

# HOMILETICA ET HOMILIAE

—THE HERITAGE OF REFORMED PREACHING—

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## INTRODUCTION TO PETER DU MOULIN'S SERMON ON 2 PETER 1:5

*by J. Mark Beach*

THE GOAL OF *homiletica et homiliae*, a section of the *Mid-America Journal of Theology* here introduced for the first time, is to explore the rich heritage of Reformed preaching, from its early sixteenth-century embodiments to its contemporary expressions. More specifically, the aim is to inform, invigorate, and inspire practitioners of the preaching craft regarding their own homiletic labors. In offering a sample or samplings of Reformed sermons from past or present, it is not pretended that every sermon has commendable features in every respect, or that the exegesis underlying a given sermon cannot be questioned or faulted, or that a homiletical method that worked well in one era is most appropriate or fitting for another, or even that sermons composed by theological giants of the Reformed tradition cannot be improved or should be imitated. Rather, the purpose in bringing materials under the heading of *homiletica et homiliae* is to explore the tradition of Reformed preaching, and also Reformed homiletical theory. Within that tradition a significant diversity of homiletic method and strategy can be discerned. However, inasmuch as there is a common commitment to preaching as a means of grace, nothing less than an indispensable

ministry of the church and the practical outcome of the theological enterprise, it is beneficial to expand our sermonic horizons for both historical-theological reasons, as well as practical-ministerial reasons.

The sermon printed below was written by Peter (Pierre) du Moulin. Moulin, son of the more distinguished French Reformed theologian and churchmen by the same name (his father, also known as Petrus Molinaeus, lived from 1568-1658), was a devoted Calvinist and adherent to the Reformed cause. Moulin (son of senior) was born in 1601 at Paris, and graduated at Leyden. Thereafter he went to England, and succeeded his father's prebend in Canterbury (being prebendary at Christ's Church), and was one of the chaplains to King Charles II. He died in 1684.

During his lifetime, Moulin was the author of numerous books and polemical treatises, including a volume of sermons from which the sermon printed below is taken.<sup>1</sup> This volume consists of a collection of printed sermons that were selected by the author just prior to his death, published the same year he died. In the preface of this volume of sermons, Moulin offers this word of explanation: "Being now barred from the Pulpit by the infirmities of Old Age, yet very loth to give over my sacred and beloved Office of Evangelist, I endeavour to continue it by committing to the press some Sermons, which I have formerly preach'd. And I am not

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<sup>1</sup> The following is a select list of Peter du Moulin's publications: *Ecclesiae gemitus sub Anabaptistica tyrannide* (1649); *Regii sanguinis clamor ad coelum adversus paricidas Anglicanos* (1652); *Of peace and contentment of minde* (1657); *A week of soliloquies and prayers: With a preparation for the Holy Communion* (1657); *The history of the English & Scotch presbytery: Wherein is discovered their designs and practices for the subversion of government in church and state* (1659); *A vindication of the sincerity of the Protestant religion in the point of obedience to sovereigns opposed to the doctrine of rebellion, authorised and practiced by the Pope and the Jesuites : in answer to a Jesuitical libel, entituled Philanax Anglicus* (1668); *The great loyalty of the papists to K. Charles I (of blessed memory) discovered by Peter Du Moulin, D.D. in his Vindication of the Protestant religion* (1673); *Directions for the education of a young prince till seven years of age: which will serve for the governing of children of all conditions, trans. from French* (1673); *A calm answer to a violent discourse of N.N., a seminary priest, for the invocation of saints with a reflection upon the covetousness and impostures of the popish clergy* (1677); *The ruine of papacy, or, A clear display of the simony of the Romish clergy with a circulatory letter to the fathers of those virgins that desert their families to turn nuns* (1678); *Ten Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions* (1684).

herein deterred by the multitude of printed Sermons of eminent Divines. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not. Candles were made to give light, as well as Tapers. Neither are mean Capacities exempted from obeying our great Master's Command, to *make our light to shine before men.*"

This sermon here reproduced has been mildly edited throughout, mostly by reducing the number of italicized words and phrases, ignoring the excessive capitalization of words, with a slightly more modernized system of punctuation, as well as the modernized spelling of some words. The aim was to facilitate the sermon's readability for a contemporary audience. Nonetheless, the seventeenth-century flavor of Moulin's sermon is retained.

The sermon itself is an excellent sample of Moulin's homiletic method, demonstrating his close attention to the text of Scripture, his equally close attention to his hearers who are the recipients of the message, weaving exposition with application, and his sensitivity to theological definition and controversy, alerting his audience to error and warning them away from it. Inasmuch as the sermon treats a practical issue surrounding the Christian life, that is, Christian virtue itself, the two-sided character of the covenant of grace is exposed, both as a gracious promise and gift of life and as a call of grace, with the gift of salvation undergirding the response of faith, or stated differently, the indicative being the foundation of the imperative. Thus, for believers to fulfill the *call of the gospel* requires that they possess the *gift of the gospel*; to work out their salvation with fear and trembling requires that God works in them both to will and to do according to his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13)—even his good pleasure of redeeming them after the image of Christ. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10 RSV).

