

A MODELL OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY

Christian Charitie

I.

A MODELL HEREOF

God Almightye in his most holy and wise providence, hath soe disposed of the Condition of mankinde, as in all times some must be rich, some poore, some highe and eminent in power and dignitie; others meane and in subjection.

THE REASON HEREOF

First, to hold conformity with the rest of his workes, being delighted to shewe forth the glory of his wisdom in the variety and difference of the Creatures; and the glory of his power, in ordering all these differences for the preservation and good of the whole; and the glory of his greatnes, that as it is the glory of princes to have many officers, soe this great King will have many Stewards, counting himselfe more honoured in dispencheing his guifts to man by man, then if hee did it by his owne immediate hands.

Secondly, That he might have the more occasion to manifest the work of his Spirit: first upon the wicked in moderateing and restraineing them, soe that the riche and mighty should not eate upp the poore, nor the poore and dispised rise upp against their superiours and shake off their yoake; 2ly in the regenerate, in exerciseing his graces in them, as in the greates ones, their love, mercy, gentlenes, temperance etc.; in the poore and inferior sorte, their faith, patience, obedience etc.

Thirdly, that every man might have need of other, and from hence they might be all knitt more nearly together in the Bonds of brotherly affection. From hence it appears plainly that noe man is made more honourable than another or more wealthy etc., out of any perticuler and singuler respect to himselfe, but for the glory of his Creator and the common good of the Creature, Man. Therefore God still reserves the propperty of these gifts to himself as [in] Ezekiel: 16. 17. He there calls wealth his gold and his silver.¹ [In] Proverbs: 3. 9. he claims their service as his due, honor the Lord with thy riches etc.² All men being thus (by divine providence) ranked into two sortes, riche and poore;

1. He there calls . . . silver: "Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them" (Ezekiel 16:17). Winthrop probably used the Geneva Bible, a translation by William Whittingham, the brother-in-law of John Calvin, which went through over 140 editions between 1566 and 1640. This English translation was popular with the Puritans for what many saw as its Calvinist leanings and anti-Catholic stance, especially in the marginal notes that accompanied many texts. James I, king of England, disapproved of the Geneva Bible and commissioned the King James Version of the Bible, published in 1611. With the exception of the marginal notes, however, the two versions were very similar. Biblical quotations in the notes here are taken from the King James Version, which eventually superseded the Geneva Bible.

2. he claims . . . with thy riches etc.: "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thy increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Proverbs 3:9-10).

under the first are comprehended all such as are able to live comfortably by their owne meanes duely improved; and all others are poore according to the former distribution.

There are two rules whereby wee are to walke one towards another: JUSTICE and MERCY. These are allwayes distinguished in their Act and in their object, yet may they both concur in the same subject in eache respect; as sometimes there may be an occasion of shewing mercy to a rich man in some sudden danger of distresse, and alsoe doing of meere justice to a poor man in regard of some perticuler contract, etc.

There is likewise a double Lawe by which wee are regulated in our conversation one towards another in both the former respects: the lawe of nature and the lawe of grace, or the morrall lawe or the lawe of the gospell, to omitt the rule of justice as not properly belonging to this purpose otherwise then it may fall into consideration in some perticuler Cases. By the first of these lawes man as he was enabled soe withall [is] commanded to love his neighbour as himself.³ Upon this ground stands all the precepts of the morrall lawe, which concernes our dealings with men. To apply this to the works of mercy, this lawe requires two things. First, that every man afford his help to another in every want or distresse. Secondly, that hee performed this out of the same affection which makes him carefull of his owne goods, according to that of our Savior. Matthew: "Whatsoever ye would that men should doe to you."⁴ This was practised by Abraham and Lott in entertaining the Angells and the old man of Gibeā.⁵

The lawe of Grace or the Gospell hath some differance from the former, as in these respects. First the lawe of nature was given to man in the estate of innocency; this of the gospell in the estate of regeneracy.⁶ 2ly, the former propounds one man to another, as the same flesh and image of god; this as a brother in Christ allsoe, and in the Communion of the same spirit and soe teacheth us to put a difference betweene Christians and others. *Doe good to all, especially to the houshold of faith*; upon this ground the Israelites were to putt a difference betweene the brethren of such as were strangers though not of Canaanites.⁷ 3ly, The Lawe of nature could give noe rules for dealing with enemies, for all are to be considered as friends in the state of innocency, but the Gospell commands love to an enemy. Proove. If thine Enemie hunger, feed him; Love your Enemies, doe good to them that hate you. Matthew: 5. 44.

