

D84

Church-History

H. Brown OF THE *Liverpool*

GOVERNMENT

OF

BISHOPS

AND THEIR

COUNCILS

ABBREVIATED.

Including the chief part of the Government of Christian Princes and *POPES*, and a true Account of the most troubling Controversies and Heresies till the

R E F O R M A T I O N.

Written for the use especially of them,

- I. Who are ignorant or misinformed of the State of the Ancient Churches.
- II. Who cannot read many and great Volumes.
- III. Who think that the Universal Church must have one Visible Sovereign, Personal or Collective, Pope or General Councils.
- IV. Who would know whether Patriarchs, Diocelans, and their Councils, have been, or must be the cure of Heresies and Schismes.
- V. Who would know the truth about the great Heresies which have divided the Christian World, especially the *Donatists, Novatians, Arians, Macedonians, Nestorians, Eutichians, Monothelites, &c.*

By *RICHARD BAXTER*, a Hater of false History.

L O N D O N :

Printed, and are to be sold by *John Kideell* at the *Atlas* in *Cornhill*, near the *Royal Exchange*, MDCLXXX.

What History is Credible, and what not.

AS the Holy Ghost saith, *Believe not every Spirit*; I may say, Believe not all Reports, or History. It was not only *Abams* Prophets, in whose mouths Satan was a *lying Spirit*: As *lying* and *deceiving* is his work in the world, for the destroying of *Holiness*, and of *Souls*, even when he turneth himself into an Angel of Light; so is it the work of his Ministers, when they seem to be Ministers of Righteousness; when it is oft said (*Be not deceived*) and [*Let no man deceive you with vain words*]; it is more necessary advice, and hardlier followed, than most men understand. As *Truth* is Gods means to work the will to *holy love*, and lead us in a *holy life*, so *Lying* is the Devils means to oppose them: and of all Lyars, none are more pernicious than *lying Historians*, and *lying Preachers*. It is a sad perplexity to the world, that when men read and hear, even the more confident and plausible Histories and Reports, they know not whether they are true or false; and if they believe that to be true which is not, the effect is worse than this perplexity. I will tell you what I take to be credible, and what not.

I. It is presupposed that a man must believe his senses, if found, about their proper objects: Papists that tell us that all mens senses are deceived, when they seem to perceive *Bread* and *Wine* in the Sacrament, do but tell us that no man then is to be believed, and therefore not they themselves.

II. The History of the Gospel is certainly credible, because it was confirmed by multitudes of uncontroled Miracles wrought by Christ, and by his Apostles, and multitudes of Christians; as the Doctrine it self beareth the Image and Supercription of God.

III. The Prophets that had Divine Inspiration and Vision, had that Evidence which gave themselves a certainty, though not to others.

IV. When History delivereth a matter of fact and sense, by the common consent of all men that knew it, though of contrary minds, dispositions, and interests, it giveth us a certainty which may be called *Natural*; because Nature hath nothing in it that could cause such a Conspiracy in *Lying*: That it is so credible as to be a *Natural certainty*, that there is such a place as *Rome*, *Paris*, *Jerusalem*; that the Statutes of the Land are not Forgeries, while all Contenders plead them against each other, and hold by them their Estates and Lives: And so that there was such a Person as *Jesus Christ*, and that the Scriptures were written by the Prophets and Apostles, &c.

V. When the History of any person and action is proved by continued or visible effects: as that *William of Normandy* conquered *England*, while so many of the effects of that Conquest in our Laws and Customs are still visible: And that the *Welsh* were the Ancient *Britains*, driven by the *Saxons* into *Wales*, while their Language, Habitation, &c. shew it: And to that Christ instituted *Baptism*, and *Church-Communion*, and the Apostles separated

parated the Lords Day for holy worship, when the Christian World hath used all these publickly in all places ever since, and do still use them: And so that Temples were built for holy worship, and endowed, when we still see and possess them.

