That this is Sainte Iohn thapostles epistle, whiche wrote the Gospell, the very stile of the wordes selfe is a playne argument. He maketh muche a dooe in the rehersall of light and darkenes, life and death, hare and loue, in often repetinge the wordes, as though they were taken out of the sayinge nexte before. Of the whiche sorte (to open my saying more plainly by example) this is one: Loue not the Wvorld, nether those thinges that are in the Wvorld. Yf any manne loue the Wvorld, the loue of the father is not in hym for all that is in the Wvorld &c. And anon after: He is not of the father, but of the Wvorld: and the Wvorld passeth aVuae. How often here is the world rehearsed? Fynally in all hys sayinge there is lesse compendious shortenes, and more open plainesse than in the writynge of the reste of thapostles. And as for theepistle, it is more evidently plaine, than nedeth any argumente, like as the two Epistles folowinge are, whiche are ascribed to one Iohn a cer|tayne senior, and not to Iohn the apostle.

Thus endeth the Argumente.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vp|on the firste Epistle of Sainte Iohn.

The fyrste Chapter.

The texte.

That which was from the beginnyng, which we haue herd, which we haue sene with our eyes, which we haue loked vpon, and our handes haue handled, of the worde of the lyfe. And he lyfe appeared, and we haue sene and beare witnes, and shewe vnto you that eternall life, whiche was with the father, and appeared vnto vs. That whithe we haue sene and hearde, declare we vnto you, that ye also maye haue felowshyp with vs, and that our felowship maye be with the father and his sonne Iesus Christ. And thys wryte we vnto you, that (ye maye reioyce, and that) youre ioye may be full.

VE write not vnto you, dearely beloued brethren, of stender or meane thinges, or of thinges vnknowen, but of a newe matter: howbeit so newe vnto vs, that with God it was from euverlasting. This is the worde of God, euen Iesus Christe bothe God and manne: whiche where he was alwayes the sonne of God, woulde of late be the sonne of a mayden: and which after hys diuine nature was invisuable to mans eies, vouchesafed to take vpon hym an humayne bodye: and did vouchesafe to be famiyliarly conuersaunte among men, that he might aryse vs vp from the darkenes of our ignoraunce to the lyght of Gospelli••
knowlage: and that we myght begynne to beholde him with the eies of our mynde, whome we haue presenty\老兵 with the eies of our bodye. In dede the vnbelefe of mannes harte required, that the truthe shoulde bee credited by grosse outwarde experimentes: but yet the godlyn\老兵 of them is more preferred by his owne worde, whiche where they neyther had sene him with theyr eyes, n\老兵 handled him with theyr handes, yet were moste certaynly perswaded, and bele\老兵ed that he is the sonne of God, and thonly autor of mannes saluacyon. It is our parte therfore, to declare that, whiche we haue moste certaynly proued by our bodyly sences, vnto those that chaunced not to see it, and yet it is expedient to beleue, that none ought to trust to haue life, nor euerlastinge saluacion, but he that beleueth the Gospelles doctrine, wherof we are both witnesses and preachers. It is not the worde of manne, nether of lyght importaunce, but it is the worde of God, and of heauen, that geueth euerlastying lyfe to them, which geue obedient hearyng vnto it: and deliue\老兵ing from the deathe of sinnes, from what so euer relygyon, from what so euer kynde of lyfe they shall turne them selues vnto it. Of this matter y\老兵 we speake of we speake of most assured credence, y\老兵 is to wete, euen the thing which we y\老兵 were continual waitours heard with our eares saw with our eies, nether sawe we afarre, of, or passinge by, but we loked pres\老兵ently on to the full. And to cause a thinge to be credited, these are two princi\老兵all chief sences, and if that also bee but a small matter, we did not only heare hym teaching, prayinge, commaundyng wyndes and deuilles, and the father sondry tymes bearing witnes vnto the sonne, and we sawe hym not only worke myracles, suffre deathe and ryse agayne: but also we haue handled with these handes of oures. For when he was rysen agayne from deathe, to thyntente to make vs beleue steofastlye that he was no vayne phantasie, but euen the lame manne alyue agayne, whome we had sene before dead, he caused vs to handle him with our handes, and laying to our fingres he shewed vs the places of his woundes. Mannekyn\老兵de was deade, bycause it was in thraldome of vices and synnes: and he suffred deathe for our wickednes, that through his goodnesse we myght lyue vnto Innocencie. We were in doubt also our selues, when we sawe hym dead, when we sawe hym buried, but when he rose again from death, he gaue vs sure hope of life. Mankyn\老兵de had had no maner of hope of eternall life, except he had caused vs to see him with our eies, and if he had not plucked awaye all doubtefulnes frō vs, by most manifestly apparent experimentes. He beinge manne suffred paynes for our synnes, and the same being God dooeth frely gene immortall lyfe to them that put theyr faythfull trust in hym. He ly\老兵ed alwayes with the father; and this life was alwayes determinately purpo\老兵ed for vs by the sonne, howbeit this counsail was not yet publyshed vnto the world, albeit the nacion of the lewes (and yet none but they) loked for it by the prophetes oracles, as it
were in a dreame. In the meane while deathe reigned, lyfe laye hydden. Some tixed theyr hope in Moses, some in worldly wisedome, but the saluacion and life of all people was Iesus Christe, the worde of God the father, the teacher of Innocencye, and the geuer of Immortalitie. For none lyueth, but he that lyueth godly, nether dooeth any escape deathe but he that atreyneth Immortalitie. At leynth thys (Iesus christe) manifested him selfe vnto the world by hym selfe, shewing him selfe playnly to all the senses of man, and so thrusting him selfe in to the consciences of menne. And therfore he would haue vs to be lokers on and witnesses of all things, that he did on earthe to

thintent they myght be faithfully published by our preachinge throughout all the whole vniuersall worlde: that like as we by Iesus haue obtenyed lyfe and saluacion, in case we perseuer still in the Gospelles doctrine, euen so shoulde you also come with vs in to the felowshippe and company of this saluacion, in case you geue credence to our witnesse bearing concerning the thinge that you neither hearde nor sawe of hym, but learne it by our preachinge. We are nether vayne witnesses ne yet vncommaunded. He had vs to bee faithfull witnesses, and we recorde vnto all men with the greate daunger of our head, none other thinge than we haue most euydent experience of, with all the sences of the bodye. We are happye, in that our eares and eies haue made vs beleue: and yet you are nearest happye, if you geue credence vnto hys witnesse bearers. Our faithe hathe glued vs vnto Christe, and made vs the children of God and membres of Christe: And your faith also shall engraffe you vnto the same bodye, that being ioyned with vs in the felowshippe of faithe, you myght make one bodye. And so shall it come to passe, that we shall not only bee all of one mynde amonge our selues, as the membres of one bodye, but we shall also haue peace and league with Iesus Christe; and by hym with God his father, from whome we were before farre different: that like as the sonne is at moste perfite consent & communion of al thinges with the father, euen so we also by perfite algreement of the profession of the Gospell, shoulde bee heaped toghter in to one bodye of Christe, to be made partakers of all the goodes of our heade. I know you are ioyous of so happye a feloweship, but yet I put you in remembrance agayne of these thinges in writing, to thintent you myght reioyce more fully, if euerie manne be not all together ioyous of hys owne saluacion, but all mens felicitie make euerie one glad. For thys dooth christen charitie cause, that euery manne must be as glad of other mennes commodities, as of his owne. The moe that this felicitie is commune vnto, the more abundaunt shall euerie ones ioye bee. Among vs there shall no being of one mynde stande together stubstantially, excepte we be fast glued together with mutuall charitie. We canne not
possibly haue peace with God, except we be answerably like vnto our head Iesus Christe: what so euer he hathe, he ascribeth it vnto the father: and what so euer we haue, it behoueth vs to ascribe it vnto Christe. Christe is the true lyght that procedeth from the father of all lyght. We canne not bee the membres of Christe, except we bee bright: nether canne we haue lyght, onles we bee transformed into him, and contynue stedfastly vnto the ende in his feloweship. Trueth and Innocencye is the lyght of the mynde, and synnes and wycked lustes are the darkenes: where lyght is, there is life: where darkenes are, there deathe is.

The texte.

And this is the tydinges which we haue hearde of hym and declare vnto you, that God is light, and in him is no darckenes at all. If we saie, that we haue felowship with him, and walke in darckenes, we lye, and do not the trueth. But and yf we walke in light euen as he is in light, then haue we felowship with him, & the bloud of Iesus Christ his sonne denseth vs from all synne. If we saye that we haue no synne, we deceaue our selues, and the trueth is not in vs. If we knowledge our sinnes, he is faythfull and iust to forgeue vsoure synnes, and to clense vs from all vnrightewesnes. If we say, we haue not synned, we make hym a lyar, and hys worde is not in vs.

What is the matter than, whiche we shewe vnto you, that you myght the more fully rejoyce? In dede it is that, whiche we haue heard euen of him, and

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hauing heard it we make it cōmune vnto you: that God, forasmuch as he is alltogether and of his own nature good, all wise, al pure, and al light & life, nether is ther any darkenes in him. In vs the matter standeth not after such sorte, but we haue muche darkenes euen of our selues: in case we haue any light, we are endebted in that all to gether vnto him, by whose free liberality we are deliuered from our olde synnes, and being deliuered from the darkenes of our former ignoraunce we haue learned by the Gospelles doctrine to liue godly after Christe our heades example. If any manne boast, that he is through baptisme engraf∫ed to the body of Christe, and hathe therby felowshippe with God the father: where as in the meane while he liueth yet in errours & vices of hys former lyfe, dooeth playnly lye. For seing (as I sayed before) God is farre from all maner felowship of darkenes: how can he possibly haue any thynge a dooe with hym, that lyueth yet still all together in errour and olde vices? For he is clene out of the waye, that thinketh he can atteyne Innocencie by any other meanes than by Christ: agayne he is deceaued, that thinketh it ynough for him to be washen in baptisme, except he be answerably like
vnto his professiō through Innocencie of life? he that thinketh thus, is deceaued, and he lieth that sayeth it. For Christe is the trueth, whiche hathe nothing a doo with lyers. The fyrrste steppe vnto light, is for a manne to acknowlage his darkenes: and the fyrrst stepping forthe of a manne vnto Innocencie, is to acknowlage his sinnes. Will ye heare therfore, by what token we maye knowe, that we haue true feloweshippe with God? Doubtles euen by thie: if like as he is light, and voyde of all darkenes, euen so shall we absteyne after his example from the darkenes of all errours and vices, framyng all our conuersacion after the light of the Gospell: and yf like as the sonne hathe most high concorde with the father: euen so shoulde we also lyue Innocently and be all of one mynde amongst our selues. The father will not laye the traunsgressions of our olde life vnto our charge, which are ones doone awaye all the sorte of them by the precious blood of his sonne Iesus Christe, so that we from henceforth absteyne from all synne, as muche as in vs lyethe. The blood of Christe hathe washed awaye all fylthynes, and hathe washen it away from all folkes: yea but he hathe washen none but those that acknowledge theyr faultes. Yf we saye that we are not endaungered with synne, we deceaue our selues, we wandre in darkenes: and Christe, which is light, whiche is trueth is not in vs. For if he were truly in vs in dede, he would dispatche awaye thys darkenes of arrogaunt ignoraunce. And if it shall chaunce vs after receyuing of baptisme, to slyde backe agayne through mannes weaknes in to any synne, and as it were a myste obscure our light: we muste beware, that arrogauncie withdrawe vs not farther and farther of, and leade vs agayne from light in to our olde darkenes. Yea we muste geue dilygence, that through discrete sobrenes we maye be admoued vnto the light that shall dispatche awaye all darknes. If the brother perchaunce doo trespasse algaynste the brother, let eyther forgive other hys trespasse, that God maye forgive them also the trespasses that are done agaynste him. For in dede God hathe vpon this condicion promysed to forgive vs, what so euer we haue of offended againste him, if we forgive our brothers fault: and exacteth hys debte (euen to the vtermoste farthinge) of him, whiche hauyng hys lorde mercifull vnto him, shewed him selfe smally mercifull towards his felowe seruaunt: that is to saye, he iudgeth him vnworthye the mercye of God seinge he ones frely

