

DIALOGUE CONCERNING TYNDALE: BK. 4. CH. 14-18

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER

The author somewhat showeth that the clergy doth no wrong in leaving heretics to [the] secular hand, though their death follow thereon. And he showeth also that it is lawful to resist the Turk, and such other infidels, and that princes be bounder thereto.

Marry, quod your friend, but as methinketh, the bishop doth as much as though he killeth him, when he leaveth him to the secular hand, in such time and place as he wotteth well he shall soon be burned.

I will not here enter into the question, quod I, whether a priest might for any cause, and if for any, whether then for heresy, without blame of irregularity put or command any man to death, either by express words or under the general name of right and justice. In which matter I could not lack both reason, authority, and example of holy men. But in this matter that we have in hand, it is sufficient that the bishop neither doth it or commandeth it. For I think there will no reason bear it that when the heretic, if he went abroad, would with the spreading of his error infect other folk, the bishop should have such pity upon him, that he should, rather than other men should punish his body, suffer him to kill other men's souls. Indeed, quod I, there be some as you say that either of high pretended pity or of a feigned observance of the counsels of Christ, would not no man should punish any heretic or infidel either, not though they invaded us and did us all the harm they possible could. And in this opinion is Luther and his followers which, among their other heresies, hold for a plain conclusion, that it is not lawful to any Christian man to fight against the Turk, or to make against him any resistance, though he come into Christendom with a great army and labour to destroy all. For they say that all Christian men are bound to the counsels of Christ, by which they say that we be forbidden to defend ourself, and that saint Peter was, as ye rehearsed, reproved of our Saviour, when he strake off Malchus' ear, albeit that he did it in the defence of his own master and the most innocent man that ever was. And unto this they lay, as ye said in the beginning, that since that time that Christian men first fell to fighting, it hath never increased, but alway minished and decayed. So that at this day the Turk hath estraited us very near, and brought it in within a right narrow compass, and narrower shall do, say they, as long as we go about to defend Christendom by the sword. Which they say should be, as it was in the beginning, increased, so be continued and preserved only by patience and martyrdom. Thus holily spake these godly fathers of Luther's sect, labouring to procure that no man should withstand the Turk, but let him win all. And when it should come to that, then, would they, as it seemed, win all again by their patience, high virtues and martyrdom, by which now they cannot suffer to resist their beastly voluptuousness but break their vows, and take them harlots under the name of wives. And where they may not fight against the Turk, arise up in great plumps to fight against their even christen. ' It is, I trow, no great mastery to perceive whom they labour to please that have that opinion. And if the Turk happen to come in, it is little doubt

whose part they will take, and that Christian people be like to find none so cruel Turks as them. It is a gentle holiness to abstain for devotion from resisting the Turk, and in the meanwhile to rise up in routs and fight against Christian men, and destroy as that sect hath done, many a good religious house, spoiled, maimed, and slain many a good virtuous man, robbed, polluted and pulled down many a goodly church of Christ. And now where they lay for a proof that God were not contented with battle made against infidels, the loss and minishment of Christendom since that guise began, they fare as did once an old sage father fool in Kent at such time as divers men of worship assembled old folk of the country to commune and devise about the amendment of

A CONSULTATION ABOUT SANDWICH HAVEN

Sandwich haven. At which time as they began first to ensearch by reason, and by report of old men thereabout, what thing had been the occasion that so good an haven was in so few years so sore decayed, and such sands risen, and such shallow flats made therewith, that right small vessels had now much work to come in at divers tides, where great ships were within few years past accustomed to ride without difficulty, and some laying the fault to Goodwin Sands, some to the lands inned² by divers owners in the isle of Thanet, out of the Channel, in which the sea was wont to compass the isle and bring the vessels round about it, whose course at the ebb was wont to scour the haven, which now the sea excluded thence, for lack of such course and scouring, is choked up with sand, as they thus alleged, divers men, divers causes. There started up one good old father and said, Ye masters say every man what he will, cha (I have) marked this matter well as some other. And, by God, I wot how it waxed nought well enough. For I knew it good, and have marked so chaue (I have) when it began to wax worse. And what hath hurt it, good father?, quod the gentlemen. By my faith, masters, quod he, yonder same Tenterden steeple, and nothing else, that, by the mass, cholde³ t'were a faire fish pole. Why hath the steeple hurt the haven, good father? quod they. Nay, by our Lady, masters, quod he, yche (I) cannot tell you well, why, but chote⁴ well it hath. For, by God, I knew it a good haven till that steeple was builded, and by the Mary mass, cha marked it well, it never throve since.

And thus wisely spake these holy Lutherans, which sowing schisms and seditions among Christian people, lay the loss thereof to the withstanding of the Turks invasion, and the resisting of his malice, where they should rather, if they had any reason in their heads, lay it to the contrary. For when Christian princes did their devoir against miscreants and infidels there be stories and monuments enough that witness the manifest aid and help of God in great victories given to good Christian princes by his almighty hand. But on the other side, since that the