Moulin's sermon stands out in several respects. First, although he recognizes that eight virtues consist together in verses 5-7 of 2 Peter 1, he limits himself to expounding just the first four. No doubt, Moulin could be faulted for not keeping together what he terms a "string of eight pearls"; nevertheless, given his fulsome exposition of the first part of this string of pearls, his sermon proves lengthy enough for one preaching event. More specifically, in examining faith as something that already exists in believers, but needing nurture and fruits, Moulin is careful to define faith. He

rejects the dubious extremes of reducing faith to mere *assent* or of inflating faith with unbounded *certitude*. The former empties faith of trust, and rises no higher than the faith of demons; the latter defines faith by its perfection rather than its essence, and allows no room for doubt, not a twinge. Against these extremes, Moulin argues that (justifying) faith is faith that flees to Christ and receives him as God's merciful gift to sinners. Faith is nothing less than coming to Christ, according to the Good Shepherd's call. That pathway involves despair of self, for believers come burdened and heavy-laden with their sin. In this connection, Moulin employs a version of the *syllogismus practicus*, that is, the practical syllogism, wherein believers find assurance of their salvation inasmuch as they believe on Christ. It is not a matter of placing faith in one's faith; rather, it is a recognition of the divine promise, that whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Second, while Moulin describes faith as the *life* of the soul, he defines virtue as the *activity* of the soul. Thus faith without virtue or an inactive faith is a masquerade. This is not however to confound faith with virtue; the two remain distinct, for virtue may be added to faith—indeed, must be added to it. Even if faith is regarded as a theological virtue, part of the package of God's sanctifying work in the life of the believer, that does not qualify it as the instrument for receiving Christ unto justification. It is not faith in its working or loving or obeying, or even faith in its activity of trusting Christ, that qualifies it as instrument. Rather, faith in its dependency on Christ, in its fleeing to Christ, in its empty-handed trusting in Christ, relinquishes all (and even its fiduciary function is imperfect). But faith opens us to him. Only the object of faith, Christ himself, justifies believers. Faith receives him. It possesses no instrumental power located within itself. Instead, the Holy Spirit is the bond between Christ and the believer, with faith in its fiduciary function ordained as the instrument of that union, and faith itself a divine gift. This point is made in the Reformed confessions as well.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the Belgic Confession, art. 22: "We believe that for us to acquire the true knowledge of this great mystery [of Christ's atoning work] the Holy Spirit kindles in our hearts a true faith that embraces Jesus Christ, with all his merits, and makes him its own, and no longer looks for anything apart from him. For it must necessarily follow that either all that is required for our salvation is not in Christ or, if all is in him, then he who has Christ by faith has his salvation entirely. Therefore, to say that Christ is

Moreover, although faith is part of the believer's sanctification, it is also the *cause* of sanctification, meaning it is the origin or source of all other virtues. Faith itself sanctifies believers, for the nature of justifying faith, which looks away from self and unto Christ, works humility in the soul, along with love for God. Moulin carefully conjoins faith and works in this way, while also keeping each distinct from the other, safeguarding the specific office of faith in justification and in sanctification. This means that faith, even when it is conceived as a call of grace, as a duty demanded of human creatures and owed to the Creator, never attains the status of a good work that justifies. In short, conceived as a good work, faith is unto sanctification.

Inasmuch as the imperative issued by the apostle Peter, namely that virtue is to be added to faith, it becomes clear that virtue itself does not constitute faith. Faith however does demand virtue, for faith in Christ is nothing less than death to sin and participation in Christ's resurrection. In faith's striving for virtue, it does not cease to cling to Christ; and despite the believer's faith being mixed with

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enough but that something else is needed as well is a most enormous blasphemy against God—for it then would follow that Jesus Christ is only half a Savior. And therefore we justly say with Paul that we are justified 'by faith alone' or by faith 'apart from works.' However, we do not mean, properly speaking, that it is faith itself that justifies us—for faith is only the instrument by which we embrace Christ, our righteousness. But Jesus Christ is our righteousness in making available to us all his merits and all the holy works he has done for us and in our place. And faith is the instrument that keeps us in communion with him and with all his benefits. When those benefits are made ours they are more than enough to absolve us of our sins." Art. 24 makes clear that faith itself is a divine gift of the Holy Spirit, being conjoined with regeneration, and cannot be unfruitful. Moreover, all good works proceed from "the good root of faith" and "are good and acceptable to God, since they are all sanctified by his grace. Yet they do not count toward our justification—for by faith in Christ we are justified, even before we do good works. Otherwise they could not be good, any more than the fruit of a tree could be good if the tree is not good in the first place." (Quoted from *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions* [Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1988], based upon the French text of 1619). Also see the Heidelberg Catechism, Q/As 61-65; the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapters XI, 1; XIV,1-2; XVI,2-6; the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q/As 71-73; the Second Helvetic Confession, chapters XV, XVI; The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, XI-XIII.

much weakness, faith's failure likewise comes under God's gracious forgiveness.

Third, Moulin demonstrates from this text that the knowledge of God must inform virtue. Faith itself is not without some knowledge of God, but virtue needs knowledge that comes by way of study and diligence. Believers are called to a reasonable service. Even more, ministers of the gospel are under the sacred duty to feed the flock. Their task is not amusement. If knowledge is to be joined to virtue, then all believers must aim to be teachable and not presume to know more than their teachers—the very ones God has appointed to instruct them.