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forgaue him all his trespasses, that will not pardone a smale offence vnto hym, agaynst whome he eyther trespasseth every daye, or elles maye trespass. That man wyll easely forgive hym that trespaseth agaynste hym, whiche wyll remembre howe many wayes he offendeth both agaynst God and agaynste his neyghbour: And as it is a very hard matter for a man to do so as he offende in nothing, euen so is it a verye easye mater to
amende suche offences with forgeuing one an other. Forgheue thou thy
neighbour, and thy neyghbour shall forgeue thee agayne: and God shall,
euen as it were of very covenaut, forgeue you both. I speake of those
faultes, that chaunce euen among them that are good, yea but among
men: and those faultes, that obscure the lyght of the Gospelles veritie,
rather than extinquyshe it. For God forbydde, that manslaughter, or
whoredome, or sacrilege shoulde chaunce vpon their life, that are ones
chosen among the chyl|dren of God. There is nothing that allureth more
the mercie of God, and swageth his wrath, than yf a man acknowlage his
faulte to God. If he that is a fearce cruel man forgeue him that
acknowlageth his faulte, how muche more shall God do so, which is more
mercifull than any man? He is by nature readyly bent vnto mercie, and
hath promised vs forgeuenes vpon this condicjon: for
gue, and it shall be
forgeuen vnto you. If he would not for
gue, in that he is good: yet he
shuld forgeue because he is iust & of faithful credence. See that thou
accomplyshe the prescribed condicion, and he shal not forget his
covenaut. If we with our whole harte forgeue our neighbour that
offendeth vs, God shall also forgeue vs, not onely one synne or an other,
but all synnes: so that we to our powers geue diligence, that we may be
once voyde of all vices. And yf we be not able fully to attayne vnto that for
the frayltie of mannnes body, yet he of his liberal free goodnes shal make
good, that is wantynge in our strengthes, and shall cleanse vs from all our
offences, who perchaunce suffereth some tokens of our olde former lyfe
to remayne stil in vs, for this purpose, that we should acknowlage our
weakenes. For in dede he is better content with a sinner that misliketh
him sel|fe, than with a righteous that mā standeth in his own conceite. He
would that y* saluacion of men shoulde be ascribed vnto his mercy, and
not to our merytes. And nowe hathe he testified, that there is no mortall
manne on yearth, but he offendeth in some thyng. And yf we wyl say, that
we haue no synne in vs, we make wod a lyar, and say agaynst hym: and he
that gaynsayeth hym must nedes lye.

The .i. Chapter.

The texte.

My lytle children, these thynges wryte I vnto you, that ye synne not. And yf
any manne sinne, we haue an aduocate with the father, Iesus Christ the
righteous: and he it is that obtey|neth grace for our sinnes: not for our
sinnes onely, but also for the synnes of all the worlde. And hereby we are
sure that we know hym, yf we kepe his commaundementes. He that sayeth, I
knowe hym, and kepeth not his commaundementes, is a lyar, and the verytie
is not in hym. But whose kepeth his worde, in hym is the loue of God
carfecte in dede: hereby we know that we are in hym. He that sayeth, he
abydeth in hym, ought to walke as he walked.
These thynges do I wryte, my lytle children, not that synne should be cómmited the more licenciously vpon truste of the mercye that is ordayned, but that no man shoulde synne at all, as muche as in vs lyeth. After that Christ hath once for|geuen vs all oure transgressions, it is requisite for vs to applie al our studious endeouers to this ende, that we may keppe innocēcie vndefiled. And yet if it chaunce vs to slide backe agayne into any sinne, ther is no cause why we should despaye of forgeuenes, we haue God ētreteable, & with him we haue a louing patrone & a trusty, who being the sonne, obtayneth whatsoeuer he wyll of the father, and wisheth hartilye wel vn|to vs: which gaue himselfe to saue vs, so that we do vttely and from the botome of our heartes mislike our selues, and geue our diligence agayne to better. He alone hath nothing to be pardoned of, and he it is that maketh intercession for the synnes of his membres, and reconclyeth the father (whiche is offended) vn|to vs, and causeth hym to bee mercyfull vn|to vs: & not vn|to vs onely, which haue now embraced hs doctrine, but also vn|to all mankynde vn|ersally, yf they with a syncere hearte confesse themsel|ues to be sinners, and purpose to leade an innocente lyfe, and so purposed go on forward, and keppe it substauncially. For baptisme doeth not make vs free from the obsueruacion of Moses law for that purpose, that we shoulde synne afterwarde licencious•y without punishement, but that we shoulde more fi•mely stycke to the loue of the Gospell, whiche causeth more to bee done of the wyllynge, than so many lawes of Moses gette perforce of the cōstrayned. He cōmaundéd many thinges in a smal rowme, that cōmausted men to loue their neighbours, even as he dyd vs. He driueth not vs to loue hym agayne, but he enticeth vs, he prouoketh vs, he kindleth vs. Whoseoeuer knoweth God aryght, cannot chose but loue hym behemētly. For euery one that professeth God with hys mouthe, knoweth not God: but he that is kyndled with the flame of gospellyke charitie, and doeth wylynglye and gladly, that whiche he dyd perfitely before, that we do good euyn vn|to our enemies, and that for the saluacion of our neyghbour we wyll not stycke to stād in daūger of our life, he declareth hymselfe to know god. But & if a mā make hys boaste, that he knoweth god, in that, that he beinge taught hys principles hath learned the misteries of the fayth, in that beinge baptised he hath professed his name, neither for al that foloweth the example of his charitie, he is a lyar, neither hath he yet fully learned to knowe God, in as|muche as god is not knownen, excepte faythe be garnysshed with charitie. And whosoeuer is a lyar, Christ whiche is the very trueth selfe, dwelleth not in hym: and whosoeuer hath not Christ dwellyng in hym, is not a liuell membere of his body. Faith without loue is a vayne matter and a deade. To bee short, loue is not idle, it ommitteth none of those thynges, that it knoweth be acceptable vn|to hym whō it loueth. Christ sayd he would not acknowlage hym to be his disciple,
that woulde not take vp his crosse and folow hym, walkyng in y\textsuperscript{*}
foresteppes of perfite charitie. Therfore he that obserueth his saying,
dclareth in dede that he holdeth fast the perf\textsuperscript{e} and ryght euangelical
charitie. By trial herof we shal know, that we are in his body, & that we
haue receyued hys spirit. Wherto doest y\textsuperscript{*} make thy vaunt, as a mèbre of
Christe, in that thou art through baptisme receyued into the flock of
christiàs? It is not an idle professiō, it is a not fine fingred professiō.

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It is not the profession that maketh a true membre of Christe, but the
imitacion. He that professeth with his mouthe that he is regenerate in
Christ, must walke in his fotesteppe. He lyued not to him selfe, he died
not for himselfe: He gaue himselfe wholy for vs, he dyd good to all folkes,
he gaue no reuilynge worde agayne to any man, but whan he was nayled
on the crosse, he prayed to the father for them that spake reuilyngly
agaynste him. This is the gospellike and perfite charitie, whiche they ought
to followe in their dedes, that professe them selues to be Christes
disciples.

The texte.

Brethren, I write no newe commaundement vnlo\textsuperscript{t}o you: but that olde
commaundemèt, which ye haue had from the beginning. The olde
commaundement is the worde, which ye haue heard from the beginning.
Agayne, a newe commaundement I write vnlo\textsuperscript{t}o you, that is true in hym, and
the same is true also in you: for the darkenes is past and the true lighte
nowe shyneth. He that saieth howe that he is in the lyght, and yet hateth his
brother, is in darkenes euen vntyll this tyme. He that loueth his brother,
abydeth in the lyght, and there is none occasion of euill in him. He that
hateth his brother, is in darkenes, and walketh in darkenes: and can not tell
whither he goeth, because that darkenes hath blynded his eyes.

Dearly beloued, thys commaundement of charitie, that I wryte vnlo\textsuperscript{t}o you,
is no newe commaundemente, but euen Moses lawe declared it long agoe,
or rather Christe by it, whiche renewed his commaundement in the
gospell: and so renewed it, that he made it peculiarly his owne. This
(quod he) \textit{is my commaundement, that you shoulde love one another, as
I haue loued you. Theryfore it is neither any new commaundement, neither
my commaundem\textsuperscript{e}nt, that I geue now vnlo\textsuperscript{t}o you, ne yet suche a one as
you haue not heard of hitherto, but it is the selfe same commaundemente,
that we gaue vnlo\textsuperscript{t}o you by and by in the begynnnyng by thauortytie of
Christe. And yet agayne the same is newe that I write nowe vnlo\textsuperscript{t}o you. It
was an olde commaun\textsuperscript{d}ement, but it is brought out of vse through the
maners of the people. The Iewes learned by heart: *Thou shalte loue the Lorde thy God, thou shalte loue thy neighbour*, but yet every one serued his own gaine. Christ renewed thys vnto vs, yea and loued vs more than himselfe, and *e loued not his neighbours, but he loued his enemies, yea those that turned way wardly from him and that were worthy of euyll. This albeit I knowe you haue heard of, long ago, yet it ought to be renewed from tyme to tyme with often re|hersall, that it maye sticke the more depely in youre mynde, seing it is the chief matter of the gospelles profession. This was a true commaundement in Christ, which performed in deede the thyng that he taughte: but it was not true in you, as long as you hated your neighbour, as long as you recompenced euill worde for euell worde, and wrong for wrong. But now it is true in you also, synce the true sprite vp lighte of the gospelles doctrine hath dispatched awaye y* darkenes of your former life, & hath taught that none is acceptable, but he that would loue the good for Christes sake, & loue thē also that are bad to this ende, that they should be couerred vnto Christ. Those that folowe this doctrine, walke in lyghte, & offende not in the darkenes of euill lustes. The hate of the neighbour powreth darkenes into the mynd. Therfore he that is so washē and so hath professed Christ, that he geueth not ouer to hate his brother, he is deceaued in beleuyng that he walketh in light, where he is yet in darkenes. For God remitteth not him, yt forgeueth not his brother. For it is not yνough to haue geuen ouer theft, whoredom & murdre, in baptisme, except al holowhartednes be also plucked quite out of y* mind, & in stede of hate, charitie come in place.