THE CAUSE WHY THE TURK DOTH PROSPER AGAINST CHRISTENDOM

ambition of Christian rulers, desiring each other's dominion, have set them at war and deadly dissension among themselves, whereby while each hath aspired to the enhancing of his own, they have little forced what came of the common corps of Christendom, God, for the revenging of their inordinate appetites, hath withdrawn his help and shewed that he careth as little, suffering, while each of them laboureth to eat up other, the Turk to prosper and so far forth to proceed, that if their blind affections look not thereto the sooner, he shall not fail (which our Lord forbid) within short process to swallow them all. And albeit Christ forbode saint Peter, being a priest, and under himself, prince of his priests, to fight with the temporal sword⁵ toward the impeachment and resistance of his fruitful passion, whereupon depended the salvation of mankind, which affection our Saviour had before that time so sore reprov'd and rebuked in him, that he called him therefore Satan, yet is it nothing to the purpose to allege that by that ensample temporal princes should without the let of such spiritual profit and the sufferance of much

spiritual harm, suffer their people to be invaded and oppressed by infidels, to their utter undoing, not only temporal, but also of a great part perpetual, which were like of their frailty, for fear of worldly grief and incommodity, to fall from the faith and deny their baptism. In which peril, since our Lord would not that any man should wilfully put himself, and for that cause advised his disciples that if they were pursued in one city, ⁷ they should not come forth and foolhardily put themselves in peril of denying ⁸ Christ by impatience of some intolerable torments, but rather flee thence into some other place where they might serve him in quiet, till he should suffer them to fall in such point that there were no way to escape, and then would he have them abide by their tackling like mighty champions wherein they shall not in such case fail of his help.

CHRIST'S EXHORTATION UNTO EVERY MAN

Now albeit so that Christ and his holy apostles exhort every man to patience and sufferance without requiting of

an evil deed, or making any defence, but using further sufferance and doing also good for evil, yet neither doth this counsel bind a man that he shall of necessity against the common nature suffer another man causeless to kill him, nor letteth not any man from the defence of another, whom he seeth innocent and invaded and oppressed by malice. In which case both nature, reason, and God's behest, bindeth, first the prince to the safeguard of his people with the peril of himself, as he taught Moses to know himself bounden to kill the Egyptians in the defence of [the] Hebrew, ⁹ and after he bindeth every man to the help and defence of his good and harmless neighbour against the malice and cruelty of the wrongdoer. For as the holy scripture saith, *unicuique dedit deus curam de proximo suo*, ¹⁰ God hath given every man charge of his neighbour to keep him from harm of body and soul as much as may lie in his power. And by this reason is not only excusable but also commendable, that common war which every people taketh in the defence of their country against enemies that would invade it, since that every man fighteth not for the defence of himself, of a private affection to himself, but of a Christian charity for the safeguard and preservation of all other. Which reason as it hath place in all battle of defence, so hath it most especially in the battle by which we defend the Christian countries against the Turks, in that we defend each other from far the more peril and loss both of worldly substance, bodily hurt, and perdition of men's souls.

And now if this be lawful and enjoined also to every private person, how much more belongeth it to princes and rulers, which if they may not upon the peril of their souls, wittingly suffer among the people whom they have in governance any one to take away another's horse, how may they without eternal damnation suffer other people, and especially infidels, to come in, spoil, and rob, and captive them all? And if they be bounden to the defence, and may not do it alone, what madness were it to say that the people may not help them.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

That princes be bounden to punish heretics, and that fair handling helpeth little with many of them.

And surely as the princes be bounden that they shall not suffer their people by infidels to be invaded, so be they as deeply bounden that they shall not suffer their people to be seduced and

corrupted by heretics, since the peril shall in short while grow to as great, both with men's souls withdrawen from God, and their goods lost, and their bodies destroyed by common sedition, insurrection and open war, within the bowels of their own land. All which may in the beginning be right easily avoided, by punishment of those few that be the first. Which few well repressed, or if need so require, utterly pulled up, there shall be far the fewer have lust to follow. For if they were handled in a contrary manner, and as ye seemed to mean in the beginning of our matter, instead of punishment, entreated, favoured, and by fair words and rewards brought home again. I fear me then that you should find little fruit in that fashion. For, first, whereas they fall into heresy by pride, that way should make them prouder, and set them more by themselves. And then would many more fall thereto, of purpose to be hired again therefrom. So that as Mamelukes and Janissaries about the Turk and Sowdan (Sultan) have used to christen their children of purpose, that by the denying of their faith after, they might be made Mamelukes or Janissaries, as their fathers were, and may be had the more in estimation and favour about the great Turk; even likewise, within a while, if we take that way with heretics we shall have young fresh fellows first become heretics, that they may be prayed and hired after to come to Christ's faith again. I would not they were over hastily handled, but little rigour and much mercy shewed where simpleness appeared and not high heart or malice. For of such as be proud and malicious, much proof hath been made already. For of some sort many, full fair handled, little change themselves or come to good amendment. I told you myself, and very true it was, of twain that were detected of heresy unto the most honourable prelate of this realm and in what benign fatherly manner and liberal also he dealt with them. And yet what amendment made his gentle and courteous entreaty in their stubborn stomach? Were they not, after, worse than they were before? And so used themselves that after much harm done by them, they came in short space after to their open conviction? They be, ye wot well, at the first customably received to grace, and verily for such merits forgiveness is reward enough. And if they cannot by that warning be warned, surely as saint Poule saith, he is not to be trusted often but rather of all good Christian people be eschewed and avoided from the flock. For they be so far waxen crooked, that seldom can they be righted again.

Forsooth, quod your friend, yet as I said at my first coming to you, were I worthy to be of counsel with the clergy when there were a man founden faulty therein, whom the people have in good estimation for some great opinion of learning and virtue, they should be secretly and soberly monished and not the matter published among the people. And finally, if they so should needs be openly convicted and corrected in face of the world, then would I not yet have them called Lutherans, lest the people which had good opinion of them, or if they happen to perceive them for nought, and so take them, then shall they peradventure give the less credence to all good men, and set the less by all good preachers after.