Fourth, Moulin demonstrates from this text that knowledge stands in need of temperance (the fourth point of his sermon), for knowledge puffs up. Indeed, Moulin argues that temperance needs to monitor and season faith, virtue, and knowledge. Faith needs temperance to guard it from conceit and false security; virtue needs temperance to protect it from pride and pretense; and knowledge needs temperance to keep it from the vanity of speculation and dogmatism. Indeed, knowledge stands most in need of temperance according to Moulin. He warns of the kind of person who is simultaneously ignorant and arrogant. Some persons are inflated with hubris even though their knowledge is meager; others fail to respect God's incomprehensibility and presume to know the secret things of God when his revealed things are not mastered—forgetting that God's secrets belong to God alone. Even as one must exercise temperance in the use of wine, so knowledge must be circumscribed by temperance—intemperance breeds ignorance (in spite of much learning); ignorance gives birth to vice; and vice paves the way to unbelief.

Finally, we make some general remarks regarding Moulin's homiletical method. It should be observed that Moulin, being an Anglican, does not follow the pattern of much late seventeenth-century Puritan preaching, wherein three distinct divisions are clearly marked out: (1) the reading of a selected Scripture-text, immediately followed by an exposition of that text; (2) a statement of the doctrine elicited from the exposition of the text, which forms the theme of the sermon, with "reasons" carefully set forth in support of the doctrinal theme; and (3) an applicatory section, often entitled "uses," wherein the doctrine was related to relevant issues facing the congregation, such as doctrinal error, moral lapses or temptations to the same, social or personal burdens and trials, and

the like.<sup>3</sup> The tripartite structure of Exposition-Reasons-Uses, which characterized much Puritan preaching of this era, is not characteristic of Moulin's more Anglican sermonic form. Moulin follows a simple expository procedure that consists of examining the selected text of Scripture within its immediate context, followed by a close exposition of the words and phrases of the text in their sequence. Application is woven into the exposition. Thus, whereas there are distinct points in Moulin's sermon, based upon the text of Scripture, there are not distinct parts or divisions between exposition and application. It should also be observed that in Moulin's sermon one looks in vain for a clearly articulated thematic statement elicited from the chosen Scriptural text.

Beyond the fundamental expository form of Moulin's sermon we observe more broadly that all of his printed sermons are well-ordered. He presents his exposition with clarity and progression so that his sermons possess movement, with distinct moments. He also sprinkles his sermons with apt metaphors and pointed contrasts; he has an eye for phony fads and fashions that threaten the ranks of the pew. Moreover, he understands the believer's heart; he knows the pleasures and delights of the Christian life, with its sadness and sorrows, its teasings and temptations. Moulin knows the allure, the tug and pull of sin, and the powerful prodding of divine grace. He knows, too, the theological and cultural currents of his day, and demonstrates that he nurtured his own heart and mind with Scripture and theological wisdom, evidenced by his fertile theological mind, well-versed in Scripture, which he quotes with powerful effect. Such are traits worthy of preaching in any age or place, and so offer themselves as worthy of emulation today.

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<sup>3</sup> See O. C. Edwards Jr., *A History of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 362ff.; Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church, vol 4: The Age of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 251-368; especially 330ff.; Edwin Charles Dargan, *A History of Preaching, vol. 2: From the Close of the Reformation Period to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (1904; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954), 136-185; F. R. Webber, *A History of Preaching in Britain and America* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1952), 195-318; Caroline Francis Richardson, *English Preachers and Preaching: 1640-1670* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1928).

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## ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE<sup>4</sup>

2 Peter 1:5: “*And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance.*”

*by Peter du Moulin*

THE PROMISES OF the gospel are accepted even by hard and impenitent hearts; but the commandments of God find not the like entertainment. Many that hear with pleasure the *glad tidings* of the salvation offered by Jesus Christ, cannot abide to hear the necessary *duties* to enjoy it.

But it is in vain to think on the one without the other. And after we have announced to you, with St. Paul, Titus 2.11, that “*the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men,*” we must tell you with the same breath that which followeth, “*teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.*”

Such is our apostle’s order in my text. For these words, “*And besides this,*” oblige me to begin somewhat besides my text. The apostle having represented to Christians in the two precedent verses what God had done for them, declareth in this text what he expects of them. What he “*hath done*” for us is expressed in these magnificent terms: “*The divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*” [2 Pet. 1:3-4].

So much *God doth* for us, much above all that we can either ask or think but yet not enough to excuse us from doing our part. It is not relying upon these great and precious promises that will serve our turn without giving all diligence to obey the commandments of him that giveth these good promises. There is a “besides this”: “*And*

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<sup>4</sup> The text for this sermon is taken from Peter du Moulin, *Ten Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions* (London, 1684), 65-94. In editing this material I have supplied the material in square brackets [ ], including Scripture references.

*besides this (saith he) giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.*" It seems he will never have done heaping virtues one upon the neck of another. And indeed it is a task that must never be ended till we have quite done with the world and with our lives, still giving diligence, and adding still virtue to faith, and knowledge to virtue, and so making to ourselves stairs of virtues to heaven.