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He that contynueth styll in the loue of hys neyghbour, abydeth in lyghte, which is Christ Iesus, and stombleth not as walking in darkenes: For true charitie is so farre of from hurtynyng any body, that it suffreth all thynges, and turneth all thynges into good. Contrarywyse he that hateth his bro|ther, although he haue geuen ouer to offer vnto images, although he haue geueū ouer to be an vsurour or a churche robber; yet he is styl in darkenes, & seruing his owne blynde lustes he walketh in darkenes:
neyth seeth he the strayght waye vnto saluacion, although the gospell shine clearely vpon him. And all is long of the darkenes of the hate of his brother, that hath so blynded his eyes. Where hate reigneth, there is the iudgement blynde.

The text.

Babes, I write vnto you howe that your sinnes are forgeuen you for his names sake. I write vnto you fathers, howe that you haue knowen him that is from the beginnyng. I wryte vnto you yongmen, howe that ye haue overcome that wicked. I write vnto you lytle children, howe that ye haue
knowen the father. I haue written vnto you fathers, howe that ye haue 
knowen him that is from the begynnyng. I haue written vnto you yonge men, 
how that ye are strong, and the worde of god abydeth in you, and ye haue 
overcome that wicked. Se that ye loue not the world, nether the things that 
are in the worlde. If any man loue the worlde, the loue of the father is not in 
him. For all that is in the worlde (as the lust of the fleshe, and the lust of the 
eies and the pride of life) is not of the father, but of the worlde. And the 
worlde passeth awaye, and the lust therof: but he that fulfylleth the will of 
God, abydeth for euer.

I loue you euen as a mother loueth her children, and write for that 
pursepose, partlie reioycynge at your felicitie, partly exhertyng you to goe 
forward better and better. I reioyce at you, as my most deare children, 
whom I haue begotten agayne by the sede of the gospels doctrine vnto 
Christ, in that the synnes of your former lyfe are pardoned you, and 
freely pardoned you, for none other cause, but because you haue 
professed the name of the lorde Iesu Christe, that you shoulde also 
remembre after his example frelye to forgeue euerye one his neyghbour. 
I write vnto you, whom not so muche the processe of age as the grauitie 
of maners and godly carefullnesse towards them that be yonger, doeth 
make worthye the name of fathers: reioyceing in you, that you are not 
onely endued with a commune maner of wisdome, wherby olde men are 
commended almost because of the experyence of thinges, and geue the 
better counsel to the ignoraunte yong folkes, but in that you haue 
reknowledged Iesus Christe the autor of saluacion: whiche not onely is of 
a greate olde age, but also hathe bene alwayes wyth the father. You being 
of great age knowe him that is eternal: and the more fully you knowe him, 
so much the more diligently you preach him to them that be of slenderer 
age. Olde folkes do remembre and kepe in mynde many olde auncient 
thynges, and you kepe him in mynde that was before al age. I write vnto 
you yongment which through the strength of faith haue ouer|come that 
wicked & vnruyl Satan. The cōmune sorte of yongmen thinketh 
themselues happie in that they geue lightly place to no mā because of 
their bodyly strength. But you are more happie, that by reason of youre 
strength of mynd, you could be overcome, neither with enticementes of 
voluptuous pleasures, ne wţi any terrours of yẽworld. Other mens actuittie 
florisheth in battail, but your actuittie hath florished more nobly against 
the assaults of deuils, the fleshe, & the world. I write vnto you childrē, 
which although for tendernes of your yeares, you are not skilled as yet in 
y* knowlage of world|ly matters, yet you haue already atteined the thîg, y* 
getteth you euerlastīg felicitie. In other childrē it is y* first special tokē of 
wit, if they acknowledge
their father, but you knowe your heauenly father, by whom you are regen
nerate vnto heauen. Let euerie one maynteyne that he hath, and encrease
in that he hath. For this cause sake, I bothe reioyce in euerie one, and also
warne all and euerie orders and states of you, that acknowledging your felicitie, you geue thanks to God youre autour, and hauyng in remem
braunce, whither you must go, preace alwayes forewarde vnto more per
fecciō. I wil rehearse it vnto you therfore, that ye can not forget it. I haue written vnto you fathers, for you knowe him whiche hath nother begin
nyng nor endyng, that the desyre of this lyfe should in no wyse stiere you, seyng you make haste to the life that neuer shal haue ende. I haue written vnto you yongmen, because you haue overcome the ruflynges yncenesse of youth through the valiant strengthe
of mynde, and because you haue with a constaunte heart kepeth the worde
of the Gospell, and haue by the helpe of Christ, overcome the Deuill the continuall enemye of mankynde. Continue you styll in victorye, contemnene styll that whyche you haue hitherto contemned, and loue more and more that you haue begun to loue. The worlde enticeth by false imaginacions of transitorye goodes, and frayeth with a vayne and false shewe of euilles. As for you, let those thiniges fraye you whiche are euill in dede, and neuer haue ende. And let these thiniges catche you that are good in dede
and knowe none ende. Folowe the lyght of the gospell and loue heauenly
thynges, whiche the heauenlye father promyseth, vnto whom you are regenerate by Christ. Flee the darknes of naughtie lustes, wherby this
worlde layeth bayte with countrefaict goodes. It can not possiblie be, that you can loue bothe at ones, nor serue both at ones. There is none agree ment betwene God and the worlde, there is no concorde betwene lyght and darkenes: whosoeuer loueth the worlde, swarueth from the loue of God the father. I speake not of this worlde, which god made, wherin we liue, wil we nil we. The wiked gredy desires of vayne thinges (wherein the common sort of menne repose their felicitie, forgetting the thiniges that are truely good in dede) I cal the world. It is not the place, howe farre of so euer it be, not the raymente, not the meate, not the title, that exempteth you frō the world, but a mind that is pure from those desires y* I spake of. And what hath this world, that is not noisomly hurtful? There are three thiniges, y* it most cheefely deceineth folishe & vncir\cumpect folkes withall: the voluptuous pleasure of the fleshe, enticemen\tes of the eies, and hyghe statelynes and proude galauntnes of lyfe. For it obiecteth certayne iugglinges of vayne pleasures to clawe the senses of the bodye withall for a tyme, that the mynde maye in the meane while be called awaye from the studie of heauenlye good thynges. For the desyre of suche maner of good thynges, the heauenlye spirite suggesteth, whom God the father geueth vnto his childrē that are truly regenerate by Christ. The deuill hath also a spirite of his owne, by whom he suggesteth a per\nicious loue of thynges neyther true nor durable, vnto them that haue bent themselues throughly vnto this worlde. He suggesteth the naughtye sportes of lechery, to title the mēbres of the body withal
through a folishe and a filthy itching delite. He suggesteth the delite of fyne meates & drinke to please y•paunche & the mouth w̄ al. He suggesteth the sweetnes of idlenes & slepe, that the mynde may waxe the more sluggishe throughe costume,

He suggesteth wanton songes and shameles fables, to anoynt the eares withall. He suggesteth the wanton enticementes of beawties and sondry kyndes of things to beholde, to delite the eies withall. He suggesteth the pompes and ioylitie of riches, the occasions of ambicion. Finally he allu∣reth mennes myndes on every parte awaye from the true and euerverlasting good thinges vnto the vayne imaginacions of good thinges. Let him that is entangled with the desire of these thinges, knowe that he is not moued by the spirite of the heauenly father, but by the spirite of the worlde. The worlde, lyke as it consisteth vpon elementes that endure but for a time, eluen so geueth it nothing but that whiche shall shortly perishe. God, like as he is eternall, euens se geueth he frely euerverlasting rewardes. Therefore he that dependeth vpon the succours of the worlde, foloweth a certayne felicite that is both vayne and shall shortly be taken awaie, which, euens casualtie that commeth vnthought vpon, plucketh awaye in this worlde, or at lest age dispatcheth it. Truly death that shall come vn to every man, plucketh quite awaye all the dreame of false pleasures. Whan the mater is ta∣ken awaye, the pleasure perisheh, and sorowes come in place. Whan the man is taken away, al is gone to naught, and euerverlasting torment cometh in place. But he that •beieth vnto the father that calleth him vnto the loue of an heauenly lyfe, his felicitie shal neuer haue ende. For he that geueth it, knoweth none ende. The unhurtfull commodities of this worlde are to be vsed for the tyme, yea but smallye, but moderately, to the necessitie of na∣ture, not to the voluptuouse fulfylling of pleasure. But the chiefe studye of mynde ought to be turned to the thynges that be eternall, whereunto the vse of all other thynges ought also to be referred.

The text.

Lytell children, it is the last time, and as ye haue hearde howe that Antichrist shall come, euens nowe are theremany begonne to be Antichristes already: wherby we knowe, that it is the laste tyme. They went out from vs, but they were not of vs. For yf they had bene of vs they would no doubt haue continued with vs. But that it might appeare, that they werenot of vs. Ne∫uertheles, ye haue an oynment of him that is holy, and ye knowe all thynge. I haue not written vnto you, as though ye knewe not the trueth: but as thoughe ye knewe it, and knowe also, that no lye commeth of trueth. Who is a lyar, but he that denieth that Iesus is Christe? the same is Antichriste,
that denieth the father and the sonne. Whosoeuer denieth the sonne, the
same hath not the father, he that knowledgeth the sonne, hath the father
also. Let therefore abyde in you that same which ye heard from the
begynnynge.

The felicitie of godly men doeth not yet appeare, but it shalbe many∣festly
opened in the commyng of our Lorde Iesu Christ. The wicked semeth to
lyue in the meane time swetely here in this worlde, but euerlastinge
so|rowe he*geth ouerthem and that shortly. For the laste tyme semeth to
be present, wherin (the course of things being turned vpsyde downe,) those
shall rayne with Christe, that are formented nowe for Christes sake:
and they shalbe brought to naught, whiche be nowe rebelles agaynst
Christe. You haue hearde that Antichrist shall come, who being armed
with all the mayntenaunce and iugglinges of this worlde, shoulde kepe
warre against Christe, and by and by when Antichriste is ouercomme
againe, the body of Christe shalbe deliuered from all euils, and the
members of the deuill shall be laden with the burthens of all euilles.
Therfore the commynge of thys Antichrist, (of whom the Apostles tolde
you before) semeth not to be farre

