doe we mar-  
uell, if holy writte call such sinne,  
an vnpardonable sinne, whiche  
shall neuer be forgien either in  
this worlde, or in the worlde to  
come? As our Lorde Iesus Christ  
speaketh. Must we thinke that this  
is a straunge rigour and seueritie  
of God? Nay this ought to make  
vs bow down our heads indeed, y  
euery one of vs may know, that  
we

we haue neede to be bridled. And because wee are so bent to mischief of our selues, if it were not that G O D gouerneth vs with his holy Ghost, wee might all come to the like destruction. For in deede the examples that God setteth before our eyes, ought to make vs feele it liuely, and to the quicke.

We see them that despise y word of G O D, or abuse it by what meanes soeuer, at the first blushe they make a least of it, and will not fully resist G O D. But what? It is but a pastime for them to doe euill, to liue a wicked life, to run with full raine, and to giue them selues to all kinde of licentiousnesse. Are they come so farre? We see them afterward to rancle and become full of poyson against G O D, and especially when hee toucheth them to the quicke, when hee giueth them girdes with y sparre, which they canot eschew: they become every day worse and worse; vntill they come to this diuelishe rage, to fight against the tructh. When we see such looking glasses, as our Lorde doeth shewe them vs, let vs euery man humble him selfe, and with all carefullnesse and diligence pray this good God, that seeing he hath once reached out his hande vnto vs, he would hold vs fast, vntill he haue deliuered vs out of all tentations. And this we haue to note vpon this worde, where Saint Paule saith, *That the* 4<sup>o</sup>  
*grace of G O D was multiplied*

*more and more vpon him.* Hee addeth therewithall the meane and way, that it was, *By faith & loue, whiche is in our Lorde Iesus Christ.* Here Saint Paule will shew howe he was brought to the way of saluation, and by what meanes: to witte, that G O D gaue him faith, and made him not only tractable and quiet, but that hee receiued the Gospell most sweetly & louingly, and had no pleasure but in it, neither any ioy nor comforte and rest but in it. That wee may better vnderstand this, let vs consider on the other side, what was in Saint Paule before he was turned. In steede of faith, hee had nothing but vnbeleefe, he was a poore blinde man, he was an horneimadde beast. And yet this was a man that had beene brought vp in the doctrine of the lawe, in the religion of the Jewes: whiche notwithstanding went about to make warres against the lawe it selfe, against the religion whiche hee shoulde haue holden from his fathers and auncesters. And in steede of this vnbeleefe wherein Saint Paul was holden, hee receiued the gift of faith, and hereby was cleane changed. After that he had beene a cruell enimie of the Gospell, as we see that hee was full of murthers, full of cruelties, in suche sorte that he sought nothing else but to shedde innocent blood, behold howe G O D doeth not onely make him finde some taste in the Gospell, but setteth him on fire with

with such a Loue, that hee forgetteth himselfe, hee passeth not of his life, he accounteth his honour as filth and dounge, as he speaketh to the Philippians: What so euer he esteemed as gaine, & he highly fet by, is this holinesse, whereof he presumed that hee was as an Angel: he saith, that hee abhorreth it all, and is ashamed of it: yea, & accounteth it as stincking dounge. And thus we see now to what purpose S. Paule speaketh of loue & faith, which is of our Lorde Iesus Christ. He meaneth not that hee can alledge his vertues, or that he hath deserued any thing, to say, y<sup>e</sup> God might be moued therby. But on the other side, he will shew, that when God woulde haue pitie on him, hee gaue him faith and loue, whereas before he was vnfaithfull, & as a wilde beast, full of crueltie. Yet notwithstanding, we are put in mind of two things: the one is, that what Saint Paule protesteth of his owne person, we must applie it to our selues: yea, without exception. For GOD doth not call men to saluation by any other meanes, but by this: y<sup>e</sup> is to say, by giuing them faith & loue. Wil we then be heires of the kingdome of God? Will wee bee drawn out of destruction, wherein we are of nature? Let vs holde the way which, Saint Paule sheweth vs in this place: to witte, that God openeth our eyes, to the end that we may come to his onely Sonne, and may know that Iesus Christ was giuen vs, to the