Surely, quod I, a certain rule that were always best were hard to give in such a case. Sometime there may peradventure such honesty be joined with such repentance, that it would not be much amiss to preserve the man's estimation among the people, to whom his perfect change may percuse more than recompense his former error and oversight. But whereas the contrary shall seem convenient there can I not see why we should forbear to call them Lutherans, since it is both an old usage to

AN OLD USAGE

call heretics after the name of him whom they follow in their heresy, and also, as Luther's sect is

in effect the whole heap of all heresies gathered together, it is now all one to call him a Lutheran or to call him a heretic, those two words being in manner equivalent, Luther teaching almost nothing but heresies, nor none heresies founden anywhere almost that the Lutherans have not among them. And since it so is, reason doth in my mind require that the name of Lutherans should be customably brought in men's ears as odious as the name of heretics. Nor I see not so great fear that either folk shall for opinion of any man's virtue, in whom they see themselves deceived, withdraw their favour and affection from such as are good indeed, or fall into the favour of Luther's sect for the estimation of the man whom they now see proved nought. For this will no man do but such as either be so foolish that they would hate all Christ's apostles for the falsehood of Judas, or so naughty that they would fain have all the world fall to the same sect and be of their own suit.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER

Of simple unlearned folk that are deceived by the great good opinion that they have percuse in the learning and living of same that teach them errors.

Forsooth, quod your friend, yet would there methinketh be much pity used in those matters among. For many a man unlearned when he heareth one that he taketh for cunning, and seeth such a man as he taketh for virtuous, commend Luther's way, he is of simpleness and good mind moved to follow the same.

Surely, quod I, therein I say not nay, but that these things being such, great pity it is to see many good simple souls deceived, and led out of the right way by the authority of such as they reckon for good men and cunning, whom they have, either by open sermons or secret communication, perceived to be favourers of that ungracious sect, thinking that men of such cunning and knowledge in scripture, being therewith of such virtuous behaviour as they seem to be, would lean to that way but if they knew it for good. And surely where it so happeneth that any simple soul is, by the good opinion that he hath in his master, led out of the right belief of the faith, weening that were the very faith which he seeth his master (whom he reckoneth good and cunning) follow and lean unto, it is a very piteous thing. And as that person is less in blame and more easily cured, so is that master double damned, as the cause both of his own sin and his that followeth him, and very hard is he to mend. Howbeit sometime we deserve with our sin that God for the

GOD FOR OUR SIN DOTHTH SUFFER EVIL TEACHERS

punishment thereof suffereth us to have lewd leaders and evil teachers. And surely for the more part such as be led out of the right way, do rather fall thereto of a lewd lightness of their own mind, than for any great thing that moveth them in their master that teacheth them. For we see them as ready to believe a purser, a glover, or a weaver that nothing can do but scanty read English, as well as they would believe the wisest and the best learned doctor in a realm. Howbeit, be a man never so well learned, and seem he never so virtuous, yet can we with no reason excuse ourself, if we leave the right belief for the trust that we have in any man earthly. For our belief is taught us by God surely planted in the church of Christ, and the

articles thereof not new begun, but now continued many an hundred year in the great congregation of Christian people, as things certain, sure, and stable, and out of all question, which none heretic doth, or can deny, and in the hearts of this congregation be they written by the holy handwork of God. And therefore accursed is he that through his trust put in any man, believeth the contrary of any point that the church of Christ is taught to believe by God. This faith was taught by Christ, preached by his apostles, of this wrote his evangelists, and many more things were taught, than are written. And this faith should have been taught and firmly standen, although nothing had been written. And the articles of this faith had in men's hearts, be the just and sure rules of construction by which we construe and understand the holy scripture that is written. For very sure are we, that whoso would construe any text of holy scripture, in such wise as he would

THE SURE RULES WHEREBY HOLY SCRIPTURE IS UNDERSTOOD

make it seem contrary to any point of this catholic faith which God hath taught his church, he giveth that scripture a wrong sentence, and thereby teacheth a wrong belief. And as saint Paul saith, Cursed be he, and though he were an angel of heaven. " And therefore be we not excusable, if we believe any man to the contrary of the faith, how good or how cunning soever he seem, while we see that he teacheth us a wrong way which we may soon know if we be good Christians and know the belief already. And we may have also a great guess thereat, if he teach us secretly as a privy mystery, the doctrine that he would not were uttered and shewed openly. For such things be they commonly that these heretics teach in hucker-mucker against the faith that all the church believeth. Now would I give this counsel to every unlearned man, when any man so teacheth thee whom thou hast in great estimation

GOOD COUNSEL

for virtue or cunning, then consider in thyself that he neither hath more virtue nor more cunning than had saint Austen, saint Hierome, saint Ambrose, saint Gregory, saint Cyprian, saint Chrysostome, with many old fathers and holy doctors, which believed all their days, and died in the belief that thou believest already, whereof he teacheth the contrary; and so say boldly to him. Then if he would beguile thee, and say that those holy doctors believed not as thou doest, but as he saith, bring him to the reckoning before some other good and well learned men. And I dare be bold to warrant that thou shalt find him double false. For neither shalt thou find it true that he told thee, and besides that he shall not let to belie thee, saying, and swearing too, that thou sayest wrong on him, and that he never told thee so.

