

57-2

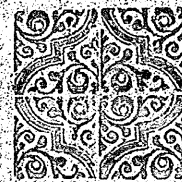
0480

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A NECESSARY
WARNING
TO THE
MINISTERIE
OF THE KIRK OF
SCOTLAND.

From the meeting of the *Commissioners*
Of the Generall *Assembly*
At *Edinburgh* 4. Jan. 1643.

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them: therefore watch, &c. Acts 20. 30. 31.



EDINBURGH,
Printed by *Evan Tyler*, Printer to the Kings
most excellent Majestie. 1643.

(1.)



IT should be unto us no small matter of grief, that the Lord having done so great things for us, and by his marvellous and mercifull providence, having according to our desires setled the truth of Religion, with Peace and Libertie within this Kingdome, while other Kirks and Kingdomes about us are in so great trouble; The Work of GOD should be so little regarded, and the spirit of Errour and Heresie, of Schisme and Division, and of Atheisme and Profanity, should appear again, and be hearkened unto by any amongst us: yet should wee think it to be no strange or new thing, that Satan rage to be cast out of his Kingdome, that Heresies, Sects and Profanity, which must be, and have ever lesse or more infested the Kirk of Christ, shew themselves, and set up their heads amongst us in this spring-time of Reformation, especially they being fomented by that influence which the present troubles of our neighbouring Kirks and Kingdomes have upon this Kirk and Kingdome.

It is time for all the People of God, and after a speciall manner for us who are the Ministers of the Gospel, seriously to set our selves to the performance of the dutie required of us, and in all vigilancie and faithfulnessse to use the best meanes for preserving the rich Treasure committed to us, for transmitting it without mixture, schisme, or pollution to the posteritie, and so far as in us lyeth, to propagate the same to other Nations, which the Supreme providence is preparing and making meet to receive so great an happinesse.

A. 2. First

(2)

First of all we have to take heed to our selves, that our hearts be right and sincere in the sight of God ; and that none of us be in the gall of bitterness, or in the bond of iniquitie, against the Work of Reformation, or against any Article of that Covenant, which we have before God and the world so solemnly sworn and subscribed : for if our own conscience condemne us, we will deale but treacherously with the adversary in the cause of God.

Secondly, we are to look to the enemies of Religion, which are of three sorts : Papists, Separatists, and malignant, male-content, and profane Time-servers.

Concerning Papists : as we are encouraged by the Civill power and authoritie, which will see the Lawes executed against them, when it cometh to their part; so have we a particular and full direction in the late and former Generall Assemblies, for our proceeding against them, and must be answerable for our diligence to the next Generall Assembly ; and therefore our care must be to follow forth the Acts of the Assemblies in all points : But with an intention, not so much to be rid of their persons for our ease, as to deliver them from their error for their own salvation, which is a Work requiring great wisdom, zeal and diligence on our part. And so much the more, that they are universally known by their speeches, carriage, and hopes, grounded upon the confusion and distemper of the times, to be more insolent and presumptuous then before.

Concerning Separatists upon the other hand : there be but very few in the Land who professe themselves to be of that sort, and therefore the evil requireth rather a prevention then a cure. For this end these directions may serve :

First, that every Minister take such heed to himself, and his own Family, both in private worship, and practice of Religion, that his Family may be a paterne to all the Families of the Flock, and his own life and conversation a
visible

(3)

visible example, and reall proof of his doctrine : So shall the people know by the eye, how and after what manner to practise that which they hear ; they shall esteeme reverently of his judgement, and shall not be easily drawne from him, and from the Flock which is fed by such a Pastour.

That by our doctrine in publick, and by our conference in private, we labour to bring the people to the sense of so great a mercy as God hath showne to this Land, in setting up our Reformation again : This will be a mean to keep them from Poperie in substance and ceremonie, and from the love of all, whether novation or separation.

That we be diligent in catechising, and frequent in visiting particular Families, for discharging the duties of our Pastorall Function, and especially for setting up the worship of God in every Family ; and enquiring how and by whom it is performed : for the ignorant are easily drawn away by Sectaries and Seducers, the profane that live without the worship of God, are alike disposed to all Religions ; and such as are in the generall piously affected, and have not the worship of God in the Families wherein they live, doe seek after it where they may have it, and are ready rather then to want it altogether, to suffer themselves to be drawn away into error.

That such as are rude and ignorant of the Principles of Religion, and such as are notoriously profane and scandalous in life, be suspended from the Communion; but so, as all diligence be used to informe the one sort, and reforme the other, which shall be a meane both to save their souls, and to remove one principall pretext of Separation.

That when we heare there is danger of Poperie or Separation, the absurdities of the one and the other, which are many and grosse, be frequently and plainly represented to the People, that they may be brought to the detestation
thereof,

(4)

thereof; and to the Love of the truth, and to stedfastnesse in the Reformed Religion.