VI. That History is credible which consentingly speaketh against the known interest of the Authors: for mans corrupt nature is apter to flatter, boasting, than to false Confessions of Sin; against a Confessor there needs no Witnesses: And this is much of the credibility of the harsher part of the Church-History which I here recite: What I say of the miscarriages of Bishops and Councils, is mostly in their own words; and what I say against Popes, is but the recital of what is said by the greatest Defenders or Flatterers of Popes: I give you no Reports against the pride, contentions and corruptions of Patriarchs and Prelates, out of the supposed Hereticks, or Protestants; I give you not a word out of *Luther* (who *de Conciliis*) hath very much; and especially speaketh much like as I here do of *Cyril* and *Nestorius*; nor out of *Illyricus* his *Catalogus Testium Veritatis*, nor out of the *Magdeburgensis*, *Osander*, *Steidan*, *Carion*, *Melancthon*, *Mornay's* *Mystery of Iniquity*, no nor out of the Collections of *Goldastus*, *Marquardus*, *Freyherus*, *Ruberus*, *Pistorius*, &c. But the substance of the common History is taken out of the commonly received Church-Historians (*Eusebius*, *Socrates*, *Sozomenus*, *Cassiodorus*, *Theodorite*; *Ruffinus*, *Evagrius*, *Nazianzen*, *Hieron*, *Vilfort*, *Nicéphorus*, *Liberatus*, *Nicetas*, and such others; and the sum of the Councils and Popes is out of *Baronius*, *Anastasius*, but most out of *Binnius*, and *Platina*, and *Aeneas Sylvius* (a Pope,) *Petavius*, and such other as are the greatest Papal Zealots: When these speak for their Cause, I leave you to just suspicion; but when they speak against it, by way of confession or lamentation, they are not to be suspected.

VII. The next degree of credibility dependeth on the Veracity or credible fitness of the Reporter: some men are much more credible than others: For instance.

1. One that was upon the place, and saw what was done, or lived near, where he had full information, is (*ceteris paribus*) more credible than one that followeth uncertain reports, or hear-say.

2. A wise man is much more credible than a proud self-conceited Confident Fool.

3. One that hath made a matter his long and hard study, is (*ceteris paribus*) more to be believed in that matter, than many ignorant men.

4. One that is impartial, a lover of peace, and not engaged by faction or interest to one side against the other, is *ceteris paribus* much more credible than a factious interested man.

5. A sober, calm, considerate man, that will stay and try before he judgeth, is more credible than a passionate or hasty judger.

6. A man of manifest honesty, conscience, and the fear of God, is much more to be believed than a worldly, wicked, bloody, unconscionable

114B.

7. *Ceteris*

7. *Ceteris Paribus* many agreed honest impartial men are more to be believed than one, or a few odd and singular persons, who have no more advantage than the rest to know the truth.

8. The young and unexperienced owe some Reverence to the judgment of their *Seniors*, as more credible by age and experience than their own.

9. Accordingly Children to their Parents, and Scholars to their Masters and Tutors owe such belief as is answerable to their difference, and the use of their learning of them.

By this you may see on the contrary who is not worthy of belief.

I. One that pretendeth Inspiration, Vision, Revelation, and giveth the hearer no sufficient proof of it.

II. One that pretendeth to tell you things beyond his reach; as many Philosophers do about the mysteries of Nature, spiritual and corporeal, Elements or mixt bodies, above and below, of which the Books of many are full, and malignant men, that take on them to tell you other mens hearts, without just proof, that they are hypocrites, and intend that which they never did, or meant ill, when they said or did well; and when false Historians will tell you with what (unproved) ill purposes or deceits, persons a thousand miles off, and perhaps a thousand years past, whom they never knew, did say and do all that is reported of them.

III. When there are but few reporters of things pretended to be known publickly in the world, especially when more credible persons contradict them.

IV. When the person is deeply engaged in a Party, and carrying on all for the interest of his Party, doth give you but his word, or the report of his own Party for what he saith; so that you may perceive that interest byasseth him to partiality.

