followe them, our owne fooliſhneſſe dooth the more vexe and diſquiet vs, and we doe nothing elſe, but waſte penſiue dayes, and heauie nights, ſtudying with our ſelues how we may periſh. If thou doubt of this, whoſoeuer thou art, heare the word of the Lord, *They erre in their heart, for they haue not knowne my waies*: if thou heareſt it, and knoweſt it, leaue off their wofull waies, who ſeeke traditions, and erre in their hearts, and haue no peace: and follow the word of God, which onely giueth light and ſecurity vnto vs.

Another thing, in this threatning is: *that God ſweareth, they ſhall not enter into his reſt*. This oath is to perſwade vs, that with a conſtant purpoſe, God is iuſt, euen as he is mercifull; & let vs not flatter our ſelues in vaine hope to eſcape his anger, while we will needes walke ſtill in our ſinnes: for in iuſtice and iudgement the glory of God ſhineth, and no more than he can breake his promiſe of loue and mercie, made with his Saints; no more will he defile his couenant, in which he hath threatned the rebellious people: but hee will ſurely recompence their ſinnes into their boſome, and his anger ſhall conſume them. Therefore to theſe alſo hath hee ſworne, and hee will not repent him; *they that haue not knowen his wayes, they ſhall neuer enter into his reſt*: of this reſt we ſhall haue occaſion to ſpeake hereafter. Now let vs pray, that God for his ſonnes ſake would prepare our heartes to the hearing of his voice, that wee may not bee deſpiſers, as our forefathers haue been, whom God threatned in his heauy diſpleaſure, and hath ſhewed his iudgements towards them, euen as he would: but let vs be as his ſheepe, that do heare his voice, that his word may be in our hearts, a ſeede of regeneration, by which wee may bee borne a new, into holineſſe and righteouſneſſe, to glorifie him that is our God for euer, &c.

The

The ſixteenth Lecture vpon the 12. 13. 14. verſes.

12 *Take heede brethren, leaſt at any time there bee in any of you an euill heart, and vnfaithfull, to depart away from the liuing God.*

13 *But exhort one another dayly, while it is called, To day: leaſt any of you bee hardened through the deceitfulneſſe of ſinne.*

14 *For we are made partakers of Chriſt, if we keepe ſure vnto the end, that beginning, wherewith we are vpholden.*

IN theſe wordes, the Apoſtle beginneth more particularly to handle the former wordes of the Prophet, and ſo to amplifie his exhortation, that in no wiſe the Hebrues ſhould forgette to heare and to obey Chriſt their onely Prophet: and firſt of all, in this that the Prophet ſayth, *To day*: by which the Apoſtle gathereth, that we muſt not neglect this time of our calling, but whē the voice of the Lord is heard, then we muſt ſhew our obedience: for it is not meete that he ſhould ſpeake, and we ſhould be deafe; nor he ſhould call to day, and we to make anſwer, wee will come to morrow; ſuch looſe regard of the word of the liuing God, becommeth not thoſe that are his Saints, neither doeth our Sauiour Chriſt ſo teach vs himſelfe, when hee ſayth ſo many times: *hee that hath eares to heare, let him heare*: therefore, when the Lord openeth his mouth, let vs erect our eares; and in the day that hee doth teach, let vs learne in the ſame, and glorifie God in his goodnes, this is the plaine meaning

of the Apoſtle in theſe wordes of the twelfth and thirteenth verſe: *Take heede brethren leaſt at any time there bee in any of you an euill heart and vnfaithfull, to depart from the liuing* GOD: *but exhort one another daily, while it is yet called to day, leaſt any of you bee hardened with the deceitfulneſſe of ſinne*: Beſides this generall doctrine in the words of the Apoſtle, we haue many things profitably to note.

Firſt, that heere againe, hee calleth them by the name of Brethren, hee ſheweth a great affection of brotherly loue toward them; for there is no doubt but hee was fee frrom flattering words, and of the aboundance of his heart his mouth did ſpeake; ſo that this teſtimony of his good will had great weight to allure the Hebrues the more willingly to heare him.

