

Chapter 1

The foundation of his Apostleship being laid, 8. he highly commendeth the Romanes, and protesteth his affection towards them. And so comming to the matter, faith, our Christian Catholike doctrine (that teacheth al to beleue) to be the way to saluation: because the Gentils (first of al) could not be faued by their Philosophie, whereby they knew God, forsomuch as they did not serue him, but Idols; he therefore iustly permitting them to fall into al kind of most damnable sinne.

Act. 13, 2.

εἰς ὑπακο-
ῇν πίστεως

Paul the seruant of IESVS CHRIST, called to be an Apostle, separated vnto the Ghospel of God, ² which before he had promised by his Prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ of his Sonne, (who was made to him of the seed of Dauid according to the flesh, ⁴ who was predestinate the Sonne of God in power, according to the spirit of sanctification, by the resurrection of our Lord IESVS CHRIST from the dead, ⁵ by whom we receiued grace and Apostleship ^{a)} for obedience to the faith ^{b)} in al Nations for the name of him, ⁶ among whom are you also the called of IESVS CHRIST:) ⁷ to al that are at Rome the beloued of God, called to be Saints. ✠ Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord IESVS CHRIST.

ᾧ λατρεύω

⁸ Firft I giue thanks to my God through IESVS CHRIST for al you, because ✠ your faith is renowned in the whole world. ⁹ For God is my witnes, whom I serue ✠ in my spirit in the Ghospel of his Sonne, that ^{c)} without intermiffion I make ✠ a memorie of you ¹⁰ alwaies in my praiers, beseeching, if by any meanes I may fometime at

^a Faith muft not be fubiect to fenfe, reaſon, arguing or vnderſtanding, but muft commād, & be obeid in humilitie and ſimplicitie.

^b S. Auguſtin vſeth this place and the like againſt Heretikes, which would draw the common Catholike faith of al Nations, to ſome certaine countries or corners of the world. *Aug. ep. 161.*

^c He praieieth without intermiſſion that omitteth no day certaine times of praier. *Aug. hæref. 57.*

the length haue a prosperous iourney by the wil of God, to come vnto you. ¹¹ For I defire to see you, that I may impart vnto you some ſpiritual grace, to ^a)confirmē you: ¹² that is to ſay, to be comforted together in you by that which is common to vs both, your faith & mine. ¹³ And I wil not haue you ignorāt (Brethren) that I haue often purpoſed to come vnto you (and haue been ſtaied hitherto) that I may haue ſome fruit in you, as alſo in the other Gentils. ¹⁴ To the Greeks & the Barbarous, to the wife and the vnwife I am debter. ¹⁵ So (as much as is in me) I am ready [♣]to euangelize to you alſo that are at Rome.

¹⁶ For I am not aſhamed of the Ghospel. For it is the power of God, vnto ſaluation to euery one that beleeueth, to the Iewes firſt and to the Greeke. ¹⁷ For ^b)the iuſtice of God is reuealed therein by faith into faith; as it is written: *And the iuſt [♣]liueth by faith.*

Abac. 2, 4.

¹⁸ For the wrath of God from Heauen [♣]is reuealed, vpon al impietie and iniuſtice of thoſe men that deteine the veritie of God in iniuſtice: ¹⁹ becauſe, that of God which is knowen, is manifeſt in them. For God hath manifeſted it vnto them. ²⁰ For his inuiſible things, from the creation of the world are ſeen, being vnderſtood by thoſe things that are made; his eternal power alſo and Diuinitie: ſo that they are inexcufable. ²¹ Becauſe whereas they knew God, they haue not glorified him as God, or giuen thanks: but are become vaine in their cogitations, and their fooliſh hart hath been darkned. ²² For, ſaying themſelues to be wife, they became fooles. ²³ And they changed the glorie of the incorruptible God, into a [♣]ſimilitude of the image of a corruptible man,

^a The Romanes were conuerted & taught by S. Peter before. Therefore he vſeth that ſpeech, to cōfirme them in their faith. *Authour Com apud Hier. Theodoret. in 16. Rom. & Chryſ.*

^b He meaneth not God's owne iuſtice in himſelf, but that iuſtice wherwith God indoweth man when he iuſtifieth him. *Aug. de Sp. & lit. c. 9.* Whereby you may gather the vanitie of the Heretical imputatiue iuſtice.

^c Loe theſe & the like are the Images or Idols ſo often condemned in the ſcriptures, & not the holy Images of Chriſt and his Saints.

