

A Full Answer from the Church of England, as it is now by Law Established,  
to the Weak Reasons in the Strong Box.

(1)

GODLY and WHOLSOME  
DOCTRINE,

And Necessary for these Times :

BEING

The Second Part of the HOMILY concerning

THE

HOLY GHOST ;

Dissolving this DOUBT :

*Whether all men rightly Challenge to themselves the Holy  
Ghost, or no ?*

**O**UR Saviour Christ departing out of the World unto his Father, promised his Disciples to send down another Comforter, that should continue with them for ever, and direct them into all truth ; which thing to be faithfully and truly performed, the Scriptures do sufficiently bear witness ; neither must we think that this Comforter was either promised, or else given only to the Apostles, but also to the universal Church of Christ dispersed through the whole World. For unless the Holy Ghost had been always present, governing and preserving the Church from the beginning, it could never have sustained so many and great brunts of Affliction and Persecution, with so little damage and harm as it hath : And the words of Christ are most plain in this behalf, saying, *That the Spirit of truth should abide with them for ever, that he would be with them always, ( he meaneth by Grace, Vertue and Power, ) even to the worlds end.*

*John 14.  
Matth. 21.*

*John 17.  
Rom. 8.*

Also in the Prayer that he made to his Father a little before his Death, he maketh intercession not only for himself and his Apostles, but indifferently for all them that should believe in him through their words, that is to wit, for his whole Church. Again, Saint Paul saith, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is not his :* Also in the words following, *We have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father :* Hereby then it is evident and plain to all men, that the Holy Ghost was given not only to the Apostles, but also to the whole body of Christs Congregation, although not in like Form and Majesty as he came down at the feast of Pentecost.

But now herein standeth the Controversie ; whether all men do justly arrogate to themselves the Holy Ghost, or no ? The Bishops of Rome have for a long time made a fore challenge thereunto, reasoning for themselves after this sort : The Holy Ghost ( say they ) was promised to the Church, and never forsaketh the Church : But we are the chief heads and principal part of the Church, therefore we have the Holy Ghost for ever, and whatsoever things we decree are undoubted Verities and Oracles of the Holy Ghost.

That ye may perceive the weakness of this Argument, it is needfull to teach you, first what the true Church of Christ is, and then to conferre the Church of Rome therewith, to discern how well they agree together. The true Church is an universal Congregation or Fellowship of Gods faithful and elect People, Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone : And it hath always three Notes or Marks, whereby it is known ; Pure and sound Doctrine, the Sacraments ministr'd according to Christs holy Institution, and the right use of Ecclesiastical discipline. This description of the Church, is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the Doctrine of the ancient Fathers, so that none may justly find fault therewith. Now if ye will compare this with the Church of Rome, not as it was in the beginning, but as it is

presently, and hath been for the space of Nine hundred years and odd, you shall well perceive the state thereof to be so far wide from the nature of the true Church, that nothing can be more. For neither are they built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, retaining the sound and pure Doctrine of Christ Jesus ; neither yet do they order the Sacraments, or else the Ecclesiastical Keyes, in such sort as he did first institute and ordain them : but have so intermingled their own Traditions and Inventions, by chopping and changing, by adding and plucking away, that now they may seem to be converted into a new guise. Christ commended to his Church a Sacrament of his Body and Blood : They have changed it into a Sacrifice for the quick and the dead. Christ did minister to his Apostles, and the Apostles to other men indifferently under both kinds : They have robbed the Lay-people of the Cup, saying, that for them one kind is sufficient. Christ ordained no other Element to be used in Baptism, but only Water, whereunto when the Word is joyned, it is made ( as St. Augustine saith ) a full and perfect Sacrament : They being wiser in their own conceit than Christ, think it is not well nor orderly done, unless they use Conjunction, unless they hallow the Water, unless there be Oyl, Salt, Spittle, Tapers, and such other dumb Ceremonies, serving to no use, contrary to the plain Rule of St. Paul, who willeth all things to be done in the Church unto Edification. Christ ordained the Authority of the Keys to Excommunicate notorious Sinners, and to absolve them which are truly Penitent : They abuse this power at their own pleasure, as well in cursing the godly with Bell, Book and Candles, as also in absolving the reprobate, which are known to be unworthy of any Christian Society ; whereof they that list to see Examples, let them search their Lives. To be short, look what our Saviour Christ pronounced of the Scribes and Pharisees in the Gospel, the same may be boldly and with safe Conscience pronounced of the Bishops of Rome ; namely, that they have forsaken, and daily do forsake the Commandments of God, to erect and set up their own Constitutions. Which thing being true, as all they which have any light of God's Word must needs confess, we may well conclude according to the rule of Augustine : That the Bishops of Rome and their Adherents are not the true Church of Christ, much less then to be taken as chief Heads and Rulers of the same. Whosoever ( saith he ) do dissent from the Scriptures concerning the Head, although they be found in all places where the Church is appointed, yet are they not in the Church. A plain place, concluding directly against the Church of Rome. Where is, now the holy Ghost which they so stoutly do claim to themselves ? Where is now the Spirit of Truth, that will not suffer them in any wise to err ? If it be possible to be there where the true Church is not, then is it at Rome : Otherwise it is but a vain brag, and nothing else.