This lawe of the Gospell propounds likewise a difference of seasons and occasions. There is a time when a christian must sell all and give to the poore, as they did in the

3. commanded . . . as himself: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 19:19).

4. "Whatsoever . . . you": "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

5. This was practised . . . Gibeā: Winthrop's examples of selfless help to others include Abraham's welcome of three angels (Genesis 18:1-2); Abraham's nephew Lot's defense of two angels against a mob (Genesis 19:1-14); and an old man of Gibeā who offered shelter to a stranger (Judges 19:16-21).

6. in the estate of regeneracy: Winthrop develops a central set of Puritan beliefs: that human beings were innocent when they were first created and living in the Garden of Eden; that after Adam and Eve sinned they were cast out of the garden and human beings thereafter lived in an unregenerate state; and that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered the possibility of regeneracy and salvation to those who believe.

7. Canaanites: Canaan was the promised land of the Israelites.

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Apostles times.⁸ There is a time allsoe when a christian (though they give not all yet) must give beyond their ability, as they of Macedonia, Corinthians: 2, 6. Likewise community of perills calls for extraordinary liberality, and soe doth community in some special service for the Church. Lastly, when there is noe other meanes whereby our Christian brother may be relieved in his distresse, wee must help him beyond our ability, rather then tempt God in putting him upon help by miraculous or extraordinary meanes.

This duty of mercy is exercised in the kinds, *Giveing, lending and forgiving*.—

Quest. What rule shall a man observe in giveing in respect of the measure?

Ans. If the time and occasion be ordinary he is to give out of his abundance. Let him lay aside as God hath blessed him. If the time and occasion be extraordinary, he must be ruled by them; taking this withall, that then a man cannot likely doe too much, especially if he may leave himselfe and his family under probable meanes of comfortable subsistence.

Objection. A man must lay up for posterity, the fathers lay up for posterity and children and he "is worse than an infidell" that "provideth not for his owne."

Ans. For the first, it is plaine that it being spoken by way of Comparison, it must be meant of the ordinary and usuall course of fathers and cannot extend to times and occasions extraordinary. For the other place, the Apostle speakes against such as walked inordinately, and it is without question, that he is worse then an Infidell who throughe his owne sloathe and voluptuousnes shall neglect to provide for his family.

Objection. "The wise mans Eyes are in his head" saith Salomon, "and foreseeth the plague;"⁹ therefore wee must forecast and lay up against evill times when hee or his may stand in need of all he can gather.

Ans. This very Argument Salomon useth to persuade to liberallity, Ecclesiastes: "Cast thy bread upon the waters," and "for thou knowest not what evill may come upon the land."¹⁰ Luke 16: "Make you friends of the riches of iniquity;"¹¹ you will ask how this shall be? very well. For first he that gives to the poore, lends to the lord and he will repay him even in this life an hundred fold to him or his — The righteous is ever merciful and lendeth and his seed enjoyeth the blessing; and besides wee know what advan-

8. Apostles times: "Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, 'Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me'" (Luke 18:22).

9. "The wise . . . plague": "The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness" (Ecclesiastes 2:14). Salomon, a variant of Solomon (c. 970-930 BCE), was the son of David and king of Israel, renowned for his wisdom.

10. "Cast . . . land": "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth" (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2).