That when we speake against the ignorance and profanitie of many of our common Professors, we take heed that we give not occasion to any to abstain from communicating with them in the externall meanes, and to run away in the way of schisme and separation: And when we speake against Separatists, that we give no occasion to the profane, to mock at the power and practice of Religion, or at separation from the bad customes of the world, and the sinnes of the time. And therefore a clear distinction would be made betwixt the Spirit of God, and private spirits; betwixt Sanctification, and this separation; betwixt a Spirituall, and a schismaticall disposition; betwixt separatists, and such as of late were called Precisians, and Puritans, who indeed were no other but the Godly, longing after, and now resting in the Reformation of Religion; betwixt Families worshipping God, and secret congregations or conventicles; and betwixt the necessary dutie of the Master of a Family, and promiscuous prophesying or interpreting of Scripture. When a word is spoken against schisme or separation, a word also would be spoken for preventing the mis-application of the profane, of the worldling, and of the carnall professor.

That as we have been, and have reason still to be zealous against all the seeds of Popish superstition, and heresie, so must we often give warning to all the Godly, to beware of the smallest beginnings, and least degrees of separation, and of countenancing of such as under the colour, whether of singular zeal and holinesse, or of the gifts of Illumination, or of Prayer, or presence of the Spirit, go about as idle and busie-bodies, speaking evil of that which they know not, and against all Christian Pietie and Charitie, seeking to disgrace the Work of Reformation, and the

(5)

the Teachers and Professours of the true Religion; remembering that Sathan can transforme himselfe into an Angel of light: As also to take heed to such as bewray their inclination that way, by absenting themselves from the Communion, by bringing home, or spreading of Books and Pamphlets which presse separation, and such other meanes; And for this effect recommends to Presbyteries the observation of the Acts of Generall Assemblies thereanent.

Concerning the third sort of Enemies, the malignants, whether they be such as from the beginning did oppose the work of Reformation of Religion in this Land, or such as shew themselves, upon whatsoever pretence, backward and disaffected to the Reformation of Religion in England, so much endeavoured by this Kirk from our zeal to the glory of Christ, our desire of the happinesse of the neighbouring kingdoms, our fears of apparent danger to the Religion here, if they be not made one with us in unitie of Religion and uniformitie of Kirk-Government, and our hopes, by the blessing of God, to have a paterne from the word set up in this Iland for the example of other Kirks abroad; Because Enemies of this kind may prove most dangerous, if they be not discovered and avoided, it is at this time a chief part of our dutie to make such malignants known to the people, that they be not deceived and drawn away from their own stedfastnesse, and from the love of Christ, and their brethren: But in doing this dutie, we have great need of wisdom, and the spirit of discerning, that we neither take our Friends to be our Enemies, and by that mistake discourage the well affected, and multiply Enemies against our selves, nor such as are indeed Enemies to be our Friends, and thereby wrong the cause of God, and weaken our selves in seeking after Reformation. And therefore they must not

(6)

not be taken for Enemies who hope the best of the Kings Majestie, and professe that they love His Honour (which is the calumnie of the malignant against the seekers of Reformation) nor such as in the beginning through want of perswasion were not so forward for Reformation, nor such as in debate of matters doe possibly differ in their judgement from others about some circumstances and midfes which may lead to the desired end of unitie in Religion; providing their conversation be such as beseemeth the gospel of Christ, and for the substance and reality of their Speeches and Actions in private and publick, they be known to contribute their best endeavours for Reformation.

Upon the other part such as be Enemies indeed may be known: First by their malicious censuring and calumniating of the Civill and Ecclesiasticall meetings of this Kirk and Kingdome which are held for conserving of peace betwixt the Kingdomes, and for endeavouring by all good means the unity of Religion, as if they tended to the diminution of the King His Greatnesse and Authority in England: Secondly, by their despising or mis-regarding of the publick resolutions agreed upon for so good ends: Thirdly, by their notable injuring the Kings Majestie in His Honour, in attributing to His Majestie whatsoever is plotted by bad Counsellours, or acted by the Popish and Prelaticall partie, as if there were not a difference betwixt the King and them, or betwixt the King His Authority and the pretence and abuse thereof: Fourthly, by flandering and traducing all such as labour to promote the Reformation in England, not sparing them who are in places of government, and whom God hath honoured to be worthy instruments in our own Reformation, as if they were Enemies to the Kings Honour, and were serving their own private ends without respect to the publick:

Fifthly,

(7)