of. For thys worlde hath so muche preuayled agaynste the doctrine of the
Gospell, that there are begonne euen nowe all readye to be a great sorte,
that deserue the name of Antichrist, whose lyfe and doctrine and all theyr
hole studye is agaynst Christ. For what appeare they to be elles, than
An|tichristes gentilmen hussershers, and the last tokens of the plage to
come? For they do lesse hurt vnto Christes people that be vitterly
straügers from Christ, than those that being ones conuersaunt in his
castelles, and by and by become runneagates, assault Christe with
Christes owne garisons and armour. For they countrefaite euen those
things, which declare in chri∫tians, the vertue, the holynes, the
document, the auctoritie, the miracles of Christ. And in dede they went out
of vs, howbeit there is no matter, why they should much trouble you, they
were conuersaunt among vs, but they were none of ours. They were
enemies of Christe, euen when they were dwelling in his castelles. But and
if they had truely bene on our syde, they wolde haue continued stil to
thende with vs. They professed Christ in title and behauiour, but in their
mynde they louted the worlde vehemently. And therfore when it is come to
the stormes of persecucions, whan it is come to the flame of afflicciōs,
they haue shewed thēselues, what they were before. Nowe they are out
from vs, they extolle vs, as a body ouerlayed with euil humours, and now
being open enemies they shall lesse hurt, than holowe harted
companions. Thus it was Christes wyll, that it may evidently ap∫peare, that
all belonge not to the bodye of Christe, that are washen in his name, that
professe his name, and are partakers of the sacramentes of the Churche. A true and stedfast dispising of the world sheweth a man to be a Christian. A mynde that is vnbroken and vnconquered agaynst al wanton enticemētes, agaynst all injuries, sheweth a man to be a Christian. He that vpon occasion shrinketh from the doctrine of Christe, dyd countrefaicte a christianne, but he was no christian. In dede it is expedient that they be openly seperated from vs, lest in outward appearance seming to be good, they should do the more harme to them that are not ware. Although they were not vnknowen vnto you, yea before they withdrewe themselues openly. For the vnccion of Christ, wherof you are also named, that is to saye the inspiracion of the spirite of Christ, sheweth playnly ynough who are true christians, and who are not. For he that is a spirituall man, iudgeth althynges. They were not vnknowen, but they were borne with al, if perchaunce they woulde repent. It is true that I saye: neither doe I wryte these thinges vnto you, as thoughe you were ignoraunt of the trueth, selying you haue the spirite of Christ to your teacher, which suffereth you not to be ignoraunt of any thing: but I put you in remembraunce of the thyng that you know, to thintent you myght y\textsuperscript{e} more surely sticke vnto the trueth, and not to be disquieted whan sorowes do happen. You are the fewer, but you are the sounder, you are the more purely clesed, you are the quieter. Nothing is taken away of the body, though the botche be launced, though the corrupt matter be runne out. You knawe that Christ is the trueth, and all lynde of lyeng is cleane contrarie to him. Whosoeuer is an holowhar|ted dissembler, with him Christe hath nothing adoe, howe faste so euer he professe him with his mouthe. There are manye facions of lyenges. He that is a lyar, by what maner waye soeuer it be, denieth Christe, whiche is the trueth, and receyueth no mixture of any kinde of lye. He that is agaynst the trueth, is agaynst Christ: he that is agaynste Christe is Antichrist. And there is none more wicked a kynde of lyeng, than to denye that Iesus is Christ: and that do many false prophetes of the Iewes, whiche denie hym to be he, whom Moses and the prophetes oracles did long agoe promise vnto the worlde to be the reuenger, and autore of saluacion: and promyse an other Antichrist I wote not whom, in stede of Christe. Doubtes who so euer is such a one, is playne Antichrist. Agayne there are, that although they professe with their mouthe, that Iesus is Christe, yet they lyue after such sorte, as though his doctrine were vayne, as thoghhe the rewardes that he hathe promysed were vayne. He taught, that the pore in spirite are blessed, because the kyngdome of heauen abydeth for them. And an other man which applieth al his whole forcast to this end, to enlargel his landes, to byulde royall houses, to enhâuce his rentes, to stuffe his coafers with money gotten by hoke and by crooke, to
be aloft in authoritie, to oppresse the poore, and to exercise tyrannie: doeth he not cleane contrary vnto Christ, whose doctrine he maketh a lyar, as much as in hym lyeth? Christ taught, that they are blessed, whiche hungre and thirst after ryghteousnes: and an other reposeth his felicitie in ryot, in the pleasures of the paunche and bely cheare: doeth he not denye Christ? He teacheth, that the meke are blessed, because they shall possesse that heauenly lande, from whence they can not be cast downe. And an other man thinketh him happye, yf he can with op|pressing of the pore establishe his owne wealth. He teacheth that they are blessed, whiche mourne in this world, because everlasting comforte is due vnto them. And an other man that in all thynges foloweth the delicate pleasures of this worlde: doeth he not denie Christ? He teacheth, that thei are blessed, whiche are mercifull towards their neyghbours. And this mā pleaseth him selfe, because of his owne accorde he doeth him sorowe that is better than himselfe. Christe teacheth that they are blessed, whiche are vexed with reuylyng wordes and afflictions for the righteousnes of the Gospelles sake. And this man forcasteth with al maner of dissembling and wyles to please the world. Christ acknowledgeth him for his disciple, that taketh vp his crosse on his shoulders, and foloweth him. And an other man thinketh himselfe neuertheles christen man, if he escape all grief.

Christe sayeth vnto his: In the Worlde you shall haue oppression, but in me you shall haue peace: and yet vnto these men Christ is heauie, & the worlde sweete. He commaundeth to do good even vnto a mannes enemye, and an other doth wrong to a man without deserte. Doth not he, that lyueth after such sorte, resistingly denie Christ? his mouth sayeth not agaynst him, but his life doth. Whan the sonne taught agaynst these maners, the father sayed, Heare him. But what sayeth this manne? No, heare not him, it is harde geare that he teacheth, heare the worlde. Therfore like as he resisteth the sonne, euens doethe he repugne agaynst the father, and seynge he is of the facion of the worlde, he disseuereth himselfe from the flocke of them, whom Christ hath chosen out of this worlde. Christe hath nothing a doe with this worlde, and he that glueth himself vnto it, repugneth agaynst Christ: and playeth Antichrist, and denieth both the father and the sonne. For the father and the sonne are of an vnseperable societie. Here the lewe

wyll crye with open mouthe agaynst me: I acknowledge the father, but the sonne I acknowledge not. But what soeuer thou trespacest agaynst the sonne, thou trespacest the same agaynst the father. The sonne neuer did nor taughte any thing, but by the auctoritie of the father. He that taketh from the sonne, taketh from the father. Therfore he that estraungeth him
selfe from the felowship of the sonne, he neither pertaineth to the body of Christ, which is the catholike churche, nor hath felowshippe with God the father, whiche agreeth in all thinges with the sonne. You see with what great leoperdie foles disseeuer themselues from the sonne. Therefore continue you styll in the gospelles trueth, which you receiued first of the surely tried Apostles. Let not the lyeng tales of the false Apostles drawe you awaye.

The texte.

If that which ye hearde from the begynnyngest all remayne in you, ye also shall contynewe in the sonne, and in the father. And thys is the promes that he hath promysed vs, euen eternall lyfe. These things haue I written vnto you, concerninge them that disceaue you. And the anoyntyng which ye haue receaued of him, dwelleth in you. And ye nede not, that anye manne teache you: but as the anoynting teacheth you of all thynges, and is true, and no lye, and as it hath taught you, euen so byde therin. And now babes abyde in him: that when he shall appeare we may be bold, and not be made ashamed of him at his comming: if ye know that he is righteous, know also that euery one which doth rightewisenes, is borne of him.

Yf you continue stedfast in that thyng whyche we deluyered fyrst vnto you, you shal abyde in the felowship of God the father and of his sonne Iesus. If anye man thynke it an harde matter to perseuer in the professynge of the Gospell, because of the affliccions of the wicked, thinke vpon the rewarde. God requireth an harde matter, but the rewarde is greate that he promiseth. For he promiseth nether riches, nor kyngdome, nether the pleasure of this worlde, but lyfe euerlastynge. He that byeth that, byeth it good chepe, although he lose his life for it. These thinges doe I beate vpon, and put you in remembraunce of with so many wordes, beyng carefull, lest the wicked, that are gone from Christ, shoulde chaunce to beguyle anye wyth theyr iugglynges. Albeit without our warnynge, I thynke the spirite of Christ him selfe teacheth you sufficiently, whom you haue a continuall re|membrauncer and teacher in youre heartes. As longe as he continueth styll in you, it is no nede, that any man teache you, what you ought to auydye. He is a secret teacher, but he is the most sure teacher of all other. He beinge once recyued of you, teacheth you of all thynges, like as the sonne hath aliso promysed. For the spirite is true by nature, and can not lye. Therefore perseuer in that, whiche he hathe ones taught you. You holde the ryghte doctrine, you remembre it, there lacketh nothing, but that you persist still in it vnto the commyng of Christe, which I suppose, is not farre to. I besche you etesones & agayne, lytle children, persist in the doctrine of the spirite, that whan our prince and judge shal appare, the conscience of a good con|uersacion maye geue vs a sure trust in him, and that we maye come forthe so, as he be not ashamed to acknowledge vs for hys disciples, nor we a|shamed to come in to his syghte. For with what mouthe shall we call hym mayster
and Lorde, yf we haue neyther taken heede to hys teachynge, nor obeyed his commaundement? with what mouth shall we call God father, yf we be out of kynde in all our life longe frō hēs ordinances? It is not simple baptisme, but the obserued righteousnes, that maketh vs the children of God. For what shall they heare, that cast out deuilles in the name of Iesu, that tolde thynges before hande, that excelled in miracles? I knoVVe you no*. He taketh thē for straūgers, in whō he seeth not the righteousnes of the gospell. And if you be persuaded, y* God is the autor of thys righteousnes, know this also, that whosoever not with wordes, but with endeuours, doynges and maners accomplisheth the ryghteousnes of the Gospell, he is borne of God, vnto whom he maye with a good conscience preace with that boldenes, that obedient children are wonte to preace to a mercyfull father withall. He wyll acknowlage them that are lyke hym, but those that are not lyke hym, he will not acknowlage.

The .iii. Chapter.

The texte

Beholde, what loue the father hathe shewed on vs, that we shoulde bee called (and be in deede) the sonnes of God. For this cause the world knoweth you not, because it knoweth not hym. Dearly beloued, now are we the sonnes of God, and yet it doeth not appeare, what we shawe. But we knowe, that when it shall appeare, weshall be lyke hym. For we shall see hym as he is. And euery man that hath this hope in hym, pourgeth hym selfe, euen as he also is pure. Whosoeuer committeth sinne, committeth vnryghteousnes also, and sinne is vnrighteousnes. And ye knowe that he appeared, to take away oure synnes, and in hym is no synne. As many as byde in hym sinne not: whosoeuer sinneth, hath not sene hym, neither knownen hym.