Marry sir, quod your friend, he will haply say that he were peradventure in that point to be pardoned, because of the jeopardy that he might fall into by the maintenance of his opinion.

Pardon him if ye will, quod I. But yet is he not then so good as were those good fathers. For either is his way naught, and then doth he naught to teach it; or if it be good, then is he naught that for any fear forsaketh it. For he that forsaketh any truth of Christ's faith, forsaketh Christ. And then saith our Saviour that who so doth, shall be forsaken of him. " And he that so doth, is not to be believed like those holy fathers, which have taught us far the contrary. For they did abide by the right faith that they taught, which is, as by their books appeareth, the selfsame faith that thou believest. And so far forth abide they thereby, that divers of them sustained great persecution therefore, and some of them death and martyrdom. So that we were more than mad if we had not lever (liefer) send our souls to the souls of those holy fathers, of whose cunning, virtue, and salvation we be sure, than to cast them away with these folk, which how holy so ever

they seem, yet shew themselves naught, in that they teach the contrary of such things as those undoubted holy doctors taught.

I marvel then, quod your friend, why they live so virtuously, fasting and giving their good(s) in alms, with other virtuous exercise, both in forbearing the pleasure of the world, and also taking pain in their bodies.

To this matter, quod I, our Saviour himself answereth where he saith in the gospel of Matthew, *Attendite a falsis prophetis, qui veniunt ad vos in vestimentis ovium, intrinsecus autem sunt lupi rapaces*. Beware of the false prophets that come to you in the clothing of sheep, and yet withinforth be ^{is} ravenous wolves. ^{is} For since that they, by false doctrine, labour to devour and destroy men's souls, we be sure enough that wolves they be indeed, how sheepishly soever they look. And hypocrites must they needs be, since they be so denounced by God's own mouth. And well may we perceive that he meaneth not well, when he teacheth evil. And that evil he teacheth we may well wit, when we see him teach the contrary of the which God hath already taught his whole church. In which hath been so many holy fathers, so many cunning doctors, and so many blessed martyrs, that so have bydden ^{is} by the faith to the death, that it were a frenzy if we would now, against so many such, believe any false heretic and feigning hypocrite, teaching us the contrary. Of those holy fathers of our faith, whom their books sheweth to have believed as we believe, we have seen and known their virtuous life well proved by their blessed end, in which our Lord hath testified by many a miracle that their faith and their lives hath liked him. But now have we not yet seen any such thing by any of these heretics; nor yet so much as any constancy in their doctrine. But and if they were once found out and examined, we see them alway first ready to lie and forswear themselves, if that will serve. And when that will not help, but their falsehood and perjury proved in their faces, then ready be they to abjure and forsake it, as long as that may save their lives. Nor never yet found I anyone but he would once abjure, though he never intended to keep his oath. So holy would he be and so wise therewith that he would with perjury kill his soul for ever to save his body for a while. For commonly, soon after, such as so do shew themselves again, God of his righteousness not suffering that their false forswearing should stand them long in stead.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER

The author sheweth that some which be Lutherans and seem to live holily, and therefore be believed and had in estimation, intend a farther purpose than they pretend; which they will well shew if they may once find their time.

And as for their living, the good appearance whereof is the thing that most blindeth us, as much surety as we have of the godly life of our old holy fathers (whereof the world hath written, and God hath borne witness by many great miracles shewed for their sakes) as uncertain be we of these men, with whom we neither be alway present, and little also can tell what abominations they may do to some of them secretly; nor yet can know their intent and purpose that they appoint upon, and the cause for which they be for the while content to take all the pain. Very

certain is it that pride is one cause wherefore they take the pain. For pride is, as saint Austen sayeth, the very mother of all heresies.

PRIDE, THE MOTHER OF ALL HERESIES

For of an high mind to be in the liking of the people, hath come into many men so mad a mind and so frantic, that they have not rought * what pain they took without any other recompense or reward, but only the fond pleasure and delight that themself conceive in their heart, when they think what worship that people talketh of them. And they be the

HERETICS THE DEVIL'S MARTYRS

devil's martyrs, taking much pain for his pleasure, and his very apes, whom he maketh to tumble through the hope of the holiness that putteth them to pain without fruit. And yet oftentimes maketh them miss of the vain praise, whereof only they be so proud. For while they delight to think how they be take(n) for holy, they be many times well perceived and taken for hypocrites, as they be. But such is this cursed affection of pride, and so deep setteth in the claws where it catcheth, that hard it is to pull them out. This pride hath ere this made some learned men to devise new fantasies in our faith, because they would be singular among the people, as did Arius, Faustus, Pelagius, and divers other old heretics.

