

APPEAL TO THE LEARNED.

Herewith I will leave all the lords and princes, with all the magistracy and rulers, and those sent by them, in the hands of the Lord, and address myself to you, O you learned, you, who think that you have the keys of heaven, and are the eyes and the light of the people; I will speak with you, as with those whose salvation I seek with all my heart, because I see with open eyes, that both you and your disciples run voluntarily into the eternal destruction of your souls, and nevertheless boast that you are the sent teachers, and your churches the churches of Christ, and would cordially and brotherly admonish you, one and all, Romans, Lutherans and Zuinglians, concerning the following articles.

That you would notice, in the first place, that your ministry and services are not of God and his word, but are from the bottomless pit, for it is evident that you blaspheme and persecute the word, ordinances and commands of Christ, and teach and enforce the word, ordinances and commands of anti-christ; that you profane the temple of God, build and honor temples of stone, break the living images in which the Spirit of God dwells; make and dress images of gold, silver and wood; that you hate a pious, blameless life; encourage and defend, by your dissolute examples, a disorderly, passionate life of the flesh. Say, my beloved, Where is there a single letter in the Scriptures concerning all your doings and worship, such as of masses, infant baptism, auricular confession, &c.? Is not, in truth, the greater part of what you do and transact, all deception, hypocrisy, blasphemy, abomination and idolatry? Whence do you derive your offices and services, and of whom are they? I would advise you, in true love, that you would reflect upon them according to the Scriptures, and in the true fear of God.

Secondly, consider what you are properly seeking through this your office and service. You and I, heretofore, stood in the same calling, office and service; I candidly confess

that in all my studies, from my youth, in preaching and singing, I sought only a vain, lazy, good living, praise and favor of men, yea, solely the gratification of my carnal desires, till the gracious and great Lord bestowed me upon the gift of his gracious Spirit, and opened the understanding of my heart, that I acknowledged with the preacher Solomon, that all my seeking, life and doings were vanity, and that the end thereof was certain death and hell.

But that you continue so to seek is too palpable to be denied. For if there were no prebends and cloisters, but few preachers, priests and monks would be found. This I certainly know. So long as these exist, the world shall never be in want of deceivers and hypocrites.

Say, beloved, what else is your whole seeking and doing, than world, carnality, gluttony, and a voluptuous life? Who can scrutinize and fully describe your earthly mind and sensual life? Some of you make an ostentatious display in ermine, in silk and velvet, others live in full revelry, others are avaricious and hoard; some violate virgins and maids, others pollute the bed of their neighbor, others' chastity is like the chastity of Sodom; all your doctrine is deceiving, your sacraments are enchanting, your piety is principally ungodliness, and your divine service is an open abomination and idolatry; some of you neither fear God nor the devil; you blaspheme the name of God, his holy word you falsify, his children and servants you persecute, and, in reliance upon his grace, you do all manner of evil; if you can only lead a life free from care, and enjoy fine times, then all is well done. Say, beloved, is it not so? Worthy men, is it not so? This is your chief seeking and striving, among great and small, this you must acknowledge and confess: for the fruit is manifest to all the world, and it cannot be any longer concealed.

O men, men! beware! If any one could enter into life, on this broad way which you

teach, and in which you walk, and keep his soul in God, we might truly lament and say, that the prophets, apostles, and all the witnesses of God, and also Christ Jesus himself, did not act wisely, and that they have not dealt rightly towards us, that they passed their lives with so much anguish, suffering, tribulation and pain in this sorrowful vale of tears, and directed us, miserable, weak children into such a way.

O no, my beloved, no; truth will eternally be truth; if you are not converted to a better and christian mind; if you die not to your deception, and also to your vain, carnal life, repent, and become in your dispositions like innocent, little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, "For to be carnally minded," says Paul, "is death."

Teach, call, hope, boast in any way you choose, if you desire to be saved, you must walk in the ways of the Lord, hear his word, and be obedient thereto; for nothing avails in heaven and upon earth, whereby you can be saved, neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper, neither eloquence nor erudition, neither councils nor long standing usages, neither emperors nor edicts, neither Christ with his grace, merits, blood and death, if we are not born of God (understand it right, those who have ears to hear, and minds to understand), believe his word sincerely, walk in the light, and do right, as John says, "This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all; if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John 1: 5-7.

O transgressors, transgressors, examine your hearts, give heed to my words and learn wisdom, you who live in voluptuousness and sit at ease, who say in your hearts, It is we, besides us there is none other; what we command shall be heard, and what we speak must be valid upon earth; we cannot go astray in the Scriptures, and in counsel we cannot err, and we can teach nothing unlawful. Ah! alas! your boasted wisdom leads you astray, and the pride of your

hearts causes you to stumble; return, your path is slippery, and your way leads to the abyss of hell.

Beloved men, learn to know what God's own and eternal Son, Christ Jesus, sought upon earth, what he taught, and what example he left you; his seeking was his Father's praise, and the salvation of our poor souls; his doctrine was his father's word, and his precedence a sure way to the kingdom of God. "Who being in the form of God," says Paul, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," Phil. 2: 6, 7; and came poor and miserable into this sorrowful world; there was no room in the inn when he was born; he had not whereon to lay his head; nor in his death had he wherewith to quench his thirst, although it is he through whom the almighty, all-bountiful Father grants to all his created beings, residence, clothing, meat and drink, as Paul says, "For ye knew the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. 8: 9.

If you have any fear of God, and would not lead your own, and the souls of your poor people wilfully to death, then contrast your seeking with the seeking of Christ, your doctrine with the doctrine of Christ, your spirit with the Spirit of Christ, and your life with the life of Christ, then you may truly find whether you are in or out of Christ, who is your God, what Lord you serve, and of whose spirit and kingdom you are.