Here sincere loue is, there is a trusty confidence, and feare is awaye. See therefore what a notable loue he hath geuen vnto vs, whiche hauing contemned the worlde with his en|tisementes and terrours, perseuer sty| in the gospel|trine, that we shoulde be named and be, not onely fa| full seruauntes, not onely frendes, but the children of God. For so Christ taught, that we should cal vpō the heuēly father, yf we haue nede of any thynge. It is a moste high honour to be called the children of God, and a moste high felicitie to be the children of God. And forasmuche as we cleaue vnto hym with a constant godlynes, and are acknowlaged of hym, the world acknowlege| not, but abhorreth and curseth vs as sedicious persons. It is no meruayle though the world
acknowledge not ye* childrē of God, seing it acknowledgeth not God himselfe, in that it denieth his sonne Iesus: let it nothing trouble your mindes, dearly beloued, that the world estemeth you as rascalles and abiecte persones. For with God we haue euen nowe thyss excellent dignitie, that we are the sonnes of God, and are glad at our heartes, feling in our selues the spirite, not of bondage but of children, vpon assured confidence wherof we crye, Abba, father. The dignitie is present, but the dignitie hath not yet appeared. As yet it is the time of batayle, the daye of triumphe is not yet come. That daye shall declare vnto all men, howe greate a dignitie they haue, howe greate a felicitie they haue, that constauntly shewe themselues the children of God. It is not yet come to lyght, what we shalbe in the comming of Christ, howbeit we hold thyss vpon a sure hope, that as soone as he shall appeare, to rendre vnto eluery one rewardes accordinge to hys dedes, we that were in this worlde companions of affliccions, shall also be companions of the ioyes: & we that were lyke hym in the contempte of the worlde, shalbe lyke hym also in the maiestie of glorye. We sawe hym here in thys world afflicted, and of lowe

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estate: then shal we see him as he is, and euer was, hygh and excellēt: and so seyngle hym we shall also be transformed vnto hys lykenes, not onely in myndes, but also in bodyes. And we see hym nowe, howebeit, as it were through a myst with the eyes of fayth. But then we shall see hym after such maner as cannot be expressed. But that thyng, whiche we shalbe than per|fitely, we must forcast nowe i the meane tyme to the vtermost of our possi|ble power. To thintēt we maye be like hi thē in glory, let vs be pure here frō all fylthynes. To thintent we maye see hym than, lette vs clense our eies nowe, lest when he shall appeare glisterynge bryght, he bee vnto vs more dreadfull than amiable. For he is not fortunatelye sene, but of them that are lyke hym. Therefore whosoeuer hath thyss confidence in Chríst, that he shal than be a companion of his glory, let hym in the meane time purge hymselfe with godly studyes cleane from worldlye affeccions, lyke as in hym was no maner of fylthynes of thys worlde, but is all together pure and heauenlye. Therefore it standeth vs in hande with all our possible powers, to bend our endeuours to thys ende, that nothyng remayne in vs of yearthye dregges. And leite no manne flatter hym selfe, sayinge: It is ynough for me vnto innocency, if I trāsgresse in none of those thinges that Moses lawe forbyddeth, nor in those thynge that are punyshed by the kynges lawes, as felonye, sacrilege, adultrie, murdre: but all maner of synne is utterly to be eschewed. For whosoeuer offendeth by any meane, although he offende not agaynst the prescriptes of Moses, yet he synneth agaynst the lawe of the gospell, which is a greate deale holyer than Moses law. And for thyss cause sake, Christ came once into the world, to shew the waye, whereby his comming agayne
shoulde become holesome and luckye vnto vs. He came to take awaye once for all not one synne or two, but al our synnes, where he onely was subiect vnto no maner of synne. He once purged vs frely from all synne, to make vs lyke manered vnto hymselfe, whiche neither any lawe nor any mortall man coulde be hable to do. Through baptisme we are engraffed into hys holy sacred body. But it is our part for all that to endeuer in the meane tyme, that we fall not from our head. We are engraffed through his owne free mercy, but we shal fall awaye, if we slyde backe agayne into our olde vices. He that abydeth in Christ, perseuereth in innocencye, and is wonderous ware to shunne from all sinne, that he may dayly more and more growe in vertues, and be made more lyke hys head. He that absteyneth not from sinnes, although he bee baptised, although he be called a christian, hath not yet sene fully, nor yet known hym. For who is it, yf he sawe with the eies of fayth, what greate dignitie it is to be chosen into the numbere of the sonnes of God, and what a fylthy shame it is to be geuen to the father deuyll, that woulde abyde to be plucked awaye from suche a bodye, to departe from suche a father, and to go out of kynde vnto so fylthy a tirannye, to slyde of his owne accorde awaye from so hygh rewardes vnto so greate miserie?

The text.

Babes, lette no man deceyue you, he that doeth righteousnes, is righteous, euen as he is righteous. He that committeth sinne, is of the deuil: for the deuyl sinneth sence the beginning. For thys purpose appeared the sonne of God, to looce the workes of the deuyll. Whosoeuer is borne of God, synneth not, for hys seed remayneth in hym, and he can not synne, because he is borne of God. In this are the children of God knowne, and the children of the deuyll. Whosoeuer doeth not ryghteousnes, is not of God, neither he that loueth not hys brother.

Babes lette no man deceyue you, flattering you for your professyng the name of christians, as though that were ynoyhe vnto felicitie. He is not iust, that speaketh iustice with his mouthe, but he that in his lyfe and maners doeth iustice in dede, is iuste, lyke as Christe also shewed himselfe in his sayinges and doynges an example of all iustice. And he that truely and wholy cleaueh fast vnto him, absteyneth as much as he possible may, from all vncleanes of sinnes, and the purenes of maners selfe declareth hym to be the sonne of God, whiche is good by nature, and knoweth no synne. But he that sinneth although he haue receyued the sacramentes of Christe, yet he is begotten of hys father the deuyl, whiche is the prince and autor of all synne. Him whosoeuer foloweth, is lyke his father, in that same thing that he sinneth in, & declareth hymselfe to be his sonne. God alloweth no felow|shyppe with synnes, for he sent his
sonne for thys intent into this worlde, to vanquis
he the woorkes of the
deuyll, that is to saye, all thynge, that are contrarye repugnaunt agaynst
the charitie of the gospel. Of Adam we are all borne endaungered with
sinnes: of God we are borne agayne by the sede of y* gospelles doctrine.
As longe as the strength of this seede abydeth in a man, he synneth not,
neither can synne, that is to wete, because the loue of god byddeth hym
naye: whiche loue rauisheth hym to the studye of well doyng, and calleth
hym awaye from all desire of offendynge, in that he is the very true sonne
of God; resembling playnly the behauiour and dispositions of his father
and head. It is not the title, it is not baptism, it is not the sacramentes that
descerne the children of God from the children of the deuyll, but the
puritie of lyfe, and charitie, expressyng and she wyng it selfe in wel
doinges. It is not idle if it be there. He that sheweth not that, neither
sheweth in his dede that he loueth his brother, he is not borne of God. If
he were alwayes membre of Christes body, he would haue loued the
other membres, for whom Christe died.

The texte

For thys is the tydinges, that ye beard from the beginninge, that ye shoude
loue one ano\textordert; not as Cayn whiche was of that wicked, and slewe hys
brother. And wherefore slewe he him? Because his owne workes were euill,
and hys brothers good. Meruayle not my brethren though the worlde hate
you. We knowe, that we are translated from death vnto lyfe, because we loue
the brethren. De that loueth not his brother abideth in deathe. Whosoever
hateth hys brother, is a man slear. And e knowe, that no man slear hath
eternall life abyding in hym. Hereby perceyue we loue• because he gaue his
lyfe for vs: and we ought to gyue oure lyues for the brethren. But whoso
hath thys worldes good and seeth his brother haue nede: and shutteth vp
his compassion from hym: howe dwelleth the loue of God in hym?

Thys is the summe of Christen iustice: thys is it, that Christe gaue first of
all vnto vs: this is it which we set forth before al thinges vnto you, that you
shoulde with louynge one an other declare youre selues to be the sônes
of God, & the disciples of Christ. For in dede the hate of the neigbour is a
step vnto murther. And malice is cleane côtrary repugnault w† charitie.
Cain was not the sonne of god, but was borne of the deuyll: why? because
he went out of kynde from his good maker, and became lyke the deuill,
which beyng strycken with enuy, was the first that slewe man with deadly
stynge. Cayn resembled the disposition of his father in sleaing Abell hys
brother. But what was the cause of hys hate? For so the, because their lyfe
was not alyke, and therfore they were of a contrarye kynde, albeit after
their bodely kinred, they were naturall borne brethren. They did bothe resemble their father. Abel was an innocēt man, and kyndled to the studious mynde of well dooinge. Cain contrariwyse haunge conceaued an hate algaing his brother, forcasted not howe to amende himselfe, but how to slea his brother. Lyke as in this case the wicked coulde not abyde the godlye, and the deuilles childe coulde not abyde y* childe of god, euuen so you ought to take it for no maruai•e, brethren, thoughge men geuen to the worlde for|sake you. They hate them that are gildes. Let no man hate them againe. They, forsomuche as they are vowed vnto deathe, and serue the autor of deathe, imagine howe to put other to deathe. It is our parte to pitie them, and not to doe them one harme for an other. For in dede the charitie of the gospell hath ledde vs awaye from the studye of harme dooinge, vnto the ••udie of wel dooing: & by this token we know that we are predestinat vn|to euerlasting life, & exempte from the tiranny of death, in y* we loue the bre|thren. He that loueth, bothe wisheth well & doeth well. The body lyueth by the breathe, the soule liueth by the spirite of Christ. Wher brotherly loue is not, there y* spirite of Christ is not. Whosoeuer therfore hateth his neigh|bour, he is deade & lyueth not inwardly. For although he haue a faiythe, yet he hath a dead faith, where charitie is not present. Doe you make a fli•te at the hating of your brother, as though it were a light faulte? he that hateth his brother is a man•lear. He hath not thurst his sword in him, he hath not poisoned hi, he hath not flowen vpon him, he hath not cursed him, but onely wished him euyll• Mans law doeth not damne him of man laughter, but in gods sight he is already damned of manslaughter. He y* hath receyued hate ones in to his brest, as much as in him is, he is a mās•ear. There are many kyndes of manslaughter: He that slea•th with sworde, suffreth punisshemēt euuen by temporall lawes. He that killeth with poyson, is punisshed euuen of them that are wicked. But he that sticketh his brother with the darte of a venemous tongue, although he be quitte by mannes lawes from the crime of manslaughter, yet by the lawe of the gospel he is gilitie of manslaughter. He is as yet hitherto alyue, that the hater wisssheth euil vn|to, & yet he him selfe is al ready dead: That mans lyfe is safe, & this hath lost euerlastinge lyfe, being his owne murtherour. Wyll you see brethren, howe muche we ought to be farre from the desire of harme dooing? Turne your eies to the example of Christ. He so loued vs, whan we deserued nothinge, yea whan we deserued deathe, that he spent his lyfe for vs. Howe muche more ought we to put our lyfe in daunger for the saluaciō of our brethrē, yf occasion so require? namely we that succede into Christ our shep|eres rowme. He cō|mitted not his shepe vn|to Peters keping, but whan he had thrise sayed he loued him, & by and by h•sheweth him y* kynde of death, that he might vn|derstone, that the saluaciō of the flocke cōmitted vn|to his charge must be defended euuen with the losse of lyfe. But wil he spends his lyfe, that grud|geth to helpe with his money? doeth a mā thinke it inoughe, yf he hurt not his brother, yf he speake to him
gently? Christ declared in his dedes, howe muche he loued vs. He ȳ seeth his brother wāt meate, clothe, drincke or lod̄ging, & hath substaunce to releue his nede withal, & is not moued with cō|passiō, but as thoughe it were no poyn of his charge, letteth him alone vn|succoured: how cā it be beleued, ȳ the loue of god is in him• The heathē su• coureth ȳ heathē, & doest not ȳ being a Christiā succour thine euē christened•

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Thou haste professed brotherly loue, and if thou haue it truly present with the, why doeth it ceasse in this case, whan thy brother is pyned with nede? Thou callest him brother, and shewest thou no token of brotherly affecciō?

