

**THE LIFE OF
BERNARD GILPIN**

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The Life of Bernard Gilpin by William Gilpin

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WILLIAM GILPIN

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BERNARD GILPIN.

BY WILLIAM GILPIN, M.A.
PREBENDARY OF ALSBURY, AND VICAR OF BOLDRE, IN NEW FOREST.

A New Edition;
WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY PREFACE,
BY
CLEMENT CARLYON, M.D.

London:
G. COX, KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1854.

210. C. 181.

P R E F A C E.

"The Church of Rome is essentially intolerant; she has ever warred against the liberties of the world, and her triumphs can only be secured by enslaving the consciences of men, and overthrowing the right of private judgment."

I KNOW no better mode of counteracting the machinations of Popery, than that of bringing before the public examples of wise and good men, who, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, co-operating with their own prayers and pious endeavours in pursuit of truth, have, in difficult times, been enabled to penetrate the gloom, and escape from the thralldom of Roman power and superstition.

It is the highest prerogative of the Church of England, that she maintains the sole, paramount supremacy of the Word of God.

The charter of her religion is the Bible.

The Catholic Church to which she belongs is the great company of Christians throughout the world, of every nation and tongue, worshippers of the same Triune God, trusting for

salvation to the atoning blood of the same merciful Redeemer, through the sanctifying influence of the same Holy Spirit on their hearts.

In the words of Anthony Farendon, an old Divine, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century, "Christ, who came down to teach and to save us, was the light of the world; and what He taught was as open as the day to all but to those who loved darkness more than light, and it will shine in its full strength to all who will look upon it to the end of the world. Nor could it be His will, who came to save us, that His saving truth should be shown by half and dark lights, or that Divines, who call themselves ministers, should be like those philosophers who did but play upon words and syllables." And he adds, in the quaint language of those times: "We have seen some such unseemly jigs in our days. Too many learned theorists there are, who have stretched beyond their line, beyond the understanding of their hearers, and beyond their own, wrought darkness out of light; a sea of words but not a word of sense."

But my present business is not with subtle controversies in high places, however much they are to be reprobated, but with the

apostate Church of Rome herself. And how great must the darkness and tyranny of that church have been, when it cost such men as Latimer and Ridley, and the subject of the present memoir, so much labour and anxiety to extricate themselves from its bondage! They had, moreover, to struggle against the force of habit and education from their very cradles. Whereas, now that the full light of the Bible has been brought to shine upon us, where shall we find bowels of charity to palliate the desertion of our Church by such learned clerks as Newman and others, whose examples must be so damaging to the cause of that pure religion which the Bible sanctions, and which embodies in all their fulness and splendour the doctrines of Christ and His Apostles, uncontaminated by the unauthorised traditions of fallible men.

Popery even goes the length of excluding from the Church of Christ all who do not belong to its own communion; thus fraudulently identifying the Church of Rome with that Church which alone is to endure for ever, and to which alone the Divine attributes of unity and indefectibility belong.

The grounds of this monstrous presumption are derived from certain isolated texts which,

if the construction put upon them by Roman Catholics were admitted, would be fatal to the Christian religion altogether, by making it at variance with itself, and with reason, the lamp of the soul. Well aware of this, it has ever been their object to exclude the light of the Bible; so that whilst England, at the head of the Protestant nations of the world, and conjointly with them, has been sending the Sacred Scriptures into every region of the earth, the Church of Rome has used, and is still using, her utmost efforts to prevent their circulation,—the circulation of that blessed book, which “has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter;”—the circulation of that Scripture which, in the words of the pious and learned Barrow, “teacheth one church diffused over the whole world; whereof each part is bound to maintain charity, peace and communion with the rest, upon brotherly terms. But the Romanists,” he proceeds to say, “arrogate to themselves the name and privilege of the only church; condemning all churches besides their own, and censuring all for apostatical, who do not adhere to them, or submit to their yoke. The Scripture teacheth, and common sense sheweth, and the fathers

both plainly and frequently assert, that all necessary points of faith and good morality are with sufficient evidence couched in Holy Scripture, so that a man of God, pious men, may thence be perfectly furnished to every good work."

Holy Scripture, under condition of repentance and amendment of life, upon recourse to God and trust in His mercy through Jesus Christ our Saviour, doth offer and promise remission of sins, acceptance with God, justification and salvation. This is the tenor of the evangelical covenant; nor did the primitive church know other terms.

But the Pope doth preach another doctrine, and requireth other terms as necessary for remission of sins and salvation; for he hath decreed the confession of all and each mortal sin, which a man by recollection can bring to remembrance, to a priest, to be necessary thereto; anathematizing all who shall say the contrary, which is plainly preaching another Gospel (forged by himself and his abettors), as offering remission upon other terms than God hath prescribed, and denying it upon those which Christianity proposeth.

He teacheth that no sin is pardoned without absolution of a Priest.