Thirdly, observe what fruits and usefulness your office and services bring forth: for what is your doctrine other than a useless, feeble sowing in the wind, which has neither spirit nor power; your sacraments are an encouragement to the impenitent, and your lives examples of wickedness. Where are the avaricious whom you have meliorated, the drunkards you have made temperate, the polluted you have made pure, the haughty whom you have humbled? How will you teach others, being yourselves untaught, and beget Christ an acceptable church, and are yourselves the servants of anti-christ, and the children of Belial? You

and your disciples, therefore, must ever confess, both high and low, men and women, that you are all dead bodies, and have not the Spirit of God; for with you we do not find contrite hearts, true knowledge of Christ, true love, an earnest desire after the kingdom of God, dying to earthly things, true humility, righteousness, friendliness, mercy, chastity, obedience, wisdom, truth and peace; but every where we find hateful, envious, obdurate, malicious hearts, an aversion and despising of the divine word, lust and love of this world, haughtiness, pride, pomp, lies, knavery, disgrace, adultery, whoredom, robbery, burning, slaying, cursing, swearing, and all manner of malice.

Behold, you withered trees, and careless shepherds, these are the fruits you bring forth, and the sheep you pasture, these are the churches and disciples you comfort with the blood of the Lord, preach to them grace and peace, and to whom you dispense baptism and the Lord's Supper. If I write not the truth, reprove me.

O beloved sirs, so entirely have you lost every christian virtue, and understanding, besides, the light, and the Scriptures; you hold captive in ungodliness under the power of hell, the poor, ignorant people, whole kingdoms, cities and countries; yea, the whole wide world, and that, O God! for such small hire, namely, for one hand full of barley and one piece of bread, as the prophet says, O, that my words might be a lie, and not the truth; sunshine is clear, but still clearer is the truth which I write.

And this is not enough for you, O you men, that you so miserably deceive the poor wretched souls; and besides this, you also rebuke, defame, belie, and betray all those who seek and fear God with all their hearts, rebuke all unrighteousness with doctrine and life, and so willingly walk in Christ. You deprive them of their possessions and lives that you may be greatly honored among the people, and be not evil spoken of in your doings, that you be not hindered in your unlawful gain; and that you may enjoy an easy and voluptuous life to the end of your days.

O how rightly you are depicted by the wisdom of God, which says, "Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! for ye

shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves (mark), neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in," Matt. 23: 13.

What I think, I write, and dissemble not. I fear, worthy sirs, that there are many of you so ungodly, and so far determined upon unlawful gain, indolent life, and the praise of men, that you would rather see all the god-fearing put to the stake, than lose a guilder of your rents, or to hear a harsh word from the magistracy, for the sake of the truth.

O you, with wanton looks, when will you be ashamed? You diamonds! when will you be softened, and you Moors, when will you become white? I think never more; for how can you do any thing good, because you have learned evil, and are used to it from your infancy?

Alas! my soul must grieve and painfully mourn for your sakes, that you have erred so lamentably, and besides this, you cover all your disgrace under the word and name of Christ, and do not observe, O you men, that you, together with all the false prophets, are promised in the Scriptures, and threatened by the Spirit of the Lord, every where with nothing but punishment, wrath, damnation and blackness of darkness, the flaming lake and eternal gnashing of teeth, weeping, wailing, fire, woe and death.

The hour is near at hand when we shall hear, "Give an account," &c. Alas, would it then be due to us, when the day is at hand, to walk a thousand years on burning coals and in red hot armor (flames), then we might even rejoice and be of good cheer; but now it is hidden from your eyes, through your haughtiness, avarice and momentary luxury.

Perhaps I would be smitten on the cheek by some of you, and with Micaiah, be compelled to hear from Zedekiah, "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?" 2 Chron. 18: 23. O my beloved, fear God and understand the truth. You direct the poor dissolute souls to the subtlety and philosophy of the learned, to the many councils, to customs and usages of long standing, to imperial edicts, to the doctrines and commandments of men, which are nothing but quicksands, which cannot

save the house from the tempest, but I do not so, but, with Moses, the prophets, apostles, angels, and the Father himself, I direct you to Christ Jesus, to whom all the emperors, kings, councils, usages and the learned, will have to yield; for his word is truth, and his commands are eternal life. To him every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; all who reject him, reject the Father that sent him, Phil. 2: 10.

This I teach you; I direct you to his Spirit, word, life, command, prohibition, ordinances and usages, as to a sure and immovable foundation, laid in Zion, to a plain and safe way, prepared of God, who, according to his sure promises, will lead all the truly penitent and Christian believers into eternal life.

Beloved men, observe, there were four hundred false prophets in the days of Ahab, king of Israel, who unanimously prophesied prosperity and felicity, that he should advance, for God would give the enemies of the king into his hands; while there was but one Micaiah, who spoke the real truth and predicted adversity in the name of the Lord, 2 Chron. 18: 6, 7.

And there were also four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and four hundred prophets of the groves, all of whom did eat at Jezebel's table; there was only one Elijah, a man of God, and a prophet of the Lord, who was zealous for the law of his God, and defended his praise, 1 Kings 18.

Joash, with all the princes, priests and common people, were unanimous in their groves and their false worship, which they had chosen after the death of Jehoiada, the high priest, and there was but one Zechariah, who reproved the ungodly abominations, and threatened them with the wrath and punishment of his God, 2 Chron. 24.