The texte

My babes, let vs not loue in word, neither in tong: but in dede & in verytie. Hereby we know that we are of the verytie, can quyet our heartes before hym. For if our hearte condemne vs, God is greater then oure hearte, and knoweth all thynges. Dear•ly beloued, if our hearte con|demne vs not, then haue we truste to God warde: and whatsoeuer we aske, we receyue of hym, because we kepe hys commaundementes, and do those thynges which are pleasant in hys sight. And this is his commaundement, that we beleue on the name of his sonne Iesus Christ, and loue one another, as he gaue commaundement. And he that kepeth his commaundementes dwelleth in him, and he •• him, and hereby we knowe that he abydeth in vs, euen by the spirite which he hath geuen vs.

My babes let vs not loue one another in wordes onely. Let the loue be in the hearte, rather than in the tongue: and let it expresse it selfe in dedes, rather than in speaking. Let this worde Brother be in our dayly commun|cacion, yea but that we may be true, let the dedes be answerably like to the comunicacion: as often as occasion serueth, let vs declare a true brotherly loue to be in vs in dede. Let not our brother want any thing ȳ we haue, whether he desire coate, or meate, or lodging, either cōforte, teaching or ad|monicion. Thus if we doe with readie good willes, we shall knowe by this token, that we are the children of the trueth, and that we loue not countre|faytlye, but purely. The trueth is Christe him selfe, vnto whose eyes we shall proue our conscience, ȳ we be allowed bothe with God and men: and by our dedes men shall knowe, that there is no dissembled loue among vs: god loketh vpō the puritie of the harte. We shal succour our brothers nede, yea but so as we releue his necessitie, not to maintene his riotous prodigal|litie: and we shal succour him willingly, without hope of reward to returne vnto vs therfore, nether for
dayne glories sake. Menne see not the mynde, but the mynde knoweth it selfe, and is seene vnto the eies of god. If menne prayse vs, and a naughtie conscience condemne vs, howsoever we deceaue men, we can not escape the judgement of God. Mans heart hath secret passages to and fro, and doubtefull lurking holes, but there is nothinge so hidden, and so close, but god perceath it. He knoweth all thinges better than we: he knoweth our harte that made our harte. He hathe eies in euery place, that is present in euery place. Dearly beloued, ye our harte condemne vs not vnto god, ye our mynde be syncere and vprightly playne, ye we doe of a mere & a pure loue that we doe: suche as we shewe our selues towar|des our neighbour, suche a one shal god shewe him selfe to vs. Ye we gladly and with a good wyll forgeue our brother his faulte, God shall easily forgeue •s our synnes also. Ye we readily geue vnto our nedy brother, as often as he desireth our helpe, we shal with a sure trusty boldenes aske also of god, that whiche shall perteigne to saluacion and necessitie, nether shall he denye our askinges. Ye we saye vnto him: _Forgue us our trespasses, as VVe for geue them that trespass against us_, and yet hate our brother inwardly: shal not our owne conscience by and by crye out against vs? with what face• askest thou of god, that whiche thou deniest thy neighbour? with what mouthe askest thou the couenaunt, whan thou thy selfe performest not y* condicion? He promised to forgeue vs our trespasses, yea but so that we doe heartely

forgeue our brother his trespasses. If we saye with the mouthe, I forgeue hym, and yet kepe euyll wyll styll in oure hearte: our naughty conscience shall take awaye our confidence of obteynynge, the thinge that we aske of God. If we bydde our brother gently, _God spede_, and helpe him nor whan he hathe ned of our helpe, we maye not hope that God will helpe, seinge we helped not our brother. If we turne the deafe eare towarde at hys com∣maundement, he will turne the deafe eare again towardes our prayers. It is a shamelesnes, not a godlynes, to desire fauour of hym, whose commaũ̄|dementes a man doeth not pa•se vpon. But and if we obserue his cômaun|dementes, if we doe whatsoever shall please him, and •o doe, that we may be allowed in his eies, whiche seeth euery thing: hereof shall we conceaue a sure confidence to obteyne. Here will the Iewe, the supersticious law kelper, saye vnto me: I kepe the sabbath dayes, I am washen, I faste, I absteyne from forbydden meates, I dooe not steale, God shall heare me. But thys is not the commaundement that I talke of: which than? For|sothe that we shoulde repose all the whole hope and confidence of oure saluacion in Iesu Christ the sonne of God, by whome the fathers wyll was to geue all thinges frely vnto vs. Is thys ynough now? No forsothe: but we must loue eche one other according to his example. So he cômaunded, but that whiche he commaunded, he did
The fyrst performe himselfe in dede. He doeth not yet truly loue Christe, that hateth the membre of Christe: he doeth not yet loue Christe, that wisheth euil to the man, for whome Christe died. Therfore he that kepeth that one only commaundement of loue, kepeth all. With this g•ue shall we be fast ioyned to Christ, so that he be in vs, and we againe in him. He by hys spirite shall dwell in oure hartes, if charitie bee warme there: The spirite of Christ is not the autor of hate, but the free ge•uour of brotherly loue. He by the layinge on of thapostles handes is pow•red in to them that are baptised, but he leapeth backe and flyeth awaye, if charitie happen to bee quenched out. By thys token therfore we shall per•ceau that the gi•te of the spirit, which we toke in baptisme, abydeth in vs, if brotherly loue contynue with vs still. Loke howe muche charitie waxeth colde, so muche will the holy gooste withdrawe him selfe awaye.

The .iiii. Chapter.

Dearely beloued, beleue not euery spirite: but proue the spirites, whether they are of god or not, for many false Prophetes are gone out into the worlde. Herby shall ye knewe the spirite of god. Euery spirite that confesseth that Iesus Christ is come in the flesshe, is of god. And euery spirite, whiche confesseth not that Iesus Christe is come in the flesshe, is not of god. And this is that spirite of Antichrist, of whome ye haue hearde, howe that he should come: and euen nowe already is he in the worlde.

I Haue geuen you a token, dearely beloued, whereby you may perceau, whether the spirite of Christ be in you or not. For there are sondry sortes of spirites in me, yea but dissembling spirites, and naughtie spirites. Therfore doe not verely belleue euery spirite. There are many here and there, that boast them selues to haue the spirite of God, but trye you whether they procede of God or not. Thys worlde hathe also a spirite of hys owne, and pretendeth as thoughe it had the spirite of God.

The spirite of God enspireth the prophetes, but there are to manye false prophetes now that are gon out in to the worlde, and falsely saye that they speake by the inspiracion of the spirit of God, whan they are ledde with the spirit of the worlde. Will you therfore haue a more certayne argument of the spirit of God? Heare the speaker, and you shall vnderstande. Evry spirite which confesseth, that Iesus Christe the autor of everlasting saluacion promysed long a goe vnto the worlde, is now all ready come, hauing receyued a very humayne body, like as he had promysed by his prophetes, he is of God, in that he acknowlageth the
sonne of God. Contrary wise he that denyeth this, forasmuche as he is a
lyer, he is not of God. For no man doeth truly professe the sonne, onles he
be enspired of the father. But those doe not onely denye him, which
speake against him in woordes openly, but also they that lyue after such a
sorte, as though Christe were not the example of godlynes vnto men, or
as though he were not the autor of perfite salua|c|ion: and so they feine
some other Messias to be loked for, because Christes doctrine is to muche
variable from theyr gredye lustes. Yf he woulde haue fauoured the
voluptuous pleasures of the fleshe, if he would haue promy|sed great
substaunce of riches, if he woulde haue geuen honours and em|pires of
y• world, they would haue long a goe acknowlaged their Messias. But now
forasmuche as he doeth teache men to despise these thinges, & en|riceth
them to take vp theyr crosse, and telleth that all felicitie must be lo|ked
for in the worlde to come, they deny him to be the olde promysed
rede|mer of mankinde, and bydde loke for an other, that shoulde
promyse the cō|modities of the bodye, and the goodes of this worlde.
Nether is it ynough to confesse Christ, onles we confesse him all wholly
and entierly. He that dy|uideth him, either takinge awaye the duine
nature, whiche he hath all one with the father: or the humaine nature,
which he toke of a woman hys mo|ther, that spirit is not of God, but is the
spirit of Antichrist, of the whiche spirite ye haue all ready hearde, that he
should come, yea he is now come all|ready, and hathe to doe in them,
whiche being addicte to worldly delices, fight agaynst the spirite of
Christe.

The texte

Lytell children, ye are of God, and haue overcome them: for greater is he
that is in you, then he that is in the worlde. They are of the worlde therfore
speake they of the worlde, and the worlde heareth them. We are of God. He
that knoweth God, heareth vs: he that is not of god, heareth vs not. Herby
knowe we the spirite of veritie, and the spirite of erroure. Dearly belo|ued,
let vs loue one another: for loue commeth of god. And every one that
loueth, is borne of God, and knoweth God. ••e that loueth not, knoweth not
god: for God is loue: In this ap|peared the loue of god to vs warde, because
that God sent his onely begotten sonne into the worlde, that we might lyue
thorowe him. Herein is loue, not that we loued God, but that he loued vs, and
sent his sonne to make agrement for our synnes.

There is no cause why you should be afrayed of these sortes of men, lijtell
children. Forasmuch as you are of god, and haue his spirite: you haue by
him overcome the Antichristes. In dede you of youre selues are but
weake, but he that dwelleth in you, is greater and myghtier than he, that
dwelleth in the worlde. The deuill fightheth agaynst you by hys membres,
but God by his spirit defendeth you. They, forasmuch as they perteyne to
the fashion of the worlde, and haue receyued the spirite of the worlde,
are wisely skilled in the worlde, and talke of worldly matters, and their
Doctrine is acceptable gear unto them, which are also given them selues unto the world. No man dooth lightly beleue, that he is an enemye to those things, which he vehemently loueth. They loue earthie thynges, & their doctrine sauoureth of the earth. We are of god, he that knoweth hym (in dede he knoweth him that loueth him) herkeneth unto vs, whiche teache heauenly things, & matters worthy of god. He y* is not of god, heareth not vs, but abhorreth fro the gospelles doctrine, which biddeth me geue away their ryches, defye voluptuous pleasures, to reioyce in affliccions, to esteeme euen life it selfe of no value for righteousnes sake, to loke for the rewarde of well done dedes in the resurreccion, which they either beleue shal not come at all, or woulde not haue it to happen: which doctrine commoneth also through sincere loue to spend euens a mans life for his neighbours sake, where as the man of a worldly spirite prouideth for his owne commoniditie at al handes, yea euuen with wrongdoing of his brother. By these tokens therefore you may knowe the true spirite of god, from the false spirite of the worlde. Therfore dearly beloved, forasmuche as we are of god, & not of the worlde, let vs loue eche one other, & let euerie one serue his neighbours profites rather than his own, for loue is of god. He therfore that is garnished with this loue, is borne of god, & doeth truly knowe god. And he that is void of loue, hath not yet knowe god, because god hiselwe is loue. He geueth him selfe unto vs, as often as he geueth vs his loue. He hath declared his loue to vs ward, that we should also declare ours towards our neighbour. But some man wil say: we acknowledge the sones charitie, but whereby doe we knowe the fathers loue towardes vs? Forsothe by this: that he sent his onely sonne, (than the whiche he hath nothing more dearer) in to this worlde, & gaue him unto death, that we by his death shoulde atteyne euerlastyng lyfe. And this is also a greater and a more notable miracle of loue, that beinge prouoked by no good turne of ours, he loued vs so e notablly. He that loueth his louer agayne, is nothing but thankful: and should haue no humanitarian except he dyd it. We loued the worlde, and were turned from the loue of god: and yet God loued vs forst and of hys owne accorde. And when he was iustly offended at oure synnes, neyther was there any manne vpon yearthe boyle of synne, that could reconcile vs unto hym, (for it behoueth hym to be full of grace, that muste make intercession unto hym that is offended, for suche as bee malefactors) he sente hys sonne downe from heauen, to sacrifice hymselfe unto the father, and with thys most pure oblacion to make hym mercyfull unto vs. What canne be Imagined more notable than thys loue? what can be thought more fervent? what can be imagined more plenteous?
Dearely beloued, yf God so loued vs, we oughte also to loue one another. No man hath sene God at anye tyme. Yf we loue one another, god dwelleth in vs, and hys loue is perfecte in vs. Hereby knowe wee that wee dwell in hym, and he in vs: because he hathe geuen vs of hys spirite. And we haue sene, and doe testifie, that the father sent the sonne to bee Sauior of the worlde: Whosoeuer confesseth, that Iesus is the sonne of god, in hym dwelleth god, and he in god. And wee haue knownen, and beleue the loue that God hathe to vs. God is loue: and he that dwelleth in loue, dwelleth in god, and god in hym. Herein is the loue perfecte in vs, that wee shoulde haue truste in the daye of iudgemente. For as he is, euenn so are wee in thys worlde. I here is no feare in loue, but perfecte loue casteth out feare, for feare hath paynfulnes. •e that feareth, is not perfecte in loue. We loue hym, for he loued vs fyrste. Yf a man saye: I loue god, and yet hate his brother, he is a liar. For howe can he that loueth not his bro|ther whō he hath sene, loue god whō he hath not sene? And this commaundement haue we of him: that he whiche loueth god, shoulde loue his brother also.