11. "Make . . . iniquity": In Luke's account, Christ gives numerous examples of the responsibilities of discipleship, including his parable of the dishonest steward who reduces by half the bills of debtors to his master so that the steward will be welcome in their homes: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (Luke 16:9).

tage it will be to us in the day of account when many such witnesses shall stand forth for Us to witnesse the improvement of our Tallent.¹² And I would knowe of those whoe pleade soe much for laying up for time to come, whether they hold that to be Gospell, Matthew 6. 19. "Lay not upp for yourselves Treasures upon Earth," etc.¹³ If they acknowledge it, what extent will they allowe it? if onely to those primitive times, lett them consider the reason whereopon our Saviour groundes it. The first is that they are subject to the moathe, the rust, the Theife. Secondly, They will steale away the hearte; where the treasure is there will the heart be allsoe. The reasons are of like force at all times. Therefore the exhortation must be generall and perpetuall, with allwayes in respect of the love and affection to riches and in regard of the things themselves when any special service for the churche or perticuler Distresse of our brother Doe call for the use of them; otherwise it is not onely lawfull but necessary to lay upp as Joseph did¹⁴ to have ready upp on such occasions, as the Lord (whose stewards wee are of them) shall call for them from us. Christ gives us an Instance of the first, when hee sent his disciples for the Ass, and bidds them answer the owner thus, the Lord hath need of him.¹⁵ Soe when the Tabernacle was to be builde he sends to his people to call for their silver and gold, etc.; and yeildes them noe other reason but that it was for his worke. When Elisha comes to the widow of Sareptah and findes her prepareing to make ready her pittance for herselfe and family, he bids her first provide for him, he challengeth first god's parte which shee must first give before shee must serve her owne family.¹⁶ All these teache us that the Lord lookes that when hee is pleased to call for his right in any thing wee have, our owne Interest wee have must stand aside till his turne be served. For the other, wee need looke noe further then to that of John I: "He whoe hath this worlds goodes and seeth his brother to neede and shutts upp his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him," which comes punctually to this Conclusion: if thy brother be in want and thou canst help him, thou needst not make doubt, what thou shouldst doe, if thou lovest God thou must help him.

Quest. What rule must wee observe in lending?

Ans. Thou must observe whether thy brother hath present or probable, or possible means of repaying thee, if there be none of these, thou must give him according to his necessity, rather then lend him as he requires. If he hath present meanes of repaying thee, thou art to looke at him not as an Act of mercy, but by way of Commerce, wherein thou arte to walk by the rule of Justice; but if his meanes of repaying thee be onely probable or possible, then is hee an object of thy mercy, thou must lend him, though there be danger of loseing it, Deuteronomy: 15. 7. "If any of thy brethren be poore," etc.,

12. Tallent: A talent was a unit of currency used by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

13. "Lay not . . . etc.": "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21).

14. lay upp as Joseph did: The son of Jacob and Rachel, Joseph stored food for seven years to prepare for a famine (Genesis 41:46-57).

15. Christ . . . need of him: The story is in Matthew 21:1-7.

16. When Elisha . . . family: 1 Kings 17:10-24.

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"thou shalt lend him sufficient."¹⁷ That men might not shift off this duty by the apparent hazard, he tells them that though the yeare of Jubile¹⁸ were at hand (when he must remit it, if hee were not able to repay it before) yet he must lend him and that chearefully: "It may not greive thee to give him" saith hee; and because some might object, "why shouldst thou soone impovishe myself and my family," he adds "with all thy Worke,"¹⁹ etc; for our Saviour, Matthew: 5: 42. "From him that would borrow of thee turne not away."

Quest. What rule must we observe in forgiving?

Ans. Whether thou didst lend by way of Commerce or in mercy, if he have noething to pay thee, must forgive, (except in cause where thou hast a surety or a lawfull pleadge) Deuteronomy 15. 2. Every seaventh yeare the Creditor was to quitt that which he lent to his brother if he were poore as appears—ver[se]: 8: "Save when there shall be no poore with thee." In all these and like Cases, Christ was a generall rule, Matthew 7. 22. "Whatsoever ye would that men should doe to you, doe yee the same to them allsoe."

Quest. What rule must wee observe and walke by in cause of Community of perill?