Whose false opinions have been long time passed openly condemned by many holy synods and general councils, and now, God be thanked, not only their opinions quenched, but also all their books clean gone and vanished quite away, ere ever any law was made for such books' burning. So that it well appeareth to have been the only work of God that hath destroyed those works which wrought in their times much harm in his church. This affection of pride hath not only made some learned men to bring forth new fantasies, but maketh also many men of much less than mean learning so sore to long to seem far better learned than they be, that to make the people have them in authority, they devise new sects and schisms to the pleasure of new fangle folk, sparing no pain for the while to set forth their sect withal, rewarding their labour with only delight of beholding what pleasure the people have in their preaching. And albeit that this frantic pleasure, with which the devil inwardly feedeth them, be the only thing that satisfieth and contenteth some, yet many are there of those that evil teacheth and appear holy, which are both secretly more lose (loose) and voluptuous than they seem. And some also which warely keep themself for the while, intend toward more liberal lewdness at length. Will ye see ensample thereof? Look on Tyndale that translated the new testament which was indeed, as ye said in the beginning, before his going over, taken for a man of sober and honest living, and looked and preached holily, saving that yet sometime it savoured so shrewdly, that he was once or twice examined thereof. But yet because he glossed then his words with a better sense, and said and sware that he meant none harm, folk were glad to take all to the best. But yet ye see that though he dissemble himself to be a Lutheran, or to bear any favour to his sect while he was here: yet as soon as he gat him hence, he gat him to Luther straight. And whereas in the translation of the new testament (he) covered and dissimulated himself as much as he could, yet, when he perceived his cloked heresies espied and destroyed, then shewed he shortly himself in his own likeness, sending forth first his wicked book of *Mammona*, and after his malicious book of obedience. In which books he sheweth himself so puffed up with the poison of pride, malice and envy, that it is more than marvel that the skin can hold together. For he hath not only sucked out the most poison that he could find through all Luther's books, or take of him by mouth, and all that (Luther) hath spat out in these books, but hath also in many things far passed his master, running forth so mad for malice, that he fareth as though he heard not his own voice. He barketh against the sacraments much more than Luther. For whereas Luther left yet some

CONFESSION

confession, and reckoned his secret confession necessary and profitable, though he set a lewd liberty therein, Tyndale taketh it away quite, and railleth thereon, and saith it was begun by the devil. Which thing had undoubtedly never been obtained among the people, that folk should shew themselves their secret sins to another man, if God had not brought it up himself. Nor never could it have continued so many hundred years without great harm grown by disclosing of many men's offences, if the holy spirit of God had not assisted his holy sacrament, as the king's highness most prudently writeth. Luther also sometime affirmeth purgatory, sometime doubteth, and sometime denieth. But Tyndale putteth no doubt at all, but denieth it as utterly, as foolishly, without ground, cause, or colour, laid wherefore.

Concerning the holy mass, Luther, as mad as he is, was never yet as mad as Tyndale is, which, like himself, so railleth thereupon in his frantic book of obedience that any good christian man would abhor to read it. And yet writing as he doth, he is not ashamed to say that the church will not believe holy saint Hierome, saint Austen, and such other, as though these holy doctors were on his side. Among all, whom he shall scant read one leaf wherein he shall not find one or other of his abominable heresies reproved. Luther himself was never so shameless to say, that these holy fathers held on his side. But because they were against him, he rejected the authority of them all. But what conscience hath this Tyndale that thus can write to blind unlearned people with, when himself well knoweth that they do all with one voice prove that shrift and

CONFESSION OF NECESSITY REQUISITE TO OUR SALVATION

confession is of necessity requisite to our salvation, and that they lay for them the holy scripture plenteously for the further proof of this part, which Tyndale would wickedly, with only railing and jesting against all their wholesome doctrine, drive away clean and he could! He knoweth also himself, that all they with one voice teach and prove by scripture too, that there is the fire of purgatory, which I marvel why Tyndale feareth so little but if he be at a plain point with himself to go straight to hell. They teach also with one voice the great profit of the mass, and honour that ought to be done thereto, which Tyndale teacheth to dishonour. They teach all the worshipping of images and relics, and praying to saints, going on pilgrimages, and credence to be given to miracles: of all which Tyndale teacheth the contrary. All they teach also chastity, and preach high pre-eminence of virginity, and widowhood above wedding, and ever have had in abomination the breach of any vow of chastity, whereas Tyndale, against them all, teaching the contrary, is therein so shameless, and so little respect hath of his own conscience, that seeming all them to write against him, and himself against them all, and that every man, that learned is, must needs perceive his shameless boldness therein, letteth not yet both to rail against Christ's church for saying as these old holy saints said before, and also to say that the church will not hear them, whereas himself seeth that the church and they say all one thing, and as well they as the church abhor and condemn his deadly damnable heresies.

Now ween I that we need little to doubt how he liveth, that thus writeth. He liveth, of likelihood, as evil as he teacheth, and worse he cannot. But as I began to say, this Tyndale in the beginning bare forth a fair face, and seemed unto the people peradventure an honest man, as some other haply do now whom ye speak of, which when they see their time, shall, if they may be suffered, cast off their visors of hypocrisy, and shew themselves at length in their own likeness as he doth now. I pray you look on Luther himself, if he should in the beginning have said all that he hath said since, who could have suffered him? If he should in the beginning have married a nun,

would not the people have burned him? And yet now, by little and little, he hath brought them to be content therewith. And let us not think the contrary, but that of those heretics that here seem so good, if there be any such, we see not yet their stomachs, but shall if they be upholden a while see them follow their author in lewd living, doctor Luther with his leman, and shall by the devil's help, induce good and simple souls so far into wrong ways, that they shall at length well like and commend the things which now their uncorrupted conscience abhorreth. And therefore let all good Christian people knock and break, as holy scripture counselleth, the young childrens' heads of Babylon against the stone; that is to say, let good Christian folk suspect, abhor, and pursue in the beginning, all such evil doctrine as is contrary to the faith and teaching of Christ's catholic church, which God and his holy spirit both by writing, and without writing, hath taught his church; and which hath in his church continued from Christ's days hitherto, as it well appeareth by the good and godly books of all our forefathers, holy doctors of Christ's church militant here in earth, and now glorious saints in his church triumphant in heaven. From whose firm faith joined with good works which, as two wings, carried them up to heaven, there shall, but we be more than mad, no fond heretic lead us, seem he never so saintish with any new construction of Christ's holy gospel or other part of holy scripture, which no wise man will doubt but that those holy cunning men, illumined with the grace of God, much better understood than all the rabble of these lewd

