

# **THE REDEEMER'S GLORY UNVEILED**

OR THE EXCELLENCY OF CHRIST VINDICATED  
IN THE ANTIQUITY OF HIS PERSON  
AS GOD-MAN, before the World began. BEING  
an Explication of the MYSTERY, which was  
kept secret, from the Beginning of the World.  
Wherein are unfolded, the Doctrines of the Pre -  
existence of the Soul of Jesus Christ, and the Glory  
of the Elect in their Vital Union to Him, &c., being a  
reprehension of this degenerate Age.

**By SAMUEL STOCKELL,**

Minister of the Gospel; not of Men, neither by  
Man, but by Jesus Christ, and Pastor of a  
Church of Christ in London.

*"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is  
this grace given, that I should preach among the  
Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make  
all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which  
from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,  
who created all things by Jesus Christ."* Eph.3:8-9.

**ORIGINALLY PRINTED – 1733.**

**COMPLETE & UNABRIDGED**

**Supralapsarian Press**

**[www.sovereignredeemerbooks.com](http://www.sovereignredeemerbooks.com)**

**2018 EDITION**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Introduction	PG 3
Dedication	PG 9
The Preface	PG 13
The Introduction	PG 18
<b>Chapter 1:</b> A Brief Account of Adam's Glory, In His Created State, &c.,	PG 22
<b>Chapter 2:</b> Redeemer's Love to the Elect, &c.	PG 36
<b>Chapter 3:</b> The Rebellion of the Elect Before Conversion, &c.,	PG 72
<b>Chapter 4:</b> Means by Which the Elect Are Brought to Jesus Christ, &c.,	PG 96
<b>Chapter 5:</b> Blessed Consequences of This Conquest of Grace, &c.,	PG 133
<b>Chapter 6:</b> Preaching of This Age, &c.,	PG 194
<b>Chapter 7:</b> The Portion Which Believers Have in The Redeemer, &c.,	PG 244
<b>Scripture &amp; Reason,</b> The Standard of All Religion. A Sermon. 1743, &c.,	PG 258
<b>A Confession of Faith.</b> 1729, &c.,	PG 295

## EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Though personally differing from Mr. Stockell, {not so much in disagreement, as more from sheer incomprehension, and a sense of caution from that which our mind is not entirely able to ascertain from the Scriptures of Truth,} from his views regarding the preexistence of Christ's human soul, a view which Mr. Joseph Hussey, {his 'father' in the faith,} firmly advocated before him; nevertheless, we find in this treatise much that engages the thoughts unto a heavenly contemplation of the glories of the Redeemer. This important contribution to the written Annals of Free & Sovereign Grace should not {according to our humble estimation} lay buried in the rubble of so-called 'Church History,' from whence it would never be extracted by those {Church Historians & Theology Professors} that would style themselves the guardians of our faith. In fact, was it not the Dispensationalist J. N. Darby who uttered these shocking words, "the yearbooks of Christianity are the annals of hell," which statement, {as it corresponds with our own solemn apprehensions regarding mans recorded history of the church of Christ,} is a blazing critique of the world of churches; and as we ponder the theological scribble and historical records of those following one another, who are held in such high esteem by the 'church' as it is recognized in, and by the world, it becomes seemingly evident that there is death in the pot. II Kings 4:40. Wilson, {Dissenting Churches,} speaking of Stockell, echoes this exact tendency,

“though his hearers were numerous, they were chiefly of the poorer sort; and as Mr. Stockell was not favoured or even reckoned amongst the churches of his day, his Meeting House was never acknowledged by the body of Dissenting ministers.” What a striking statement, which speaks volumes in regards to how true Gospel ministers have been treated throughout the ages.