Ans. The same as before, but with more enlargement towards others and lesse respect towards our selves and our owne right. Hence it was that in the primitive Church they all had all things in Common, neither did any man say that which he possessed was his owne. Likewise in their returne out of the Captivity, because the worke was greater for the restoring of the church and the danger of enemies was Common to all, Nehemiah exhorts the Jews to liberallity and readiness in remitting their debts to their brethren, and disposing liberally of his owne to such as wanted, and stande not upon his owne due, which hee might have demanded of them.²⁰ Thus did some of our forefathers at times of persecution in England, and soe did many of the faithful of other Churches, whom wee keepe an honorable remembrance of them; and it is to be observed that both in Scriptures and latter stories of the churches that such as have beene most bound to the poore saintes, especially in these extraordinary times and occasions, God hath left them highly commended to posterity, as Zacheus, Cornelius, Dorcas, Bishop Hooper, the Cuttler of Brussells and divers others.²¹ Observe againe that the Scripture gives noe caution to restraints any from being over liberall this way; but all men to the liberall and cherefull practise hereof by the sweetest promises; as to instance one for

the first, "Thou shalt lend him sufficient": "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in distress, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, whatsoever he wanteth" (Deuteronomy 15:7-8).

Secondly, "Thou shalt not greive . . . Worke": "Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand'; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him ought, and he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteth thine hand unto" (Deuteronomy 15:9-10).

Thirdly, "The year of release, is at hand": The Old Testament book of Nehemiah tells the story of the Hebrew religious reforms and supervised the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (c. 444 BCE).

Fourthly, "and divers others": A list of Christian martyrs.

many, Isaiah 58. 6: "Is not this the fast I have chosen to loose the bonds of wickednes, to take off the heavy burdens, to lett the oppressed goe free and to breake every yoake, to deale thy bread to the hungry and to bring the poore that wander into thy house, when thou seest the naked to cover them. And then shall thy light breake forth as the morneing, and thy healthe shall growe speedily, thy righteousness shall goe before god, and the glory of the Lord shall embrace thee; then thou shalt call and the Lord shall Answer thee" etc. [Verse] 10: "If thou power out thy soule to the hungry, then shall thy light spring out in darknes, and the lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfie thy soule in draught, and make fatt thy bones, thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and they shalt be of thee that shall build the old wast places" etc. On the contrary, most heavy curses are layed upon such as are straightened towards the Lord and his people, Judges 5. [23]: "Curse ye Meroshe because ye came not to help the Lord," etc. Proverbs [21. 13] "Hee whoe shutteth his eares from hearing the cry of the poore, he shall cry and shall not be heard." Matthew 25: "Goe ye carssed into everlasting fire" etc. "I was hungry and ye fedd mee not." 2 Corinthians 9. 6: "He that soweth sparingly shall reape sparingly."

Haveing already sett forth the practice of mercy according to the rule of god's lawe, it will be usefull to lay open the groundes of it allsoe, being the other parte of the Commandment, and that is the affection from which this exercise of mercy must arise. The Apostle tells us that this love is the fulfilling of the lawe,²² not that it is enough to love our brother and soe noe further; but in regard of the excellency of his partes givinge any motion to the other as the Soule to the body and the power it hath to sett all the faculties on worke in the outward exercise of this duty. As when wee bid one make the clocke strike, he doth not lay hand on the hammer, which is the immediate instrument of the sound, but setts on worke the first mover or maine wheele, knoweing that will certainly produce the sound which hee intends. Soe the way to drawe men to workes of mercy, is not by force of Argument from the goodnes or necessity of the worke; for though this course may enforce a rationall minde to some present Act of mercy, as is frequent in experience, yet it cannot worke such a habit in a soule, as shall make it prompt upon all occasions to produce the same effect, but by frameing these affections of love in the heart which will as natively bring forth the other, as any cause doth produce effect.