These virtues are those pearls of great price, for which a man must sell all that he hath and buy them. Of these eight pearls I have taken the first four to weigh and consider, with God's assistance: *faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance*. And there is a string that threads these pearls and must go along in the exposition of each part: viz. "*Give all diligence to add.*" This would be understood as many times repeated as there are virtues mentioned: Give all diligence to add to your faith virtue; Give all diligence to add to virtue knowledge; Give all diligence to add to knowledge temperance. And here is for you such a necklace of pearls as Solomon would have to be an "*ornament of grace about your head and chains about your neck*" [Prov. 1:9]. Now these pearls are so curiously strung together that the latter hath a relation to all the former, virtue to faith; knowledge to faith and virtue; temperance to faith, virtue, and knowledge. But they would be viewed severally and insisted upon with maturity.

I. As for the first, which is *faith*, the truth is, my text doth not greatly require an exposition of it. It is well if my audience do not. For faith is not here commanded but presupposed. St. Peter saith not, Give diligence to *get faith*, but "*to add to your faith.*" In the first verse of the epistle, he addresseth himself to those "*that have the like precious faith with him,*" to none else; he accounteth none worthy or capable of his doctrine but the faithful. And now whether the apostle writes to you or not, and whether instead of saying, "*Add to your faith,*" we should not say, *Get ye some faith*, I leave it to the several consciences. But if never before, yet now, let us labour to get faith, and learn what faith is.

The faith required here is *justifying* faith, well grounded upon that doctrine of faith of which the apostle spake in the first verse (for there the *word* of faith signifies the *doctrine*) that precious doctrine of faith, whereby the "*divine power gives us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.*" The personal faith grounded upon that doctrine of faith is a recourse to the mercy of God by the merits of

Jesus Christ, a sure mercy promised on the gospel, that “*whosoever believeth on him, shall not perish but have everlasting life*”—upon which promise the faithful conscience assumeth thus: Now I believe on Jesus Christ; and hence draweth this conclusion: Then I shall not perish but have everlasting life. Justifying faith is nothing else but that syllogism.

This doctrine which is the plain ground and the A, B, C[s] of the gospel is grown an intricate matter by too much explication. Some confine faith to the understanding, and make it no more but a *firm assent of the understanding to the truth of God*. It is the faint and languid definition which Bellarmine and too many with him give to faith—a definition which barreth confidence and personal application from the nature of faith.

Others will acknowledge no other faith but a *certain confidence*, without the least wavering *that Christ is ours and his merits*, and exclude from the number of the faithful all such as doubt. Both are in fault and run to opposite extremes.

As for that faith confined to the *assent of the understanding*, if we must only believe that St. Luke and St. John have truly related the history of Christ’s passion, and must not attempt to lay our whole trust on the merit of it, nor apply it to ourselves for fear of presumption, certainly we are in an ill case—in no better case than the devil, for he believeth the truth of God’s promises, but dares not apply them to himself.

And as for the *full confidence* in God’s mercy through Jesus Christ *without any doubting*, it is indeed the highest degree of faith, if it be upon good ground. Blessed and holy is he that hath that right confidence. And then it will be right when it worketh love, humility and repentance in the heart. That full confidence we must all aim unto and never leave till we obtain it. But as handsomeness and strength are not the essence but the perfection of man’s body, likewise a full confidence of our salvation upon good ground is not the essence but the perfection of faith. So that as you would not deny a child or a lame man to be a true man; likewise you must not deny a trembling or a halting faith to be a true faith when a good soul saith, “*Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief*” [Mark 9:24]. For observe that he that spake so, obtained of the Lord what he would have. To teach us that the humble penitent soul that can but take his recourse unto Christ hath faith enough to obtain his mercy.

These two acts of faith must be distinguished: the *direct* act, which embraceth the mercy of God through Jesus Christ; and the

*reflected* act, which is the assurance and comfort that the soul feeleth by embracing the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

The *justifying act* of faith is the *direct* act, not the *reflected*. For it is evident that we are justified before God because we embrace the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ, not by the assurance and comfort arising out of it in our consciences. Wherefore it is a very ill consequence to say, I have no *comfort*, therefore I have no *faith*; for you are not justified by your comfort in God's mercy through Jesus Christ but by our recourse to it. Were this well apprehended, it would ease many troubled consciences. "Come unto me," saith Christ, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden" Matth. 11:28. Coming to Christ with a contrite heart, labouring and heavy laden, is believing on him; and many believe to *salvation* that believe not yet to *comfort*. In effect *coming* to Christ in the style of Christ is *believing* on him. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out," saith he, John 6:37. And two verses before, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst." So in the sense of the Lord Jesus, coming to him and believing on him are all one. And they that come to him as the true and sole object of their faith are certainly justified, though they be not presently comforted. They are justified by faith when they believe not their own faith.

Let us be disciples of the disciples of Christ, learning of them to pray to him: "Lord increase our faith" [Luke 17:5]—there being no essential want in the world (either for the spiritual or the temporal) but comes for want of faith. Let him that mistrusteth God's mercy have recourse nevertheless unto that mercy. Let him hope against hope. Let him wrestle, as Jacob, by a holy obstinacy, and not let the Lord go till he hath got a blessing. Yea he that hath the right faith, let him get it again. As you love God, as you love your own salvation, let that ground be once fast. It is the life of the soul. It is the groundwork of all virtues. Even for the world it is the spring of wealth and content. Wherefore it is laid down here first of all as the foundation upon which all goodness and happiness are built. All instructions raised in the soul and not upon this ground are built upon sand and will end in ruin. So much for *faith*.

