

In some kind we are all infants. For we are all infants in understanding and utterance, touching all matters divine. In this life we attain but some small beginnings of those things, as the Emperour Gratian, in his confession to Ambrose, piously and truly writes. We speake (saith he) of God, not what we ought, but what we are able: Yea the Prophets, and the Apostles themselves confesse the same thing. 1 Cor. 13. 9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. And in ver. 12. Now we see through a glasse darkely, but then face to face.

But, notwithstanding the beginnings wee learne are small, and also the voice of the ministry bee proportioned to our capacity, therein God himselfe speaking with us, as with babes, and permitteih us, like babes to speake to him, yet so would the Lord have the doctrine touching himselfe to bee known, as that he gives us no hope of another life, by any other means. Yea, those beginnings, whatsoever they are, doe with so great a distance surpass all humane wisdom, that there is no comparison betwene it and them. For these rudiments, which to reason are hidden wisdom, are both necessary and sufficient to everlasting salvation. Let us therefore, not onely acknowledge our infancy, but desire also to be of the number of suckling babes. For as the babe grows not to ripeness of man-hood, unlesse he bee fedde with the mothers milke, or convenient food: so wee likewise, that wee may not faile of our hoped perfection, ought not to refuse the milke of the word, whereby we are nourished and suckled to eternal life. This is that spiritual infancy well pleasing to the Lord, as Christ witnesseth, rebuking the Pharisees disdain of the childrens cry in the Temple, Hosanna to the Sonne of David. These are those infants, in whose voyce the Lord will be effectual: By whose mouths (as the Psalmist addeth) bee perfecteth strength; or (as they translate who weigh the originall) foundeth a kingdome. Hee speaketh of strength or kingdome, which is scene in this life, called the kingdome of Christ: which is, the Sonne of God instituting and preserving of a ministry, thereby gathering a Church, quickning believers by the found of the Gospel, and sanctifying them by the holy Spirit to eternal life, defending the Church in this life against the kingdome of the Divell, and after this life raising them up holy to eternal life; that in them may reigne the God-head evidently, and not covertly by the ministry.

That which is the foundation of this kingdome, S. Paul declares, 1 Cor. 3. 11. Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Iesus Christ. Christ is the foundation, first in his proper person: Because all the members of his kingdome, namely the Saints, being conjoynd and inferted into him, doth he carry about him, keeping and holding them together, as the foundation doth the other parts of the building, as the vine doth its branches. Then againe by his doctrine. For as good lawes are the sinewes of a political kingdome: so this kingdome is gathered, kept, and governed, by the doctrine concerning Christ. And as without a foundation the building cannot consist: so unlesse we hold to Christ, and what hee is, and what hee hath done for us, whatsoever else may seeme to bee piety or comfort, it's fading, it's fained, it's nothing.

This foundation is laid in the mouths of infants, when they, believing this same doctrine upon their hearing of it, do by the excitement of the holy Spirit

No hope of life to come, but by knowing the things revealed concerning God.  
1 Pet. 1. 3.  
Eph. 3. 10.  
The foundation of Christ's kingdome is Christ, & how many we are.  
Phil. 3. 8.

rie learne and imbrace the same, and thereby are ingrafted and grow into one with Christ.

In this businesse of maine importance, God useth our infancy to illustrate his glory; The greatnesse of the work, & weaknesse of the instrument plainly proving, that so great a matter is not effected or dependent by and on our, but Gods effectual power. Also to the end it might blunt the insolencie of his adversaries, when as their lofty power is subdued under our weaknesse; and our seeming folly evinceth, that nothing is more foolish than their wisdom: As it is said, In silence and hope shall be your strength: For the Sonne of God destroyeth the works of the Divell, snatching from him them that beleeve, remitting their sin, & taking it away, & beginning in them eternal life, defending the Church, accusing and laying open the malice of the enemies, repressing and punishing them both in this present life, and at the full deliverance of the Church from all evils. And these (though hell repines) doth he worke and witness, by the miserable cries of men. As it is said 2 Cor. 10. 4. The weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mighty through God to the pulling downe of the strong hold; casting downe imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it selfe against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And having in a readinesse to renge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

As therefore the basenesse of the vessel detracts nothing from the worth of the wares it containeth; so our meane and infant expresseion of the doctrine, may not so farre be slighted, as that it should derogate one whit from the weight of those motives which invite you to an ardent study of divinity. But while I meditate with my self, that I am to take a view of some of those motives in this rehearfall preface, I am sensibly so overwhelmed with an infinite masse of matter of maine importance, that scarcely can I resolve whence to make an entrance. But seeing that some of them must come into consideration, we will put that foremost which ought to rule all our actions and indeavours, namely, the serious will of God, expressed in apparent commands. For now, we which are citizens of the Church have conference together, and know for certaine, that the bookes of the Prophets and Apostles are most infallible declarations of the mind and will of God. And in them, here and there, are certaine precepts delivered and rehearsed, which injoyne men a diligent search and knowledge of the doctrine contained in those bookes. Such is that precept of the Decalogue touching the Sabbath. Such is that speech of our Saviour, Luke 10. 41. Nothing is necessary. The knowledge of this wisdom (saith he) is eternal life. This David commendeth, as frequently in other places, so in the first Psalm (which hee writeth as an Epiomie of it) for that it is a companion of true blessednesse. But these have not satisfied our man-loving heavenly Father, that is solicitous of our salvation. Hee addeth further peculiar precepts touching that summe of doctrine that is to bee published to all, especially the youth; namely, the doctrine of Catechismall instruction, Deut. 4. 9. Teach them thy sonnet. Deut. 6. 6, 7. These words shall be in thine heart. Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, &c. And thou shalt binde them for a signe upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets betweene thine eyes. Here doe we heare Parents, and those to whom the charge of Parents is committed, commanded that they care to

Why God useth weeke means for the conversion of men.  
The necessity of Catechismall instruction, is proved from these motives. Gods command.  
A teach

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