Samuel Stockell, frequently called Sam the Potter, on account of his being raised in that profession, was originally a member of a Church in Petticoat Lane, London, under the ministry of Mr. Joseph Hussey, and like Hussey, {in his sentiments regarding Church Government,} remained a Congregationalist throughout his ministry. Indeed, Stockell was a follower, and great admirer of Joseph Hussey, but possessed neither his learning, nor attained to that prominence which characterized the faithful ministry of him, whom he loved in the Faith of Christ Crucified. Like Hussey, he was a very jealous advocate for the Doctrines of Free & Absolute Grace, and drank deep into the sentiments of Tobias Crisp, and other writers of this stamp. His followers, {who were all of High Grace Persuasion, when it comes to essential Gospel Truth,} considered him a very deep and spiritual preacher, who attained to an eminence in heavenly truths above any that were preaching the Gospel in London at that time. The zeal and confidence with which he asserted the sacred truths of Holy Scripture, gave him great authority amongst his people, who looked up to him with reverence, as a person endowed with special

extraordinary gifts. Those who attended his ministry were chiefly of the poorer sort, who looked to him for instruction and guidance as they attended to the things of Christ. Perhaps sadly, but more so mercifully, his meeting house was never even recognized by the Dissenting Churches or Ministers of his day; being, as it were, cast out by all ecumenical movements, even those who advocated the doctrines of Grace, who wanted nothing to do with him, or those associated with him.

Upon his initial venturing forth to preach the Gospel, he preached occasionally where he could, and wherever a door of utterance was granted unto him, and after a time {November 1729} was chosen assistant to Mr. Samuel Harris, in Mill-Yard, Goodman's-Fields, upon which being so selected to that work, he felt compelled to deliver a Confession of his Faith in Christ, which was published at the desire of many that heard it in 1730. His work with Harris soon was squashed as they disagreed upon some points of Doctrine, which forced his removal, upon which he attempted to set up for himself.

Even in this Confession of his Faith in Christ, he felt an obligation to clear himself from slandering reports which were being heaved upon him during this period of his life. He states that, "God is my Witness, whom I serve, that I do not take Pleasure in, nor allow myself in the Breach of any one Part of the righteous Law of God, though my Father and my God hath been pleased, for gracious Ends, to suffer the Wicked to asperse me, and vilely to treat my Character, to represent me to the World, and to the

Churches, as an evil Person," which seemed to be illustrative of the abuse which he received from his antagonists throughout his ministry in London.

As Stockell excelled in his zealous and bold proclamation of Gospel Truth, and being granted fluency, as well as confidence in the pulpit, he acquired a measure of popularity; so it was not long before a few hearers began to attach themselves to his ministry, which shortly thereafter were constituted into a Church of Christ. His first meeting-house was in Whitechapel; but that proving too small, he had a new one built for him, in the way from Spitalfields to Hackney, which went by the name of the Loggerheads, from the sign of a public-house in that neighborhood. But there his continuance was very short as well; for, falling out with his patrons, he was obliged to leave it. After this, he set up anew, near Cripplegate, whither some of his people followed him; and upon the meeting-house in Red-Cross-street becoming vacant, in consequence of the dissolution of Mr. Lewis's church, he removed into that, at which place he continued preaching till his death, a period of twenty-five years.

A derogating note regarding his church in London, written during the early part of his ministry gives this brief account of him. "His meeting is filled, and he is as bold and daring a man as most that are to be met with; which qualifications, it is apprehended, are what he principally excels in."

Speaking of his own experience as gradually being liberated from law terrors which had seized his

soul under a legal ministry, he makes mention of the effect that Mr. Hussey's preaching had upon his spirit, when he says, "ah, this is a happy concomitant of a vital union to the Redeemer; for, though the soul before was in ten thousand terrors about its eternal state, upon this union, they disappear. I will not say, that they never show themselves again; for they frequently do, as we find by woeful experience; yet I believe it is often owing to the preaching which the poor soul sits under, for they, who sit under a legal ministry are often in great danger of being in the greatest darkness about their state. I know it by my own experience, that, when I sat under a law ministry, I was in continual ups and downs, and could never arrive at any certainty about my state; but, when the Lord was pleased to bring me under the clear light of the Gospel, by the Ministry of his servant, Mister Joseph Hussey, I was brought to live a more comfortable life. My guilt did not return so often upon me; for I had now the blood of sprinkling to go to; and I saw the Covenant in all its stability and firmness, so that my soul came to an anchor, where I did ride sweetly and with abundance of joy."