THE LUTHERANS ARE THE WORST HERETICS THAT EVER SPRANG IN CHRIST'S CHURCH

heretics. Of all which that ever sprang in Christ's church, the very worst, and the most beastly, be these Lutherans, as their opinions and their lewd living sheweth. And let us never doubt but all that be of that sect, if any seem good as very few do, yet will they in conclusion decline to the like lewd living as their master and their fellows do, if they might once (as by God's grace they never shall) frame the people to their own frantic fantasy. Which dissolute living they be driven to dissemble, because their audience is not yet brought to the point to bear which they surely trust to bring about, and to frame this realm after the fashion of Switzerland or Saxony, and some other parts of Germany, where their sect hath already foredone the faith, pulled down the churches, polluted the temples, put out and spoiled all good religious folk, joined friars and nuns together in lechery, despited all saints, blasphemed our blessed Lady, cast down Christ's cross, thrown out the Blessed Sacrament, refused all good laws, abhorred all good governance, rebelled against all rulers, fall to fights among themselves, and so many thousand slain, that the land lieth in many places in manner desert and desolate; and, finally, that most abominable is of all, of all their own ungracious deeds lay the fault in God (taking away the liberty of man's will, ascribing all our deeds to destiny, with all reward or punishment pursuing upon "all our doings) whereby, they take away all diligence and good endeavour to virtue, all withstanding and striving against vice, all care of heaven, all fear of hell, all cause of prayer, all desire of devotion, all exhortation to good, all dehortation from evil, all praise of well doing, all rebuke of sin, all the laws of the world, all reason among men, set all wretchedness a broach, no man at liberty, and yet every man do what he will, calling it not his will but his destiny, laying their sin to God's ordinance, and their punishment to God's cruelty, and, finally, turning the nature of man into worse than a beast, and the goodness of God into worse than the devil. And all this good fruit would a few mischievous persons, some for desire of a large liberty to an unbridled lewdness, and some of an high devilish pride, cloked under pretext of good zeal and simpleness, undoubtedly bring into this realm, if the prince and prelates, and the good faithful people did not in the beginning meet with their malice.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER

The author sheweth, that in the condemnation of heretics, the clergy might lawfully do much more sharply than they do, and that indeed the clergy doth now no more against heretics than the apostle counselleth and the old holy doctors did.

For as for the clergy whom they labour to bring in hatred under the false occasion of cruelty, do no more therein than saint Austin, saint Hierome, and other holy fathers have been wont to do before, nor no further than the apostle adviseth himself. For they do no more but when one heretic after warning will not amend but waxeth worse, eschew him then and avoid him out of Christ's flock, which is the very thing that saint Paul counselleth, where he writeth to Titus . *Hereticum hominem post primam et secundam correptionem devita.* ¹⁹ And this is much less, that the clergy doth to heretics, than saint Peter did unto Ananias and Sapphira ²⁰ for a far smaller matter, that is to wit, for their untrue saying and keeping aside a portion of their own money when they made semblance as though they brought to the apostle altogether. For though they were not killed by his own hand, yet appeareth it well that God killed them both twain by saint Peter, his means, as governour of his church, to the fearful example of all such as would after that break their promise and vow to God willingly made of themselves or their own good(s). Which thing Luther and Tyndale would have all men do now. Did not saint Paul write unto the Corinthians, that they should deliver to the devil him that had defiled his father's wife, to the punishment of his body, that the spirit might be saved in the day of judgment? ²¹ What say we of Hymeneus and Alexander, of whom he writeth unto the Corinthians also. *Hymeneum et Alexandrum tradidi Sathane, ut discant non blasphemare.* I have, quod he, betaken Hymeneus and Alexander to the devil, to teach them to leave their blasphemy. ²² In which words we may well learn, that saint Paul as apostle and spiritual governour in that country, finding the twain fallen from the faith of Christ into the blasphemy of that they were bounden to worship, did cause the devil to torment and punish their bodies, which every man may well wit was no small pain, and peradventure not without death also. For we find nothing of their amendment. And this bodily punishment did saint Paul, as it appeareth, upon heretics, so that if the clergy did unto much more blasphemous heretics than I ween they twain were, much more sorrow than saint Paul did to them, they should neither do it without good cause, nor without great authority and evident example of Christ's blessed apostles. And surely when our Saviour himself calleth such heretics, wolves cloaked in sheep's skins ²³ --and would that his shepherds the governours of his flock should in such wise avoid ²⁴ them as very shepherds would avoid very wolves--there is little doubt, but as an honourable

MY LORD OF ROCHESTER

prelate of this realm in his most erudite book, ²⁵ answereth unto Luther, the prelates of Christ's church rather ought temporally to destroy those ravenous wolves, than suffer them to worry and devour everlastingly the flock that Christ hath committed unto their cure, and the flock that himself died for to save it from the wolves' mouth. But now though it well appear (as me thinketh it doeth) that the clergy might in this case right sore procure against heretics, yet do they indeed no further than the old holy fathers did in their time, and the blessed apostle counselleth

them to do. But all the sore punishment of heretics wherewith such folk as favour them would fain defame the clergy, is, and hath been, for the great outrages and temporal harms that such heretics have been

THE CAUSES OF THE PUNISHMENT OF HERETICS

always wont to do, and seditious commotions that they be wont to make, beside the far passing spiritual hurts that they do to men's souls, devised and executed against them of necessity by good Christian princes, and politic rulers of the temporalty, for as much as their wisdoms well perceived that the people should not fail to fall into many sore and intolerable troubles if such seditious sects of heretics were not by grievous punishment repressed in the beginning, and the sparck (spark) well quenched ere it were suffered to grow to over great a fire.