V. When the Historian sheweth a malignant spirit, that extenuateth or denieth all the good that was in his Adversaries, and fasteneth on them as much *Odium* as he can without just proof, and justifieth all the reproach that is used against them.

VI. When the Historian liveth so far off from the place and time, that he is no competent reporter, having all his notice but by the fame of his own Faction, as incapable as himself.

VII. When the sober moderate men of his own party contradict him, and speak well of the persons whom he reproacheth.

VIII. When the reporter is manifestly a proud, worldly, wicked, unconscionable man, especially of a bloody brutish disposition: For as Gods threefold Influence, or the *Understanding*, *Will* and *Life* is but one, so the Devil doth usually vitiate together the *Understanding*, *Will* and *Life*; and he that is from the beginning an *Enemy*, and a *Murderer*, is also a *Liar*: Though a *wicked*, *malignant* and *eruel* man, may yet have an opinionative faith and knowledge, and preach the truth, when it is for his carnal interest; yet when his malice and interest tempteth him against it, there is no trusting his word.

114C.

IX. When

IX. When an ignorant proud man thinketh that he must be believed merely for the reverence and authority of his place.

X. When the reporter liveth in a time and place where carnal interest hath got the major Vote for falshood, and it passeth commonly for truth, especially where Tyranny, Civil or Ecclesiastical, silenceth the truth in Press, Pulpit, and Discourse, that it dare not be spoken; by which the Papists have not only made their own writings and reports incredible, but by their *Indices Expurgatorias*, and base corrupting of ancient Writers, have weakened our certainty of much of the old History and Fathers.

XI. When the reporter is a weak and silly man, that hath not wit to sift out the truth.

XII. When he is passionately rash, and of hasty judgment, and hath not patience to stay and suspend his judgment till he hear all.

XIII. When it is a Novice or raw Student, that hath not had time, helps and experience to know what he pretends to know, and yet contradicteth wiser men of more advantage and experience.

XIV. When present experience telleth us, that the party that he writeth against as unlearned or wicked, are men of Eminent Learning, and the fear of God; and that the party that he magnifieth as such, are contrary; by such marks incredible History may be discerned.

Qu. *But how can we know mens wisdom, and piety, and honesty, and impartiality, when we never know the men?* Ans. Though hypocrites may much counterfeit truth and goodness, its hard so to do it, but the contrary which ruleth in them will break out, as a stink will get through narrow passages: and though truth and honesty may be much clouded, they have, like light, a self-revealing power.

To give you some instances; as among Physicians *Hypocrites*, and *Galen*, and *Celsus* of old; and of late *Montanus*, *Crato Fernelius*, *Platerus*, *Hildanus*, and such others, do speak with that self-evidencing honesty, and many *Paracelsians* with that palpable vanity, that one of them will constrain belief, and the other unbelief, even in them that never heard what they were: So among Historians, *Ensebius*, though counted an *Arrian*, and *Socrates*, and *Sozomen*, though called *Novatians*, and *Theodoret*, and *Liberatus*, and some others, do write so as to constrain belief of things which were within their notice, and with honest impartiality: Among the Papists, what clear footsteps of understanding, honesty, and impartiality, and so of truth, is there in *Ibuanus*; and much in *Commynes*, *Guicciardine*, *Father Paulus Servita* Hist. of *Trent* Council, and divers others: Though Doctor *Jamer* bid us keep *Crab*, because the later Councils are corrupt, and all of them must be taken with due Antidotes, yet because most of the matter is fetcht from publick Acts and Records, they are more credible than most single History: *Acesta* speaketh impartially of the *West Indies*, and *Godignus* of the *Abassians*, *Matth. Paris* of *England*, and the Pope, and so of some others: Of Protestants, some do but recite recorded testimonies, or publick acts, and the very writings themselves of the times they speak of, when others do but