ἐλάτρευσαν

and of foules and foure-footed beafts and of them that creep. ²⁴ (For the which caufe God ^a)hath deliuered them vp vnto the defires of their hart, into vncleanneffe, for to abufe their owne bodies among themfelues ignominiously.) ²⁵ Who haue changed the veritie of God into lying: and haue worfhipped & ferued the creature rather then the Creatour, who is bleffed for euer. Amen. ²⁶ Therefore [♠]God hath deliuered them into paffiōs of ignominie. For their women haue changed the natural vfe, into that vfe that is contrarie to nature. ²⁷ And in like manner the men alfo, leauing the natural vfe of the woman, haue burned in their defires one toward another, men vpon men working turpitude, & the reward of their error (which they fhould) receauing in themfelues. ²⁸ And as they liked not to haue God in knowledge; God deliuered them vp into a reprobate fenfe, to doe thofe things that are not conuenient: ²⁹ replenifhed with al iniquitie, malice, fornication, auarice, wickednes, ful of enuie, murder, contention, guile, malignitie, whifpers, ³⁰ detractours, odible to God, contumelious, proud, hawtie, inuentours of euil things, difobedient to parents, ³¹ foolifh, diffolute, without affection, without fidelitie, without mercie. ³² Who whereas they knew the iuftice of God, did not vnderftand that they which doe fuch things, are [♠]worthie of death: not only they that doe them, but they alfo that confent to the doers.

ANNOTATIONS

7 Grace to you & peace.) It is a kind of bleffing rather then a prophane falutatiō, proper to the Apoftles, of greater vertue thē the benedictiōs of the Fathers in the old Testament. The holy Fathers of the Church feemed to abfteine from it for their reuerence to the Apoftles. The Manichees (*Auguft. cont. ep.*

Apoftolical falutatiō or bleffing.

Epiph. har. 66.

The fame vfed of Heretikes.

^a *Eph. 4, 19.* He faith, *They haue deliuered or giuen vp themfelues to al vncleanneffe.* By which cōferēce of fcriptures we learne that thēfelues are the caufe of their owne finne and damnation, God of his iuftice permitting & leauing them to their owne wil, and fo giuing them vp into paffions &c.

fundæ. c. 5. 6.) and other Heretikes (as also theſe of our time) becauſe they would be counted Apoſtles, often vſe it.

8 Your faith renowned.) The holy Doctours vpon theſe words of the Apoſtle, and ſpecially by our Maiſters promiſe made to Peter, that his faith ſhould not faile, giue great teſtimonie for the prouidence of God in the preferuation of the Romane faith. S. Cyprian thus: *ep. 51. nu. 6. They are ſo bold to cary letters from prophane Schifmatikes to the chaire of Peter and the principal Church whence Prieſtly vnitie roſe: not conſidering the Romanes to be them whoſe faith (the Apoſtle being the commender) was praized, to whom miſbeleefe can not haue acceſſe. So S. Hierom Apolog. adu. Ruff. li. 3. c. 4. to. 2. Know you that the Romane faith commended by the Apoſtles mouth, wil receiue no ſuch deceites, nor can be poſſibly changed, though an Angel taught otherwiſe, being ſenſed by S. Pauls authoritie. Againe ep. 63. ad Pammach & Oceanum c. 4. to. 2. Whatſoeuer thou be that auouchſt new ſectes, I pray thee haue reſpect to the Romane eares, ſpare the faith which was praized by the Apoſtles voice. And in another place: Wil ye know, ô Paula, and Fuſtochium, how the Apoſtle hath noted euery prouince with their proprietieſ? the faith of the people of Rome is praized. Where is there ſo great concourſe to Churches and Martyrs ſepulchers? Where foundeth, Amos, like thunder from heauen, or where are the temples (void of Idols) ſo ſhaken as there? Not that the Romanes haue another faith then the reſt of the Chriſtian Churches, but that there is in them more deuotion and ſimplicite of faith. In another place the ſame Holy Doctour ſignifieth that it is al one to ſay, the Romane faith, and the Catholike. Apolog. 1. adu. Ruff. c. 1. So doth S. Cyprian. ep. 12. num. 1. ad Antonianum: and S. Ambroſe de obitu fratris, in med. Whereupon, this word, Romane, is added to Catholike, in many countries where Sectes doe abound, for the better diſtinction of true beleeuers from Heretikes: which in al Ages did hate and abhorre the Romane faith and Church, as al malefactours doe their Iudges and correctours.*

The Romane faith highly commended.

It can not faile nor be corrupted.

The Romane ſtatutions, a tokē of greater faith and deuotion.

The Catholike and Romane faith al one.