Forsooth, quod your friend, it appeareth well that the clergy is not in this matter to be blamed as many men reckon. For it seemeth that the sore punishment of heretics is devised not by the clergy but by temporal princes and good lay people; and not without great cause.

Well, quod I, and to the intent that ye shall perceive it much the better, and over that believe your own eyes and not my words in many things that ye have heard of my mouth, we will not part this night but I shall deliver into your hands here more books than ye will read over till to-morrow. But for that ye shall neither need to read all, nor lose time in seeking for that ye should see, I have laid you the places ready with ryshes ^z between the leaves, and notes marked in the margins where the matter is touched. So caused I to be borne into his chamber a book of decrees, and certain works of saint Cyprian, saint Austen, and some other holy doctors, and therewithal a work or twain of Luther, and as many of Tyndale. And in this wise went we to supper; and on the morrow forbare I to speak with him till near dinner time. At which our meeting he shewed me that in the decrees where the rushes lay, namely in *causa 22 . questione quinta*, and divers other of the questions consequently following, he had seen at full that the clergy doth at this day no further for the punishment of heretics than did the old fathers and holy doctors and saints in time passed, as by their own words, there alleged, doth open and plain appear. And that as well the clergy in the persecution of heretics lawfully may do as the temporal princes in war against infidels be deeply bounden to do, much more than they now do, or of long time have done, or yet as it seemeth go about to do. And over this, he said, that he had seen of Luther's own words worse than he had ever heard rehearsed, and in Tyndale worse yet in many things than he saw in Luther himself. And in Tyndale's book of obedience he said that he had founden what thing Tyndale saith against miracles and against the praying to saints.

Marry, quod I, and these two matters made us two much business before your going to the university. I would it had happed you and me to have read over that book of his before. Howbeit in good faith if ye will, we shall yet peruse over his reasons in those points, and consider what weight is in them.

Nay, by my trouth, quod your friend, we shall need now to lose no time therein. For as for miracles, he sayeth nothing in effect but that which I laid against them before, that the miracles were the works of the devil. Saving that where I said that it might peradventure be said so, he saith that indeed it is so, and proveth it yet less than I did. And therefore as for the word of his, without better proof, is of little weight.

Forsooth, quod I, Tyndale's word alone ascribing all the miracles to the devil, ought not to weigh much among Christian men, against the writing of holy saint Austen, saint Hierome, saint Ambrose, saint Chrysostome, saint Gregory, and many another holy doctor, writing many a great miracle done at holy pilgrimages and saints' relics, done in open presence of many substantial folk, and divers done in their own sight. All which miracles all those blessed saints do ascribe unto the work of God, and to the honour of those holy saints that were worshipped at those pilgrimages. Against all whom, when Tyndale ascribeth them all to the devil, he plainly sheweth himself as faithful as he would seem, very near sibbe to the infidelity of those Jews that ascribed Christ's miracles to the devil, saying that he did cast out devils by the power of Beelzebub prince of devils. ²⁷

Surely, quod your friend, and as for that he reasoneth against praying to saints is very bare.

It must needs, quod I, be bare, except he well avoid the miracles, whereto when he hath nothing to say, but to ascribe God's works to the devil, he sheweth himself driven to a narrow strait. For he and his fellows, as touching miracles, neither have God willing nor the devil able to chew any for the proof of their part, nor I trust in God never they shall.

In faith, quod your friend, as for reasoning the matter of praying to saints he is not worth the reading now. For all the substance in effect that ye prove it by is by him clean untouched.

That is, quod I, no marvel, for he hath not heard it.

In faith, quod your friend, and of his own making, he layeth arguments for it, such as he list, which he layeth forth faintly, and then doth answer them so slenderly, and all his whole matter in those points and other so plainly confuted by the old holy fathers, that, if I had seen so much before, it had been likely to have shortened much part of our long communication. For, by my trouth, quod he, when I consider both the parts well, and read Luther's words and Tyndale's in some places where ye laid me the rushes, I cannot but wonder that either any Almain could like the one, or any Englishman the other.

I cannot much marvel, quod I, though many like them well. For since there is no country wherein there lacketh plenty of such as be naught, what wonder is it that vicious folk fall to the favour of their like? And then, as for such, when their hearts are once fixed upon their blind

AS GOOD IT IS TO PREACH TO A POST, AS TO A HERETIC

affections, a man may with as much fruit preach to a post, as reason with them to the contrary. For they nothing ponder what is reasonably spoken to them, but whereto their fond affection inclineth, that thing they lean to, and that they believe, or, at the leastwise, that way they walk and say they believe it. For in good faith, that they so believe indeed, their matters be so mad that I believe it not. And yet make they semblance as though they believed that no man were able to confute Luther or Tyndale, where methinketh, for these matters of their heresies that they so set forth, (if the audience were indifferent) there were not in this world a man more meet to match them both twain in dispicions, than were mad Colins alone, if he were not of the same sect. For he lasheth out scripture in Bedlam as fast as they both in Almain. And in good faith they both expound it as madly as he. And so help me God, as me thinketh, that man is as mad as any of all three, which, when he seeth the right faith of Christ continued in his catholic church so many

hundred years, and on that side so many glorious martyrs, so many blessed confessors, so many godly virgins; and in all that time, virtue had in honour, fasting, prayer, and alms had in price, God and his saints worshipped, his sacraments had in reverence, christian souls tenderly prayed for, holy vows kept and observed, virginity preached and praised, pilgrimages devoutly visited, every kind of good works commended. And seeth, now, suddenly start up a new sect setting forth clean the contrary, destroying Christ's holy sacraments, pulling down Christ's cross, blaspheming his blessed saints, destroying all devotion, forbidding men to pray for their fathers' souls, condemning fasting days, setting at naught