Fifthly, by their going about & endeavouring to make the hearts and hands of others to faint in the work of Reformation; and if it were possible, to make them as malignant and disaffected as themselves: Sixthly, by labouring to bring the Parliament of England in suspition, as if they intended to cast off the yoke of Royall Authoritie, or intended not the Reformation of Religion, and Unitie with this Kirk: Seventhly, by their insolencie and boasting when they hear of the successe of the Popish and Prelaticall partie, and their readinesse to assist them according to their power, whereby they bewray their feare of the Reformation of Religion, and their hopes to see the day when they shall be avenged upon such as they maligne at home. When they are known by these and the like practices, we ought to warne the People to beware of their company, counsells and seducements: And because such malignants shroud themselves under the false pretence of loyaltie to the Kings Majestie, without respect to Religion, or the good of the publick; we ought in all our speeches and prayers to testifie our faithfulnessse, and high respects to the Kings Majestie, and also to presse and pray for the unitie of Religion, and for prospering all the good wayes that may conduce for so blessed a work, as serving for the honour of GOD; and for the King His greatnesse, and the true peace of His Kingdomes, declaring all such as oppose the unitie of Religion to be enemies to God, to the King, and to the peace and prosperity of the Kingdomes.

Next, since it is incumbent to us by our calling, and committed to us by the Generall Assembly, according to our callings, to use all Lawfull and Ecclesiasticall wayes for furtherance of Reformation and Unity of Religion, for continuance of our own peace at home, & of the common peace betwixt the Kingdomes, A necessity is laid upon us:

First, to give warning to the people of the danger of

B

the

I.

(8)

the Protestant Religion through the Popish Armies in England and Ireland, pretending that they are better and more dutifull Subjects then the Protestants, but intending no lesse then the ruine of the reformed Religion, and the planting of that Heresie, Idolatry and Tyrannie, in a more compendious way then could have been done by the late Service-Book, and Book of Canons. In which course if they shall by their power prevail; it will be impossible for the Kings Majestie to suppress Poperie, and maintaine the true Religion conforme to the many promises contained in His Majesties Declarations; they will soone cast off their professed allegiance and subjection; and it will be no easie matter for this Kirk and Kingdome, whence they conceive all their troubles and disappointments have issued, to resist their violence, especially considering what a disaffected and discontented party we have at home in our own bosome.

I I. Secondly, since unitie in the truth hath been our strength since the beginning, we ought by all good means in publick and private, to prevent and remove all divisive motions which by malicious & crafty sycophants are endeavoured, by spreading of calumnies and slanders against the present government, and putting aspersions on such, whether of the Nobilitie, Gentry, Burrowes or Ministerie, as the Lord hath honoured to be faithfull and happy Instruments in his work from the beginning, have endured the heat of the day, and resolve to be constant unto the end.

I I I. Thirdly, that since by the providence of God the two Kingdoms are of late so strongly united, & there be hopes of a more strong union by unity of Religion, it is our dutie to labour to remove and prevent all occasions of jealousies and suspitions betwixt the Kingdomes, and to do or say nothing that may breed mis-understandings, break off correspondence, weaken the confidence, or infringe the Union and Peace betwixt the two Kingdomes so happily established

(9)

established in His Majesties presence, and with his Royall consent in both Parliaments.

Fourthly, because when we speak for the Kings honour, IV. & for obedience to civil authority in all things lawfull, our speeches are wrested by perverse men to their corrupt ends, as if we loved not the Reformation of Religion; and when in preaching and prayer we testifie our zeal to the Reformation of Religion in England and Ireland, we are traduced as Enemies to the King, & to Royall authoritie, which may make a great mistaking, and work dangerous effects amongst the people who love both Reformation of Religion and the Kings Honour: Therefore in this difficultie we ought to shew in our doctrine, That there is no repugnancy betwixt the Kings Authority & the Reformation of Religion, That nothing can serve so much for His Majesties glory, and the greatnes of His Kingdoms, as doth the Reformation of Religion in all his dominions, And that such as are opposite to the Reformation of Religion are greatest Enemies to the Kings Honour, whatsoever they professe or swear to the contrary; And also to explain the difference betwixt the Kings power and just authoritie, and the pretending and abusing thereof by such men for their own private ends; And to shew that opposition to such men and their wayes, is a true testimony of faithfulness and loyalty to the King.

That the Presbytery be carefull to discern and try these malignants, and to reclaime or censure them, according to the Acts of the Assembly, and to make report of their diligence to the next Assembly.