And we muſt learne a very good leſſon, with what care, and loue, and earneſt deſire wee muſt doe all things to our neighbour. We muſt not as in other things, where we care not greatly whether they come to paſſe or no, ſo vſe our exhortations and admonitions to our bretheren: but what we aduiſe them or ſpeake vnto them touching the feare of God, we muſt haue all our heart bent to doe them good, no care, nor deſire, ought to be greater in vs, than this, that by ſome meanes we might doe them good.

This affection the Apoſtle ſheweth, when hee calleth them brethren and we that this day preach vnto you when we ſay (dearely beloued) or (louing brethren) or vſe ſuch like names by which wee call you, either wee haue this earneſt affection to winne you vnto Chriſt, or elſe, in the pulpit alſo wee haue learned to diſſemble; I note this now, both to ſtir vp my ſelfe, and to admoniſh other, for I heare dayly ſuch louing names of the people in the Preachers mouthes, and I pray GOD, as much louing affection may be in their hearts vnto them.

Another

Another thing, in theſe wordes of the Apoſtle taught vs, is this; what the cauſe is why all the day long the Lord ſpeaketh vnto vs, and few regarde it: and the cauſe is an vnbeleeuing heart, therefore the Apoſtle ſayth, *Take heede, there be not in any of you an euill and vnbeleeuing heart, to fall away from the liuing* GOD: which wordes hee addeth as a declaration of the former wordes of the Prophet, where hee ſayeth; *It is a people that doe erre in their hearts, for they haue not knowen my wayes*: heere wee muſt firſt ſee where is the roote and fountaine of our ſinne, which is not farre off from euery one of vs, in the Eaſt or Weſt endes of the world: but it ſpringeth vp, and is nouriſhed in our owne hearts: and whatſoeuer is euill in vs, heere it hath his fountaine: in which we knowe firſt our ſinne is our owne, and of our ſelues it riſeth: accuſe not, neither this nor that, but humble thy ſelfe, and confeſſe thy ſin, which is bred within thee.

It is true, we haue many tentations, but we could not be ouercome of them, if the corruption of ſinne were not within vs: for our Sauiour Chriſt was alſo tempted, yet hee ſinned not, and the cauſe was, when the Prince of this world came vnto him, he found nothing in him; if it were ſo in vs, all tentations ſhould be in vaine: but wee, becauſe wee are borne in ſinne, and no goodneſſe dwelleth in our fleſh, therefore wee are ſtraight carried as wee moſt deſire, and our owne concupiſcence giueth ſtrength to our tentations.

And againe, heere wee ſee, as our heart is a roote of ſinne: ſo there is no ſinne but commeth from the heart; if thy heart accuſe thee not, bee of good comfort, thy ſinnes are aboliſhed; if thy heart condemne thee, mock not thy ſelfe, for thy ſin abideth. Our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith: *the things come not from without which doe defile a man, but they* Mat. 15. 15

doe

doe proceede from the heart that is within: for out of the heart come euill thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theftes, falſe witneſſe, ſlaunders, and all ſuch things as defile a man: a notable ſentence, and full of godly comfort in all our life; for when I ſee ſo many men vexed in minde, this way or that way, ſome vow pilgrimages, ſome obſeruation of dayes, ſome abſtaine from meats, ſome one thing, ſome another: in this wauering of many, my hope is ſtedfaſt, I feare not, meat, drinke, day, time, place, perſon; for all this ſerueth me, and I ſerue the Lord, before whome when my heart is ſetled in loue and obedience, all the world beſide cannot defile mee: let vs therefore take good heede of this, and wee take good heede to the ſafeſt Tower of defence, that wee haue in all our life; take heede of thy heart, for if it accuſe thee, it will kill thee; if it be on thy ſide, let the heauens fall, yet the ruines of it ſhall not make thee afraid: let thy aduerſaries bee who they will, let their counſell bee neuer ſo ſubtile, and thy deſtruction that is conſpired neuer ſo cruell; yet if thy heart ſhall be faithfull, thine enemies ſhall feare more than thou, and they ſhall be aſhamed more than thou; for innocency aſſiſteth thee, which is ſtrengthened with the arme of GOD, and is not vanquiſhed of a vaine man. Let vs follow then the calling of the Apoſtle, and let vs regard well our hearts.