II. Now when we have once faith we have not done. "Besides this" (saith our apostle) "we must give all diligence to add to our faith, virtue": For *faith* is the *life* of the soul, and *virtue* is the *pulse* and *activity* of the soul. Life is an active principle—it will be doing. You may be sure that there is no life of faith where there is no activity of virtue.

The Greek word for *virtue* (ἀρετή) signifieth properly *valour in war*. St. Peter then would have us to add to our faith constancy and courage, as St. Paul charged Timothy “*to fight the good fight of faith*,” 1 Tim. 6:2 and 2 Tim. 2:3. He will have him to “*be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*” [2 Tim. 2:1]. A fit lesson for all Christians, especially for those that are of Timothy’s order—for ministers being more aimed at by the oppositions of the devil and the world have more need to put on the whole armour of God, and to add to their faith virtue and resolution.

But we must leave to *virtue* a larger extent, her full extent, taking it for the whole work of sanctification—of which although faith be also a part, it may be distinguished (as it is distinct indeed) from other parts of sanctification in two things: (1) that faith justifieth us before God, which other virtues do not; (2) and that it is not only a part of sanctification, but also the cause of it, and fits as a mother in the family of virtues.

But as faith and virtue are distinct here, they are here conjoined also, “*Add to your faith, virtue.*” St. Peter will have them to go together. And the truth is, they hold together very close; for the same faith that justifieth us doth also sanctify us. Yea by the very act of justification we are sanctified; for he that faithfully apprehends and applieth to himself the mercy of God and the righteousness of Christ is thereby, *ipso facto*, touched with an unfeigned humility and with a fervent love of God. And these are the two principal virtues growing upon the stock of faith, which afterwards multiply and branch themselves into all good habits and good acts.

You see what great cause St. Peter had to command us to join to our faith virtue, since they are so conjunct by nature, that faith cannot work one of her main offices, which is, to embrace Christ and justify the conscience, without doing together her other great work, which is to produce virtue, even humility and love, for without them trust in God’s mercy would not be faith, but presumption and madness.

Which near conjunction made many to say that we are justified by being sanctified; that is, in other terms, that we are justified by works—which if we admit, fare you well with the gospel, we are fallen to the conditions of the law.

Indeed the justifying act of faith is a good work, yet it justifieth not the conscience because it is a good work, but because it layeth hold in Jesus Christ who is the Lord our righteousness. It is by virtue of the object not the action of faith that we are justified.

This temper then must be kept: to acknowledge that faith and virtue are inseparable; and that faith doth not justify except to sanctify. But we must take heed of saying that by being sanctified we are justified or that our works bear any share in our justification.

But that we confound not the doctrines of justification and sanctification, we must not confound the words as some do. "*Hold fast the form of sound words,*" 2 Tim. 1.13—a necessary doctrine for divines at all times. For it is the ordinary method of Satan, when he will bring in new doctrines, to bring forth new words or alter the signification of the old.

Then to retain the right form and the right use of sound words, this precept of "*Adding to our faith virtue,*" is as good as saying, "*Show me thy faith by thy works.*" For we must make our faith an obligation to virtue, and our virtue a necessary consequence of our faith. Truly if we did tightly apprehend the nature and the necessary consequences of faith, we should never be deceived in examining whether we be in the faith, nor slack in the work of our regeneration when we find that we have faith. Such is the efficacy of faith, that by it we are accounted dead to sin in the death of Christ and risen to righteousness in his resurrection. Upon which St. Paul insisteth very much in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Romans. And the drift of that doctrine is on the second verse, "*If we be dead to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?*"

Our Christian duty calls us to examine whether we be dead to sin by our faith into Christ, dead for our sins. Whether we have buried our old man in his grave. Whether we be risen to righteousness in his resurrection. Whether we have added at least some virtue to our faith, that we may know whether we have any faith at all. Have we been patient in injuries, sober and holy in our conversation, just in our dealings, charitable not only in our deeds, but in our words and judgments? Have we sometimes taken ourselves in hand to cool our greediness, to heat our charity, to subdue these worldly hearts of ours full of wantonness and pride? Have our hearts gone along with our prayers when we prayed for our sanctification?

If thus we have given all diligence to sanctify ourselves, and crucify and bury our old man with Christ, though after that there remain too many roots of the old weeds within us, we shall find that in God's book of accounts a sincere endeavour is taken for a virtuous performance. Wherefore the apostle saith not barely, "*Add to your faith virtue*" but "*give all diligence to add to your faith virtue.*"

This is a precious word, "*Give all diligence.*" We were undone but for it. Were we to be judged by our virtue, there were no hope for us. But our gracious Master that knows our weakness looks for our diligence rather than our performance. Give all diligence; it will be accepted for virtue.

But truly this is no light task, to *give all diligence*. You have not discharged it when you have given your ministers fair leave to speak, and graced them so much as to stay out the sermon. God will have our hands as well as your ears, and all the days of the week as well as the first.