*1 Cor. 14.*

*August. contra Pelagiani Doctrinam. Epist. 4.*



Saint

Saint Paul (as ye have heard before) saith; *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is not his.* And by turning the words, it may be truly said: *If any man be not of Christ, the same hath not the Spirit.* Now to discern who are truly his, and who not, we have this Rule given us, *That his Sheep do alwayes bear his voice.* And St. John saith, *He that is of God heareth God's Word.* Whereof it followeth, that the Popes not hearing Christs voice, as they ought to do, but preferring their own Decrees before the expresse Word of God, do plainly argue to the World, that they are not of Christ, nor yet possessed with his Spirit. But here they will alledge for themselves, that there are divers necessary points not expressed in holy Scripture, which were left to the Revelation of the Holy Ghost, who being given to the Church according to Christs Promise, hath taught many things from time to time, which the Apostles could not then bear. To this we may easily answer by the plain words of Christ, teaching us that the proper Office of the Holy Ghost is not to institute and bring in new Ordinances contrary to his Doctrine before taught; but shall come and declare those things which he had before taught; so that it might be well and truly understood. When the Holy Ghost, saith he, *shall come, he shall lead you into all truth.* What truth doth he mean? Any other than he himself had before expressed in his Word? No; for he saith, *He shall take of mine, and shew unto you.* Again, *He shall bring you in remembrance of all things that I have told you.* It is not then the duty and part of any Christian, under pretence of the Holy Ghost, to bring in his own Dreams and Phantasies into the Church: But he must diligently provide that his Doctrine and Decrees be agreeable to Christs holy Testament. Otherwise in making the Holy Ghost the Author thereof, he doth blaspheme and belye the Holy Ghost to his own Condemnation.

Now to leave their Doctrine, and come to other points. What shall we think or judge of the Popes inollerable Pride? The Scripture saith, *That God resisteth the proud, and sheweth grace to the humble.* Also it pronounceth them Blessed which are *poor in Spirit*, promising that they which humble themselves shall be exalted. And Christ our Saviour willeth all his to *learn of him*, because he is *humble and meek*. As for Pride, St. Gregory saith, it is the Root of all Mischiefe. And St. Augustin's judgment is this; that it maketh men Devils. Can any man then, which either hath or shall read the Popes Lives, justly say, that they had the Holy Ghost within them? First, Astouching that they will be termed *Universal Bishops*; and *Heads of all Christian Churches* through the World, we have the judgment of Gregory expressly against them, who writing to *Mauritius* the Emperour, Condemneth *John* Bishop of *Constantinople* in that behalf; calling him the *Prince of Pride*, *Lucifer's Successor*, and the Fore-runner of *Antichrist*. St. Bernard also agreeing thereunto, saith; *What greater Pride can there be, than that One man should pyeer his own judgment before the whole Congregation, as though he only had the Spirit of God?* And *Chrysostom* pronounceth a terrible Sentence against them, affirming plainly, that whosoever seeketh to be chief in Earth, shall find Confusion in Heaven, and that he that striveth for the Supremacy, shall not be reputed among the Servants of Christ. Again he saith: *To desire a good work, it is good; but to covet the chief degree of Honour, it is mere vanity.* Do not these places sufficiently convince their outrageous Pride, in usurping to themselves a Superiority above all other, as well Ministers and Bishops, as Kings also and Emperours? But as the Lyon is known by his Claws, so let us learn to know these men by their deeds. What shall we say of him that made the noble King *Dandalus* to be tied by the neck with a Chain, and to lye flat down before his Table, there to gnaw bones like a Dog? Shall we think that he had Gods Holy Spirit within him, and not rather the Spirit of the Devil? Such a Tyrant was Pope *Clement* the Sixth. What shall we say of him that proudly and contemptuously trod *Frederick* the Emperour under his feet, applying the verse of the Psalm unto himself: *Thou shalt go upon the Lyon and the Adder, the young Lyon and the Dragon thou shalt tread under thy foot?* Shall we say he had Gods Holy Spirit within him, and not rather the Spirit of the Devil? Such a Tyrant was Pope *Alexander* the Third. What shall we say of him that armed and animated the Son against the Father, causing him to be taken, and to be cruelly famished to

