

He commendeth the Lady and her fannes for continuing in the old faith, bidding them so to doe hereafter also, lest they lose the reward of their workes in the day of iudgement: and to loue the true beleeuers, but with Heretikes to haue no societie: expressing also the points then in controuersie.

The Seniour to the Lady Elect and her children, whom I loue in truth, and not I only, but also al that haue knowen the truth, ² for the truth which abideth in vs, and shal be with vs for euer. ³ Grace be with you, mercie, peace from God the Father, and from Chrif IESVS the Sonne of the Father in truth, and charitie.

⁴ I was exceeding glad, because I haue found of thy children walking in truth, as we haue receiued commandement of the Father. ⁵ And now I beseech thee Lady, not as writing a new commandement to thee, but that which we haue had ^afrom the beginning, that we loue one another. ⁶ And this is charitie, that we walke according to his commandements. For this is the commandement, that as you haue heard from the beginning, you walke in the same: ⁷ because many seducers are gone out into the world, which doe not confesse IESVS Chrif to haue come into flesh: this is a seducer and an Antichrif.

⁸ Looke to your felues, that you lose not the things which you haue wrought: but that you may receiue a full ^areward. ⁹ Euery one that ^breuolteth, and perfitteth not in the doctrine of Chrif, hath not God. He that perfitteth in the doctrine, the same hath both the Father, and the Sonne. ¹⁰ If any man come to you, and bring not ^athis doctrine, ^areceiue him not into the house, ^anor say, *God faue you*, vnto him. ¹¹ For he that faith vnto him, *God faue you*, communicateth with his wicked workes.

^a Reward for keeping fast the Catholike faith.

^b To goe backe or reuolt from the receiued truth and doctrine Apostolical, is damnable.

¹² Hauing moe things to write vnto you: I would not by paper and inke: for I hope that I fhall be with you, and fpeake mouth to mouth: that your ioy may be ful. ¹³ The children of thy fifter elect falute thee.

ANNOTATIONS

5 From the beginning.) This is the Rule of a Chriftian Catholike man, to walke in that faith and worship of God which he hath receiued from the beginning. Which is that which we now cal according to the Scriptures, *the tradition of the Apoftles*: that which is come to vs from man to man, from Bishop to Bishop, and fo from the Apoftles. So fhall a faithful man auoid feducers that rife vs in euery Age, teaching new doctrine.

To hold faft the old receiued faith.

10 This doctrine.) The Apoftles, and true Paftours their lawful Succellours, and the Church of God in holy Councel, vfe to fet downe the true doctrine in thofe points which Heretikes cal into controuerfie. Which being once done and declared to the faithful, they need no other marke or defcription to know an Heretike or falfe Teacher by, but that he commeth with an other doctrine then that which is fet downe to them. Neither can the Heretikes shift themfelues, as now a-daies they would doe, faying, ô let vs firft be proued Heretikes by the Scriptures, let them define an Heretike. No, this is not the Apoftles Rule. Many a good honeft shepheard knoweth a wolfe, that can not define him. But the Apoftle faith, If he bring not this fet doctrine, he is a feducer. So holy Church faith now, Chrift is really in the B. Sacrament, vnder forme of bread and wine &c. If therfore he bring not this doctrine, he is a feducer, and an Heretike and we muft auoid him, whether in his owne definitions and cenfures he feeme to himfelf an Heretike or no.

To bring wilfully another doctrine then the Catholike Church fetteth downe, is alwaies a marke of feducers & Heretikes.

10 Receiue him not.) Though in fuch times and places where the communitie or moft part be infected, neceffitie often forceth the faithful to conuerfe with fuch in worldly affaires, to falute them, to eate and fpeake with them, & the Church by decree of Councel, for the more quietnes of timorous confciences prouideth, that they incurre not excommunication or other cenfures for communicating in worldly affaires with any in this kind, except they be by name excommunicated or declared to be Heretikes: yet euen in worldly conuerfation and fecular actes of our life, we muft auoid them as much as we may, becaufe their familiaritie is many waies contagious and noifome to good men, namely to the fimple: but in matter of religion, in praying, reading their bookes, hearing their fermons, prefence at their feruice, partaking of their Sacraments, and al other communicating with them in fpiritual things, it is a great damnable finne to deale with them.

When & wherein to cōuerfe with Heretikes, is tolerable, when & wherein, it is damnable.

10 Nor fay, God faue you.) S. Irenæus (*li. 3. c. 3.*) reporteth a notable ftorie of this holy Apoftle touching this point, our of Polycarpe, which is this. *There be fome (faith he) that haue heard Polycarpe fay, that when Iohn the Difciple of our Lord was going to Ephesus, into a bath, to wash himfelf, and faw Cerinthus the Heretike within the fame, he fodenly fhips out, faying that he feared left the bath fhould fal, becaufe Cerinthus the enemie of truth was within.* So faith he of S. Iohn, and addeth alfo a like worthie example of S. Polycarpe himfelf: who on a time meeting Marcion the Heretike, and the faid Marcion calling vpon him and asking whether he knew him not: Yes, quoth Polycarpe, *I know thee for Satans fonne and heire. So great feare (faith S. Irenæus) had the Apoftles & their difciples to communicate in word only, with fuch as were adulterers or corrupters of the truth: as S. Paul alfo warned, when he faid, A man that is an Heretike, after the firft and fecond admonition auoid.* So farre Irenæus. If then to fpeake with them or falute them, is fo earnestly to be auoided according to this Apoftles example & doctrine; what a finne is it to flatter them, to ferue them, to marrie with them, and fo-forth?

Tit. 3.

S. Iohn would not be in one bath with Cerinthus the Heretike.

The like zeale of S. Polycarpe, and other Apoftolike men in not communicating with Heretikes.