Though a man of small attainments in natural learning, yet by a diligent study of the Holy Scriptures, he attained to a considerable knowledge upon theological subjects, and delivered his thoughts with ease, both in speaking and in writing. After his entrance into the ministry, he applied himself to the study of the languages, particularly the Hebrew, for which he had a particular regard. He

was a zealous advocate for the doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ, which was defended by some orthodox writers before him, such as Goodwin, Fleming, Watts, Hussey, &c. Mr. Stockell, also, undertook the public defense of this doctrine, in this book which he published with the following title, "The Redeemer's Glory Unveiled, or the Excellency of Christ Vindicated, in the Antiquity of his Person, as God-Man before the World began; being an Explication of the Mystery which was kept Secret from the Beginning of the World; wherein are unfolded, the Doctrines of the Pre-existence of the Soul of Jesus Christ, and the Glory of the Elect in their vital Union to him, &c., being a Reprehension of this degenerate Age, 1733." It is still in great repute amongst persons of the same school with the author, and it must be acknowledged to be a worthy contribution to those writings which excel in setting forth the work of Sovereign Redemption, as Accomplished by Christ and Effectually Applied by the Spirit. Mr. Stockell was buried in Bunhill-Fields, where the following inscription was placed upon his tomb-stone. Here lies the body of that faithful minister and servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. Samuel Stockell, Pastor of a Church near Cripplegate, London, who departed this life May 3, 1753; in the 49th year of his age.

## DEDICATION

**To the church of Christ, over whom the Lord, by your own consent, hath made me pastor, grace and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied.**

Dearly beloved, whom I love in the truth, and for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever, the pregnant proofs that you have given of your love to, and zeal for the great and glorious truths of the everlasting Gospel of God, and the tender regard that you have always had, under my ministry, for the Redeemer's Glory, with many other particular's which might be mentioned, give you an indisputable right to the dedication of the Redeemer's Glory Unveiled, &c.

It administers abundant joy to my soul, when I consider you, as the seals of my ministerial labours among you; for, though you have had many instructors in Christ, you have not had many fathers; but, as an instrument in the hand of the Holy Ghost, I have begotten you in the Gospel; and, as many of you as have been converted under my ministry, so all of you have professed abundant joy and establishment thereby. Oh, that I may be made a further instrument in the hand of the Lord to carry on the great work begun, and present you as a chaste virgin to Christ, and that you may be my joy and crown, in that great day of accounts.

But, I'm very jealous over some of you, that you have only a name to live, and that your hearts and works are not right before the Lord; that you are dead, even whilst you have a name in God's house, and a place within his walls. May the good Lord awaken you, and bring you to himself, and to the knowledge of the things that tend to your peace, before they are hidden from your eyes. Remember, that if the ordinances of Christ do not give and convey grace, they harden the heart; and, oh, what a dreadful thing is it to be hardened under the dispensations of grace, and to be ripened for everlasting damnation, by the very means Heaven hath appointed to make the redeemed meet for the inheritance amongst the saints in light.

However, it is my great glory that this is the case of but a few; for the most of you are always, with a cheerful aspect, ready to show a reverential regard to the Person of Christ and his Institutions. Your faith and conversation have been, and, blessed be God, are according to the revelation of the Gospel; for, in these respects, you have been inferior to none, but have even surpassed many of your elder sisters in the Lord. In these matters, many daughters have done well, but thou, I had almost said, doth excel them all.

But I must say this of you, that you have excelled most of the churches; for few of them can equal you, in your constant and steady adherence to the doctrine of the Redeemer's Antiquity, as real, though secret, God-Man, before the world began, as the Head of all God's ways and works; in whom, with

amazing delight, you are made daily to see, and that for yourselves, an inestimable fullness of nature, grace and glory. With what joy have you beheld your justification in his imputed righteousness founded on the Covenant of Grace? And you have also, with great pleasure, viewed the holiness that fills his person, the communications of which are to you the sanctification of your souls, and your meetness for glory. You likewise behold the faithfulness of your God in his covenant, in daily communicating these graces to you, whereby you are enabled to go on with steady pleasures and unshaken joys, to the world where joys and pleasures are grown to full perfection; and this influences your conversation and makes you adorn your profession by an evangelical obedience.

