

remission of sins, and that they are necessary to the righteousness of the New Testament; that sin, in a case reserved, cannot be forgiven without the authority of the reserver, where, indeed, the canons themselves speak only of the reservation of the canonical penalty, and not of the reservation of sin. From whence and of whom have the bishops the power and authority to impose these traditions upon the Church, to wound consciences? For there are clear testimonies which prohibit the making of such traditions, either to deserve remission of sins, or as necessary to the righteousness of the New Testament, or to salvation. For Paul to the Colossians saith, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day," &c. Also, "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not, taste not, &c.) after the commandments and doctrine of men?" also to Titus he openly prohibited traditions, warning, "that they should not give heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth;" and Christ, speaking of them that enforce traditions, says in this wise "Let them alone, they are blind, leaders of the blind:" and he reproves such modes of worship, saying, "Ever plant which my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

If bishops have the power of lading churches with infinite traditions, and grieving consciences, why doth Scripture so often prohibit the making and following traditions?—and why doth it call them doctrines of devils?—did the Holy Ghost forewarn us of these things in vain? Wherefore it must needs follow, that since ordinances, instituted as things necessary, or with an opinion to deserve remission of sins, are contrary to the Gospel: that it is not lawful for any bishop to institute such. For it is necessary that the doctrine of Christian liberty be kept still in the churches, which is, that the bondage of the law is not necessary to justification, as it is written in the Epistle to the Galatians, "Be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." The pre-eminence of the Gospel may still be retained, which declares, that we obtain remission of sins and justification freely by faith in Christ, and not for cer-