9 Serue in ſpirit.) Diuerſe Heretikes when they heare that God is a ſpirit, and muſt be ſerued and adored in ſpirit, imagin that he muſt be honoured only inwardly, without ceremonies & external workes: which you ſee is otherwiſe, for that the Apoſtle ſerued God in ſpirit, by preaching the Ghospel. To ſerue God then in ſpirit, is to ſerue him with faith, hope, and charitie, and with al workes proceeding of them: as to ſerue him carnally, is, with workes external, without the ſaid internal vertues.

How God is ſerued in ſpirit.

9 A memorie of you.) A great example of charitie for al men, ſpecially for Prelates & Paſtours, not only to preach, but to pray continually for the conuerſion of people to Chriſts faith: Which the Apoſtle did for them whom he neuer knew, in reſpect of God's honour only and the zeale of foules.

Praier for conuerſion of foules.

15 To euangelize.) The Ghospel is not only the life of our Sauour written by the foure Euangelifts, nor only that which is written in the new Teftament: but their whole courfe of preaching & teaching the faith. Which faith commeth ordinarily of preaching & hearing, and not of writing or reading. And therfore S. Paul thought not himfelf difcharged by writing to the Romanes, but his defire was to preach vnto them: for that was the proper comiffion giuen to the Apoftles, to preach to al Nations. The writing of the bookes of the Teftament, is another part of God's prouidence, neceffarie for the Church in general, but not neceffarie for euery man in particular: as to be taught and preached vnto, is for euery one of age and vnderftanding. And therfore S. Peter (who was the cheefe of the Commiffion wrote litle; many of them wrote nothing at al: and S. Paul that wrote moft, wrote but litle in comparifon of his preaching) not to any but fuch as were conuerted to the faith by preaching before.

Mat. 28.

17 Liueth by faith.) In the 10. to the Hebrewes, he fheweth by this place of the Prophet (*Abacuc. 2.*) that the iuft though he liue here in peregrination, and feeth not prefently nor enioyeth the life euerlafting promifed to him, yet holdeth faft the hope therof by faith. In this place he applieth the Prophets wordes further to this fenfe, That it is our faith, that is to fay, *the Catholike beleefe (faith S. Auguftin li. 3. cont. 2. ep. Pelag.) which maketh a iuft man, and diftinguifheth between the iuft and vniuft;* and that by the law of faith, and not by the law of workes. Whereof it rifeth, that the Iew, the Heathen Philofopher, and the Heretike, though they excelled in al workes of moral vertues, could not yet be iuft: and a Catholike Chriftian man liuing but an ordinarie honeft life, either not finning greatly, or fupplying his faults by penãce, is iuft. And this difference rifeth by faith. Not that faith can faue any man without workes, *For it is not a reprobate faith that we fpeake of,* (as the holy Doctour faith) *but that which worketh by charitie,* and therefore remitteth finnes and maketh one iuft. See *S. Auguftines place.*

18 Is reuealed.) By al the paffage following you may fee, that the Ghospel and Chrift's law confifteth not only in preaching faith (though that be the ground, & is firft alwaies to be done) but to teach vertuous life and good workes, and to denounce damnation to al them that commit deadly finnes & repent not. And againe we fee that not only lacke of faith is a finne, but al other actes done againft God's commandements.

26 Hath deliuered them vp.) As he faith here, God deliuered them vp, fo to the Ephefians (*c. 4. 19.*) he faith of the fame perfons and things: They deliuered themfelues vp to al vn-cleaneffe. So that it is not meant here that God doth driue, force, or caufe any man to finne, as diuers blafphemous Heretikes doe hold; but only that by his iuft iudgement, for their owne deferuing, and for due punifhment of their former grieuous offences,

The Ghospel is not only the written word.

The Apoftles writing, and preaching, whether more neceffarie, and how.

The Catholike or Chriftian faith with good workes iuftifieth, & without this faith, no workes whatfoeuer.

Not only by faith.

God is not the author of finne.

God punifheth finne by permitting men to fal further and further.

he withholdeth his grace from them, and so suffreth them to fall further into other finnes. As, for their crime of Idolatrie, to suffer them to fall into vnnatural abominations: as now for heresie, he taketh his grace and mercie from many, and so they fall headlong into all kind of turpitude: as contrariwise, for ill life, he suffreth many to fall into heresie. And for Christs sake let every one that is entangled with the Idolatrie of this time, that is to say, with these new Sectes, looke well into his owne conscience, whether his forsaking the true God, may not come vnto him for a punishment of his former or present ill life which he liueth.

32 Worthie of death.) Here you see why the Church taketh some finnes to be deadly, and calleth them mortal: to wit, because all that doe them, are worthy of damnation: others be venial, that is to say, pardonable of their owne nature and not worthy of eternal damnation.

Sinnes mortal and venial.