The deffinition which the Scripture gives us of love is this: "Love is the bond of perfection."²³ First, it is a bond or ligament. 2ly it makes the worke perfect. There is noe body but consists of partes and that which knitts these partes together, gives the body its perfection, because it makes eache parte soe contiguous to others as thereby they doe mutually participate with each other, both in strengthe and infirmity, in pleasure and paine. To instance in the most perfect of all bodies: Christ and his church make one body. The severall partes of this body, considered aparte before they were united, were as disproportionate and as much disordering as soe many contrary qualities or

22. The Apostle . . . lawe: The Apostle Paul wrote, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).

23. "Love is the bond of perfection": See Colossians 3:14: "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."

elements, but when Christ comes and by his spirit and love knitts all these partes to himselfe and each to other, it is become the most perfect and best proportioned body in the world. Ephesians 4. 16: "Christ, by whome all the body being knitt together by every joint for the furniture thereof, according to the effectuall power which is in the measure of every perfection of partes," "a glorious body without spott or wrinkle," the ligaments hereof being Christ, or his love, for Christ is love (1 John 4. 8). Soe this definition is right: "Love is the bond of perfection."

From hence we may frame these conclusions. 1. First of all, true Christians are of one body in Christ, 1 Corinthians 12. 12, 27: "Ye are the body of Christ and members of their parte." 2ly. The ligaments of this body which knitt together are love. 3ly. Noe body can be perfect which wants its proper ligament. 4ly. All the partes of this body being thus united are made soe contiguous in a speciall relation as they must needes partake of each other's strength and infirmity; joy and sorrowe, weale and woe. 1 Corinthians: 12. 26: "If one member suffers, all suffer with it, if one be in honor, all rejoyce with it." 5ly. This sensibleness and sympathy of each other's conditions will necessarily infuse into each parte a native desire and endeavour to strengthen, defend, preserve and comfort the other.

To insist a little on this Conclusion being the product of all the former, the truthe hereof will appeare both by precept and patterne. 1 John 3. 10: "Yee ought to lay downe your lives for the brethren." Galatians 6. 2: "beare ye one another's burthens and soe fulfill the lawe of Christ." For patterns wee have that first of our Saviour whoe out of his good will in obedience to his father, becoming a parte of this body, and being knitt with it in the bond of love, found such a native sensibleness of our infirmities and sorrowes as hee willingly yielded himselfe to deathe to ease the infirmities of the rest of his body, and soe heald their sorrowes. From the like sympathy of partes did the Apostles and many thousands of the Saintes lay downe their lives for Christ. Againe, the like wee may see in the members of this body among themselves. Romans 9. Paule could have beene contented to have beene separated from Christ, that the Jewes might not be cutt off from the body. It is very observable what hee professeth of his affectionate partaking with every member: "whoe is weake" saith hee "and I am not weake? whoe is offended and I burne not;"²⁴ and againe, 2 Corinthians: 7. 13. "therefore wee are comforted because yee were comforted." Of Epaphroditus he speaketh, Philippians 2. 30. that he regarded not his owne life to do him service.²⁵ Soe Phebe and others are called the servants of the churche.²⁶ Now it is apparent that they served not for wages, or by constraint, but out of love. The like wee shall finde in the histories of the churche in all ages, the sweete sympathy of affections which was in the members of this body one towardes another, their chearfullness in serveing and suffering together; how liberall they were without repineing; harbourers without grudgeing and helpfull without reproaching; and all

24. "whoe is weake . . . and I burne not;" 2 Corinthians 11:19.

25. Of Epaphroditus . . . service: In his letter to the Philippians, written from a Roman prison, Paul tells them that he is sending Epaphroditus to serve as their minister in his absence (Philippians 2:25-30).

26. Soe Phebe . . . churche: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea" (Romans 16:1).

from hence, because they had fervent love amongst them, which onely make the practise of mercy constant and easie.

The next consideration is how this love comes to be wrought. Adam in his first estate was a perfect modell of mankind in all their generations, and in him this love was perfected in regard of the habit. But Adam rent himselfe from his Creator, rent all his posterity allsoe one from another; whence it comes that every man is borne with this principle in him, to love and seeke himselfe onely, and thus a man continueth till Christ comes and takes possession of the soule and infuseth another principle, love to God and our brother. And this latter haveing continuall supply from Christ, as the head and roote by which he is united, gets the predominieing in the soule, soe by little and little expells the former. 1 John 4. 7. "love cometh of god and every one that loveth is borne of god," soe that this love is the fruite of the new birthe, and none can have it but the new Creature. Now when this quallity is thus formed in the soules of men, it workes like the Spirit upon the drie bones. Ezekiel 37: "bone came to bone." It gathers together the scattered bones, or perfect old man Adam, and knitts them into one body againe in Christ, whereby a man is become againe a living soule.