Even as those renowned and worthy men of God, though they were few, reproved, with pure, divine ardor, in the power of the Spirit, and faithfully admonished by the law of God with their great and glorious talents, all the disobedient and idolatrous kings, princes, priests and the common people, without respect to persons; and on account thereof suffered disgrace, mis-

ery, tribulation, bonds and death, as we may abundantly read and see in the Scriptures and in history; I do also here, with my small talents, for similar views and reasons, openly testify to the truth, because I see, that you all hypocritically flatter lords and princes, and caress the world, and because there is, alas, nobody who opposes this ungodliness with the word of the Lord, nor reproves the wickedness of the world; I must, on this account, hear and bear much, as did the above mentioned although I mean it so well, and have such true grounds.

O worthy men, deliberate! reflect on the matter. Consider the end; contemplate the consequence. You console yourselves with the invention of men; but we put our trust in the word and truth of God; you seek the world, we seek heaven; you place your affections upon the present, we upon the future; you depend upon the emperor and temporal powers; we depend on Christ and his promises, till we all shall appear before him, who will come in the clouds of heaven, to requite all flesh; then you will see what you sought, what office you conducted, what fruits you brought forth, for what hire you served, whose word you preached, whose counsel you rejected, and whom, O men, you have so enviously pierced.

Hereby I will commend you to the Lord, you learned and preachers; and entreat for God's sake (to the good of all your souls), that you accept this my faithful warning with gratitude and love, written to you, with a sincere and Christian intention; read it with an understanding heart; reflect upon it, and examine it with fear and trembling. I certainly know that you will find nothing in it but kindness, love, zeal, and a sure foundation of the only and invincible truth.

And though some of you may think that I reprove too severely, you ought to know that I have not done so without the instruction, counsel and doctrine of the holy prophets, Christ and the apostles. I have given no name without the word of God. Let him that is innocent thank God and rejoice; he that is guilty, is not reproved by me, but by the Spirit and word of God.

O, ye whom I desire as friends, fear God and his judgment; reform your earthly car-

nal life; abandon all your deceptions, blindness, seducements and abominations, in which you have hitherto been involved; seek the right truth with all your powers; pray to God for wisdom; warn every one; deal and act unblamably; then you will not be of that number of shepherds called by such dreadful names in the Scriptures, and you will not be partakers of that displeasure, punishment and wrath, but you will inherit grace, mercy and life, as the

prophet says, "But if the wicked will turn from his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him," Ezek. 18: 21, 22. The gracious and merciful Lord, grant you all his grace, knowledge, Spirit, wisdom, light and truth, that you may sincerely awaken, repent, and be eternally saved, Amen.

APPEAL TO THE COMMON PEOPLE.

Give ear, ye people; you who trust in lies, and boast that you are Christians; tear your bands asunder, and suffer yourselves to be led no longer as asses bound and under a heavy burden of sin, by these aforementioned drivers, for they deceive you; they preach to you according to their own opinion, and not out of the mouth of the Lord; they comfort you in your wicked ways; they call and cry only mercy and peace, though it is displeasure and judgment, as the prophet says. The priests and prophets teach a false worship, and comfort my people in their calamity, that they shall esteem it lightly, saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace;" they are the blind leaders, who lead you and themselves into the pit, and the blind watchmen who watch not over the city of God. Thieves and murderers, who slay your poor souls with the sword of their false doctrine, and steal from you the word and kingdom of the Lord; greedy shepherds who seek your wool, milk and flesh, and not your souls. In short, they are those who wholly desolate the kingdom of Christ, and promulgate in high honor the kingdom of anti-christ through the whole world, and who always comfort and defend you, poor children, in your dissolute abominations, your obdurate, blind life, so that, alas! there is none who is sincerely converted to the Lord, laments his sins, and says, What do I?

O, worthy children and brethren, my heart

in my body quakes and fears, when I reflect that such a numberless multitude of men are born in vain and to no purpose; who will have eternally to endure the wrath and judgment of the Lord, if they repent not, and shall never find grace.

Beloved children, take heed, for thus Christ Jesus teaches you, I tell you of a truth, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 18: 3. O, dear Lord, this is spoken by God's eternal truth, which cannot lie, and how ungodly you ignorant people live, and how far you are from the innocence of children, your fruits testify; for you despise God and his word; you hate all righteousness and truth, many of you live as the irrational creatures, others quarrel, curse, swear, are covetous, practice usury, lie, cheat, injure and defraud one another; fidelity and piety are seldom found among you, faithlessness, and knavery, alas, every where; eating to excess, gambling, gaming, drinking and carousing are pastimes amongst you; to pollute women and defile virgins is called courting and loving. To take the advantage of, and defraud one another, is called understanding and wisdom; you are valiant at beer and mighty at wine; unrighteousness and destruction are in all your ways, the poor and weak you oppress, and you revile the afflicted, the god-fearing and pious; you think and practice nothing but evil, you

are without understanding, says the prophet, as a frantic heifer. Pomp and splendor you call the fashion and custom of the country. The one lies in wait for the other's honor, property, and life, and seeks his destruction, as the prophet says, your faith is hypocrisy, your worship idolatry, your whole life is world and flesh, as may be seen, and then you say, he that walks in simplicity, walks right, as if ignorance, blindness, despising the truth, and godliness, were a pious, humble and plain life. Dear children, be ashamed of your offensive wantonness and accursed folly.

Do you suppose that Christ is a liar, and his word a fable? O no! his sentence stands immovable, and shall never be altered; if you live in pride, avarice, voluptuousness, unchastity and in carnal lusts, believe not Christ and his word, continue to be earthly-minded, and are not born of God, you must die eternally, or the Spirit of God is not true, but false.