death, contrary to the Law both of God, and also of Nature? Shall we say that he had Gods Holy Spirit within him, and not rather the Spirit of the Devil? Such a Tyrant was Pope *Paschal* the Second. What shall we say of him that came into his Popedom like a Fox, that reigned like a Lyon, and dyed like a Dog? Shall we say that he had the Holy Spirit of God within him, and not rather the Spirit of the Devil? Such a Tyrant was *Boniface* the Eighth. What shall we say of him that made *Henry* the Emperour, with his Wife and his young Child, to stand at the Gates of the City, in the rough Winter, bare-foot and bare-legged, only cloathed in Linsey-woolsey, eating nothing from morning to night, and that for the space of three days? Shall we say that he had Gods Holy Spirit within him, and not rather the Spirit of the Devil? Such a Tyrant was Pope *Hildebrand*, most worthy to be called a *Firebrand*, if we shall term him as he hath best deserved. Many other Examples might here be alledged. As of Pope *Joan* the Harlot, that was delivered of a Child in the high street, going solemnly in Procession. Of Pope *Julius* the Second, that wilfully cast St. *Peter's* Keys into the River *Tiber*. Of Pope *Urban* the Sixth, that caused five Cardinals to be put in Sacks, and cruelly drowned. Of Pope *Sergius* the Third, that persecuted the dead Body of *Formosus* his Predecessor, when it had been buried eight years. Of Pope *John* the fourteenth of that name, who having his Enemy delivered into his hands, caused him first to be stripped stark naked, his beard to be shaven, and to be hanged up a whole day by the hair, then to be set upon an Ass, with his face backward toward the Tail, to be carryed round about the City in despite, to be miserably beaten with Rods, last of all to be thrust out of his Countrey, and to be banished for ever. But to conclude, and make an end, ye shall briefly take this short Lesson; Wheresoever ye find the Spirit of Arrogancy and Pride, the Spirit of Envy, Hatred, Contention, Cruelty, Murder, Extortion, Witchcraft, Necromancy, &c. assure your selves that there is the Spirit of the Devil, and not of God, albeit they pretend outwardly to the World never so much Holiness. For as the Gospel teacheth us, the Spirit of Jesus is a good Spirit, an holy Spirit, a sweet Spirit, a lowly Spirit, a merciful Spirit, full of Charity and Love, full of Forgiveness and Pity, not rendring evil for evil, extremity for extremity; but overcoming evil with good, and remitting all Offence, even from the Heart. According to which rule if any man live uprightly, of him it may be safely pronounced, that he hath the Holy Ghost within him: If not, then it is a plain token that he doth usurp the name of the Holy Ghost in vain.

Therefore (dearly beloved) according to the good Counsel of St. *John*, Believe not every Spirit, but first try them whether they be of God, or no. Many shall come in my name (saith Christ) and shall transform themselves into Angels of Light, deceiving (if it be possible) the very Elect. They shall come unto you in Sheeps Cloathing, being inwardly cruel and ravening Wolves. They shall have an outward shew of great holiness and Innocency of Life, so that ye shall hardly, or not at all discern them. But the rule that ye must follow, is this; to judge them by their fruits. Which, if they be wicked and naught, then is it impossible that the Tree of whom they proceed should be good. Such were all the Popes and Prelates of *Rome* for the most part, as doth well appear in the story of their Lives; and therefore they are worthily accounted among the number of false Prophets and false Christs, which deceived the World a long while.

The Lord of Heaven and Earth defend us from their Tyranny and Pride, that they never enter into his Vineyard again to the disturbance of his silly poor Flock; but that they may be utterly Confounded and put to Flight in all parts of the World. And he of his great Mercy so work in all mens Hearts by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, that the comfortable Gospel of his Son Christ may be truly Preached, truly Received, and truly Followed in all places, to the beating down of Sin, Death, the Pope, the Devil, and all the Kingdom of Antichrist; that like scattered and dispersed Sheep, being at length gathered into one fold, we may in the end rest all together in the bosom of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, there to be partakers of eternal and everlasting life, through the merits and death of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.