

John Ball *A short treatise, contayning all the principall grounds of Christian religion: by way of questions and answers, very profitable for all men, but especially for householders*

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(...)

Q: What is the Lord's Supper?

A: A sacrament of our contrivance.

Q: Who is the author of this sacrament?

A: The lord Jesus in the same night he was betrayed.

Q: What are the outward signes of this sacrament?

A: Bread and wine with the accons pertaining to them as breaking, giueing, receiueing, eating & drinking.

Q: Why are those called outward signes?

A: Because they represent one thing to the eye, & to the outward senses, & another thing to the mind.

Q: What is the inward grace?

A: Christ with all the benefits of his death and Passion.

Q: Is it not enough to say that the benefits of Christ are onlie sealed in the sacrament?

A: No, but Christ with all his benefits.

Q: why so?

A: Because except Christ be bestowed we cannot be partakers of his benefits.

Q: What doth the bread signifie?

A: Christ's bodie.

Q: What doth the wine signifie?

A: The blood of Christ.

Q: What doth the breakiung of the bread signifie?

A: The crucifying of Christ.

Q: What doth the giueing of the bread and wine note?

A: The action of God the Father offering Christ to all & bestowing him effectually upon every worthy receiuer.

Q: What doth the receiueing of it signifie?

A; Our receuing and feeding on Christ by faith.

(...)

Q: If the danger is to be so great may not a man take liberty to absent himself?

A: No, but he must prepare himselfe.

Q: What graces are required in those that come to receiue?

A: Five: 1. Knowledge 2. Desire. 3. Repentance. 4. Ffaith. 5. Loue.

Q: What must we know?

A: Our estate by nature & our estate by grace.

Q: Why must we know these two things?

A: Because else we cannot be thankfull to Christ as we ought. 2. Because in the sacrament Christ is offered & in the covenant sealed.

Q: What are we by nature?

A: We are dead in sinne & bond-slaves to Satan

Q: Was man created dead in sinne?

A; Noe

Q: How then did he fall into that estate?

A: By the sinne of Adam.

Q: What was the sinne of Adam?

A: Eattng the forbidden fruite.

Q: Did all mankind sinne in Adam?

A: Yes for we were all in his loines.

Q: What is our estate by grace?

A: Children of God & heires of salvation.

(...)

Q: What must we desire?

A: God's favour, and to be satisfied with the bread of life.

Q: How must we desire it?

A: Heartiflly and continually

Q: Why must we desire God's favour?

A: Because it's necessary for it were better for a man he had never beene borne then to be out of God's favour, and because it is excellent for God's favour, and the light of his countenance is better then life it selfe.

Q: What must we doe to stir up this desire in vs?

A: We must consider the necessity of the sacrament 2. The excellency of it. 3. The benefits we haue therein 4: The helps we haue thereby to quicken & confirme our faith.

Q: What is the 3rd grace required in every worthy receiuer?

A: Repentance

Q: Why is Repentance necessary before we come to the Lord's Table?

A: Repentance is required as necessary in a man of age before he be baptized, now if it be required of him before baptisme then much more before the come to the Lord's table. 2. He that comes to the Lord's table inrepentent & in his sins doth his best to crucify Christ againe. 3. Sinne is of a soylng nature and dooth defile god's ordinances vnto a man's soule. 4.if we come in our sinnes we cannot profit by God's ordinances.

(...)

Q: Which are the commandments of the First Table?

A: The 4: first & the doe teach vs the duty we owe vnto God immediately.

Q: What is our duty to God?

A: We must loue him with all our heart with all our might with all our soule with all our thoughts the greatest measure of loue God is most worthy of, and we are bound to loue God so that no thought should at any time vpon any occasion draw our hearts away from God.

Q: What are the commandments of the second Table?

A: The 6. Last & the teach vs our duty we owe vnto our neighbor.

Q: What is the duty we owe vnto him?

A: We must loue him as our selues his soule, bodie, goods, good name, person & chastity.

Q: What sorrow is required?

A: Hearty and continually

Q: How should we stir vp our hearts to sorrow for sinne

A: We must consider the filthiness of sinne 2. God's iudgements due for sinne 3. God's mercies bestowed on man 4. Christ's sufferings for sinne 5. Or own vnthankfulness notwithstanding these benefits.

(...)

Q: What is faith?