tell

tell you stories on their bare word: *Goldastus*, *Rubens*, *Freberus* and *Pistorius*, do but give us Collections of the writings of those former Ages, and nothing of their own: So doth Mr. *Rushworth* now in his three Volumes of Collections; and Mr. *Fuller* hath partly done so, and writeth moderately; Mr. *Gilbert Burnet* thus writeth the History of the Reformation, laying not the credit on his word, but on his Evidences; and *Cambden* impartially thus writeth of *Queen Elizabeth*, and in his *Britannia*: *Usher* hath done the like, *de success. Eccles.* of the *Waldenses*; and in his *de Crimordiis Eccl. Brit.* of the *Pelagians*, not saying, but proving by Records, and old Evidences, what he delivereth, besides the advantage of his known extraordinary learning, honesty, and impartiality; so doth *Fax* for the most part in his *Martyrology* give you but the publick Record, or proved Histories (though *Cope* call him lyar) *Melancthon* and *Bucholtzer* were men of such knownincerity, as constraineth credit to their reports.

On the other side, who can believe such palpable Railers as *Tympius*, *Cochleus*, *Genebrard*, and many such, that lye contrary to certain evidence? such as make the Vulgar believe, that *Luther* learnt his Religion of the Devil, and was killed by him; that *Oecolampadius* was kill'd by the Devil; and that *Bucer* had his guts pull'd out, and cast about by the Devil; that *Calvin* was a stigmatized *Sodomite* and *Sensualist*; that *Beza* died a *Papist* (who lived long after to write a Confutation) and abundance such, *Milebius Adam* gathereth his History of Lives from the Pens of those that most intimately knew the persons, what able, holy, laborious, and excellent servants of God were *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Dancus*, *Knox*, and many such, as described by *Adamus*, and in the judgment of those that were their most knowing observers: But what vile rebellious wretches were they in the judgment of Doctor *Heylin*, and such as he? what excellent persons did God use for the beyond-sea Reformation? even as in *France* and *Holland*; *Jewel*, *Bilson*, and other Bishops, defend that which *Heylin* describeth as the most odious Rebellions: He maketh the *Geneva* Presbyterians to do that against their Bishop, which *Dr. Pet. Moulin* in his Answer to *Philanx Anglicus*, sheweth was done before, while they were *Papists*. Some things in *Heylins* History of the Reformation, and the Presbyterians, I believe, which he bringeth Records for; but upon his own word I can scarce believe any thing that he saith, so palpably partial is he, and of so malicious and bloody a strain, representing excellent persons as odious intollerable Rogues, and the Reformation, even of the *Lutherans*, as too bad; but that in *France*, *Belgia*, *Frisland*, the *Palatinate*, *Hungary*, *Transylvania*, *Scotland*, to be but a series of the most odious Rebellions, Murders, and horrid Sacriledges; and ours in *England* to be much the Spawn of King *Henries* Lust, and thinking King *Edward 6.* his death a reasonable mercy; and odiously representing such excellent Bishops as *Grindall*, *Abbot*, and *Usher*, and such excellent Divines as we sent to *Dort*. *Davenant*, *Hill*, *Ward*, *Carlton*, &c. It pleaseth the Prelatits to say true of me, that I am no Presbyterian, and therefore speak not for the persons in partiality, as one of their party; but I must say, as in Gods sight,

fight, that in my own acquaintance, I have found that sort of men, whom Dr. Heylin and such other reproach as Presbyterians and Puritans, to be the most serious, conscionable, practical, sober, and charitable Christians that ever I knew, yea verily the knowledge of them hath been a great help to the steadfastness of my Faith in Christ: Had I known no Christians but carnal, worldly, and formal men, who excel not Heathens in any thing but Opinion, it would have tempted me to doubt whether Christ were the Saviour of Souls, as I should think meanly of the Physician that doth no cures: But when I see holy mortified persons, living in the love of God and man, I see that Faith is not a dead fancy: And when I have lived in intimate familiarity with such, from my Childhood, to the sixty fifth year of my age, and known their integrity, notwithstanding their infirmities; and then read such Histories as represent them as the most odious, flagitious persons, I see it is not for nothing that some men are called *Διαβόλοι* in the Scripture, and the Children of their Father the Devil, who was from the beginning a lying malignant Murderer.