The third Consideration is concerning the exercise of this love which is twofold, inward or outward. The outward hath beene handled in the former preface of this discourse. For unfolding the other wee must take in our way that maxime of philosophy *Simile simili gaudet*, or like will to like; for as it is things which are turned with disaffection to eache other, the ground of it is from a dissimilitude ariseing from the contrary or different nature of the things themselves; for the ground of love is an apprehension of some resemblance in things loved to that which affects it. This is the cause why the Lord loves the creature, soe farre as it hathe any of his Image in it; he loves his elect because they are like himselfe, he beholds them in his beloved sonne. Soe a mother loves her childe, because shee thoroughly conceives a resemblance of herselfe in it. Thus it is betwene the members of Christ. Eache discernes, by the worke of the Spirit, his owne Image and resemblance in another, and therefore cannot but love him as he loves himselfe. Now when the soule, which is of a sociable nature, findes any thing like to it selfe, it is like Adam when Eve was brought to him. She must have it one with herselfe. This is flesh of my flesh (saith the soule) and bone of my bone. Shee conceives a greate delighte in it, therefore shee desires nearness and familiarity with it. Shee hath a greate propensity to doe it good and receives such content in it, as fearing the miscarriage of her beloved, shee bestowes it in the inmost closett of her heart. Shee will not endure that it shall want any good which shee can give it. If by occasion shee be withdrawne from the company of it, shee is still looking towards the place where shee left her beloved. If shee hearde it groane, shee is with it presently. If shee finde it sadd and disconsolate, shee sighes and moanes with it. Shee hath noe such joy as to see her beloved merry and thriving. If shee see it wronged, shee canot heare it without passion. Shee settts noe boundes to her affections, nor hath any thought of reward. Shee findes recompense enough in the exercise of her love towards it. Wee may see this Acted to life in Jonathan and David.²⁷

27. Jonathan and David: The account is in 1 Samuel 19-20.

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Jonathan a valiant man endued with the spirit of Christ, soe soone as he discovers the same spirit in David had presently his hearte knitt to him by this linement of love, soe that it is said he loved him as his owne soule. He takes soe great pleasure in him, that hee strips himselfe to adorne his beloved. His fathers kingdome was not soe precious to him as his beloved David. David shall have it with all his hearte, himself desires noe more but that hee may be neare to him to rejoyce in his good. Hee chooseth to converse with him in the wilderness even to the hazzard of his owne life, rather then with the greates Courtiers in his fathers Pallace. When hee sees danger towards him, hee spares neither rare paines nor perill to direct it. When Injury was offered his beloved David, hee would not beare it, though from his owne father; and when they must parte for a season onely, they thought their heartes would have broake for sorrowe, had not their affections found vent by abundance of teares. Other instances might be brought to shewe the nature of this affection, as of Ruthe and Naomi,²⁸ and many others; but this truthe is cleared enough.

If any shall object that it is not possible that love should be bred or upheld without hope of requitall, it is graunted; but that is not our cause; for this love is allwayes under reward. It never gives, but it allwayes receives with advantage; first, in regard that among the members of the same body, love and affection are reciprocally in a most equall and sweete kinde of Commerce. 2ly, in regard of the pleasure and content that the exercise of love carries with it, as wee may see in the naturall body. The mouth is at all the paines to receive and mince the foode which serves for the nourishment of all the other partes of the body, yet it hath noe cause to complaine; for first the other partes send backe by severall passages a due proportion of the same nourishment, in a better forme for the strengthening and comforting the mouthe. 2ly the labour of the mouthe is accompanied with such pleasure and content as farre exceeds the paines it takes. Soe is it in all the labour of love among christians. The partie loving, reapes love againe, as was shewed before, which the soule covetts more then all the wealthe in the world. 3ly. Nothing yeildes more pleasure and content to the soule then when it findes that which it may love fervently, for to love and live beloved is the soules paradise, both here and in heaven. In the State of Wedlock there be many comfortes to beare out the troubles of that Condition; but let such as have tryed the most, say if there be any sweetnes in that Condition comparable to the exercise of mutuall love.