Say, beloved, why extol the apostles and prophets, while you revile their doctrine as heresy, and their lives as madness? Why suffer yourselves to be called christians, while you hate and oppose Christ's word and example?

Say you, we are without understanding, untaught, and know not the Scriptures? I then again reply: The word is plain and needs no comment, namely, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself," Matt. 22: 37, 39. Again, You shall give bread to the hungry and entertain the needy, Isa. 58: 7.

If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; for, to be carnally minded is death; the avaricious, drunkards, and the proud, shall not inherit the kingdom of God; for he will judge adulterers and fornicators, Rom. 8; 1 Cor. 6, and many like passages. All who do not understand such passages, we must confess and acknowledge, are more like irrational creatures than men, more like blocks than christians.

O my children, my beloved children, do not deceive your own souls; seek wisdom and understanding, even as you do your daily food, that you may find great riches;

for the kingdom of heaven suffers violence. Strive, says Christ, to enter in at the strait gate; ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you. The Almighty, great God is not satisfied with a bare name, but he desires a true, sincere faith, unfeigned, ardent love, a new, converted heart, true humility, mercy, chastity, patience, righteousness and peace; he desires the whole man, heart, professions and actions. He who delights in the word of the Lord, speaks the truth from the heart, crucifies his flesh, and will give his goods and blood for the word of the Lord, if it be required.

Behold, dear children, this is the way in which we will all have to walk, if we desire to be saved; therefore, awaken and learn wisdom. Hear the inviting voice of God, open unto him, and meet him, that he complain not of you, as he did formerly through his prophets, of obdurate and stiff-necked Judea and Jerusalem. "I have nourished," says he, "and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me; the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward," Isa. 1: 4.

Jeremiah says, "Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle; yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord," Jer. 8: 6, 7.

Remember, dear children, how greatly Jesus Christ took to heart the obstinacy and blindness of the Jews; when he said, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," he wept and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes," Luke 19: 42.

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with

mekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls," James 1: 21. Seek God with a full heart, repent sincerely, cleanse yourselves inwardly before the Lord, let go world, flesh, false doctrine, and every thing contrary to the honor, will, and word of God; hear, believe and follow Jesus Christ,

the only, and true shepherd of your souls, who sought you in such great love, and purchased you with such a precious price, then you may, of a truth, boast that you are the people of God, and the church of Christ. To him, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, be praise and the eternal kingdom, Amen.

APPEAL TO CORRUPT SECTS.

Christ said, "False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed, behold, I have foretold you all things," Mark 13: 22, 23. O, you backsliding, erring children! Mind, had you taken to heart this faithful warning of our Lord and Savior, Christ; had you acknowledged his Spirit, doctrine, and holy life as a perfect Spirit, doctrine and life, and acknowledged him as the true Prophet, promised in Scripture; and had you received him as the true and living Son of God; you would never have been led so far from his ways, nor would such frightful errors have taken place. But, O Lord! I fear that some of you are so far enchanted, that you will nevermore come to Christ, the true Shepherd; for you, through a perverted and obscure understanding of the Scriptures, defend, as just and right, the abominable works of ungodliness, which are not only contrary to the Spirit, word and will of Christ, but also contrary to reasonable modesty, nature, and reason.

Is it not a grievous error, that you suffer yourselves to be so sorely bewitched by such worthless persons, and so lamentably misled from one unclean sect to another; first to that of Munster, next to Battenberg, now Davidists; from Beelzebub to Lucifer, and from Belial to Behemoth? Ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the real truth. You suffer yourselves to be led about by every wind of doctrine. You choose out a way for yourselves, as do also the priests and monks; you hold not to the head. Christ, from

which all the body, fitly joined together, cometh unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

I fear that your sins will be punished; for you are earthly, and carnal minded, whereby you thrust from you the pure knowledge of Christ, and hate his cross; and against all admonition of Scriptures, against the undeceiving example of Christ and his saints, you conform yourselves in the splendor, pomp, eating, drinking, folly, hypocrisy, and false worship, of this proud, useless, vain and idolatrous world, which you should, by right, instruct and admonish by a pious, humble, sober, and godly walk.

O, you backsliding children! consider how grievously you disgrace the holy Moses, who teaches and speaks to you out of the mouth of God. He says, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him," Deut. 18: 18, 19. This is repeated by Peter and Stephen in Acts 3: 23; and 7: 37.

What do you do with all the great prophets of God, as David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who, in so many places, with such plain words, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, direct us to Christ and his word? They must either testify to lies, or your prophets must be deceivers and false teachers. This is incontrovertible.

Did not holy Paul say, "But though we,

or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1: 8. That your prophets, with their king, dominion, polygamy, sword, &c., do not agree with Paul and the doctrine and gospel of the apostles, you are all forced to acknowledge and admit, whence it forcibly follows, that they, with their doctrine and conduct, are cursed and anathematized.

Say, my beloved, what do you do with the revealed and infallible word and testimony of the Almighty Father, which he himself has testified of his Son, and said? "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," Matt. 17: 5. *Him shall you hear*; but since you reject his Spirit, word and example, you follow and hear those who, with their spirit, doctrine and conduct, are from the bottomless pit, yea, manifestly anti-christs and false prophets.

Know you not, that the Son of God has himself commanded us that we should observe all that he has enjoined, and that he will be with us until the end of the world?

