

*He commendeth the Lady and her fannes for continuing in the old faith, bidding them so to doe hereafter also, left 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.*

**T**he 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, <sup>2</sup> for the truth which abideth in vs, and ſhal be with vs for euer. <sup>3</sup> Grace be with you, mercie, peace from God the Father, and from Chriſt IESVS the Sonne of the Father in truth, and charitie.

*Io. 15, 12.  
1. Io. 3, 11.*

<sup>4</sup> I was exceeding glad, becauſe I haue found of thy children walking in truth, as we haue receiued commandement of the Father. <sup>5</sup> And now I beſeech thee Lady, not as writing a new commandement to thee, but that which we haue had <sup>a</sup>from the beginning, that we loue one another. <sup>6</sup> 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: <sup>7</sup> becauſe many feducers are gone out into the world, which doe not confeſſe IESVS Chriſt to haue come into fleſh: this is a feducer and an Antichriſt.

*Ro. 16, 17.*

<sup>8</sup> Looke to your felues, that you loſe not the things which you haue wrought: but that you may receiue a full <sup>a</sup>reward. <sup>9</sup> Euery one that <sup>b</sup>reuolteth, and perſifteth not in the doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God. He that perſifteth in the doctrine, the ſame hath both the Father, and the Sonne. <sup>10</sup> If any man come to you, and bring not <sup>a</sup>this doctrine, <sup>a</sup>receiue him not into the houſe, <sup>a</sup>nor ſay, *God ſaue you*, vnto him. <sup>11</sup> For he that faith vnto him, *God ſaue you*, communicateth with his wicked workes.

<sup>a</sup> Reward for keeping faſt the Catholike faith.

<sup>b</sup> To goe backe or reuolt from the receiued truth and doctrine Apoſtolicall, is damnable.

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

## ANNOTATIONS

5 From the beginning.) This is the Rule of a Chriſtian Catholike man, to walke in that faith and worſhip of God which he hath receiued from the beginning. Which is that which we now call according to the Scriptures, *the tradition of the Apoſtles*: that which is come to vs from man to man, from Biſhop to Biſhop, and ſo from the Apoſtles. So ſhall a faithful man auoid feducers that riſe vs in euery Age, teaching new doctrine.

To hold faſt the old receiued faith.

10 This doctrine.) The Apoſtles, and true Paſtours their lawful Succeſſours, and the Church of God in holy Councel, vſe to ſet downe the true doctrine in thoſe points which Heretikes call into controuerſie. Which being once done and declared to the faithful, they need no other marke or deſcription to know an Heretike or falſe Teacher by, but that he commeth with an other doctrine then that which is ſet downe to them. Neither can the Heretikes ſhift themſelues, as now a-daies they would doe, ſaying, ô let vs firſt be proued Heretikes by the Scriptures, let them define an Heretike. No, this is not the Apoſtles Rule. Many a good honeſt ſhepherd knoweth a wolfe, that can not define him. But the Apoſtle faith, If he bring not this ſet doctrine, he is a feducer. So holy Church faith now, Chriſt 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 muſt auoid him, whether in his owne definitions and cenſures he ſeeme to himſelf an Heretike or no.

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

10 Receiue him not.) Though in ſuch times and places where the communitie or moſt part be infected, neceſſitie often forceth the faithful to conuerſe with ſuch in worldly affaires, to ſalute them, to eate and ſpeake with them, & the Church by decree of Councel, for the more quietnes of timorous conſciences prouideth, that they incurre not excommunication or other cenſures 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 conuerſation and ſecular actes of our life, we muſt auoid them as much as we may, becauſe their familiaritie is many waies contagious and noiſome to good men, namely to the ſimple: but in matter of religion, in praying, reading their bookes, hearing their ſermons, preſence at their ſeruice, partaking of their Sacraments, and al other communicating with them in ſpiritual things, it is a great damnable finne to deale with them.

When & wherein to cōuerſe 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 Polycarpus, 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 skips out, faying that he feared left the bath should 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 earneftly 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.