From former Considerations arise these Conclusions. 1ly for the manner whereby the love and affection of Christians is bred. 2ly. First, This love among Christians is a reall thing, not Imaginarie. 2ly. This love is as absolutely necessary to the being of the body of Christ, as the sinewes and other ligaments of a naturall body are to the being of that body. 3ly. This love is a divine, spirituall nature free, active, strong, couragious, permanent: under valuing all things beneath its propper object; and of all the graces, this makes us nearer to resemble the virtues of our heavenly father.

28. Ruth and Naomi: After the death of her husband and her two sons, Naomi entreats her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, to return to their own people, where they will be better off, and to their own gods. Orpah reluctantly does so, but Ruth insists on staying with Naomi, saying: "whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:1-22).

4thly It rests in the love and welfare of its beloved. For the full and certaine knowledge of these truthes concerning the nature, use, and excellency of this grace, that which the holy ghost hath left recorded, 1 Corinthians 13, may give full satisfaction, which is needful for every true member of this lovely body of the Lord Jesus, to worke upon their heartes by prayer, meditation, continuall exercise at least of the speciall [influence] of this grace, till Christ be formed in them and they in him, all in each other, knitt together by this bond of love.

II.

It rests now to make some application of this discourse by the present designe, which gave the occasion of writing of it. Herein are 4 things to be propounded: first the persons, 2ly the worke, 3ly the end, 4thly the meanes.

1. For the persons: Wee are a Company professing our selves fellow members of Christ, in which respect onely though wee were absent from each other many miles, and had our employments as farre distant, yet wee ought to account ourselves knitt together by this bond of love, and live in the exercise of it, if wee would have comforte of our being in Christ. This was notorious in the practise of the Christians in former times; as is testified of the Waldenses,²⁹ from the mouth of one of the adversaries *Aeneas sylvius*³⁰ "mutuo [ament] penè antequam norunt," they use to love any of their owne religion even before they were acquainted with them.

2ly for the worke wee have in hand. It is by a mutuall consent, through a speciall overvaluing providence and a more then an ordinary approbation of the Churches of Christ, to seeke out a place of Cohabitation and Consorteshipp under a due forme of Government both civill and ecclesiasticall. In such cases as this, the care of the publique must oversway all private respects, by which, not only conscience, but meare civill pollicy, dothe binde us. For it is a true rule that particular Estates cannott subsist in the ruine of the publique.

3ly The end is to improve our lives to doe more service to the Lord; the comforte and encrease of the body of Christe whereof wee are members; that ourselves and posterity may be the better preserved from the Common corruptions of this evill world, to serve the Lord and worke out our Salvation under the power and purity of his holy ordinances.

4ly for the meanes whereby this must bee effected. They are 2fold, a Conformity with the worke and end wee aime at. These wee see are extraordinary, therefore wee must not content our selves with usuall ordinary meanes. Whatsoever wee did or ought to have done when wee lived in England, the same must wee doe, and more allsoe, where wee goe. That which the most in their Churches mainetaine as a truthe in profession onely, wee must bring into familiar and constant practise, as in this duty of love. Wee must love brotherly without dissimulation; wee must love one another with a pure hearte fervently. Wee must beare one anothers burthens. We must not looke onely on our owne

to her afflictions, nor hath any thought of reward. Shee findes recompence enough in the exercise of her love towards it. Wee may see this Acted to life in Jonathan.

29. Waldenses: Members of a twelfth-century Protestant group organized by a French religious reformer, Peter Valdes. 30. *Aeneas sylvius*: Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464) became Pope Pius II in 1458.