And because while the Commissioners of the Assembly are guarding themselves against the opposition of these Enemies, they are secretly and covertly opposed by a malignant Petition, crossing an humble Petition of theirs, presented to the Lords and others Commissioners for conserving of Peace; against which, as destructive of all

(10)

that they had been building up, they were constrained to emit their Declaration, which is sent also with this Warning, to all the Ministerie in the Land : it is necessary that the foresaid Declaration be diligently perused by the Ministers, and by them made knowne and published to all the people, that they be not deceived and drawn away from their stedfastnesse, by the cunning and craft of the secret and subtle Enemies of our Nationall Covenant, upon any pretence whatsoever : And if any shall be found to deale for subscribing the Crosse Petition, and thereby to work division in the Ministry, or among the People, or if any of the Ministry, (which God forbid) shall be found to favour, countenance, or speak in defence thereof, or be remisse in publishing the Declaration, in that case the Presbyterie to proceede against them as dis-covenanters, and enemies to the peace of the Kirk and Kingdome, and to the intended unity of Religion, whatsoever their professed intentions, and specious pretexts be to the contrary, as they will be answerable to the next Generall Assembly: to which both we for our directions, and they for their diligence must render a reckoning.

In end, because much every way doth depend upon us of the Ministerie, we have need to stirre up our selves to faithfulness in every pastorall dutie, and to keep our selves and the People in truth and unity: Which by the blessing of God will be a powerfull mean to preserve our Religion, and to propagate the same to other Kirks, groaning under their severall burdens, and panting for such a Reformation as the Lord in mercy hath granted unto us.

The Commissioners of the Generall Assembly upon mature deliberation judge it necessary, that this Warning be publickly read in all the Parish Kirks, that secret enemies may be discovered, and that none of the people pretend ignorance in joyning lesse or more, with any of the said three sorts of enemies. A

(11)



A
SOLEMNE FAST
 AND
HUMILIATION

Appointed by the Commissioners
 of the Generall Assembly, to be kept through
 the whole Kingdome, upon the last Sabbath
 of *February*, and the next
 Thursday thereafter.



Hereas by the late Generall Assembly, power is committed to us to consider and perform what wee finde necessary by all lawfull and Ecclesiastick wayes, for furtherance of the Union in Religion, and Unity in Kirk-government, for continuance of our own Peace at home, and of the common Peace betwixt the Kingdomes : We finde it necessary, that there shall be a Solemne Fast and Humiliation kept in all the Kirks of this Kingdome, on the last Sabbath of *February*, and the Thursday next thereafter, for the causes and motives following.

Although within these few years we renewed the Covenant, and vowed solemnly to stand to the former Reformation of Religion, and to reforme our selves and Families, we have notwithstanding fallen from the zeal and fervencie of our Profession at that time; Persons

B 3

of

(12)

of all ranks and callings are grown luke-warme, and are content with a meere formalitie, and shew of Godlinesse, without the inward power; yea, the most part are profane, so that Blasphemie, Profanation of the Sabbath, Fornication, Adultery, Drunkenesse, and other vices abound as much as before in the time of corruption, Family worship, mutuall edification, and stirring up one of another by information, admonition, consolation, rebuke much neglected, and Ministers negligent in urging the same. All which are so much the more hainous, because of our unthankfulness after so great mercies, and breach of Covenant.

- I I. The danger of this Kirk and Kingdome, arising partly from within, by the insolencie of Papists in these troublesome times, the divisive motions of the malignant party, and creeping in of the errors of separation; and partly from without, from the Popish Armies and Prelaticall party in England and Ireland, which aime undoubtedly at the disturbance of our Peace, and overthrow of the Work of Reformation. The consideration whereof should move us to pray to God to direct us in all lawfull meanes which may serve for unitie among our selves, that we may be the more strengthened against the common enemies.
- III. In respect of the fellow-feeling which we ought to have with the members of Christs body far and near, we have cause to lament the long lasting troubles of the Kirks of God abroad in Germany, and elsewhere, and specially the present combustions in England, and almost utter desolation in Ireland.
- IV. That the Lord may blesse all lawfull meanes to be used for preserving the Union and Peace betwixt the two Kingdomes, and procuring the unity of Religion, and uniformity of worship and Kirk-government within His Majesties

(13)

Majesties Dominions; especially that God would grant a good successe to the treaty and travels of the Commissioners for the conservation of Peace, and a gracious acceptance to the Supplications unto His Majesty from the Lords of Councell, and the Commissioners both of Parliament, and of the Generall Assembly.

Because the unhappy division betwixt the King and the Parliament of England is a great impediment to the work of Reformation, and to the settling of a firme Peace in His Majesties Dominions, it is our dutie to recommend earnestly to the Lord, that the differences may be composed in such a way as may most conduce to advance the so much wished for Unity of Religion, and uniformitie of worship and Kirk-government.

Finally, that the Lord would discover and disappoint VI. all the conspiracies, counsells, and machinations, which tend to the execution of the bloudie decrees of Trent, the fountain whence hath issued all the troubles and persecutions to the Reformed Kirks, and quickly destroy the man of Sinne.

FINIS.

0488

