

Chapter 04

We may not beleue al that boast of the fpirit, but trie them, whether they teach Catholike articles of the faith (namely the incarnation of Chrif:) whether their doctrine be not worldly, and themfelues difobedient hearers of the Apoftles. 7. We muft loue one another, confidering the exceeding loue of God in fending his Sonne to faue vs. 17. An argument of perfect charitie is, if we haue nothing in our confcience to feare in the day of iudgement. 19. And an argument that we loue God is, if we loue our Brethren.

My Deareft, ¹beleue not euery fpirit, but ²proue the fpirits if they be of God: becaufe many falfe Prophets are gone out into the world. ³In this is the fpirit of God knowen. ⁴Euery fpirit that confeffeth IESVS Chrif to haue come in flefh, is of God: ⁵and euery fpirit ⁶that diffolueth IESVS, is not of God: and this is Antichrift, of whom you haue heard that he commeth, and now he is in the world. ⁷You are of God, litle children, and haue ouercome him. Becaufe greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world. ⁸They are of the world: therefore of the world they fpeake, and the world heareth them. ⁹We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth vs. He that is not of God, heareth vs not. ¹⁰In this we know the fpirit of truth, and the fpirit of errour.

τὸ τοῦ ἀντι-
χρίστου

*Io. 8, 47.
10, 17.*

Io. 3, 16.

¹¹My Deareft, let vs loue one another: becaufe charitie is of God. And euery one that loueth is borne of God, & knoweth God. ¹²He that loueth not, knoweth not God: becaufe God is charitie. ¹³In this hath the charitie of God appeared in vs, becaufe God hath fent his only-begotten Sonne into the world that we may liue by him. ¹⁴In this is charitie: not as though we haue loued him, but becaufe he hath loued vs, and fent his Sonne a propitiation for our finnes.

¹¹ My Deareft, if God hath fo loued vs, we alfo ought to loue one another. ¹² God ^a)no man hath feen at any time. If we loue one another, God abideth in vs, and his charitie in vs is perfited. ¹³ In this we know that we abide in him, and he in vs: becaufe he of his Spirit hath giuen to vs. ¹⁴ And we haue feen, and doe teftifie, that the Father hath fent his Sonne the Sauour of the world. ¹⁵ Whofoeuer fhall confeffe that IESVS is the Sonne of God, God abideth in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ And we haue knowen and haue beleued the charitie, which God hath in vs. God is charitie: and he that abideth in charitie, abideth in God, and God in him. ¹⁷ In this is charitie perfited with vs, [†]that we may haue confidence in the day of iudgement: becaufe as he is, we alfo are in the world. ¹⁸ [†]Feare is not in charitie: but perfect charitie cafteth out feare, becaufe feare hath painefulnes. And he that feareth, is not perfect in charitie. ¹⁹ Let vs therefore loue God, becaufe God firft hath loued vs. ²⁰ If any man fhall fay, that I loue God; and hateth his brother, he is a lier. For he that loueth not his brother whom he feeth, God whom he feeth not, how can he loue? ²¹ And this commandement we haue from God: that he which loueth God, loue alfo his brother.

Io. 1. 18.
1. Tim. 6, 16.

Io. 13, 34.
15, 12.

ANNOTATIONS

1 Beleeue not euery fpirit.) That is, Receiue not euery doctrine of fuch as boaft themfelues to haue the fpirit. For there be many falfe Prophets, that is to fay, Heretikes, which fhall goe out of the Church, and challenge the fpirit, and vant of God's word, Scripture, and Ghofpel, which indeed be feducers.

Heretical boasting of the fpirit.

1 Proue the fpirits.) It is not meant by this place, as the Proteftants would haue it, that euery particular perfon fhould of himfelf examine, trie, or iudge who is a true or falfe Doctour, and which is true or falfe doctrine. But the Apoftle here would euery one to difcerne thefe diuerfities of fpirits, by taking knowledge of them to whom God hath giuen the gift of difcerning fpirits and doctrines (which S. Paul exprefly faith is giuen but to fome, and

The Church only, not euery priuate man, hath to proue & difcerne fpirits.

^a No man in this life, nor with corporal eyes, can fee the proper effence or fubftance of the Deitie. See S. Auguft. *ad Paulin. de vidēdo Deo. ep. 112.*

not to euery one, *1. Cor. 12.*) & by obeying the Church of God, to whom Chrift hath giuen the Spirit of truth. And this is only the fure way to proue the fpirits and doctrines of thefe daies. And al they that would bring vs from our Pafours and the Churches iudgement, to our owne priuate trial, feeke nothing els but to driue vs to miferable vncertainty in al our beleefe: As Caluin doth, who *vpon this place* faith, that priuate men may examine the general Councils doctrines.

Caluin.

2 Euery fpirit that confeffeth.) The Apoftle fpeaketh according to that time, and for that part of Chriftian doctrine which then was fpecially to be cōfessed, taught, & maintained againft certaine wicked Heretikes, Corinthus, Ebion, & the like, that taught wickedly againft the Perfon and both natures of Chrift IESVS. The Apoftle therefore giueth the faithful people this tokē to know the true Teachers of thofe daies frō the falfe. Not that this marke would ferue for al times, or in cafe of al other falfe doctrines, but that it was then a neceffarie note. As if a good Catholike Writer, Pafour, or parents would warne al theirs, now in thefe daies, to giue eare only to fuch Teachers as acknowledge Chrift our Sauour to be really prefent, and facrificed in the B. Maffe, & that al fuch are true Preachers and of God, the reft to be of the Diuel, or to be counted the fpirit of Antichrift. Which fpirit of Antichrift (he faith) was come euen then, and is no doubt much more now in al Heretikes, al being precurfours of that great Antichrift which fhall come towards the later end.