Now, as this is the ſafety of thy life, to haue thy heart cleane: ſo marke theſe words of the Apoſtle, and hee will teach thee how to haue thy heart cleane, *Let there not be in any*, (ſaith he) *an euill heart of infidility*: Infidelity is it which maketh thy heart abound in euil, & if by any meanes, it can get roome to lodge within thee, thy heart is taken, and imagineth from hencefoorth all miſchiefe. When our Sauiour Chriſt ſo many times reproueth ſundry ſorts of men, he maketh this as a general fault of al, that they are vnfaithfull,

Infidelity, the cauſe of all euill.

faithful, & ſlow to beleeue. When S. Paul condemneth thē as reprobate men, which doe neuer ſee the light of the Goſpell, he maketh this the cauſe of their ſinne, that the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their vnbeleeuing heart. And if wee will bee free from ſo great a plague, let vs follow this counſell of the Apoſtle, that there bee not in vs vnbeleeuing hearts. Let vs bee, as our Sauiour Chriſt teacheth Thomas to be, not vnfaithfull but faithfull: whatſoeuer is ſpoken in the word of trueth, let it haue within vs a ſure perſwaſion. If God ſay, he will be our defence, and our exceeding great reward: let vs beleeue the aſſurance of his promiſe, and know hee will not leaue his Saints, neither yet forſake them. If God haue promiſed eternall life to thoſe that walke faithfullie before him, let vs beleeue his word; that a thouſand thouſand, and ten thouſand thouſand yeres before him haue none accompt, neither yet any time, which can be expired at the laſt; but aboue all time, in immortality hee hath eſtabliſhed a dwelling for his Saints. If GOD haue threathed eternall fire, to conſume and deuoure his enemies; let neuer our hearts doubt or wauer, through the temptations of the diuell: but let vs acknowledge it in a certaine truth, & beleeue it, as if we heard euen now the fearefull voyce to ſound: *Goe ye curſed into eternall fire*. With ſuch a beleeuing heart let mee foreſee the latter end, and I ſhall not ſinne for euer. But take now this feare away of thoſe laſt iudgements, and bring a wauering heart to Gods promiſes, and the ſentence is pronounced ouer thee, becauſe thou haſt not beleeued trueth, thou ſhalt erre in thine heart, and beleeue lyes, till vanity waſte away thy yeres, and thou fall away into the deſtruction, which thou ſhall feele, before thou canſt beleeue that it is prepared.

2. Co

And let vs not onely beleeue theſe laſt things, of which laſt of all, men muſt haue experience; but in all things now inci-

incident into our life. Let vs not bee hard hearted, but beleeue the truth, what it speaketh vnto vs.

If Paul say: *The glorie of the wicked is to their shame*: Let vs yet, while we haue time, beleeue it, and cast out such ambitious desires, as most assuredly shall bring confusion. 3.19

If Paul say: *They that wish to be rich, they fall into temptations, and into snares, and into many foolish and hurtfull desires which drowne men in perdition and destruction*: why doe wee not beleeue it? and why make wee not our affections as strange from couetousnesse, as we wish to bee farre off from death, and from the graue? 1.6.9

If our Saviour Christ say: *If you loue mee keepe my commandements*: who hath bewitched vs, that wee should not beleeue the truth? what meane wee to liue in all excesse of sinne, and pollute our selues in riot, and yet still say, we loue the Lord? Surely (deerly beloued) one cause is of all; an vnbeleeuing heart hath seduced vs. We thinke wee eate of the secret Manna, when indeede wee feede of ashes. Wee cannot see, that GOD resisteth the proud, his iudgements are high aboue our reach: and therefore, wee will set vp our owne praise, and striue for honour, euen vnto death, and wee feare not the shame that wee cannot see. Ioh.14.13.

