

1651
OF
RECEIVING
THE
COMMUNION
IN THE
COMPANY OF SVCH,

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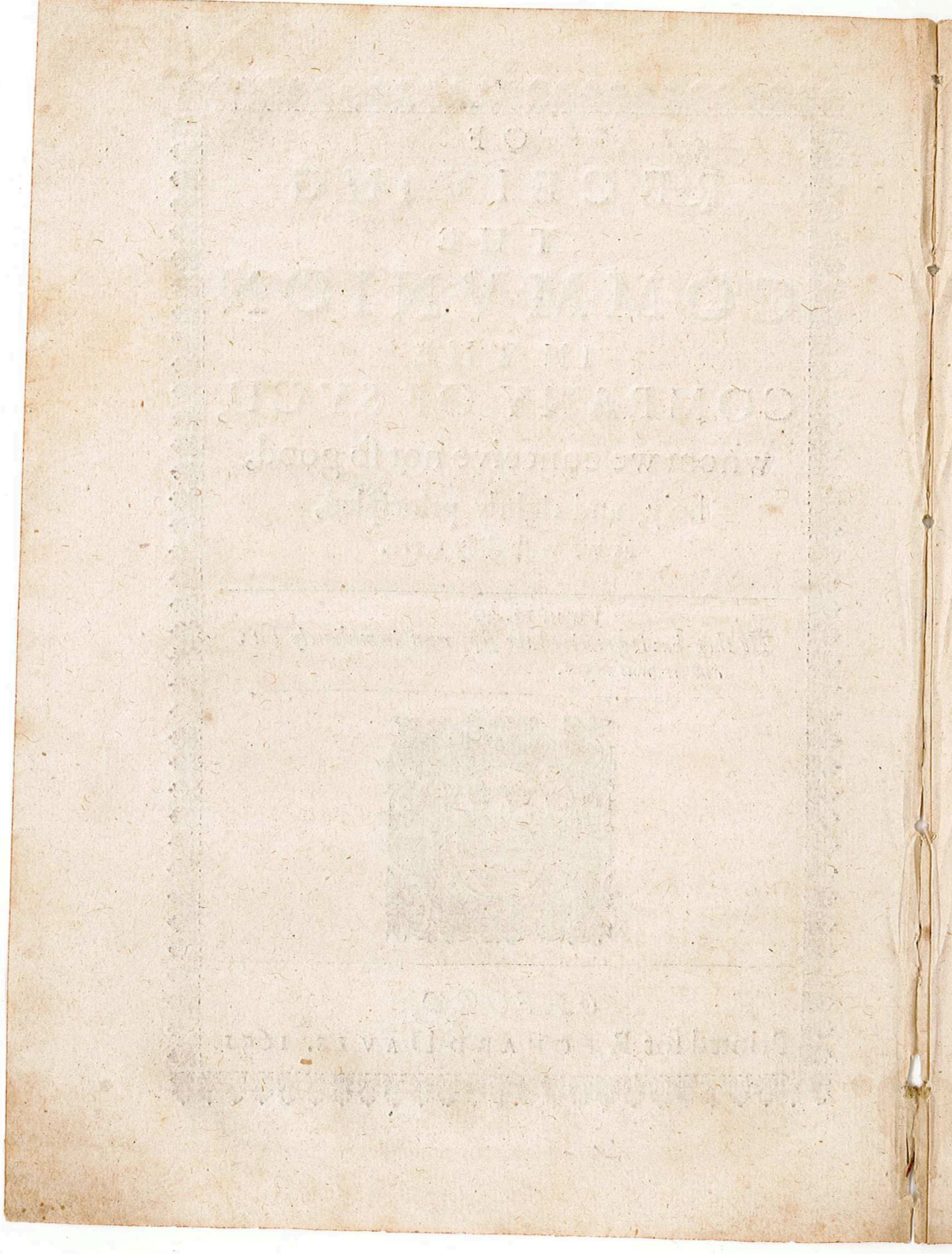
JOH. 13. 30.

*He then having received the sop, went immediately out :
and it was night.*



OXFORD,

Printed for RICHARD DAVIS. 1651.





Of Receiving the Communion in the company of such, whom
we conceive not so good, holy, and rightly principled,
as wee wish they were.

I.



JESUS CHRIST gave the Communion to *Peter*, who he knew, would deny him with cursing and swearing; and indeed so did [*Matth. 26. 34. — Thou shalt deny me thrice. vers. 70. — He denyed before them all. v. 72. He denyed with an oath. v. 74. he began to curse and to sweare, I know not the man*] and to all the Disciples, who as *Peter*, did not yet believe the resurrection, nor a great while after neither, nor could they be brought to it, *Mar. 16. 11. [And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had beene seene of her, beleevved not. and vers. 13. [And they two went and told it to the residue: neither beleevved they them.]* Nay the words of eye-witnesses seemed to them, as idle tales, *Luk. 24. 11. where also vers. 13. and so forward,* a story of two Disciples (and *Cleopas* one) who did not yet beleeve that he was Hee that should redeem *Israël, vers. 21. nor did they in any tolerable manner understand the chiefe Scriptures concerning Christ, much lesse all, till v. 45. Christ opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures. Thomas* said, he would not beleeve but upon manifestations, that himselfe had proposed, *Joh. 20. 25. [Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nailes, and put my finger into the print of the nailes, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not beleeve.]* Nay more then all this, the very morning before the Ascension we find the eleven in an expectation of Christs Being a Temporall King, *Act. 1. 6. This was no lesse then 40. daies after his resurrection, and yet were they in the same errour, that those two disciples were in, on the very day of his Resurrection, Luk. 24. 21. So slow and dull were they to beleeve, though Jesus Christ himselfe had taught them for 3. years together before; and yet God bare with them still.*

