All things in parable despise not we;  
Lest things most hurtful lightly we receive,  
And things that good are of our souls bereave.  
My dark and cloudy words, they do but hold  
The truth, as cabinets enclose the gold.

The prophets used much by metaphors  
To set forth truth: yea, whoso considers  
Christ, his apostles too, shall plainly see,  
The truths to this day in such mantles be.

Am I afraid to say, that holy writ,  
Which for its style and phrase puts down all wit,  
Is everywhere so full of all these things,  
Dark figures, allegories? Yet there springs  
From that same book, that lustre, and those rays  
Of light, that turn our darkest nights to days.

Come, let my carper to his life now look,  
And find there darker lines than in my book  
He findeth any; yea, and let him know,  
That in his best things there are worse lines too.

May we but stand before impartial men,  
To his poor one I durst adventure ten,  
That they will take my meaning in these lines  
Far better than his lies in silver shrines.  
Come, truth, although in swaddling clothes I find,  
Informs the judgment, rectifies the mind;  
Pleases the understanding, makes the will  
Submit, the memory too it doth fill  
With what doth our imagination please;  
Likewise it tends our troubles to appease.

Sound words, I know, Timothy is to use,  
And old wives' fables he is to refuse;  
But yet grave Paul him nowhere doth forbid