end that we may finde our saluation in him, and accept suche a gifte and such a treasure as GOD offereth vnto vs in the Gospell, that is to say, faith: and afterward that we haue loue, that beeing reconciled to GOD, wee become subiect to him, to bow vnder his yoke: and then, that wee lie among our neighbors in true vnitie and brotherhoode. This is the way which we must hold, if we haue a longing to inioy saluation, which is sette forth vnto vs in the Gospell: and let this be for one rule. But it is a doctrine whiche wee practise verie euill: for euery man will say from teeth forward, that hee desireth nothing but to be saued. But what? How many are there to be found y<sup>e</sup> haue an earnest zeale to render such obedience to God, through faith, as hee demaundeth, and as meete is he should haue? Where is the loue in Iesus Christ? We see that euery mā is giuen to him selfe, and wee passe not for that, that God setteth before vs, and teacheth vs. And wee must note this text so muche the better, to the end that euery one of vs may learne to keepe vnder suche hinderances as turne vs aside, that wee can not be brought fully to God, & when we haue once begonne to be in a good way, let vs take heede that wee go on forward more and more, as well in faith as in charitie. The seconde point that we haue to remember, is this, that faith and charitie are

gistes of God, and men can not of them selues lighten them selues. They can not chaunge their euill stomaches, to loue their neighbours as they ought, when they once loue God: but we must needes haue it from aboue, it is God that must fashion and shape vs anewe by his holy spirit, and before we ca haue faith, it is he that must open our eyes, and giue vs light. For when S. Paul confesseth here, that these two things were giuen him of God, he teacheth vs, that no man can bragge, as though he had them by his owne witte, or boast of his owne vertues, be they neuer so excellent: but wee are taught, that who so euer they be that haue faith, must holde it from God. And so must we thinke of loue likewise: and yet if we sayle once, as there is no man but feleth his faith verie weake, and his loue verie slender and colde, we must pray to God for increase, both of the one and the other, knowing that there is no way, but to haue it from him. Nowe let vs come to that which S. Paule addeth. *This is a true worde, and worthie by all meanes to bee receiued of all men without doubt, that Christe came to saue sinners, whereof I am the first.* Here S. Paule maketh a more full confession of that which he touched already, to wit, that the offence which he had committed in resisting the Gospell, was so great and haynous, that God wrought a maruellous miracle, when he turned him. And therewithall he also

applieth this confession to a general doctrine for al Gods children, to the end that in his person, we may be so much the more assured of our saluation, and forgiuenesse of our sinnes. Therefore let vs note first of all, that S. Paule humbled him selfe in this place, to the end that Gods glorie might be better knowne. And this is according to that which was said this morning, that God is neuer exalted of vs as he deserueth, vnlesse we our selues be viterly confounded, and cast downe to the bottomlesse pit of hell. For as long as man reserue the least iot that may bee to him selfe, God is spoyled of his right which he ought to haue. And as long also as men cloake their shame, and couer their filthinesse, God hath not that which is due to him, as S. Paule sheweth, in the third to the Romanes. For wherein is it that he saith, the glorie of GOD appeareth? Surely, when euerie mouth is stopped, & we knowe howe much we are indebted to him. So then, vntill men be come to a reckoning, to condemne them selues wholly, and confesse that they haue nothing in them, but only curie, and onely wretchednesse, and that they are creatures cast away, & worse then naught, vntill they be come thus farre, the glorie of GOD is not knowne, as neede is it should be knowne. To be short, al the cloakes that men take, to hide their villanous and shameful filthinesse withall, are euen so many clouds

which hinder the glorie of God, that it can not haue it clearenesse and shewe towards vs. True it is, that we may perceiue well a little clerenes, although there be clou-des and mystes, and the time be something close: yet notwithstanding, the skie is not faire, we see not this cleare brightnesse, as whē the ayre is cleane voide and purged. Thus must we learne to vn-couer our selues, and discouer all our transgressions, to ȳ end, that hereby both we ourselues and o-ther also may knowe, howe much we are bound & indebted to our God, and howe exceeding great his goodnes is, that it is more thē an endlesse bottomlesse pit, seing that it pleased him to drawe vs 10 out of euerlasting death, whercin we were al plunged. Therefore, let vs weigh well S. Pauls wordes, when he maketh such a confessiō here. For he sheweth vs here, that he will not through vnthankfulnes, lessen the vnestimable benefitt which he had receued. And what is he amongst vs, ȳ oweth lesse to God, then S. Paul did? It is true, ȳ 20 al of vs haue not ben cruel to persecute the Gospel. But what letted? Had we not this euil in vs? If it were not, yet were we, as wilde beastes to thrust away the grace of God, and treade his holy truth vnder our secte. Whereby we deserued iustly, ȳ God should cleancast vs off. And let vs consider morcouer, how many, diuers, and 30 fundrie kindes of faultes we haue committed. To beshort, we must