Dearely beloued, yf God, whiche hathe no nede of vs, of hys owne ac|corde and wylyngly hath so muche loued vs, we oughte also after hys ex|ample to loue eche one other. The sonne of God shewed hym selfe visiblye vnto vs, but no man hath sene God the father at any tyme with his bodily eies, and yet he is perceyued by the euident tokens of thynges. We feele hym angrye, we fele hym mercyfull, we fele hym to be absent, we fele hym to be presente. We are hable to testifie our mutuall loue towards God by none other argumente, than yf we loue every one other, lyke as he hathe loued vs. He loued vs frely without cause, he loued vs for thys purpose, to saue vs. Yf we loue eche one other after such wise: god, which is loue, (as I sayed) abydeth in vs. It is a cómune loue to beare good wil to him y• deser|ueth well, to loue hym that is hable to requite oure loue, and to testifie our good will with one good turne for an other: but y• loue of god is perfite to|wardes vs. He loued vs of his own accorde, he loued vs being straungers, he loued vs, of whome no maner requitall coulde returne to hym agayne, he loued vs euē to the losse of his onely begotten sóne. If we loue our neigh|bour in a semblable wyse, than the loue of God is perfite in vs, declaryng also that God hymselfe is in vs. Lyke as all one spirite knytteth the mem|bres of the body together, and maketh them one body: euen so the spirite of god doeth in a maner glue together and knytte bothe vs with hym, and every one to other, and as it were dryueth perforce all into one. And yf the spirite of god, which inspireth into our heartes y• loue of our neighbour, be stronge in vs, doubtles we knowe by thys token, bothe that we abyde in God, and God lykewyse in vs.
Therefore he is an enemie vnto loue, that denyeth Iesu to be the sonne of God, whiche gaue hymselfe to redeeme mankind. But of this matter we were euen lookers vpó, we sawe it with our eies, we hearde it with our eares, we handled it with our handes, and of a matter so many waies prouedly knowē, we beare witnes to the whole worlde, that god sent his sonne, to saue the world with his death, in case it woulde repent from his olde errours, and ordre the life of it from henceforth accordyng to the rule of the gospell. For he dyd not onely sende hym to saue the nacion of the Iewes, but he gaue hym also to be a sauiour to al the whole worlde. He therfore that confesseth that Iesus is the sonne of god, whom the prophetes had prophecied before shoulde come, he abydeth in God, and god in him. For he knoweth the trueth, and embraceth loue. He acknowledgeth not the loue of God towarde him, that doeth no expresse it in his neighbour. But as for vs, we haue both knownen by experience, and beleue with our harte, and confesse wyth oure mouthe, and expresse in oure workes the dedes that God hath bestowed vnto vs. It remaineth, that we shoulde perseuer in that which is begonne, and not to offende, so as God be not bothe plucked awaye from vs, and wee drawen awaye from God. God (as I sayed before) is loue. Therfore he that continueth styll in loue, continueth styll in God, and God lykewyse in hym: because the mutuall knotte of the spirite of God abideth. Wyl you also haue an other token geu|en you, whereby you maye trye, whether the loue of god bee perfite in you? If we know our owne conscience to be good, and that we drede not the daye of iudgement, wherein they shall be seperated from Christe, that haue not folowed Christ. They shall quake, when they shal heare that hor|rible voyce.  

\textit{Departe from me} But we looke for that daye with a trusty bolde|nes, that is to were, knowyng to our selues, y\textsuperscript{*} lyke as he was conuersaunt in the world, euen so are we also in the worlde. He toke no maner of spotte of the worlde, but cleansed the worlde from it owne fylthynes, and drewe it, as muche as in hym was, into hys purenes. Euen so wee also to oure powers are not onely not mingled with y\textsuperscript{*} worlde, but also we rather driue it, with teachyng of the gospell, and chaste examples of lyfe, vnto Christe. The drede of goddes iudgemente spryngethe out of an euyll conscience. Feare therfore agreeth not with loue. For loue encreaseth assured confid|ence: which, yf it be perfite, shal dryue quite out of minde al feare. But it is glad, as often as that daye of iudgemente commeth in his mynde: first ha|uyng a very good opinion of the good God, and hauing it selfe a good con|science. Loue causeth gladnes, feare causeth formentynge sorrowfulnes. Moreouer he that is afrayed, declareth hymselfe therin not yet to be per|ite in loue. As much as wāteth vnto loue, so much encreaseth to feare. For he is afrayed, lest he shall not
fynde God the iudge mercyfull vnto hym, seyng he shewed hymselfe vntractable vnto his neighbour. That daye shal openly declare, who hath bene a true louer in thys worlde. We loue God: and no meruaile, seyng he first loued vs. For we coulde not be hable to loue hym, excepte he drewe vs vnto hymselfe with hys loue. Thys same therefore, that we loue God, is hys benefite. Finally, in that we loue God, we testifie it in louinge oure neighbour in whome he wyll be loued. If a man wyll saye: I loue God, when he hateth hys brother, he is a lyar. For when the wycked, of whom for the moste parte they doe not onely not loue God, but also they beleue not that God is: yet for al y* they after a sort loue their neighbour, either because he is their kynsman or alliaunce, or because he is acquaynted and familiar with them, or at the leaste because man seeth the other to be a man, lyke as the very beastes loue every one hys own kynd by the instincte of nature: howe shall he loue God, whome he hath not sene at any tyme, when he hateth hys neyghbour, whom he seeth? Furthermore howe standethe it together that he loueth God, that passeth not vpon the commaundementes of God? If a man woulde crye: I loue the kyng, and for al y* setteth naught by the kynges proclamacions, would there any man beleue hym? we haue thys speciall commaundement of oure Emperoure, that he whiche loueth God, shoulde also loue hys brother, whether he bee good or badde. Yf he be good, let hym loue Christ in hym: yf he be badde, let hym loue hym to thys ende, that he maye be converte vnto Christ.

The .v. Chapter.

The texte

Whosoeuer beleueth that Iesus is Christ, is borne of God. And every one that loueth hym whiche begat, loueth hym also whiche was begotten of hym. By thys we knowe, that we loue the children of God, when we loue God and kepe his commaundementes. For thys is the loue of God, that we kepe hys commaundementes, and hys commaundementes are not greuous. For all that is borne of God, overcommeth the worlde. And thys is the victory that overcommeth the worlde, euin our fayth. Who is it that overcommeth the worlde: but he whiche beleueth, that Iesus is the sonne of God? This Iesus Christ is he that came by water and bloud, not by water onely: but by water and bloude. And it is the spirite that beareth witnes, because the spirite is trueth. (For there are thre whiche beare recorde in heauen, the father, the worde, and the holy ghost. And these thre are one.) And there are thre whiche beare recorde in (earth) the spirite, and water, and bloud: and these thre are one. Yf we receyue the witnes of men, the witnes of God is greater. For thys is the witnes of God (that is greater) whiche• he testifie
of his sonne. He that beleueth on the sonne of God, hath the witnes in himselfe. He that beleueth not god, hath made hym a lyar, because he beleued not the record that god gaued of his son. And thys is the recorde, howe that God hath geuen vnto vs eternall lyfe, and this lyfe is in hys sonne. He that hath the sonne hath lyfe: & he that hath not the sonne of god, hath not lyfe.

W

Ho soeuer beleueth that Iesus is Christ, that is to say, him of whom we must nedes aske al the succoures of our salua|cion, and beleueth that in his hearte: he is borne of god, and is called alredy into the nûmbre of the sonnes of God. In dede he can not chose but loue, ye is a sonne. Thâ whosoeuer loueth him heartely that is ye father, loueth him also ye was borne of him, that is to wete, his brother, with whome he hath all one commune father. By this tokê we proue, that we doe truly loue ye children of God, ye we first loue God him selfe heartely. For there is nothing truely loued, except it be loued for his sake. Than that we loue God, it shall euidently so appeare, ye we kepe his commandementes, and kepe them cheerfully and gladly: for his commandementes are none otherwyse greuous. For what is greuous to the louer? what is greuous to him that goeth post haste to suche maner rewardes. The worlde obiecteth terrible appearaunces of euilies, pouertie, vanyshement, slaunder, enprisonmentes, whippings, deathes. It is a great fraye, but the victorie is made readye: For what soeuer is borne of God, ouercommeth the worlde.

But with what furnitures doeth he ouercome ye worlde? with riches? with garisons of men? with engines of warre? with worldly learning? no, no: they ouer|come the worlde (as cruely rageing as it is) throughe a stedfast onely faith, wherwith they committe them selues wholly vnto God their protector. Thy riches are snatched awaye, yea but what sayeth faithe to that? Thou haste a treasure in heauen. Thou art throwen out to be a vanished man, yea but the countrey of heauen loketh for his countreman. Thy body is turmoyled with tormentes: yea, but with them, are bought euerlasting ioyes. Death is deuised for the: yea but after it shall folowe lyfe that neuer shall dye. Who is it than that ouercometh the worlde? not a lorde, not the riche man, not a philosopher, not a kyng, but he who soeuer he be, that beleueth verely, that Iesus is the sonne of God. Beleue that which he hath promised, and it shal nothing moue thee, whatsouer the worlde purposeth against thee. He ouercame the world first, & atteyned immortalitie: he came into this world hauîg takê our mortal body, to get the victorie for vs, to shew the meane of victorie getting, to cause ye rewardes to be certaynely reckoned vpon. But with what furnitures came he armed withall? He came by water and bloude, euen Iesus Christie: by water, that he myght washe vs cleane from our synnes; by bloude, that he myght geue vs immortall lyfe. Hys owne wyll was to be baptised, beinge cleane voyde from all synne, that he myght
frelye geue vnto vs innocencye: hys owne wyll was to dye on the crosse, that he myght open vnto vs the waye vnto immortalitie. He dyd not onelye testifie by these two tokens, that he was Christ and the sauioyr of the worlde, in that he receyued baptisme, as a synfull man: in that he dyed as a malefactour, where he one onely & none among all but he, was Innocent from all synne: but the spirite also aplyearynge the likenes of a doue, bare recorde of him, that it was he, whô the father had geuen to be the sauioyr of the worlde. For the spirite is also the trueth, as the father and the sonne is: there is one trueth of all, like as there is one nature of all.