Wee know not what the kingdome of heauen is, neither can wee knowe; for our eye cannot see it, our eare can not heare it, our heart cannot comprehend it, neither hath the spirit of God reuealed it vnto vs. And when infidelity hath thus couered vs, it is no marueil though wee heare in vaine, *It is easier for a Camell to creepe through a needles eye, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heauen*: for wee cannot feare, where wee thinke there is no daunger; wee cannot hope, where we looke for no goodnesse; promises and threatnings are but blasts of winde, where infidelity

lity hath taken away our wisedome: let vs now looke into our selues, and search our heart and raines, whether wee stand in faith or no: for behold, this knowe, and the spirit witnesseth it, there is no ambitious minde aspiring to honour, no vncleane and filthy concupiscence of adultery, no couetous desires of gold and siluer, no sinfull delights of worldly minded men, no falling from God, for these corruptible and vaine things, but infidelity is both roote and branch, the beginning & ending: an vnfaithfull heart cauſeth all in all; and let faith but dwell within thee, to beleeue the word of trueth; knowe there is glory, and honour, and immortality, and eternall life to those that patiently seeke the Lord: and indignation, and wrath, and tribulation, and anguish vpon the soule of euery man that doth euill. Know that the world is vanity, and all flesh is grasse; that righteousnesse is perfect blessing, and the feare of GOD is happinesse; beleeue this, and thou beleeuest thine eyes to see the light of the Sunne, or to discerne the darkenesse of the night, and thou shalt neuer fall: were thy temptations neuer so many, thou shalt ouercome them, till the diuell himselfe doe flee from thee: let vs therefore pray, and pray continually euen as the Apostles prayed, *O Lord increase our faith.*

The wordes following heere: *In falling away from the liuing God*: they shewe, both what it is to bee vnfaithfull, and what worke it hath in vs. For to doubt when the Lord hath spoken, or mistrust what he hath promised, it is to fall away from him: and when wee begin in heart to wauer, and call into question, whether his worde shall bee performed, or no; wee lay our selues open to the assaults of sinne, and soone fall away from the liuing GOD, to our owne vanity. And this generall rule, that infidelitie maketh vs fall from GOD, wee must particularly apply to all the

works

wortes of our life, that we be not hardened (as the Apoſtle ſayth) with the deceit of ſinne: if I fall into danger, and miſtruſt Gods prouidence, and ſeeke worldly meanes and vnlawfull helpe of man for my deliuerance, the Prophet Ieremie curſeth this infidelitie, and ſayth: wee withdrawe our hearts from the Lord. If in maintenance of our Common wealth, we ſeeke onely pollicies, and doe that which is wiſeſt with naturall men; the Prophet Eſay crieth, woe vnto ſuch, for they fall away from God, they looke not (ſayth he) vnto the holy one of Iſrael, nor ſeeke vnto the Lord. If I vſe lying words, or any deceit, in buying, and ſelling, thinking ſo to waxe rich; I am a lying merchant that am fallen from God: and as Salomon ſayth, *the bread of deceit ſhall bee ſweete but for a while, and then my mouth ſhall bee filled with gravell*: and therefore that we may not at laſt be aſhamed, and bee guilty of this great ſinne, to forſake the liuing God, let vs take heed there bee not in any of vs an euill heart of infidelity.

17.5. 31.1. Pro.23.17

It followeth now: *but exhort one another dayly while it is yet called to day*. As before the Apoſtle taught vs to beware of the ſinne; ſo like a wiſe teacher hee telleth vs heere, how we ſhall doe it, that is, by dayly exhorting one another. So Saint Paul, when hee would perſwade the Theſſalonians, to walke as children of the light, and as in the day time, hee ſetteth out this rule vnto them, *Exhort one another, edifie one another*: and this is the diſcharge of that great commandement, *Loue thy neighbour as thy ſelfe*: as appeareth by the law that is written: *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother from thine heart, but thou ſhalt reproue him, and ſuffer him not to ſinne*. Thus the Lord hath ordained, and this duety hee will aske at our hands, in which he will iuſtifie vs, or els condemne vs. Saint Iames ſayth: *Hee that conuerteth a ſinner from going aſtray, let him knowe it, hee ſhall ſaue a ſoule from death, and ſhall couer a multitude*

1 The.5.11 Leu.19.17 Iac.5.20.

multitude of ſinnes. Salomon ſaith: *The fruite of the righteous is as a tree of life, and he that winneth ſoules, is wiſe*. And the Prophet Daniel in cleare and abſolute words ſpeaketh plainly: *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightnes of the firmament, and they that turne many to righteouſneſſe, ſhall ſhine as the ſtarres for euer and euer*.