things, but alsoe on the things of our brethren, neither must wee thinke that the lord will beare with such faileings at our hands as hee dothe from those among whome wee are liued; and that for 3 Reasons. 1ly In regard of the more neare bond of marriage betweene him and us, wherein hee hath taken us to be his after a most strickt and peculiar manner, which will make him the more jealous of our love and obedience. Soe he tells the people of Israell, you onely knowe of all the families of the Earthe, therefore will I punishe you for your Transgressions. 2ly, because the lord will be sanctified in them that come neare him. We know that there were many that corrupted the service of the Lord, some setting upp themselves before his owne, others offering both strange fire and strange Sacrifices alsoe; where came noe fire from heaven or other sudden judgement upon them, as did upon Nadab and Abihu,³¹ whose yet wee may thinke did not sinne presumptuously. 3ly When god gives a speciall commission he lookes to have it stricktly observed in every Article. When hee gave Saule a Commission to destroy Amaleck, Hee indented with him upon certaine Articles, and because hee failed in one of the least, and that upon a faire pretence, it cost him the kingdome which should have beene his reward if hee had observed the Commission.³²

Thus stands the cause betweene God and us. We are entered into Covenant with him for this worke.³³ Wee have taken out a Commission, the Lord hath given us leave to doe our own Articles. Wee have professed to enterprise these Actions, upon these and these ends, wee have hereupon besought him of fayour and blessing. Now if the Lord will heare us, and bring us in peace to the place wee desire, then hath hee ratified the Covenant and sealed our Commission, [and] will expect a strict performance of the Articles contained in it; but if wee shall neglect the observation of these Articles which are the ends wee have propounded, and, dissembling with our God, shall fall to pursue this present world and prosecute our carnall intentions, seekeing greate things for ourselves and our posterity, the Lord will surely breake out in wrathe against us; beleeving of such a perjured people and make us knowe the price of the breache of such a Covenant. The onely way to avoyde this shipwracke, and to provide for our posterity, is to follow the counsell of Micah,³⁴ to doe justly, to love mercy, to walke humbly with our

Therefore let us choose the way that is knowne, who is the way of the Lord, that we may see the end of our journey. See Leviticus 10:1-2: "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them censers, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

When hee gave Saule... Commission: The story of Saul's failure to follow God's command is found in 1 Samuel 15.

Covenant with him for this worke: A covenant is a legal agreement or contract. The Puritans believed that the promises of the Old Testament did not simply apply to ancient Israel but to any society that followed God's laws and commands.

Counsell of Micah: The Old Testament prophet Micah called upon Israel to repent its sins, warning of the destruction of Jerusalem. But he also prophesied the glorious future of the city as the center of worship: "And many nations shall come, and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths': for the word of God from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:2).

God: For this end, wee must be knitt together in this work as one man. Wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affection, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities. Wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience and liberality. Wee must delight in eache other, make other's conditions our owne, rejoyce together, mourne together, labour and suffer together, allwayes haveing before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body. Soe shall wee keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among Us as his owne people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our wayes, soe that wee shall see much more of his wisdome, power, goodnes and truth, then formerly wee have been acquainted with. Wee shall finde that the God of Israell is among us, when tenn of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies; when hee shall make us a prayse and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, "the lord make it like that of NEW ENGLAND." For wee must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a hill.³⁵ The eies of all people are uppon Us, soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken, and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. Wee shall open the mouthes of enemies to speake evill of the wayes of god, and all professours for God's sake. Wee shall shame the faces of many of god's worthy servants, and cause theire prayers to be turned into Cursses upon us till wee be consumed out of the good land whither wee are a goeing.

And to shutt up this discourse with that exhortation of Moses, that faithfull servant of the Lord, in his last farewell to Israell, Deuteronomy 30. Beloved, there is now sett before us life and good, Death and evill, in that wee are Commanded this day to love the Lord our God, and to love one another, to walke in his wayes and to keepe his Commandements and his Ordinance and his lawes, and the articles of our Covenant with him, that wee may live and be multiplied, and that the Lord our God may blesse us in the land whither wee goe to possesse it. But if our heartes shall turne away, soe that wee will not obey, but shall be seduced, and worshipp other Gods, our pleasures and proffitts, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, wee shall surely perishe out of the good Land whither wee passe over this vast sea to possesse it.

Therefore lett us choose life,
that wee and our seede
may live by obeyeing his
voyce and cleaveing to him,
for hee is our life and
our prosperity.

[1630; 1916]

35. a Citty upon a hill: See Matthew 5:14: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."