A: An obedientiall adhering to God and resting or trusting on Christ alone with an affection of pietie for saluacion, or a cleaving to the whole word of God, for as it embraces the promises so it yields absolute submission to God's commandments.

Q: What are the actions of faith in receiuing of the sacrament of the Lord's supper?

A: 1. By faith we come to see the sacrament in the Lord's ordinance & so we are thereby stirred vpp to come with reverence vnto God's ordinances. 2. By faith we come to see those benefits which God hath promised in the covenant of grace and sealed in the sacrament are farre better then the world and all the profittes and pleasures thereof. 3: by the same faith we come to be stirred vp to desire and long after these benefits and so to covet them that nothing in the world will suffice but them. (...)

Q: What if a man find himselfe weake in faith and full of doubting?

A: He must bewaile his unbelief, pray for faith for to haue his doubts resolued and so receiue to bee together strengthened in believing.

Q: Is it enough that a man hath bene a beleeuer when he comes to the sacrament?

A: No, he must renew his faith and receiue in faith.

Q: What is the 5th and last grace required in receiuers?

A: Loue

Q: What is loue?

A: A longing desire for the God of our brethren.

Q: Who must we loue?

A: All men, even our enimies.

Q: How must we loue them?

A: As our selues both in soule and bodie.

(...)

Q: Hath a man ability of himselfe thus to prepare himselfe to come to the Lord's Table?

A: No, but he must begg grace of God by earnest and hearty prayer.

Q: What rule of direction is there according vnto which we must frame our prayers?

A: The genrall direction is the word of God the more speciall is the Lord's prayer

Q: What petitions in the Lord's prayer doe concerne the receiuying of the sacrament?

A: The 2th, 3th, 5th and 6th.

Q: Which is the second Petition?

A: Thy Kingdom come.

(...)

Q: What is the 5th Petition?

A: Fforgive vs our trespasses as we forgiue them that tresspasse against us.

Q: How doth this Petition concerne the Sacrament?

A: Sinne makes a separation betweene Christ and us, therefore we must begg of God the pardon of our sins before we come to the Sacrament.

Q: What is the 6th Petition?

A: And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evill.

Q: How doth this Petition concerne the Sacrament?

A: After we haue receiued, we are apt ot in danger to fall into temptations or tryalls, we therefore because we are subject to temptations should pray to God to keepe us from them.

(...)

[This transcription was made from unnumbered pages in the CRRS copy with a handwritten text (as above) written into empty pages of the book (a printer's error)]

A: By the assaults and suggestions of Sathan we feele there is a Devill, may we not then certainly conclude that there is a God? 2. Sathan labours by all means to extinguish the light of the Gospell, to leade men on in ignorance, error, and prophanesse, and to turne them out of the path of holinesse. Now why should Satan warre thus against God, his word, and saints, why should hee seeke God's dishonour, and man's destruction, if there were no God, a law, and an everlasting life?

Q: How else?

A: By the consent of nations defence of the Church, support and comfort of the godly, but principally by the Scripture (...)

Expos. 6: all nations in every age, time, and place of the world have acknowledged that there was a God.

2. The Gentiles could not endure him who denied a divine power

3. They adored stocks, stones, bruit beasts, and the basest creatures rather than they would have no Deitie at all.

4. They were zealous and forward in the worship of their Idols, which shewes that though they acknowledged not their true God, yet they know there is a God to whom divine worship is due.

5. Such as have studied to beware Athiests, could never blot this truth out of their consciences but majestie of God hath affrighted, and his terrours made them afraid.

7. The Devill with great malice and furie, and ungodly men with all their might, authoritie, malice, and policie have laboured to finde out and extripate all those that call upon the name of the Lord Iesus, but they have beene miraculoysly hid, preserved and defended by the Lord. 2. God hath wonderfully frustrated all the devices of the wickjed enemies of his church. By meanes they practices to roote it out, it was increased.

3. God fought from heaven against the persecutors of his children, and executd upon them the fiercenesse of his displeasure: dreadfull judgements did overtake many of them, and such horror fell upon some that they were forced to leave their places of favour and rule, and betake themselves to a solitaire and private life. (...)

Q: What is God?

A: Hee is a Spirit, having his being of himselfe. God is spirituall, invisible and immaterial substance (...)

Transcription made from pages 46-48 of the original.