Observe the word *all*. St. Peter saith not, give *some* but give *all* diligence. He will have all our hearts, all our minds, all our strength, for since Christ gave his whole self for us, Godhead, manhood, body and soul; be ye sure he will not be satisfied with parcels of our poor selves and of our weak diligence. "*Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and seek him with their whole heart,*" Psalm 119[:2]. Let us give our whole selves to God, and keep nothing behind. Let our "*souls bless the Lord, and all that is within us bless his holy name,*" Psalm 103. So much for virtue.

III. Now the way to further our diligence in adding to our faith virtue, is to add to virtue *knowledge*. When the good wife in the parable would sweep the house, she lighted the candle. Labouring for virtue and sanctification is sweeping the house within us; but the light of knowledge must be by, else if we go about to sweep the house of our hearts or the house of the church without the light of a right knowledge we may commit the fault of the Roman vulgar version in that place, *evertit domum*, instead of *everrit*; it will be overthrowing instead of sweeping. Instead of making the house clean, we shall pull it down.

The knowledge of God is mentioned in the two verses before my text—a knowledge that brings grace and peace, and all things pertaining unto life and godliness. Such a knowledge is part of faith, and is grounded upon authority. But in this text the apostle means (as I take it) that knowledge which is gotten by study and reason, yet upon the ground of faith. Two reasons I have to take it so. The *one*, that we are bidden to add to our faith knowledge, as a thing different from faith; the *other*, that the word σοφῶν, which is here translated *diligence*, properly signifies *study*. This knowledge then is got by study and diligence. And the apostle would have us all students, women and all, at least enough to be "*always ready to give an*

*answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us.*" So much he requireth in his first epistle, chapter 3:15.

What! to give a reason of our hope? *Cognoscere causas! Felix qui potuit.* It is a high degree of knowledge; and God demands no less. God will be served by every creature of his in its own kind. We are reasonable creatures; God will have from us a reasonable service, *λογικὴν λατρείαν*. God by his mercy sets up the light of faith in our soul. But unless we pour the oil of knowledge into the lamp of faith, the lamp of faith will [go] out. Never deceive yourselves: And then God knoweth what virtue you shall work in the dark. *"My people is destroyed for want of knowledge. Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, saith the Lord,"* Hosea 4:6.

Certainly destruction comes upon souls for want of knowledge. For as *"the new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,"* Col. 3:10, so the old man of sin is made up of ignorance, after the image of him that created him, even the devil. Look over all the histories of the church. Whensoever there was an ignorant, it was also an ungodly age; for the want of knowledge was ever attended with the want of faith and virtue.

As learned as we are, or think to be, it is the want of knowledge that undoeth us. For what is the reason that some are carried away by their intemperance and voluptuousness; others are plotting mischief to rise by the fall of their neighbours? It is because they know neither God's commandments nor promises, or regard them not, which is the worst ignorance. Tell me not, there is a learned man; it is a pity he is not honest. I tell you he is an ignorant; he knows not so much as his duty. Would the world remember that God is holy, that he is all-seeing, that he is the searcher of hearts, that he loveth righteousness and abhorreth iniquity, and that he will certainly bring every work into judgment. Sure there would be more equity, more charity, more sobriety, more devotion. David's question was a wise one, Psalm 14:4: *"Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge, that eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord?"*—as if he had said, Had they knowledge in any reasonable measure, they could not be so mischievous; they would not oppress their neighbors; they would be careful to call upon the Lord, who would lead them in the ways of truth and righteousness. Ignorance with them was the cause of all mischiefs, and so it is with us.

But even they that would be good, may come short of it, unless they add to virtue knowledge, and examine upon what ground they do good: Whether they do good to the poor because they are

members of Christ, or to avoid their clamour. Whether they be sober to save their consciences, or to save charges. Whether they go to church to obey God, or to obey custom. Whether they be just in their outward dealings to please God, or to get the credit or advancement in the world. Whether they take upon them the ministry for the office, or for the benefice. Had we all the inspired gifts of the primitive Christians when this epistle was written, yet should we need to add to our virtue knowledge—else virtue would not stand upon faith, nor faith upon God.

This lesson regards divines especially, through whom, as so many channels of mercy, the knowledge of God is conveyed unto his people. For (saith Malachi 2:7) *“the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.”*

That part of the priest’s office under the law, to teach the people, is now passed to the ministers of the gospel. I say not that they are heirs of the levitical priesthood; but in this they succeed them: that at their mouths the people should seek the law, and they are the ministers of the Lord of hosts. So necessity lieth upon the minister to be learned in the evangelical law; *“not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the Devil,”* 1 Tim. 3.6. Here St. Paul sheweth how ignorance and pride are going hand in hand, and both ushering the devil: For commonly the least learned are the most peremptory; and then the devil hath fair play, being guarded with ignorance and boldness, to set himself forth like an angel of light.