Two Crimes I have long ago heard the Rabble charge on those whom they called Puritans, Lying and Covetousness; whereas near two thousand Ministers are cast out, and suffer, which they could mostly escape, if they durst but lye; and if I ask money for the Poor (of what party soever) I can sooner get a Pound from those called Puritans, than a Shilling from others far richer than they. Can I take any men to be other than malignant liars who would make men believe that such men as Hildersham, Dod, Rogers, Ball, Paul Bagnie, Ames, Bradshaw, &c. were Rogues and seditious Rebels, or that revile such as Usher, Hall, Davenant, &c. Reader, believe not a word of any of the revilings or odious characters and stories, which any aspiring worldly factious Clergy man writeth of such as are his Adversaries: lying is their too common language; yea, if they do but once set themselves eagerly to seek Preferment, I will never trust them, or take their words: It hath been so of old, the same man that was a Saint to his Acquaintance, hath been described as wicked, or a Devil by others: How bad were Origen and Chrysostome to Theophilus, Alexand. and Epiphanius? And how bad was Theophilus to the Historians that write his actions? How excellent a person was Cyril Alex. to the Council of Calcedon, and how bad a man was he to Theodoret, Isidore, Pelus. &c. Ignatius Const. was a Saint to Nicetas, and many others, and to Photius he was an Antichrist, and wicked limb of the Devil: Photius was a holy man to his Party, and a wicked wretch to Nicetas, and others: Yea, see the credit of worldly Prelates; the same Bishops one year cry down Ignatius as a wicked man, and call Photius a holy person, and the next year, or shortly after, cry down Photius for a Rogue, and cry up Ignatius; yea, and upon the next turn cry up holy Photius whom they had anathematized: These doings were familiar with carnal Prelates.

But as Gods Spirit in his servants is so suited to the Doctrine of the same Spirit, that they relish it where they find it; so their piety and honesty is such a self-evidencing thing, that pious and honest men that knew them, cannot believe their lying slanderers. And

And when Satan hath done his worst, the very writings of such men as Calvin, Beza, Melancthon, Perkins, Hildersham, Ames, Dod, Burges, Gataker, Usher, Davenant, Hall, &c. will not suffer men to believe their odious revilers: Even among Papists, when I read the works of Bernard, Gerson, Kempis, Thaulerius, Sales, and the Lives of Nerius, Renti, &c. I cannot believe him that would tell me they were wicked men though faulty: And the Lives written by Adam, Clark, Fuller, &c. shall be believed before Calumniators.

Alas, how little are most Histories to be believed, where they prove not what they say; there are about sixty that say there was a Pope Joan, and near as many that say no such thing. Hildebrand to one half of the Bishops was the holy Restorer of the Church, to the other half the vilest Rebel. We are not agreed here in London who burnt the City in 1666. nor what parties began the late War, nor what party brought the King to death, while we are alive that saw these publick facts: Not only Lads that knew it not, but Heylin (the great Reproacher of the Reformers) would make men believe that it was Presbyterians in England that began the strife and War, when yet he had himself laid so much of it on Archbishops, and Bishops, and on the Parliaments complaints of Popery, Arminianism, and Arbitrary Illegalities; and after faith (Hist. Presb. p. 465. 470.) *The truth is, that as the English generally were not willing to receive that yoke; so neither did the Houses really intend to impose it on them, though for a while to hold fair quarter with the Scots, they seemed forward in it. This appears by their Declaration of April 1646 -- Nor have they lived to see their dear Presbytery settled, or their Lay-Elders entertained in any one Parish of the Kingdom (that's false on the other side) and yet all must be done by this Parliament, as Presbyterians, four years before, when they were Episcopal, disliking only the persons and actions of Bishop Laud, Wren, and some other present Bishops.*

If I find a man like Schlusfeldburgius, fall Pell-mill with reproach on all that differ from him, or Dr. Heylin, speak of blood with pleasure, and as thirsty after more (as of Thacker, Udall, &c.) or as designing to make Dissenters odious, as he and most of the Papists Historians do. (as the Image of both Churches, Philanax Anglicus, the Historical Collections out of Heylin) I will believe none of these revilers, further than they give me Cogent proof.