conclude, that if S. Paul did vpon good cause magnifie the mercie of God, experience teacheth vs, ȳ we must do the like at ȳ least. Yet let vs marke well what he saith, *That he is the cheefest of all sinners.* That is to say, ȳ greatest & most hainous. How so? S. Paul had neither bene an whoremonger, nor a dronkard, nor glutton, nor these, nor man of wicked and desolate life, as he sheweth ȳ he was vnre-prouable, according to the lawe, and perswaded him selfe, that he was very iust. Why then doth he call him selfe the greatest sinner? Herein therefore we see what an offence it is to resist the worde of GOD, although a man doe it of 40 ignorance, not thinking to doe euil. We saw before, ȳ S. Paul shewed ȳ he did it ignorantly, yea, ȳ he had such a zeale as most of vs had, vntil God brought vs vnder his yoke, & yet he saith, ȳ he was ȳ greatest sinner in ȳ world. Doth he play ȳ hypoerise here, in making his confession? As there be many that wil say, from teeth forward, I am the greatest sinner: and yet are they puffed vp with pride, & thinke they haue a maruellous holines. Ah, S. Paule went not this way to worke, as I haue already touched: but he shewed, although mē be ignorant, yet haue they for al ȳ, no excuse before God, but ȳ their sinne and iniquitie is so horrible, ȳ they must needs confesse, ȳ he might iustly castout his ligh-tenings against them. This confir-meth the doctrine which was ex-poun-

pounded heretofore. And indeed, if we marke what the cheifest seruice is, y<sup>e</sup> god demandeth and accepteth, we can quickly say, that humbleness is the greatest sacrifice y<sup>e</sup> he alloweth. And hence it is, that it is saide, that obedience of faith, is as it were, mother of all vertues, it is the foundation and roote, and without it all vertues, 10 which are esteemed & accounted of amongst men, are nothing but smoake, they are euen as many sinnes which God condemneth. When we haue bestowed muche adoe in praying a man, and haue set him vp as highe as an Angel, God will cast him away, with all the goodly shewe that is in him, vnlesse he haue this obedience of 20 faith. Therefore it will serue to great purpose, for men to say, I would not haue thought it, it seemed so to me: for with all their thinking, and with all their reputatiō, they shall be condemned as rebellious before God. This wold seeme hard to vs at the first blush to be digested. Why so? For we see what paines men daily take to 30 scape out of Gods hand, & seeke many byways and crooked meanes. And whē they may haue this cloake, saying, I thought to doe well, and why will not God accept my good intent? When, I say we can allege this, we thinke we haue inough: but such cloaks are nothing worth before God. For he pronounceth, as he is a compe- 40 tēt iudge, y<sup>e</sup> when they serue him not obediently, what so euer is in

thē, shall be nothing but filth and abhominatiō before him. If there were no more but this, one decree, which shall neuer be called backe, it were inough for vs. But yet we must call to memorie, that which we touched a litle while agoe: to wit, y<sup>e</sup> there is neuer such ignorance in mē, but there is some hidden hypocrisie, and obstinate malice, and rebellion, and contempt of God, as it was in S. Paul. For although he burned with a folish zeale, and thought to serue God, yet was he full of pride, yet pleased he him selfe, and made great account of him selfe, thinking him selfe to be better then the best Christian in the worlde: for in deede, he could abide none of them. And whence came such a pride of his, but onely that he could not submit him selfe to God? When he accounted of him selfe on that fashion, could it otherwise be, but Sathan had bewitched him? for there is nothing that God blameth more then this pride. If wee be proud amongst 30 men, and would help our neighbours, God can not abide it. How wil he suffer vs then to come and cast vp our noses against him, and despise him? Is it a sinne to be excused, when men are so presumptuous to fight against God? Thus we see where S. Paul was ouer y<sup>e</sup> eares, vntill he was tamed by the grace of our Lorde Iesus Christ. He contented him selfe with his own knowlege, & no man could bring him to the Gospell, and