This duety, I confeſſe, is chiefly the miniſters, then the magiſtrates, then the fathers and maſters, who are all according to their calling guilty of bloud, if men periſh in their gouernment for want of inſtruction: but yet, this duety is alſo common to all, and none excepted; we ought all to edifie and exhort one another.

There is no excuſe of ignorance, there is none ſo ſimple, but hath learned the royall lawe: *Thou ſhalt loue the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoule; and thou ſhalt loue thy neighbour as thy ſelfe*. In breach of this duety, who is ſo ſimple, but he can ſometime eſpie the ſinne of his brother? in this, let him exhort him after his skill; for though he haue receiued but one talent, yet muſt he occupy that, els he ſhal be condemned for a wicked, and a faithleſſe ſeruant. Looke therefore vnto this, and watch euery one ouer his brother, that he may confirme him in the grace of Chriſt. We haue often meetings for the comfort of our life, and many brotherly feaſtings are among vs: Take heede wee drinke not our wines in carued bolls, and haue ſweete muſicke at our tables, and none of vs, as the Prophet ſayth, remember the affliction of Ioſeph; that is (I meane) and none of vs care for the adultery, drunkennes, gluttony, blaſphemy of his brethren; for if our meetings be ſuch, our comfort of our meeting will ſoone bee at an end, and our laſt mirth will bee in heauineſſe.

Amos 6.3

And heere wee muſt marke, when this duety of mutuall exhortation is required: the Apoſtle addeth, *while it is yet called*.

called to day : this is, as I told you before, while yet life and forgiuenes is offered vnto vs through the preaching of the Goſpell: this is to ſtirre vs vp not to neglect the time of our
6. calling: ſo the Prophet Eſay, *Seeke* (ſaith he) *the Lord while he may be found, call je vpon him, while he is neere.* We haue all our times in which we are called to repentance: if wee neglect them, we ſhall not haue them againe, though we ſought them with teares. The day was paſt with the rich man to call vnto Abraham for Lazarus to helpe him, when they were both dead: the day was, when Lazarus lay at his gate deſpiſed of him. The day was paſt with Pharaoh, when he was in the red ſea: the day was, while Moſes and Aaron wrought ſuch miracles in his ſight. The day was paſt with Iudas, when the diuell was now entered into him: the day was before, when Chriſt reproued him of his wicked purpoſe. The day is with vs, while yet we feele our hearts flexible, and our conſcience is touched with the feare of God: the day is paſt, when at the laſt, our hearts ſinke downe into infidelitie, and wee can no more be ſorie for ſinne; therefore while time is, and we be yet ſure it is the day of health, let vs regard it, and take hold of it, as it commeth: for when it is gone, it is paſt recouerie; and behind, there is no handfaſt to pull it backe againe.

It followeth: *Leaſt any of you be hardened with the deceit of ſinne*: wee ſee heere, how we be carried into euill, that is, by craftineſſe, and by deceit of ſinne. Sinne neuer appeareth in her owne countenance, no more than the diuell ſheweth himſelfe in his owne ſhape; but as he is a lyar from the beginning, ſo all his doings are deceiuable error; as he himſelfe is falſe, ſo are all his doings in falſhood. Saint Paule calleth
Eph.4.14. calleth it, *Iuggling craftineſſe*, to deceiue cunningly.