Prolepsis. Not that any hence should bee suffered to curse and sweare, or be contented with his dulnesse or slownesse, or be encouraged to goe on in ignorance and unbelieve; (there are other scriptures enough against these things, and other waies for preventing and reforming of these things commanded to us in these scriptures, and not Exclusion or Suspension from the Sacrament) But that, when men desire and endeavour to approve themselves to bee disciples, as the disciples here did; Their present ignorance, failings and slenderesse can be no sufficient ground, either to any knowing and worthy believer to forbear communicating with them, or to any Minister to suspend or exclude them from the Sacrament; no more, then it was to Jesus Christ to withhold the Ordinance from his ignorant and unbelieving disciples, who did desire and endeavour to be better, and were in a way to be so, and indeed were so very shortly after.

II.

The place, that to some men seemes to be most against *Judas* his being present at the Sacrament is *Iohn. 13. verse 30.* [*Hee then having received the sop, went immediately out: and it was night*] though indeed this very place considered with all circumstances seemes unanswerably to prove the Contrary. For,

First, *vers. 2. Supper*, that is, the Passeeover was ended; and that (according to the season of the yeare, the custome of the country, and the law also of the Passeeover) in the twilight, before day was quite in, that is, before dark night.

Secondly, After *Supper*, and before the Communion, was done and said all from *v. 2. to v. 17.* and are thus recorded by no other Evangelist.

Paralipomena
scribebat Jo-
hannes, omittens
aliis dicta, nisi
siquid contextus
historiae deside-
rabat.

Thirdly, Our Saviour intimating, that one of the twelve should betray him, is in the Gospell storied of him to have been no lesse then three times given out by him. First in *Joh. 6. 70. Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devill?* *vers. 71. He spake of Judas Iscariot, &c.* A time mentioned by no Evangelist else. The second by *S. Mattheu*, and *S. Marke* to have been at the Passeeover, *Mat. 26. 21. And as they did eat* [the Passeeover, *v. 10. 20.*] he said, *Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray mee,* and *Mar. 14. 18. And as they sate and did eate.* [the Passeeover, *vers. 16,*

17.] *Jesus said, Verily I say unto you one of you which eateth with mee, shall betray mee.* And the third by S. Luke to have been after the Passeeover, and at the Communion for certaine, if not a little after. *Luke 22. for v. 21. But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the table;* when just before, to wit, *ver. 19. 20.* We have the Communion given by Jesus Christ & received by the disciples. And this time (by what has bin said but just now in the second obervation) is that, questionlesse, which is meant in this *Joh. 13. 18, 19 & 21. I speak not of you all, I know^h whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with mee, hath lift up his heele against me. 19. Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to passe, yee may believe that I am He. 21. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit and testified, and said, verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.* So that these words in *vers. 21. One of you shall betray me,* are to be conceived not another speech from *v. 18. 19.* but onely the speaking out plainly (*testified and said*) what was darkly said before out of the Prophet. And whereas the words here are many more and differing from those in S. Luke, that is not at all materiall, for it is usuall in the Evangelists, for one to record some words, and another other some, of the same speech, spoken by Christ at one and the same time.

Fourthly, The dipped sop was a peice of the blessed and broken bread, dipt into the wine for distinction sake, that *John* might have knowne the Traytor according to our Saviours signification, *v. 26.* But so slow and heedlesse notwithstanding was he sure, as well as the rest (if they also did heare that Intimation to *John*) that, for ought we finde in the Gospels, they understood nothing, no not of this, which they seem'd so desirous to know. And that their slownesse and slendernesse not long before this was very great, we finde plainly by *Luk. 18. 34. They understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.* Adde hereunto, that whereas that speech of our Saviour *Joh. chap. 13. vers. 27. That thou dost, doe quickly;* was meant wee all know, of *Judas* his betraying him; (as if he should have said, I know the wickednesse of thy heart, what mischief against me thou hast conceived and art resolved upon, but know this, I am provided to beare every thing, and therefore be as quick as thou canst, I am ready.) Had the disciples by this

time knowne that *Judas* was the man, that would betray him, they would sure have understood this in the right sense. But that so they did not, is plaine by the next words, *vers.* 28. 29. *Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, &c.* So that, that speech of our Saviour to *Judas*, *Matth.* 26. 25. *Thou hast said;* must needs be understood, either to have beene so whisper'd into his eare, that the other disciples did not heare (He sitting next unto Christ on one side, or at least very neare him) or else to have beene no better understood by them, then this, *Joh.* 13. 27. *That thou doest do quickly.*