THE DEVOUT DEEDS OF HERETICS

the holy days, pulling down the churches, railing against the Mass, villainously demeaning the blessed sacrament of the altar, the sacred Body of our Saviour Christ. And seeth the one side and the continuance thereof so clearly proved by many a thousand miracle, so clearly testified by the virtuous and erudite books of all the old holy doctors from the apostles' time to our days, and seeth on the other side a fond frere and his fellows, without wit or gace, bear us in hand that all those holy fathers never understood the scripture, but only these beasts that teach us vice as fast as ever the other taught us virtue; and that seeth on the one side, saint Cyprian, saint Hierome, saint Ambrose, saint Austen, saint Basil, saint Chrysostome, saint Gregory, and all the virtuous and cunning doctors by row, from the death of Christ and the time of his apostles till now, and seeth among all these neither priest, monk nor frere, that ever did, after his profession made, marry and take a wife, or any suffered to break their vowed chastity in all their time; and seeth on the other side none other doctors of this new sect but frere Luther and his wife, priest Pomerane and his wife, frera Huskin and his wife, priest Carlastadius and his wife, Dan Otho, monk, and his wife, frere Lambert and his wife, frantic Colins, and more frantic Tyndale, that saith all priests, monks and freres, must needs have wives--that man were, I say, as frantic as they both, that would rather send his soul with such a sort as these be, than with all those holy saints that ever since Christ's days have testified by their holy handwriting that they died in the same faith that the church believeth yet, and all this fifteen hundred year hath done, and shall do to the world's end, go there never so many heretics out thereof and leave it never so little, yet shall it remain and be well known alway by the profession of that faith, and those holy sacraments that have continued therein from the beginning thereof, and the holy doctors thereof ever had in honour and reverence, and their acceptation with God incessantly testified by miracles, which never one sort of so many sects of heretics could yet allege for any doctor of theirs nor never shall I think, till the great indignation of God provoked, by our sin and

ANTICHRIST, THE HEAD OF ALL HERETICS

wretchedness, shall suffer the head of all heretics, Antichrist, (of whom these folk be the fore-walkers) to come into this wretched world, and therein to work such wonders, that the sight thereof shall be able to put right wise men and good men in great doubt of the truth, seeing false Antichrist proving his preaching by miracles; whereas, now, neither good man nor wise man can have any colour of excuse, if men were so mad to believe these mad masters of whom they see the principal arch-heretics and first authors of the sect neither shew miracle for the proof of their doctrine, and yet their teaching and their living all set upon sin and beastly concupiscence, and so clean contrary to the doctrine of all the old holy doctors, for whom God hath and doth shew so many miracles in his church, which, as I said, shall not fail to be conserved and his right faith therein to be preserved in despite of all the heretics that ever shall spring, Antichrist and all, and in spite * of the devil the great master of them all, whom Christ shall at the last restrain, and destroy his idol Antichrist with the spirit of his holy mouth repairing and delating his church

again, and gathering thereinto as well the remnant of the Jews, as all other sects abroad about the world, shall make all folk one flock under himself the shepherd, and shall deliver a glorious kingdom to his father of all the saved people from our former father Adam to the last day, from henceforth to reign in heaven in joy and bliss incogitable one everlasting day with his father, himself and the holy Ghost--which send these seditious sects the grace to cease, and the favourers of those factions to amend, and us the grace, that stopping our ears from the false enchant-ments of all these heretics, we may, by the very faith of Christ's catholic church, so walk with charity in the way of good works in this wretched world, that we may be partners of the heavenly bliss, which the blood of God's own son hath bought us unto. And this prayer, quod I, serving us for grace, let us now sit down to dinner, which we did. And after dinner departed he home toward you, and I to the court.

THE END

¹ fellow Christians.

² endorsed.

³ I would.

⁴ I wote.

⁵ *Matt.* 26. 52.

⁶ *Matt.* 16. 23.

⁷ *Matt.* 10. 23.

⁸ renie, renying.

⁹ *Ex.* 2. 12.

¹⁰ *Ecclesiasticus* 17. 12.

¹¹ *Gal.* 1. 8.

¹² *Luke* 12. 9.

¹³ withinfurth been.

¹⁴ *Matt.* 7. 15.

¹⁵ abided.

¹⁶ cared.

¹⁷ except that.

¹⁸ following upon.

¹⁹ *Titus* 3. 10.

²⁰ *Acts* 5.

²¹ *I Cor.* 5.

²² *I Tim.* 1. 20.

²³ *Matt.* 7. 15.

²⁴ expel.

²⁵ John Fisher, Bp. Of Rochester.

²⁶ rushes.

²⁷ *Luke* II. 15.

²⁸ 1529 ed. has "spyght"; 1557 "sight."