Now then, if we this day confeſſe that ſinne is of the diuell, why do we not beleeue as the holie Apoſtle beleeueth, that

that the ſinner is holden in deceit & error, to do the things he knoweth not? And if in ſinning wee doe wee know not what, and as wee would neuer doe, if wee knew what wee did: what meane we ſo willingly to bee deceiued: where is the glory of our gray haires, or the reioycing of a manly countenance, when ſo childiſhly wee will bee lead into the pit and ſnares. Wee knowe it is ill, wee knowe it is of the diuell, wee hate the name of it, we are aſhamed of the light of the Sunne, when wee commit it, wee knowe the ende of it is death, and it bringeth foorth nothing but our deſtruction: and what hearts haue wee yet within vs, of fleſh, or of ſtone? of wiſedome, or of madneſſe, that wee bee ſtill deceiued with ſuch a Monſter? where bee now our politique heads, and wiſe counſels, of which wee boaſt ſo much, that we be wary men, circumſpect in all things, foreſeeing harmes, preuenting enemies practiſes, and I wot not what idle praiſes of vaine men. For, where is their wit, where is their counſel, where is their ſound aduiſe & deepe conſiderations, when their greateſt and deadlieſt enemies, ambition, pride, reuenge, vniuſtice, couetouſnes, adultery, lodge in their priuy chambers, and lye betweene their breaſts? Alas (dearely beloued) what gaine ſhould be vnto vs, if wee with you, and you with vs, ſhould both periſh together. How much were it better, that we ſhould admoniſh one another, and liue together to eternall life? Let vs not then be mocked with the deceit of ſinne. And at one word, to all thoſe wiſe men, of which I ſpake, and to all you that be preſent of that number, this I ſay: and yet, nor I, but the Prophet Ieremie, that you may bee ſure I ſay the truth. When all your vaine praiſes ſhall bee ſcattered into the winde; when the Lord ſhall cut off all flattering lippes, and make perpetuall ſilence of theſe emptie idle blaſts, that haue puffed vp you: another, and a truer, and a more enduring

teſtimony,

teſtimony ſhalbe pronounced of you,thatexcept you turn, while it is yet called to day, and bee not hardned with this deceitfulnes of ſinne, you are vnwiſe,and ſhall bee aſhamed of your groſſe ignorance; for you haue refuſed the lawe of the Lord,and what wiſedome can be in you? This teſtimony I am ſure is true, and the liuing God hath ſpoken it of the children of men: and how bleſſed are we, if we doe beleeue it? and how much more happineſſe is in one day of our honour, in which wee are wiſe to eſcape the deceit of ſinne, than in ten thouſand dayes, in which wee ſhould fall from the Lord of life? This is wiſedome, and he that hath vnderſtanding, let him marke where, and how many are his footſteps,that he bee not ouertaken with the ſleights of ſinne.

It followeth now in the words of the Apoſtle: *for wee bee made partakers of Chriſt, if we hold the beginning of our ſubſtance ſtedfaſt vnto the latter end*: he amplified before the exhortation of the Prophet, by pondering of this word, *to day*: willing vs not to pretermit the time, but diligently to ſtirre vp one another while this day of health abideth. Now, hee continueth the ſame exhortation, by waying of the reſidue of the words: *If you heare his voyce, harden not your hearts, as in the bitter murmuring*: ſhewing, that our forefathers example ſhould be our inſtruction,and we ought to take heed by their puniſhments: for,if GOD ſpared not them,how ſhould he ſpare vs?but they,when they heard his voice,yet they ſinned;and though he ſpake vnto them: yet they beleeued not,and therefore his anger fell vpon them: euen ſo, if now the voyce of Chriſt ſhall be heard of vs, and wee beleeue it not,or els little regard it, as we fall into the ſame example of diſobedience, it ſtandeth with the iuſtice of our God, that wee ſhould bee partakers of like puniſhment. To this purpoſe are the words of the Apoſtle,to the end of this Chap-

chapter. Touching the 14. verſe, the more to perſwade vs, the Apoſtle ſheweth what great benefit is vnto vs, if we will be faithfull to heare his voyce, and abide conſtant in obedience of it, for ſo wee ſhall bee partakers of Chriſt. We know, this is our hope, and all the aſſurance we haue with God, that we be made members of Ieſu Chriſt, wee muſt bee grafted into him, and bee made members of his bodie.