Blessed and holy is that minister of God’s Word, who is first of all truly endowed with faith and virtue, and then soundly grounded in holy knowledge; and takes no less pain to feed his learning than to vent it, supplying his layings out with his comings in: Whose mouth out of the fullness of his heart speaketh good things—like that rich householder of the parable, *“fetching out of his treasury things new and old”* [Matt. 13:52], employing them not for ostentation but edification, which he promotes no less by his life than doctrine. Such men commonly, though they be not sparing of their pains, are not lavish of their words, and have more skill in stuffing than spinning out; bringing forth much holy matter with little noise—like great rivers, which gliding gently enrich the land with commerce and plenty. For it seems that God would have the high priest’s robe to be decked with pomegranates and bells mingled together, to teach

his ministers that he loveth not a sound without fruit, and will not have the church served with an empty noise.

We learn who are the pastors after God's heart, Jer. 3:15: "*I will give them pastors according to my heart, which shall feed them with knowledge and understanding*"—not amuse them with tales and flourishes, and with that invention which I have many times admired, how a man can find variety enough to say nothing in a million words. But all that is hollow meat; it is *verba dare populo*. For though words without knowledge, set forth with much vehemency, may stir the passion of the people, they feed not their consciences. Then it fareth with the deluded souls according to Isaiah's comparison, Isa. 29:8: "*It is as when a hungry man dreameth that he eateth, but he awaketh, and his soul is empty.*"

This is plain dealing, to speak the duty of ministers before the people: And I do it, because all shall know that there is no hidden mystery of craftiness among us, and that we will not do the work of the Lord deceitfully. Also to shew that we know our duty in some measure. And although we will always suffer ourselves to be admonished by godly, learned and discreet persons of the laity (and thank them too), we may spare the pains of some of the lowest capacity and the highest presumption who like no text of Scripture so well as this, Psalm 119: "*I am wiser than all my teachers,*" and would put down all teachers and all teaching. But these that would put down all teaching would be teachers themselves, set up by their own authority, mistaking an itch of contention and intemperance of words for an inward calling, yet understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. For take them from their usual themes of invective, and put them upon a plain principle, say it be justification, say it be regeneration, and without doubt the very questions of their catechism would put them shrewdly to it: Like those disciples of Ephesus, who likely thought themselves jolly men, but when it came to the proof, they knew not whether there was any Holy Ghost.

In one thing I concur with them: They wish for the putting down of all ministry in the church; I wish it also. But how? I wish withal for that glorious time when there will be no more need of it, when the kingdom of Christ shall be come in glory—that blessed time when the prophecy of Jeremiah shall be fulfilled, chapter 31, v. 34: "*They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall know me from the least of them to the greatest, saith the Lord.*" O that the blessed time were come,

promised Isa. 11:9: “*The land shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea!*” Then indeed all ministry must go down, for what need of ministers when Christ our great Master shall be all in all? Till then let ministers teach knowledge, and let the people learn it. In this mystical body some are the mouth, some are the ear. Let not the ear jostle the mouth out of office. “*Let none think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but think soberly,*” Rom. 12:3. But this intrencheth upon the fourth point, “*Add to knowledge temperance,*” to which I pass.

IV. *Temperance* in the proper and ordinary sense signifieth sobriety. But here I take it as meant in a metaphorical and borrowed sense, for modesty in our knowledge. For since the apostle joineth these two, “*Add to knowledge temperance,*” it is most like[ly] that he means it in the sense most convenient to knowledge. Now because these four good habits hold together, temperance which is the fourth, hath a relation to each of the three former. For that we be not overweening with the conceit of our faith, nor proud on the ostentation of our virtue, nor over-born with the sail of our knowledge, St. Peter will have us to add to them all *temperance*. Without it faith will degenerate into carnal security, the study of good works into affected singularity, knowledge into curiosity and peremptoriness. But temperance is the seasoning of all virtues, and there is none but will admit this caution, *Ne quid nimis*, nothing too much. Not that one can be too virtuous, but one may overdo virtuous acts, though not in the substance yet in the circumstance; and then the circumstance drowns the substance.

Besides, as full bodies and the pride of blood are much subject to inflammations, which will turn and corrupt the whole mass of the blood, so virtues when they are once ἐν ἀκμῇ, in their height and prime, are much subject to be inflamed with presumption—a wicked leaven which leaveneth the whole lump of virtues, of which the falls of Satan and Adam are lamentable examples. But temperance is that *granum salis*, that precious salt, which preserveth all virtues from rankling. And of all virtues the intellectual comprehended in this word *knowledge*, stand in most need of it.

Temperance in knowledge ought to be considered two ways, in the *subject* and in the *object*.

As for the *subject*, weak understandings ought not to be overcharged with knowledge; And this care belongs to Parents and Masters. For commonly the weakest wits have the strongest conceit

of their capacity; and in that strong conceit lyeth their weakness. Weak brains ought to be temperate in knowledge, just as they ought to be temperate in wine, for excess in either of these may take their wits off the hooks. It is not only poetry, that is *Vinum dæmonum*; the devil will use *any* knowledge, and the *best* sooner than any, to intoxicate the brain and make it drunk even with goodness. But of all excesses in knowledge, a surfeit of *divinity* is pernicious to weak souls, whether they be *bold* or *timorous*.

For if with their weakness they are *bold* and passionate, then their little learning will fill them with a high conceit of themselves, and a headstrong willfulness to set up and defend heresies. And whether they defend good or bad doctrine, they so not so much with reasons, as with a furious zeal, which being assisted with number and strength will break into strange effects, even to the destruction of whole nations—as it was done by the Donatists in Africa, and might be done by Papists or Quakers in England, if God and our superiours would let them.