To confeffe or deny any article which the Cath. Church teacheth, is at al times a certaine marke of Catholike or Heretike.

3 That diffolueth.) To diffolue, loofe, or feperate IESVS a-funder, was proper to al thofe old Heretikes that taught either againft his Diuinitie, or Humanitie, or the Vnitie of his Perfon, being of two natures, as Cerinthus, Ebion, Neftorius, Eutyches, Manes, or Manichæus, Cerdon, Apelles, Apollinaris and the like. And this is one place by which we may fee that the cōmon Greek copies be not euer authentical, & that our old approved tranflation may not alwaies be examined by the Greek that now is, which the Proteftants only follow: but that it is to be prefuppofed, when our old Latin text differeth plainely from the Greek, that in old time either al or the more approved Greek reading was otherwife, & that often the faid Greek was corrupted then or fince by Heretikes or otherwife. For of the Greeks, S. Irenæus *li. 3. c. 18:* among the Latin Fathers, S. Auguftin *tract. 6. in fine*, S. Leo *ep. 10. c. 5.* and Venerable Bede did read as we doe. And this reading maketh more againft the faid Heretikes, then that which the common Greek now hath, to wit, *Euery fpirit that confeffeth not Chrift to haue come in flesh, is not of God.* Which is alfo in effect faid before vers. 2. And that therefore it was corrupted and altered by Heretikes, fee the words of Socrates alfo a Greek Writer, very agreeable to this purpofe. *Neftorius (faith he) being eloquent by nature, which is often in Heretikes, accounted himfelf therfore learned, & difdained to ftudy the old Interpreters, counting himfelf*

Many old herefies that diffolued Chrift.

The Greek text corrupted by old heretikes.

li. 7. c. 32.

better then them al: being ignorant that in S. Johns Catholike epistle the old (Greek) copies had: EVERY ONE THAT DISSOLVETH IESVS, IS NOT OF GOD. So faith he, adding moreouer that fuch as would feparate the diuinitie from the difpenfation of Chrif't's humanitie, took out of the old copies this fenfe. For which the old Expofitours noted that thefe which would loofe IESVS, had corrupted this Epiftle. See alfo the *Tripartite li. 12. c. 4.*

6 In this we know.) This is the moft fure & general marke to know the true fpirits and Prophets from the falfe: that thofe which be of God, wil heare and obey their Apoftles & lawful Paftours fucceeding the Apoftles, & fubmit themfelues to the Church of God: the other, that be not of God, wil not heare either Apoftle, Paftour, or Church, but be their owne Iudges.

A fure marke of true or falfe Teachers.

17 That we may haue confidence.) Confidence called in Latin *Fiducia*, is neither, al one with faith, nor a perfuafion infallible that maketh a man no leffe fecure and certaine of his faluation, then of the things that we are bound to beleue, as the Proteftants falſely teach: but it is only a hope wel corroborated, confirmed, and ftrengthened vpon the promifes and grace of God, and the parties merits. And the words both following and going before, proue alfo euidently againft the Proteftants, that our confidence and hope in the day of iudgement dependeth not only vpon our apprehenſion of Chrif't's merits by faith, or vpon his grace and mercie, but alfo vpon our conformitie to Chrif't in this life, in charitie and good workes. And that is the doctrine of S. Peter when he ſaid, *Labour, that by good workes you may make fure your vocation and election:* and S. Paules meaning, when he ſaid, *I haue fought a good fight, there is laid vp for me a crowne of iuſtice, which our Lord wil render to me in that day a iuſt iudge.*

Againſt the Proteſtants ſpecial faith and prefumptuous ſecuritie of faluation.

2. Pet. 1, 10.

2. Tim. 4, 7.

18 Feare is not in Charitie.) The Heretikes very falſly vnderſtand this place ſo, that Chriſtian godly men ought to haue no doubt, miſtruſt, or feare of hel and damnation. Which is moſt euidently againſt the Scriptures, commending euery-where vnto vs the awe and feare of God and his iudgements. *Feare him* (faith our Sauour *Mat. 10.*) *that can caſt body and ſoul into hel.* And *Pfal. 118.* *Pearſe my fleſh with thy feare.* Which feare of God's iudgements cauſed S. Paul and al good men to chaſtife their bodies, left they ſhould be reprobate and damned. And the wife man for this cauſe affirmeth him to be happie, *that is euer fearful.* And holy Iob faith, *I feared al my workes.* And the Apoftle, *With feare and trembling worke your faluation.* Which kind of feare is euen in the iuſteſt men and moſt ful of charitie, conſiſting wel with the fame vertue, and is calleth *Filialis timor*, becauſe it is fuch as the good child ought to haue toward his Father.

The feare of God in iuſt men, conſiſteth with charitie.

1. Cor. 9.

Prou. 28.

Iob. c. 9.

Phil. 2.

But there is a kind of feare which ſtandeth not with charitie, and is cleane againſt hope alfo, that which bringeth fuch perplexitie and anxietie of conſcience, that it induceth a mā to miſtruſt or deſpaire of God's mercies. That feruile feare alfo which maketh

What feare agreeth not with charitie.

a man often to leaue finning & to doe the external workes of iuftice, not for any loue or delight he hath in God or his lawes, but only for feare of damnation, though it be not il in it-felf, but very profitable, as that which helpeth toward the loue of God, yet it ftādeth not with charitie neither, but is daily more & more leffened, & at length quite driuen out by charitie. Of thefe kind of feares then the Apofte fpeaketh, and (as fome expound) of the feare of men alfo, of which our Sauour faith, *Feare not them that kil the body.*

Seruile feare is not il.

Mat. 10.