I hear of a Scots Narrative of the Treasons, Fornications, Witchcrafts, and other wickedness of some of the Scottish Presbyterians; and as for me, the Author knoweth not what to call me, unless it be a Baxterian, as intending to be a Hæresiarcha, being neither Papist, nor of the Church of England, nor Presbyterian, nor Independent, &c.

To this I say, I have no acquaintance with any Scots Minister, nor ever had in my life, except with Bishop Sharp that was murdered, and two other Bishops (and two or three that live here in London) therefore what they are I know not, save by Fame: But though I have heard that Country aspects, as too much inclin'd to Fornication, I never before heard the

Religious

Religious part and Ministers so accused: Either it is *true*, or *false*; if *false*, shame be to the *reporters*; if *true*, what doth it concern us here, or any that are innocent, any further than to abhor it, and lament it, and to be thankful to God that it is another sort of men that are called *Puritans* in *England*; and that in all my acquaintance with them these 56 years (which hath been with very many in many Countries) I remember not that ever I heard of one Puritan, man or woman, save one, accused or suspected of fornication; and that one yet living, though openly penitent, hath lived disowned and shamed to this day; but I have heard of multitudes that revile them, that make a jest and common practice of it: Try whether you can make the Inhabitants of this City believe, that the Nonconformists or Puritans are fornicators, drunkards, or perjured, and that their accusers and haters are innocent men that hate them for such Crimes! But its possible that you may make men of other Countries or Ages believe it, and believe that we wear Horns, and have Cloven Feet, and what you will; but I fear not all your art or advantages on those that are acquainted with both sides: But the misery is, that faction ingageth men to associate only with their party where they hear reproaches of the unknown dissenters, from whom they so estrange themselves, that the Neighbours near them are as much unknown to them, save by lying fame, as if they lived an hundred miles from them. I remember Mr. Cressy once wrote to me, that he turned from the Protestant Religion to the Roman, because there was among us no spiritual Books of Devotion for Soul Elevations, and affectionate Contemplation: And I told him it was Gods just Judgment on him, that lived so strange to his Neighbours, because they are called Puritans, and to their Writings, which Shops and Libraries abound with; had he read Bishop Halls, Mr. Greenham, Mr. Ri. Rogers, Mr. Jo. Rogers, Mr. Hilderham, Mr. Boltons, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Downham, Mr. Reyners, Dr. Sibbes, &c. yea or no better than my own (the Saints Rest, the Life of Faith, the Divine Life, the Christian Directory, &c.) or had he read the Lives of Divines called Puritans (or but such as two young men (published partly by my self) Joseph Allen, and John Janeway) he would never have gone from the Protestants to the Papists, because of our formality and want of an affectionate spiritual sort of devotion, especially knowing what excess of formality is among the Papists, and how much it is of the Clergies accusation of the Puritans, that they are for too little form, and too much pretence of spiritual devotion.

But if any called Religious, or Puritans, or Presbyterians be vicious, I know no men that so heartily desire their punishment and ejection, as those that are called by the same names: I thank God that these twenty years, while neither *Wis*, *Will*, nor *Power* hath been wanting against them, I have scarce heard of two men (if one) that have been judged and proved guilty of any such immorality, of all the ejected silenced Ministers in this Land: I would I could say so of their Adversaries.