Euen as the vine branch, can haue no life nor bring foorth any fruite, except it abide in the bodie of the vine; no more haue we either life or righteouſnes, except we be, and abide in Chriſt. This is the myſtical vniting, and ſpirituall ioyning wee haue with Chriſt; hee is our ſubſtance and being,in the inheritance of glorie: ſo his righteouſneſſe is our righteouſneſſe, his loue is our loue, his life is our life, his ſpirit is our ſpirit, of his fulneſſe wee receiue all: this is a great myſtery which neither our eye ſeeth, nor our hart can vnderſtand: but yet it is a reall ioyning of vs with him, which our faith dooth eaſilie comprehend, and when wee ſhall ſee that wiſdome which could vnite in one perſon, GOD and man, wee ſhall ſee the wiſdome which hath made all vs, the bodie of that head, and members one of another. This great benefite is heere ſet out vnto vs, in a ſure promiſe; *wee be partakers of Chriſt*: that wee ſhould (as I ſaid) be more moued with ſo great a bleſſing. And heere wee haue all to learne a good leſſon, that is, how wee are all ſet free from ſinne, and preſented faultleſſe before the preſence of Gods glorie, and that is, by beeing made one with Chriſt, and appearing in his countenance, for of him onelie it is true; *This is my beloued Sonne in whome I am well pleaſed*: if vnto him wee bee giuen, and with him bee ioyned: then in him wee are alſo beloued, and through him wee bee accepted. This is the ſaluation wee haue by him, Matth. 3.

to be graffed in him, and made partakers of his life. Euen Abraham our father, and before Abraham, Noe, Enoch, Abell, or whosoeuer since haue had highest praise, Iob, Daniell, Samuell, Iohn Baptist, the virgin Marie, all are one before God, not one in himselfe excepted, but all were vnited to Iesus Christ, in whom they were righteous. Were wee neuer so full of good workes, our well doing extendeth not vnto the Lord: nor they can possiblie either deserue his fauour, or once come in his sight; but we must leaue all our works in the earth, where they are done, and they must dye with the corruptible hands and feete with which they are wrought; wee must goe naked and bare, and offer nothing but that which is Christs, yea our selues we must present in his bodie; for in our owne persons wee cannot possiblie be accepted: haue therefore a wise and vnderstanding faith, know how you are made one with Iesu Christ, and there lay the anchor hold of thy hope; for in him it is impossible thou shouldest perish.

It followeth: *if wee hold the beginning of our substance sure and stedfast vnto the end*: this is the condition vnder which wee shall be partakers of Christ; perseuerance and constancie vntill the ende. Our *Substance* as the Apostle calleth it, that is our being, our vpholding, our setled standing, this our estate of vniting vnto Christ, the beginning of this, now wrought in vs, we must hold it, and strengthen it vnto the end, then wee know we be partakers of Christ: this beginning of our *Substance*, is faith by the preaching of the Gospell, by which wee bee now spirituallie vnited vnto Christ: this faith by hearing the voyce of Christ through which wee are one with him, by the same word wee must nourish it, and keepe it stedfast vnto the ende: this is the same thing which Paule teacheth to the Colossians; that Christ hath reconciled vs in his bodie, if wee abide in faith grounded

Col.1.23.

