

SUMMARY: Dedicatory epistle to Lord Burghley in John Brooke's *A Brief and Clear Confession of the Christian Faith*, published in 1579, a translation from the French. John Brooke also dedicated books to Oxford and to Oxford's wife Anne Cecil, Lord Burghley's daughter.

To the right honourable Sir William Cecil, knight, Baron of Burghley, knight of the honourable Order of the Garter, Master of her Highness' Wards and Liveries, one of the Lords of her Majesty's Privy Council, and Lord High Treasurer of England

Reading this small little volume first written in French and collected by Master John Gardiner (right honourable), and perceiving the same in my simple judgment under a poor habit and little show to bear and import great and weighty effect, finding also therein such singular ground of profound learning and rare wisdom, and therewithal such firm approbations and inexpugnable defences with authorities of holy writ, I thought it no less than needful and nothing more than necessary to do what in me might lie to make the same obvious, usual and familiar unto my brethren of this realm by translating the same into our mother tongue. The which thing having once performed and finished according to my poor talent and slender skill, although I do not doubt to have followed mine author directly and truly in sense and exposition without corruption or abuse, yet finding in myself such imperfections of learning, such barrenness and want of fine phrase and choice words wherewith to have garnished the same, uneaths I durst of myself or in mine own name launch forth my silly bark into the troublesome waves, not doubting (sail she never so sure & true) but sometimes she shall be countermet with churlish billows and puffed at with outrageous blasts and violent tempests. The force whereof more safely to defend and withstand, being loath to leave the same in such obscureness and secrecy as I found it whereof no Christian man ought to be ignorant, I imagined with myself to seek to anchor in your harbour, being very desirous that this my unsmoothed and rough-hewn workmanship might have free passage and safe conduct under your Honour's favourable protection and defence. In which purpose and pretence being abashed and more than half dismayed by the occasions aforesaid, yet grew I in double heart and took treble encouragement that the authority of the matter itself would more than countervail the rest in your Honour's favourable acceptance. But when I further considered whereof I should crave you to be a supporter, namely of the Christian faith (for so the book is intituled, and containeth an hundred articles of the Christian faith), all fearful doubts expelled, assured trust willed me to abide constant in my purpose. For as to your honourable title, wisdom hath annexed her enlargement of authority, so to that authority godly zeal having adjoined a fervency of true faith, and to these also humility of spirit having coupled frank courtesy and benevolence towards all, these I say, right Honourable, have made me so bold to crave that this my small piece of travail whatsoever may receive that hope hath promised, and with my goodwill would gladly deserve, being no ways able except by prayer to Almighty God on whom as duty bindeth I shall not cease continually to call for your Lordship's long preservation of life and much increase of his most comfortable blessings.

Your Honour's daily orator,
John Brooke