II. And now I must speak to the Accusers speeches of my self; I thank you Sir that you feigned no worse against me: if I am an *Heretic*, why would

would not you vouchsafe to name that Heretic which I have owned: I have given you large Field-room, in near 80 Books; and few men can so write, as that a willing man may not find some words which he is able to call Heretic: A little learning, wit, or honesty, will serve for such an hereticating presumption. 2. I never heard that *Arminius* was called an *Arminian*, nor *Luther* a *Lutheran*, nor Bishop *Land* a *Landian*; but if you be upon the knack of making Names, you best know your ends; and best know how to fit them to it. 3. But seriously, do you not know my Judgment? will not about 80 Books inform you? how then can I help it? 4. No, but you know not what Party I am of, nor what to call me; I am sorrier for you in this than for my self; if you know not, I will tell you, I am a CHRISTIAN, a MEER CHRISTIAN, of no other Religion; and the Church that I am of is the Christian Church, and hath been visible where ever the Christian Religion and Church hath been visible: But must you know what Sect or Party I am of? I am against all Sects and dividing Parties: But if any will call *Meer Christians* by the name of a Party, because they take up with *meer Christianity*, *Cred*, and *Scripture*, and will not be of any dividing or contentious Sect, I am of that Party which is so against Parties: If the Name CHRISTIAN be not enough, call me a CATHOLICK CHRISTIAN; not as that word signifieth an hereticating majority of Bishops, but as it signifieth one that hath no Religion, but that which by Christ and the Apostles was left to the Catholick Church, or the Body of Jesus Christ on Earth.

And now Sir, I am sorry that you are not content with meer Christianity, and to be a Member of the Catholick Church, and hold the Communion of Saints, but that you must needs also be of a Sect, and have some other Name: And how shall I know that your Sect is better than another? Were not the Papists Sectaries and Schismatics, damning most of Christs Body on Earth for not being subject to their Pope, I should not be so much against them: I find promises of Salvation in Scriptures to Believers, that is, Christians as such (if such sincerely,) but none of the salvation of men as Papists, *Diocensians*, *Grecians*, *Nestorians*, *Eutychians*, &c. I would say also [nor as Protestants] did I not take the Religion called Protestant (a Name which I am not fond of) to be nothing but *simple Christianity*, with opposition to Popery, and other such corruption. And now you know your own delings, your tongue is your own, and who can controul you, whatever you will call us; but I, and such others, call our selves MEER CHRISTIANS, or CATHOLICK CHRISTIANS, against all Sects and Sectarian names, and haters both of true Heretic, Schism, and proud, unrighteous, hereticating, and Anathematizing. Psal. 4. O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after lying? But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: Psal. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men: They speak vanity every one with his Neighbour, &c. See the rest.

I will add, that if to be serious in the belief of the Christian Faith, and the Life to come, and in seeking it above this world, and in constant endeavours to please God, whoever be displeas'd by it, is it that maketh a man a Puritan, because he is not a formal Hypocrite; then I would I were worthy of the Titles which your Pseudo Titulus and his Brother give me, who say, I am Purus Pritus Puritanus, and one qui totum Puritanismum totus spirat: Alas I am not so good and happy. But Readers, when this sort of men have described the Puritans as the most intollerable Villains, you that knew them not may conclude, that they were men no more erroneous, or worse than I, how much better soever; for Bishop Morley saith of me, *Ab uno disce omnes*: And of my Doctrine, I have left the world a full account; and must shortly be accountable for it and my life to God, whose pardon and grace through Christ I daily beg and trust to.

A Notice concerning Mr. Henry Dodwell.