grounded and settled, and be not mooued from the hope of the Gospel, which we haue heard preached vnto vs: touching this, I said much in the exposition of the sixt verse, now this I will adde: if you will knowe the Church of Christ, know it by this marke, it holdeth the beginning of her substance stedfast vnto the end: the beginning of our substance he called before in the sixt verse, the assurance and reioycing of our hope. Saint Paule (as I tolde you) in plaine words expounderh it thus: a sure faith in the Gospell preached. Now you know the marke of the Church of Christ, a sure faith by the preaching of the Gospell: take away assurance, you take away the faith of Gods elect, for it must be sure, stedfast, settled, vnmoueable vnto the end: if hunger, thirst, nakednes: if the sword of the Tyrant, if the stormie seas, if fearefull visions of euill spirits, if any of these make thee feare, in all these thus Christ reproueth thee: *O thou of little faith*: for if he that made all, be stronger than all, if in him thou trust, thou must feare at nothing, but know for trueth, that neither height nor depth, nor death, nor life, nor Angel, nor power, shall euer seperate thee from the loue of God: this therefore (I say) first marke, take away suretie, and take away the faith of Gods Church. Againe, take away the preaching of the Gospell, and you take away faith: for so Paule saith, *our faith is grounded in the Gospell preached vnto vs*: as in another place he speaketh expressie, *faith is by hearing of the word of God*: therefore the Gospell hath this name, to be called *the word of faith*, *the hearing of faith*, *the preaching of faith*: and our receiuing of the Gospell, is called the *obedience of faith*: neither is it possible to haue faith, where thou hast no word which thou canst beleeue. Now consider (I beseech you) what Church is the Church of Rome; their faith they conceale it not, but thus teach, and preach, that it hath no certeintie: & for the gospel to warrãt

Rom.10.17. Rom.10.8. Gal.3.2. Rom.1.5.

their faith, they seeke it not, but say: ignorance will stirre vp deuotion, and will not suffer the people to knowe the Scripture, nay, they say they neede it not, but onely beleeue as the church beleeueth: are these the people to whome the Apostle writeth, that they should surely beleeue the Gospel vnto the end? If light be darkenesse, if good be euill, if holinesse bee sinne, then are these men the Church of Christ: but the time is past. Now let vs pray, that it would please God to strengthen in vs a true and liuelie faith, &c.

The seauenteenth Lecture vpon the residue of the Chapter.

15 *So long as it is said, To day if you heare his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the prouocation.*

16 *For some when they heard, prouoked him to anger: howbeit, not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.*

17 *But with whome was hee displeased fortie yeares? Was hee not displeased with them that sinned, whose carcases fell in the wildernesse?*

18 *And to whome sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but vnto them that obeyed not.*

19 *So wee see that they could not enter in, because of vnbeliefe.*

HEere the Apostle proceedeth to amplifie this exhortation of the Prophet, in these words, *If you heare his voice, harden not your hearts as in their bitter murmuring*: Touching these words, you haue heard them before expounded vnto you, therefore wee now will let them passe, onelie noting this vnto you, the Apostle saith; *while it is yet called to day*, that the Prophet had said *to day*, the Apostle saith;

saith; *yet that exhortation is, and yet it is called, to day*: whereby we learne the prophecies were not for the present time onely, but daily wee and our children after vs, are admonished, instructed, taught, in their preaching: so when the Prophet Esay reproueth the people for vsing their owne counsell, and seeking helpe of the Egyptians, when they were in aduersity, that wee should knowe it was not onely then Gods will, that his people shoulde trust in him, and not make them vaine helpes of men: but that alwaies, hee should bee our onely refuge, the Prophet sayth: *now goe and write it before them in a table, and note it in a booke, that it may bee for the last day, for euer and euer.* Esa. 30. 8. So the Prophet Ieremie, mentioneth how Baruch wrote all his wordes, Ier. 45. 1. making them an instruction vnto the posteritie that should read them. This our Sauiour Christ meant, when hee sayd, *one soweth, and another reapeth*: meaning, the Prophets labored, and wee eat the fruit of their labour; and so Peter sayth: *that not vnto themselues, but vnto vs they ministred these things which now are preached vnto vs*, not onely meaning that they are witnesses of our faith vnto vs, but our hope, our loue, and all is grounded vpon that foundation. Ioh. 4. 38. 1. Pet. 1. 12.

A lesson (dearely beloued) well to be marked: for there be many, now a daies, which make too small account of Gods Prophets; their boldnesse in their ministerie, their sharpe condemning of mans foolish pollicy, their rules of iustice & iudgement, a great many cast them off as things of another world, or another people: but we shall see that God is vnchangeable, and his righteousnesse is one for euer, and he hath made his Prophets our schoolemasters, and the same word endureth for euer. I speake not of figures, and such outward lawes as the Iewes had, for an appointed time, but Gods iustice, & gouernement which is eternall, is contemned of vs, if wee cast away the Instructions of rule and