Will you then say, that the doctrine of Christ and his apostles was imperfect, and that your teachers bring forth the perfect instruction? I answer, that to teach and believe this, is the most horrible blasphemy, the most mocking perversity, that can be uttered against the Most High; for you thereby declare that Christ is not the true Son of God, the perfect Teacher, and the true image of righteousness. You deny the whole Scripture, you reject the testimony of Moses and all the prophets, who pointed to the only and true Christ, as has been shown; you disparage the word of the Father, and reject Christ Jesus, with his Spirit, word, kingdom and spiritual government; you put your trust and hopes in lying, mortal flesh, and upon earthly, carnal things, which, as the Scriptures teach, must be dispersed like dust before the wind. Examine the Scriptures in the fear of the Lord, and reflect, if such is not a gross blasphemy against the Almighty.

Say, you deceived children, where is there a syllable in the whole doctrine of Christ and the apostles (according to which Spirit, doctrine, conduct and example all Scripture

must be understood), by which you can prove and establish one of all your erring articles?

If you would appeal to the literal understanding and transactions of Moses and the prophets, then must you also become Jews, receive circumcision, literally possess the land of Canaan, again erect the Jewish kingdom, build the city and temple, and according to the law, offer sacrifices, attend to the worship of God, and declare that Christ, the promised Savior, has not yet come, who has changed the literal and figurative ceremonies into new, spiritual and abiding substances.

You miserable, erring sheep, observe, I have before remarked to the magistrates, that the kingdom of Christ is not of this visible, perishing world, but that it is an eternal, spiritual and abiding kingdom, where there are no eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. There no king reigns, but the true King of Zion, Christ Jesus. He is the King of righteousness, the King of peace, the King of kings, who has all power in heaven above, and on earth beneath; before whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. The true king David in Spirit, who, through his righteousness, merits and crimson blood, has ransomed the sheep from the mouths of the savage lions and bears of the pit, has slain the great and terrible Goliath, and obtained for the spiritual Israel of God, eternal welfare and peace. Neither the King nor his servants bear any sword but the sword of the Spirit, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the word of God, with which he brings forth, builds, extends and governs his kingdom, guards and defends it under the pressing cross, in all trials and temptations, from the gates of hell, onsets and powers, and not with iron or steel, as the rude, vindictive world does; for his kingdom and dominion is spirit, and not letter, as has been shown.

Again, under this kingdom, and under this King, no other wedlock must be tolerated, except between *one* man and *one* woman, as God had in the beginning established in the union of Adam and Eve; and Christ has further said, that these two are one flesh,

and that they shall not separate, save for the cause of fornication, Matt. 5: 32.

This is not a kingdom in which a display is made of gold, silver, pearls, silk, velvet and costly finery, as is done by the proud wicked world, and which also your leaders teach and give you liberty to do under this deception, viz., that it is harmless if you do not desire and serve them from your heart. Thus might satan approve his haughtiness, and make pure and good the desire of his eyes. In the kingdom of all humility (I say), the outward adorning of the body is not desired and sought with power, but the inward adorning of the spirit, with zeal, diligence, and a broken, contrite heart.

Here is known no lying, eating, drinking, or hypocrisy; here none conforms himself to a drunken, luxurious, idle and idolatrous world, nor lays from him the cross of Christ, as you do, but all are upright and godly in heart and deed. They speak the truth from the heart. They lead a circumspect, temperate life; shun all idolatry and false doctrine from within and without; abstain from all appearance of evil; perform the true worship of the heart; abide firmly in the word and ordinances of Christ; lead an unblamable life before the whole world, and testify of Jesus Christ with the mouth, works, possessions and blood, as the divine honor requires it.

Here that confession is unknown to which some of you pretend, here we confess only to the true God before whom we have sinned, and to our neighbor against whom we have trespassed.

Here modesty, rectitude, and honesty are taught and practiced, but not immodesty, disgrace and uncleanness. I think you understand well what I mean.

In short, here the Spirit, word, will, commands, prohibitions, ordinances, customs, and examples of Christ are taught. To which all Scriptures refer us, and not the opinions of false prophets, high sounding words, enchanting appearances, boasting, dreams, and lying miracles, against which, the Spirit of God, and the Scriptures everywhere warn and counsel us.

Dear children, reform yourselves. Every one who teaches you otherwise, than is testified by the word of the Lord, even though

he were one who could dry up the bottom of the sea, and hurl the stars down from heaven, let him be abandoned, and let his doctrine be regarded as deceiving and erroneous, for, to all eternity there may no other foundation be laid, than that which is laid, Christ Jesus. He is the corner stone and foundation in Zion, on whom all the building fitly framed together (according to his will, Spirit and word), groweth into a holy temple unto the Lord.

O ye backsliding children, hear the word of God and make haste, for your way is in darkness, and your path leads to death. Embrace the truth and learn wisdom, for your comforters have destroyed you and rendered uneven the way in which you must go. Munster and Amsterdam may well be to you an eternal warning and example. When a prophet, said Moses, speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is not the thing which the Lord hath spoken.

O dear Lord! How many innocent hearts have they ruined? How many poor souls have they deceived? What gross shame have they cast upon the word of the Lord? What great abominations have some of them committed under the appearance of good? How have they made the poor, blind magistrates, who are, alas, destitute of a correct understanding of the holy word, to be guilty of innocent blood?

I think it is time you should see and learn to know your lying faithless, and deceiving prophets. They are the foxes which destroy the vineyard of the Lord. These are the thieves and murderers of your souls; false prophets who deny the Lord that bought them; who have directed you, poor erring sheep, by their own lying visions, dreams, and thoughts of their hearts, and have led you against all the Scriptures upon a false and loose foundation.

How like unto those you have become, of whom Eusebius writes, that they walked according to the lusts of their hearts, as the prophets foretold; who denied Paul and the New Testament, and carried with them a book, which they boasted, fell from heaven as a present to them.