MR. Dodwell having written a copious Discourse, asserting, that we have no right to salvation, but by Gods Covenant validly sealed by the Sacrament; and that the Sacrament is not valid, unless delivered by one that hath Ordination by such a Bishop as hath his Ordination by another Bishop, and so on by an uninterrupted succession from the Apostles, with much more such Schismatical stuff, which I fully confuted in my Books called, [*The true and only terms of the Concord of all the Christian Churches*] and I aggravated his Schismatical condemnation of the Reformed Churches, and most others (as having no true Ministry, Sacraments, nor Covenant-title to salvation, and as sinning against the Holy Ghost, because he professeth himself a Protestant: The said Mr. Dodwell saith, that these words would perswade men that I take him for a Papist, and expecteth that I therein right him: Be it therefore known to all men, that I never meant by that word to accuse Mr. Dodwell of being a Papist, but to aggravate his abuse of Protestants; and that I take my self bound to charge no man to be of a Religion which he denieth: And what his Religion really is, his Books may best inform him that would know.

THE

These pages from Richard Baxter's *Church-History* (1680) are the source of the phrase 'Mere Christianity', used by C. S. Lewis as the title for one of his books in 1952.

Baxter's introductory essay on 'What History is Credible' comes after the Preface, and covers pages vii-xvi (i.e. pages without numbering preceding the actual work). His statements about being a 'meer Christian' and an advocate of 'meer' Christianity appear on the penultimate page (xv):

II. And now I must speak to the Accusers speeches of my self; I thank you Sir that you feigned no worse against me; if I am an *Heresiarcha*, why would not you vouchsafe to name that Heresie which I have owned: I have given you large Field-room, in near 80 Books; and few men can so write, as that a willing man may not find some words which he is able to call Heresie: A little learning, wit, or honesty, will serve for such an hereticating presumption. 2. I never heard that *Arminius* was called an *Arminian*, nor *Luther* a *Lutheran*, nor Bishop *Laud* a *Laudian*; but if you be upon the knack of making Names, you best know your ends, and best know how to fit them to it. 3. But seriously, do you not know my Judgment? will not about 80 Books inform you? how then can I help it? 4. No, but you know not what Party I am of, nor what to call me; I am sorrier for you in this than for my self; if you know not, I will tell you, I am a CHRISTIAN, a MEER CHRISTIAN, of no other Religion; and the Church that I am of is the Christian Church, and hath been visible where ever the Christian Religion and Church hath been visible: But must you know what Sect or Party I am of? I am against all Sects and dividing parties: But if any will call *Meer Christians* by the name of a Party, because they take up with *meer Christianity*, Creed, and Scripture, and will not be of any dividing or contentious Sect, I am of that Party which is so against Parties: If the Name CHRISTIAN be not enough, call me a CATHOLICK CHRISTIAN; not as that word signifieth an hereticating majority of Bishops, but as it signifieth one that hath no Religion, but that which by Christ and the Apostles was left to the Catholick Church, or the Body of Jesus Christ on Earth.

And now Sir, I am sorry that you are not content with meer Christianity, and to be a Member of the Catholick Church, and hold the Communion of Saints, but that you must needs also be of a Sect, and have some other Name: And how shall I know that your Sect is better than another? Were not the Papists Sectaries and Schismaticks, damning most of Christis Body on Earth for not being subject to their Pope, I should not be so much against them. I find promises of Salvation in Scriptures to Believers, that is, Christians as such (if such sincerely,) but none of the salvation of men as *Papists*, *Diocesans*, *Grecians*, *Nestorians*, *Eutychians*, &c. i would say also [*nor as Protestants*] did I not take the Religion called *Protestant* (a Name which I am not fond of) to be nothing but *simple Christianity*, with opposition to Popery, and other such corruption. And now you know your own designs, you tongue is your own, and who can controul you, whatever you will call us; but I, and such others, call our selves MEER CHRISTIANS, or CATHOLICK CHRISTIANS, against all Sects and Sectarian names, and haters both of true *Heresie*, *Schisme*, and *proud, unrighteous, hereticating* and *Anathematizing*. Psal. 4. *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? how long will ye love vanity, and seek after lying? But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly of himself*: Psal. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men: they speak vanity every one with his Neighbour, &c. See the rest*.

» The full PDF of Baxter's work is available at www.archive.org/details/churchhistoryofg00baxt

retrieved from www.lewisiana.nl/baxter