he was an hypocrite withall. For if a man search him selfe narrowly, & examine his life, he must needs be beaten downe, not onely with shame, but with vtter desperatiō. And could S. Paule, pleasing him selfe herein, haue a pure conscience before God? No no: but he was full of dissembling. It is true, that he did not wholly resist the truth of set purpose, for he was ignorant: but yet hypocrisie bare som sway among this ignorance. And this that we say of S. Paule, must needs be applied to all other. And therefore let vs not thinke it straunge any more, for God to condemne the rebellion of the vnfaithfull, although they pretend not to lift vp them selues of wicked purpose, or pretended malice: although they seeke all starting holes they can, know we, that God condemneth them, seeing that S. Paule sheweth, that such manner of men are the greatest sinners. This goeth verie far: for howe many may a man finde at this day, euen of thē that know the Gospell, whiche thinke, that they which erre of simplicitie, (as men commonly speake) euen all they are good men, and there is no malice in them, no poyson: a like matter: but this is sure, that we shall not be iustified, vnlesse God make vs newe againe by his holy spirit. Which is not don, but whē we are drawn to the knowledge of our Lorde Iesus Christe. Then must we needes conclude, that all they that are wrapped in

their vaine superstitions, haue nothing but hypocrisie in them. For otherwise, holie writt should vtterly be false. Nowe, as we condemne other, so are we readie to iustifie our selues, and knowe not that we haue fallen as beastly as they: yea, we see this. For they that vnderstande the doctrine of the Gospell, howe speake they of their superstitions in times past, but mockingly? Which is farre from lamenting, and being sorrie for it. Howe many may a man finde that are sorrie in their harts, when they remember howe they were drowned in their abominations, and vile idolatries? This is nothing among them. And yet Saint Paule sheweth vs in his person, that they are horrible offences, & such as cannot be excused before God. For if whormongers, dronkards, murtherers, and theeues, are to be condemned, there is no cause why we should think to be quit, vnlesse it be because God vseth so great pitie, and powreth out the infinite treasures of his goodnesse and mercie vpon vs. And thus are we taught by this text, that it shall auaille men nothing at all, to streine them selues to serue God, and therein torment themselues, vntil they be brought to the obedience of faith. So then, all they that haue their good intentes, (as they call them) do not onely lose their time, and are beguiled of all that whiche they thinke to do well, but they prouoke the wrath of GOD, they heape

heape vp horrible finnes . When they come with their deuotions, as to heare a masse, to do their baggage , and torment them selues with all that which the Papists cal Gods seruice , they are euen as many offences, wherewith they drowne them selues in the botto-  
 comelesse pit of hel: let vs dispute as long as we list, see howe God 10  
 pronounceth the sentence, that shal neuer be called back againe. Knowe we then, that the cheefest end we haue to driue vnto, is to frame and giue our selues to y<sup>e</sup> obedience of faith, y<sup>e</sup> is to say, that our life be wholly ruled according to the word of God: and ther vpon let vs knowe howe miserable we are, and what condition we 20  
 were in, vntil God drew vs out of y<sup>e</sup> darknes of Papistrie, where into we were entred, which thing we must do, to magnifie the grace of our God, with sobes and sighes for our offences which we haue committed against him, & y<sup>e</sup> he hauing pitie on so many poore creatures which went to destruction, wold not suffer them, to whom he hath 30  
 shewed him selfe, to fall away from him, but that they may continue with him, and followe their race euen to the end. And thus must wee practise this text. Yet must we note moreover, y<sup>e</sup> y<sup>e</sup> was touched this morning, y<sup>e</sup> it is not sufficient for euery mā to acknow-  
 ledge him selfe a sinner generally, but we must confesse our faults 40  
 without all dissembling, that being wounded with the iudgement