So it is with you, O ye entranced (bear with me, for it is the truth which I write).

The prophets you read according to the Jewish understanding. You say the doctrine of Christ and the apostles is at the present time fulfilled; and pretend that there is now another dispensation, &c., and observe not that you thereby deny the Son of God, and gainsay the whole Scriptures; you comfort yourselves with mere lies, as also did disobedient Israel in their time.

Oh dear Lord! How long shall these sore plagues endure? how long shall the name of the Lord through you be blasphemed, and his holy word through you be disgraced? Is it not a grievous error (man phrenzy), that Christ, the Son of the living God, who, brought forth in eternal righteousness, has reconciled heaven and earth by the blood of his cross, with his word of truth, and with the counsels of eternal life, is rejected from your hearts, which he so dearly bought, and which should, so properly be the dwelling place of Christ: and poor, sinful flesh, and mortal man descended from Adam, full of all unrighteousness, haughty speeches, lies and open deception is received by you and adopted in stead.

Oh, beloved children, what are you doing? Are you so thoroughly enchanted that you have lost all reason, intelligence, the Scriptures, and everything, so that you cannot see at all? then may God be merciful unto you. Good children, observe that a letter of the law of Moses could not be changed till the new Moses, Christ Jesus, came, who was promised through the law and the prophets. If then the letter of the law was so strong, effective and firm, and in its time unchangeable, although given only through a servant, and sealed by perishable blood, how much more powerful, effectual, firm, and unchangeable is the free law of the Spirit, which was given through the Son himself, and confirmed by the blood of the eternal covenant.

All who taught anything contrary to the word of Moses, were false prophets, for nothing was to be taken from, nor added thereto, but all appeals were to the law and the testimony, Dent. 4: 2. All the prophets of the present day are false who teach contrary to the Spirit, word, commands, prohibitions, ordinances and example of Christ, even though such should exhibit themselves in appearance, as holier than John, more zeal-

ous than Elias, and more miraculous than Moses.

They persuade you that the doctrine of the apostles is imperfect, but that *they* now teach that which is perfect. This is a deception above all deceptions, as above said, for thereby the creature is honored more than the Creator. Paul does not refer to any better doctrine or perfection other than that which is shown by the doctrine of the apostles, which will abide in everlasting clearness, according to the infallible promise of God, and which we shall receive in the resurrection of the righteous, when all doctrine shall receive an end. This is true, otherwise Paul is at variance with himself, and the true reality is not to be found in Christ.

Again, will you say, then, with the Jews and Scribes, that Elias will come before the great and terrible day, and thus wait for something new?

First, I answer with Christ's own words, that "all the prophets and the law prophesied until John, and if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come," Matt. 11: 13, 14.

Secondly, Even though Elias himself were to come, he dare not teach any thing against the foundation and doctrine of Christ and the apostles, but he must, if he would preach aright, teach and preach conformably to the same, for, by the Spirit, word, actions and example of Christ, all must be judged, and receive the last sentence, otherwise the whole Scriptures are false.

Therefore, one of two things must follow, either that we are not to look for an Elias any more, since John was the Elias who was to come; or if an Elias should come yet, he must propose and teach us nothing but the foundation and word of Christ, according to the Scriptures; for Christ is the man who sits upon David's throne, and shall reign forever in the kingdom, house, and congregation of Jacob.

I would then, herewith sincerely admonish you all to weigh and prove all spirit, doctrine, faith, and conduct, with the Spirit, doctrine and conduct of Christ, and that ye be temperate. All spirits which accord therewith, are from God, but those which are contrary, are from him, who from the begin-

ning has turned Adam and his race aside from God, and has led them by lies onward to death.

If you will not hear, but will ever turn your ears to lies, and believe the deceiving creature more than the infallible Creator; if you set your feet upon slippery places; if you neither fear nor regard Scripture admonitions, nor the power and punishments of God, but reject and set aside all as idle and useless, and suffer yourselves always to be comforted with falsehoods, visions, dreams, splendid delusions, false interpretations and continue, without the cross, on the broad way, then will the righteous Lord send to you mockers and deceivers, and by his righteous judgment suffer you to be led from one ungodly course to another, as may already be seen.

You shall be satiated with lies, vanity, folly and hypocrisy. You will reap the fruits of your wantonness, and at last, with all false prophets and lying wonder workers, you shall hear the words, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," Luke 13: 27.

Be ye then eternally warned and faith-

fully admonished of God. Beware, the day approaches, repent, reform. The word of God is true. Is there any one among you who fears God, let him reflect on what I here write; search the Scriptures and believe the truth, for God hates all liars. Eternal woe and gnashing of teeth will be the portion and reward of the hypocrite; "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9.

O ye miserable, enchanted children! turn again. If ye knew what it was to forsake the living fountain of Christ, and dig for yourselves dry wells which can neither yield nor hold water, Jer. 2, how soon would you turn your back on the false prophets and their hypocritical lives, surrender yourselves to the true Shepherd of your souls, Christ Jesus, and follow and obey his sure counsel, teaching, admonition, ordinance, and holy example (although in weakness); but alas, enchanting blindness has obscured your understanding. The beloved, merciful Lord grant you eyes to see and hearts to understand; this is our sincere wish, Amen.

TO THE BRIDE, KINGDOM, STATE,

AND

CHURCH OF THE LORD, GRACE AND PEACE.

Thus spake the Bridegroom, Christ Jesus, through Solomon to his bride, the church, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," Cant. 2: 10-13.