Fiftly, *Supper*, that is, the *Passover* was ended by *Twilight*, *v.* 2. but *Judas* went not out, till it was darke night, *v.* 30. [*He then having received the sop, went immediatly out: and it was night.*] That is, Not till he had had his feet washed by his Master, *v.* 4. and also been made partaker of the Communion, which was not in the twilight, but in the very night, and *Supper being ended*, *v.* 2. and 4. *He riseth from Supper.* But now the sop is given to *Judas* a good while after, *viz.* not before, *v.* 26. *Hee it is, to whom I shall give, &c.*

Sixtly, Admit it could be proved, that *Judas* was not at the Communion; yet what is this to prove that such mixt Communion, as we now have, are not lawfull? All that could follow (admit *Judas* his not communicating could be made out most cleerly) is onely this, That that one plea for our use, is none of the soundest. But at no hand would it follow, either that the other pleas (for instance, that in the first Position) are not most sound and orthodox; or, that the usage it selfe is Polluting, Sinfull, and by Saints not to be endured.

III.

[*Not discerning the Lords body*] is held forth to be a great and perillous sinne to those that are guilty of it; yet neither in that place, nor any else, held forth, either to people, to be ground to them to forbear communicating in the company of those whom they suspect to be such; or to a Minister, either to *suspend*, or *exclude*, all those, who he onely feares are such Not-discerners.

IV.

To communicate with not-discerners, and otherwise unworthy receivers, is not in I *Cor.* 11. 29, 30. held forth to us to be any cause
of

of temporall, much lesse eternall judgement to those, that are worthy, though communicating in the company of the unworthy; But onely undiscerning and unworthy receiving affirm'd to be the Provocation in those, that were judged and chastened, as there the Apostle shewes, and especially in v. 30. *For this cause many are weake and sickly among you, and many sleepe, viz. many of those among you, that have eaten and drunken unworthily (in the verse just before, viz. v. 29.) not discerning the Lords body.* And marke it, There seemes to be this emphasie also in the word, *many*; namely, Many, not All: As if he should have said, The whole body of you are not punished for the fault of some; No, nor yet all the offenders themselves (*Pius scilicet Deus partem percussit sententia suae gladio, ut partem corrigeret exemplo, as salvia.*) Yet *many* of them; that they, that were spared, might be the more surely scared and warned.

V.

In the Ordinance of the Lords and Commons (as in all Lawes) The Law-makers sure intended, an equity, & justprudence should take place; Not that in all places, concernning all persons, and at all times, the Letter of the Ordinance should be pressed, even to rigour and extremity; But where Circumstances concur, there to presse, or for beare according to the occasion. For instance, In case I know a man to order, or to have ordered his life soberly, justly and godlily (as the Apostle speakes) though hee be able perhaps to give little or no account almost of his faith in words; Yet, besides many other things in gods word, Very charity requires mee to hope and perswade my selfe, That had hee not a good measure of Christian faith and knowledge in his heart, hee would never have shewed soe much in his life and conversation; And soe forbids mee to pursue the utmost of the Ordinance about such an one; Nor, I beleeve, would any of the Law-makers, were they consulted with, direct otherwise.

VI.

Concerning the meaning of these words, *This is my body*; Let that Apothegme of Q. *Elizabeth* be much thought-on; who beeing examined (in her sisters Raigne) about the Reall presence,
and

and in great danger, made this Answer (which 'tis said saved her life)

Christ tooke the bread and brake it;

Hee was The Word, that spake it;

And what that Word did make it;

I doe receive and take it;

All Controversies are best shut-up with such short Resolutions of faith and practise, as this is.

VII.

Nor all, nor any one of these six positions would we be understood to have been thought and written, out of any design against the Ordinance of the Lords and Commons, concerning suspension from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; taken in that sense in which by them it was published, to wit, as an Act of Christian prudence and Ecclesiasticall policy, no way contrary to the Word of God (for in this notion we heartily desire and earnestly endeavour that it may obtain, and do zealously exhort all sorts to submit unto the Examination therein expressed; the abler sort of people, for the good example of the slender ones; and the weaker, that they may learne, and in time, by gods blessing upon their using the meanes, attaine unto such notable abilities, as they see in others.) No, But our true and onely intent in them is this, To give notice unto the world that the way, that wee were in heretofore, was not defective in any thing that is held forth in the Word of God, as præceptively to worthy receiving necessary, and that what now is added is onely matter of spirituall prudence; And that in walking according to the purpose thereof, to say the most that can be sayd, we shall only do better, but yet that heretofore wee did well; and still shall doe well, Authority for allowing, wee doe charitably live and practise according to the Rules and Rubricks, that heretofore have been our direction, and which for a long time good Christians have followed, to the glory of God, the comfort of their owne soules, and the edifying of one another in faith and love.

FINIS.