of GOD, we may haue so much more earnest desire to receiue his mercie. For while men haue this simple consideration, to say, I am a poore sinner, they come verie coldly to God : and when he hath pardoned them their faultes, they will not thinke them selues much bound to him, but will be, as it were, in a slumber. What must we then do ? Let vs followe the example of S. Paule: that is to say, let vs not only haue a confused imagination that we are sinners, but let vs feele particularly what our finnes are , and what horribleness there is in them , & what vengeance we haue deserued, vnlesse GOD receiue vs to 20  
 mercie . Let euery man grope to the verie bottome of his heart, let him marke well what his life hath bene, to the end that we may all enter into such an acknowleging of our faultes, that we make such a confession as S. Paule maketh here, not from his teeth forwards, but to dispose our selues wholly, to displeafe our selues in our sins, to the end, that euerie one for his 30  
 parte, may praise the inestimable mercie of God toward vs. Therefore, let this small paltie cease, to say, I am a sinner, I knowe I am a man: for we seeme to mock God, when we say so, but let euery one consider. Goe to, I am not only a sinner, to condemne my selfe generally with other , but I haue committed suche faultes before God, and yet was I subiect to sarr 40  
 greater, vnlesse God had prefer-  
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ned me. And let vs not say? And what of this man? Is not he more worthy to be condemned then I? As for our neighbours, let vs shut vp our eyes, let vs not goe seeke their life, to let our owne go, but let euery man confesse his owne finnes, and not confesse the faults of his neighbours, to say. Alas, I am not a common sinner as other men are, but there are so many faultes in me, that I am afraid: and God must needes shewe in me a great and singular grace, to pardon me so many faultes as I haue committed against him. But (as I said, this must not be pronounced only from the teeth forward, but it must be spoken from the heart. For we shall see men say so, and yet are the greatest hypocrites in the world: they will say, I am the greatest sinner in the world, and wil they acknowledge their sinne thinke you? If a man come and tell them of it, they will say as we commonly vse to say, what is he that saith so? If a man rebuke the, and tell them, Alas, your finnes are so horrible, that none can be more: yea wis, sinne? Who darcth say so? who can finde any fault with me? Thus we see that there are some, that doe nothing but mocke God, when they confesse them selues to be great sinners. S. Paul vsed no such dissembling: for he condemneth him selfe here for the greatest sinner and the cheefest, as a captaine of euill and destruction: knowing in deed that it was so. And why so? Because he

had stood against the trueth of God. For he thought thus, What is the maiestie of Iesus Christe? For in him dwelleth al fulnesse of the godhead. And I haue fought against him, against this wisdom of God, whereby I was made and fashioned. I haue fought against my redeemer, against him of whom I haue to holde my saluation: He is the iudge of the worlde, and I come to lift vp my selfe against him? Where doth all righteousnesse consist, all rule and perfection of goodnesse, but onely in the Gospell? And I would haue troden all this vnder my foote. Therefore Saint Paule thinking vpon al this, confesseth him self not without cause, to be the greatest sinner. And thus, when a man will well examine his life, to codeinne himselfe before God, he must not accuse his neighbours, (as I said,) if a man wold diligently examine this man or y man, he should find himself worie: we must not stand, I say, vpon any man, but we must bring our selues before God, and marke what our owne liues haue bene, and how we haue behaued our selues both toward God, and toward our neighbors. When we proceede in this sort, it is sure that we will say with S. Paule without dissembling, Alas, what am I? And when we haue made such a confession of our finnes, it will cost vs nothing to glorifie our God, but we will say, Ah Lorde, what had bene become of me, if thou haddest not reached out thy hand

hande vnto me to plucke me out of destruction? As we see howe S. Paule speaketh in this place. For after what he hath made suche a confession of his sinns, as we haue heard, O, saith he, let honour and glory be giuen to God only, who is immortall and inuisible, who is our euerlasting king. When Saint Paule speaketh thus, he sheweth, 10 that he can not sufficiently set foorth and declare to the worlde, the graces that God hath bestowed vpon him: as if he had saide, that he was in the bottomlesse pit of death, and God drewe him out of it. Therefore, when we shall thinke vpon the goodnesse and mercy of God, and the miserable condition wherein we were before 20 that he made vs feele his grace, we shall be stirred vp to confesse our sinnes, yea, in trueth and veri-

tie, bicause God shall be witnesse, so that we shall not be afraide to pronounce it before him, before his Angels, & before al creatures.

Nowe let vs fall downe before the face of our good God, with confession of our faultes, praying him that it would please him to make vs know them in such sort, that euery one of vs may be his own iudge, and not looke to haue him our enemie, and to pursue vs: but that we may rather be our owne iudges, to the end, y<sup>e</sup> being beatē downe within our selues, he may reach vs out his hand, and be mercifull to vs, in the name of our Lorde Iesus Christe. And seeing, that during the state of this mortall life, we shall neuer be so well reclaimed, but we shall alwayes haue many blemishes and, &c.