For there are three in heauen, that beare recorde vnto Christ, the father, the worde, and the spirite: the father, whiche sending once and eftsones a voice downe from heauen, testified openly, that he is his dearly beloued sonne, in whom nothing coulde doe amisse: the worde, whiche having done so many miracles, whiche in his death and resurrectiō declared him selfe to be the true Christ, bothe God and man, the peacemaker betwene God and men: the holy gooste, whiche descended vpon his head when he was baptised, and that after his resurrectiō fell vpon his disciples. And of these three there is all one most perite agrement: the father is the autor, the sonne the messanger, the holy goost the remembrauncer. There are three thinges also on earthe, that beare recorde vnto Christ: his humayne spirite whiche he put from him one the crosse: the water and the bloode, that ranne out of his syde when he was deade. And these three witnesses doe agree The other declared him to be God, these recorde that he was man. Iohn also bare witnesse. And yf we receyue witnesse of men, it is reason, that the witnesse of God be of more importaunce with vs. For the testimonie of God the father is manifest: Thys is my VVelbeloued Sonne, in VVhom I am pleased, heare him. What thing can be spoken more plainly or more fully? he that beleueth truly in goddes sonne Iesus Christ, and hath reposed al the succours of his lyfe in him, so that trusting in his promisses he contemneth all thinges, that this worlde can make a shewe of, whether they be amiable or dreadfull, hathe a witnesse in him selfe, and beareth witnesse vnto the sonne of God. For whan (throughe thinspiracion of the spirite of Christe) he defieth euen deathes for his loue, he beareth no trifling witnesse vnto mē, that they are no vaine thīges that Christ hath taught and promised. He that trusteth not in god, but putteth his trust in the worlde, he, as muche as in him is, maketh god a lyer, whiche hath promised felicitie vnto them that woulde herkē vnto his sonne Iesu Christ: where as he in his conversaciō teacheth that felicitie is to be asked of the worlde, & cleaueth so vnto the cōmodities of this lyfe, as thoughe nothing of a man remayned after the death of the bodye. The father cryeth: Heare him. And his lyfe, that beleueth not, sayeth: Heare the worlde. For whan the sonne prayed the father, that those whiche beleued or shoulde beleue in him, might haue
eternal life, the fathers voice was heard, testifying as by the sound of a trumpet, that his prayers should be allowed. The father therefor hath given us everlasting life, shewing of whom it should be asked, even of his son Jesus Christ. His doctrine who soever embraceth, his example whosoever foloweth, his promises whosoever trusteth unto, he both possedeth the son and hath life: the pledge wherof he keepeth in the mean time, even the spirit of God, through the undoubted confidence whereof he is bold to call God, father: He that is a stranger from the son, is estranged also from life.

The texte.

These thinges haue I written vnto you that beleue on the name of the sonne of God, that ye maye knowe, howe that ye haue eternall life, and that ye maye beleue on the name of the sonne of God. And thys is the trust that we haue in hym: that yf we aske any thyng accordinge to his wyll, he heareth vs. And yf we knowe that he heare vs whatsoeuer wee aske, we knowe, that we haue the peticions, that we desire of hym. If any man see his brother sinne a synne not vnto death, let hym aske, and he shall geue hym lyfe for them that sinne not vnto death. There is a synne vnto death, for whiche saye I not that a man shoulde praye. All vnrighteousnes is sin, and ther is a synne not vnto death. We knowe, that whosoever is borne of God, synneth not: but he that is begotten of God, kepeth himselfe, and that wicked toucheth hym not. We know, that we are of God, and the worlde is all together set on wickednes.

We knowe, that the sonne of God is come, and hath geuen vs a mynde to knowe hym, whiche is true: and wee are in him that is true, through his sonne Iesus Christ. This same is very god, and eternal lyfe. Babes, kepe your selues from images. Amen.

These thinges therfore doe I repete and beate vnto you with so many wordes, lest any man shoulde persuade vnto you the contrarye. But take it for a sure and an undoubted certainty, that it is true whiche you haue beleued: that euerlastynge lyfe is ordained for you through Jesus Christ, whose joined felowe heires you are. You haue already the ryght clayme and gage, and shall haue possession of the thyng selue in his tyme. Therefore you that beleue in the sonne of God, beleue stedfastlye, and put youre sure trust in hym daylye more and more. He wyll not fayle you in the promyses of euerlastynge lyfe, that fayleth you not nowe euen in thyss lyfe. For in dede the spirite of Christe geueth this confidence vnto you, that whatsoever you shal aske in ye name of ye sonne, you should obtaine it, if ye aske accordinge to his wyll, that is, yf you be suche when you come to praye as he would haue you to come: that is to saye, pure from all maner hate of your brother. (For he obtayneth nothyng at
goddes hande, of whom his neyghbour obteyneth not forgiveuens of his fault:) And if you aske those thinges that are auailable to the lyfe of heauen, and make to the glorye of Christ. Or elles we for the moste parte knowe not what we shoule aske of God, and many tymes for holsome thynges we desire hurtfull thynges, yf the spirite of Chríste put vs not in mynde, what were expedient for vs to aske: but as ofte as we aske after thys sorte, we are sure that god heareth oure prayers: we are sure that he wyll frely geue vs whatsoeuer we shall aske. So hath he promised vs, and is hable to performe whatsoeuer he promíseth, and wyll performe whatsoeuer is holsome for vs. Neither shall he onely encrease his giftes in vs, being prouoked therunto by oure prayers, but also he wyll pardon vs oure daylye offences, without whome the feblenes of mans nature can scarcely be hable to endure longe: and he shall not onely pardon every one hys offences, yf he desire pardon, but he shall also heare the brother praying for the brothers offences, so that the sinne bee of suche sorte, that it doeth not quenche out brotherly loue, although it doe somewhat obscure it. For there is a synne that cannot bee imputed vn to weakenes, nor be healed with lyght and easye remedies: as whan a manne vpon a sette malyce persecuteth the christen felowshyppe, where he hymselfe hath professéd Christe, and in pretence of religion goeth aboute to subuert religiō. The desperate frowardnes of suche a one deserueth not the prayer of godly menne: and yet perfite charitie prayeth also for suche, wyshyngge for those thynges that cannot possiblye be done. There is no manne that prayeth for the deuyll, because he doeth wittynlye throughge malyce oppugne them, whome God woulde well vnto. Perhappes no prayer should also be made for them, that are translated into hys affecction: and are rather to be shunned, that they doe no harme, than to bee releued with prayers, excepte they shewe an hope of their repentaunce. Suche a disease nedeth more strong remedies, and is greater, than can bee taken alway by dayly praieris, wherby lighter offences are taken away, which are done of feble weakenes, & not of purposed frowardenes. Whatsoeuer is committed besyde perfite righteousnes, is sin: but there be many differences of synnes. There is some synne, whiche althoughe it demynyshe and blotte innocencye, yet it vttërlye quenche not out christian charytye: as whan by occasion we ouershote a worde agaynstre oure frende, whiche

we are sory for by and by that it ouer shot vs: whan a sodayne angre hath russhed out at a worde, that wee woulde wyshe by and by myghte bee called backe agayne: whan throughge the sweeties of meate or drynke re|ceuyng, wee take somewhat more then the necessitie of nature doeth require. And to pardon these offences God is easie, yf he bee called vpon with mutual prayers. Suche maner of faultes of children, those that be
gentyll parentes doe for the moste parte wynke at, whiche woulde not suffre greater offences. Albeit there is none so lyght a faulte that ought to be neclected. Whatsoever is done amysse, is euyll and to bee eschewed of godlye folkes, and yf it bee neclected, it drawethe by lytell and lytell vnto death. But lyke as spedye remidy oughte to be had for these lighter offenses, whiche men are scarce hable to auoyde: euuen so god forbydde, that he whiche hath once renounced the worlde, and dedicated hymselfe vnto god, shoulde be tombled backe agayne into anye greate notable cryme. By professing of ye gospel we are made the chil|de of God, and membres of Christ. And it is not conuenient, that the children should diffre so greatly from the father, and the membres from the head. Therfore he that throughlye vn|derstandeth, that he is borne of god, taketh more hede that he doe no euyl, than of deathe it selfe: and kepeth hymselfe that he haue nothinge a doe with that naughtie lorde (deuill) whom he serued before together with the worlde. Lyke as Chryste beynge once dead rose agayne to lyfe, and rose al|ayne to lyfe neuer to dye any more: euuen so he that throughe baptisme is once dead vnto the worlde, and risen againe to newnes of lyfe with Christ, it is not mete for hym to doe that thyng agayne, for the whyche Chryste must dye agayne. Let them be affrayed of the worlde, whiche are not truely born againe of god: which haue not al the pith of their whole heart|tes receyued the seede of the gospelles doctrine. We knowe, that wee are truely of god, whome neyther the euyll thynges nor the good thynges of thys world can seperate from Chryste. The whole world is set all together on naughtines. Whiche waye soeuer a man turneth hym, there is occasion offred of thynges to turne vs awaye quite from the innocent vpryghtnes of lyfe. But from the worldes enchauntmentes the sonne of god hath once delyuered vs: whiche came into the worlde for thys cause, to exempte vs out of the contagious infeccion of the worlde. He hath dryuen awaye the darkenes of oure former ignoraunce, and hath geuen vs an vnderstand|dyng that is lyghtened with the lyght of the gospel: to thintent we should knowe the true god & the free geuer of al righteousnes: who onely had no|thyng a doe with the worlde: and we are in hym truely, in that we folowe hys doctrine and promyse with an vpryght conscience, as longe as wee are in hys sonne Iesus Christe, whome he sent into the worlde for that in|tent. He is the true god, which onely ought to be honoured: and the true lyfe, whiche onelye oughte to bee desyred. Lytell chyldren, yf you doo truell|lye knowe the true God, beware of false goddes, and vayne Images, whych the worlde hath in honoure. He wurshyppeth an Idole, that maketh moneye hys God. He wurshyppeth an Idole, that maketh hys bely hys God. He wurshyppeth an Idole, that for worldelye honours sake, despysethe the commaundementes of GOD. There be manye suche
kyndes of Images. Beware you of all, yf you wyll abyde in the wurshippe of the true God. Whyche humble prayer of myne he vouchesafe to make good, by whose goodnes wee are delyuered from oure erroures.

Amen.

Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon the fyrste epistle of Saint Iohn.