But if a surfeit of theology gets into a weak or *timorous* soul, it works another effect, which is trouble of conscience. For as meats of hard digestion in a weak stomach breed crudities, and bring qualms and colic, likewise hard matters of divinity breed obstructions and pangs of discomfort in weak consciences. Let such good souls keep themselves to their prayer book and meditations of God's love, and leave high questions to the schools.

These are the cautions of temperance on holy knowledge, in regard of the *subject*. But now where the subject is strong enough, and the wit may bear knowledge, there is need of another caution of temperance in the *object*—and that not for the quantity of knowledge, but the choice. For if a sound wit can hit once the right object of holy knowledge, there is no great danger of too much. Though God has given us a lease of three such lives as that of Methuselah, we could not in all that time compass that skill in which St. Paul did happily lose himself, when he said, Eph. 3:18: "*Let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.*" And see what scope he gives to your knowledge in the following words, "*that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*" This is further than you can go in this life, go ye never so fast. There you need not the bridle of temperance. All then lyeth in the choice of your knowledge, in setting a right bias upon your knowledge. Let it

take once the right channel; and then let it go as far as it will, it will never do any hurt. Study the breadth, the length, the depth, the height of the love of God to us, and never fear to go too far.

Wherein then lyeth the dangerous intemperance of going too far in holy knowledge? My brethren, it lyeth in presuming to know what God hath hidden from us: when men go about to unlock the closet of God's counsel with the key of human reason, and storm when they find their key too short to reach the bottom of that great lock.

I would gladly know of those curious people that would unlock God's council chamber, and cannot abide to be saved unless they know why God damneth not their neighbours. Do they fully understand the articles of their creed? Do they know, do they feel that love of Christ which passeth knowledge? Do they know, do they feel what obligations the death and resurrection of Christ layeth upon them? Have they learned their distance with God, and how far they may and may not presume with him in prayer? what temper of knowledge, reverence, love, fear, humility, and confidence they must have in their breast that they may worship God in Spirit and in truth?

Before we have learned well these necessary things, is it time for us to enquire of the concurrence of God's grace with man's will, and of the high inscrutable points of God's eternal decree? Shall we pry into his hidden counsel before we well know his revealed will?

It is indeed our duty to learn, and our comfort to believe this doctrine, Eph.1:5, that *"God hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in his beloved."* Yet to keep your search in these high points within the limits of temperance, I recommend unto you these *three* short cautions.

1. Remember that God's essence and wisdom, being infinite, cannot be comprehended by a finite mind.

2. Remember that of the actions of God agree not with the rules of your reason; these rules of reason were made for man, not for God.

3. Remember that the knowledge prescribed by St. Paul, to be filled with all the fullness of God, is not the knowledge of God's counsel, but that of his will and love.

But what! *Calum ipsum petimus stultitiã.* We mount towards heaven not by faith and love but by boldness and curiosity. But if

ever any get to paradise that way, we may safely give him leave to shut the door after him.

But I am afraid that many have more need of *diligence* than *temperance* in knowledge. And the intemperance that spoils their knowledge is not the improper and metaphorical, which is curiosity, but the literal and downright intemperance in meat and drink. For whereas St. Paul exhorted Timothy to use a *little* wine, they (to make a work of supererogation) use a *great deal* of wine—which is a direct and material opposition to the knowledge of God, for it throweth liquor upon that holy lamp of divine knowledge. It is true, that some will brew controversy with strong drink, and are shrewd disputants when they are among their pots. But those disputes shew that their light of God's knowledge is oppressed, like a candle that spitteth and sparkleth when the wick is moist.

They say that wine sharpens the wit. But I am sure that sobriety preserveth the truth. St. Paul sets them both together, Act. 26:25, "*I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.*" And a necessary lesson at all times for the preserving of holy knowledge, "*to add to knowledge temperance,*" both in the one sense and in the other.

It is one of Heraclitus his *Ænigma's*, "*Dry light is the best*"—that is, the more the light of your understanding is free from the fog of the vapours of your stomach, the fitter it is for knowledge. As a pure air transmitteth the light better than a mist.

How clear then, how pure ought that mind to be, which is to entertain such a pure light as the knowledge of God and our salvation? Even when we keep within bounds in our opinion, I fear that being so faithful in lifting up a health will violate our faithfulness to God. And that sending the cup round so often without need will smother knowledge, and in time wear away both temperance and knowledge, and virtue, and faith and all. For as the growth of the new man proceeds from faith to virtue, and from virtue to knowledge, and from knowledge to temperance; likewise the decrease of the new man will fall from intemperance to ignorance, from ignorance to vice, and from vice to unbelief; and then the tree is plucked up by the roots.

The Lord enable us by his good Spirit to break down the old strongholds of unbelief in our sinful nature, giving us a faith that may be to us a mother of virtue, a virtue that may feed faith her mother, a knowledge that may instruct our virtue, and a temperance

that may season our knowledge. Yea Lord grant us so to be made new creatures by that grace of thine *“which bringeth wisdom and salvation, as to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,”* [Titus 2:12] through Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be glory now and for ever more. *Amen.*