Chosen, true children, you, who with me, are called to the like grace, inheritance and kingdom, and are named after the Lord's

name, hear the voice of Christ, your king; hear the voice of your bridegroom, ah, thou bride of God, thou friend of the Lord, arise, and adorn thyself to honor thy king and bridegroom. Though thou art pure, purify thyself yet more; though thou art holy, hallow thyself yet more, and though thou art right, rectify thyself yet more; adorn thyself with the white silken robe of righteousness; hang about thy neck the golden chain of all piety; gird thyself with the fair girdle of brotherly love; put on the wedding ring of true faith; gird thyself with precious fair gold of the divine word. Adorn thyself

with the pearls of all modesty; wash thyself with the clear waters of grace, and anoint thyself with the oil of the Holy Ghost. Wash thy feet in the clear, limped river of Almighty God; let your whole body be pure and clear, for thy friend hates all wrinkles and spots; so will he have pleasure in thy beauty and will praise thee and say, "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointments, than all spices. Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb; honey and milk are under thy tongue," Cant. 4: 10, 11.

Rejoice, O thou bride of the Lord! for your beloved is fairer than all the children of men, "The chiefest among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and as black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves, by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his lips, like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl; his belly is as bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars; his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely," Cant. 5: 10—16. Cry out and say, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty," Ps. 45: 10, 11.

Draw near, O thou queen, O thou well-prepared and fairest of all woman; bow thy neck with Esther, under his powerful sceptre; hear his word and fear his judgment; acknowledge his great love, for he has greatly humbled himself towards us. "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite, and as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born, thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all," Ezek. 16: 3, 4. Thou wast polluted in thy blood, behold so despised were your souls, as the prophet lamented. But he has pitied thee, promised thee life, nourished thee and clothed thy shame, purified thee from thy uncleanness,

wiped off thy blood, anointed thee with balsam, clothed thee with spiritual clothes; he has adorned thee with bracelets, ear-rings, and a beautiful crown, and has taken thee for his bride, and made an everlasting covenant with thee; he has fed thee with oil, honey and wheaten bread; he has led thee to the chamber of his love, and kissed thee with the mouth of his peace.

How lovely and gracious a bridegroom and king is he, who has chosen his miserable, impure, unesteemed, yea, unchaste servant, to such an exalted station, and has called her to be such a glorious queen, and has spared no labor, pains nor costs, till he has made her the fairest, purest, most worthy and precious among women.

Arise, make haste, adorn and dress yourselves, extol and praise him who has created you, and called you to such a high honor through the word of his grace.

The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land; there is nothing more which can harm or hinder, for hell, sin, the devil, death, the world, flesh, fire and sword, are already overcome by all the children of God, through Christ! All they know is Christ Jesus, their seeking is the pure apostolic doctrine and the pious, unblamable life, which is from God.

Praise be to the Most High, who has silenced the falsehoods, for the truth sounds in every street. Anti-christ sinks to shame, and Christ rises to higher honor, yea, the unfruitful, cold winter has disappeared, and the fruitful pleasant spring has come, the lovely fair flowers shoot forth and vegetate in every place; the voice of the turtle dove is heard. The wholesome, holy word, the word of repentance, the word of grace and eternal peace, is testified with word, writings, life and death, in many countries.

"The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape, give a good smell; arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," Cant. 2: 13. Faith assumes verdure, love blooms, the sun softens, and the truth is published and testified to, which remained fruitless for so many years; although you must, for a short time, bear the heat of the sun, yet you so well

know that the kingdom of glory, in eternal joy, is promised and prepared for you.

Rejoice and watch; thou art black but comely, thou art as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out," Cant. 4: 16. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, not the perishing kingdom of Assyria, Media, Macedonia, nor of Rome, but the kingdom of the saints, the kingdom of the great King, the kingdom of David, the kingdom of grace and eternal peace, which shall never more perish, but shall abide and stand forever, therefore, hear him and be obedient, that you be not thrust out with the haughty, disobedient Vashti, but with the pious Esther, live in endless glory, before the true Ahasuerus, Christ, and abide with him forever.

Arise, thou daughter of Zion, and observe what is promised thee. O Jerusalem, although thou, as a comfortless one, sittest for a while, and must bear all manner of storms and hail, but your helper will arrive in time, who brings forth thy righteousness as the morning, and is thy shelter from the wind and storm. For He who loved thee has said, "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles and all thy borders of pleasant stones, and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression," Isa. 54: 11—14.

Behold, thy wall stands firmly upon twelve foundations, thy gates are of pearls, the city is of pure gold, the river of living waters, proceeding from the throne of God and the lamb, is in the midst of your way, and the tree of life is on either side, and its leaves serve to heal the nation. Happy and holy is he who has part in this city.

Therefore, so purify yourselves, you who seek the Lord, circumcise the foreskin of your hearts, for the holy city may be inhabited by no uncircumcised person, the golden streets are trodden by no unclean

feet; the unclean, drink not of the pure waters; the fruit of life shall never be eaten by any of the ungodly, "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," Rev. 22: 15.

Be ye all minded like Christ Jesus. Be earnest to hold the union of the Spirit through the covenant of peace; ye are all one temple, house, city, mountain, body and church in Christ Jesus.

Place your candle upon a candlestick, build your city upon a high mountain; live unblamably, behave in all things consistent with Christianity, fear God in all your ways, praise him in all your works; for great is the grace which has appeared. Prove yourselves in all things, as those who are born of God; shun all false doctrine; repay not evil with evil, but return the evil with good; pray without ceasing; in patience possess your souls; judge all your thoughts, words, and lives, after the thoughts, words, and life of Christ, so shall you in eternity never more be deceived.

Walk worthily after the calling wherby ye are called. Let the tyrannical, blaspheming, upbraiding, and furious, hate the Lord and his word, they persecute you not, but Christ Jesus, to whom they are inimical, they will be judged in their time, and, if they do not repent, will be repaid again in their own bosoms.

Strive and wrestle valiantly, in order that the crown be not taken from you. Fly to the mountain of the covert of Christ Jesus. Gird yourselves with the weapons of righteousness, declare God's word with freedom, neither shrink nor give way. God is your conductor; be faithful unto death, so shall you inherit the crown of life.

Whosoever overcomes, will be clothed with white clothing, and his name shall not be erased from the book of life. Although we appear to the unwise, to die and depart from the right way, our souls are, nevertheless, in hope and peace, Wis. 3:2.

"It is a faithful saying," says Paul, "for if we be dead with him (Christ), we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us," 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12. There-

fore, fear your God from the heart, watch and pray and commend to him your affairs, as Jeremiah did. He has chosen you to be his loving bride, children, and members; called you to the kingdom of his grace, and the inheritance of his glory, and has bought

you with the immaculate blood of Christ Jesus.

Peace be with you, the Spirit, power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with all my fellow laborers, believers, brethren and sisters, till eternal life, Amen.

CONCLUSION OF THIS BOOK.

Behold, dear sirs, friends and brethren, here we have briefly pointed out and declared upon what foundation and Scriptures we are built, what we seek and have in view, and how we rebuke, with the word of the Lord, all abominable sects and ungodliness of the whole world, both with the greatest and the smallest, without any respect of persons, and we point out to every one, the wholesome, pure truth. The god-fearing may read and judge. But this I have not done in order that the cross of Christ may be avoided, in no wise, for I know and am persuaded, that the lamb with the wolf, the dove with the kite, and Christ with Belial, can never be at peace, the truth must be hated; and were it so, that Christ himself should speak from heaven, still would neither Scripture nor godliness, neither Christ nor apostle, neither prophet nor saints, neither lives nor property, be regarded by men. All those, who rebuke, in pure, upright zeal, the haughty, avaricious, proud, idolatrous, bloodthirsty world, and who seek their happiness and eternal welfare, with all the heart, must suffer and be oppressed.

You must (said Christ), be hated of all men for my name's sake. Through much tribulation you must enter into the kingdom of God. Christ himself so suffered and then entered into his glory.

Therefore, I have done this, that the precious, pure truth, might be revealed; that here and there some might be won; the right way pointed out to the blind; the hungry fed with the word of God; the erring directed to Christ, the shepherd; the ignorant taught; the kingdom of God extended; and his holy name magnified and praised,

this, together with our innocence, shall be a witness on the day of judgment to all bloodthirsty tyrants, and all deceivers, false prophets, and all hardened and impenitent, that to them the truth had been testified. But will ye not hear, then be your sins upon you; I have declared unto you according to my small gifts, God's Spirit, word, foundation, ordinance and will, and have pointed out to you righteousness. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear, and whoever has understanding, let him understand.

I testify my Savior openly; I acknowledge him, and dissemble not. If you repent not and be not born of God, in your spirit, belief, life and worship, and become not one with Christ, then is the sentence of your condemnation on your poor souls already finished and prepared.

All, who teach you otherwise than we have here taught and testified to you, from the Scriptures, deceive you. This is the narrow way through which we all must walk, and must enter the strait gate, if we would be happy. Here is excepted, neither emperor nor king, duke nor count, knight nor nobleman, doctor nor licentiate, rich nor poor, man nor woman. Whoever boasts that he is a christian, the same must walk as Christ walked. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9. "He that committeth sin is of the devil," 1 John 3: 8. Here neither baptism, Lord's Supper, confession, nor absolution will avail anything. These and other Scriptures stand immoveable, and judge all those who live out of the Spirit and word of Christ, and

whose thoughts are upon earthly and carnal things; they shall never be overthrown, perverted nor weakened, by angel or devil.

Will you say, with refractory Israel, we will not hear the word which you have preached to us in the name of the Lord? but we will do as our forefathers, our kings and princes have done from former years till the present time. So I answer with holy Jeremiah and say, Although you have pleasure in lies, and do such abominations, so hath the Lord taken your wickedness to heart, and has sent you one hard punishment after another, as hunger, pestilence, storms, grief, misery and the consuming, devouring sword, that your land is turned to a waste, to amazement and a curse, as one evidently may see in many places, because you perform strange worship; despise the Lord, your God; cast his word aside; shed innocent blood; walk according to your wantonness; sin against God, and walk not according to his law, ordinance and commands, as the mouth of the Lord has commanded you.

Again, as the unprofitable and rebellious world are warned and rebuked against their will, the prophets, and the true servants of

God, are judged and destroyed by the princes and magistracy, as seditious mutinists, and are persecuted by the priests and common people as deceivers and heretics. Therefore, we have made up our minds to both teach and suffer, expecting that we will fare no better in this matter than they did, but we say with Ezekiel, That when this shall come to pass, then shall you find that the undissembled, pure word of the Lord, had been taught to you.

The merciful, gracious father, through his loving Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, grant to you all, the gift and grace of his Holy Spirit, that you may hear and read these our christian labors and service of true love, with such hearts, that you may strive for, confess, believe, and follow after the genuine truth, with all your soul, and be eternally saved, Amen.

Dear, worthy lords, grant to your poor servants, that we may fear the Lord from the heart, and preach the word of God, and do right. This we pray you for Jesus' sake. O Lord! Father of all grace, open the eyes of the blind, that they may see thy way, word, truth and will, and walk therein with faithful hearts, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