Though many carnal preachers, and blind priest-ridden professors, have stigmatized you as Antinomians, and no friends to holiness and duty; yet you shine in the eyes of all that know you, for your ready attendance upon the public worship of God; for you love the gates of Zion, and the place where your God manifest his glory. Your love to private meetings to seek the Lord, on special occasions; your liberal contributions for the support of the cause of Christ, and his poor members, your family and secret religion; and your moral and modest behavior and deportment to all men, bespeak you to be a people redeemed from a vain conversation; and all this you perform without whine or cant, or those frightful grimaces that are legible on the faces of your hypocritical despisers; and,

although you are reproached, you are not cast down, but through grace esteem it, as an honour, to be accounted worthy to suffer shame, for the sake of Christ, and a peaceful conscience in his blood. Go on still, my brethren, in the strength of the Lord, your own God, with an undaunted courage and resolution; and may your zeal and labor for the glory of Christ, and the promotion of his Mediatorial Kingdom, in the salvation of his church, prove successful, and remain a pattern to be imitated by all the churches that know you.

I add no more, but desire to be remembered by you at the Throne of Grace, when your souls are warm under a sense of divine love, that I may have continued to me the sensible manifestations of the love of God, be kept close to him in all my ways and supported and edified in all my ministerial labours, for the glory of God and the good of souls; and that you may grow in grace, and in a greater knowledge of Christ, and more intimate fellowship with him, in order to your meetness for your thrones of everlasting glory with him, is the prayer of him, who is your servant for Christ's sake, in the work of the Gospel,

**Samuel Stockell.**

## THE PREFACE

Reader, the following treatise, which contains several great and important truths of the Gospel, is not published for strife and contention, for the sake of novelty or singularity, nor for any secular advantage. The first of these I abhor, the second I don't affect; and the third I don't expect, but these sheets are made public from a principal of love to the honour of Christ, and the salvation of souls.

Some will perhaps object that although I have declared that I do not affect novelty, the greatest part of the treatise is a novel. I answer, it may seem to be a novel to men, who never have seriously or studiously read their Bibles; but all, who have, with sobriety and humility, diligently examined the sacred Oracles, have discovered, that the things contained in the following sheets are to be found in the Word of God. Our sentiments, therefore, are far from being new, for we have the glory of antiquity on our side.

Some may say, that I here reflect upon all men, as if they never with care and attention read the Word of God, and would commend myself, as the most assiduous in conversing with the sacred Oracles. I answer, I fear that I have too great a reason to reflect upon many, who rest in their authors, expositors, annotators and systems, more than they ought, rather than closely apply their minds to labor and study; whereas, if they did but study more, and read less, we should have greater

men amongst us, and our sermons and works would not swell with other men's lines.

But there have been many, who in their day have studied hard, and brought truth to light; and some few, I hope, there are in our age, who with diligence seek after truth, dig for her as for hidden treasure, and do not altogether rest in the sentiments of good men, as if their sayings were infallible proof; though this is manifestly the case of many, since they seek no further evidence. Not, that I despise reading; no, very far from it, for I very frequently with pleasure look into the writings of the Fathers, and am instructed; but then I bring all to the touchstone of the Word and sanctified reason, to know, whether those things that they affirm are so.

You may perhaps say that every wise man does the same. It is very true, but then all men, even some accounted great men, are not so wise; for there are some who have ventured abroad into the world, in other men's works; and, when their monstrous dress hath been detected, they have confessed is not to be their own, and all they could offer, in their own vindication, was, that they took their authors word for it. But I forbear, the residue of the Spirit is with my God, who will pour it down, in his own time and way, and teach all his servants in a better manner than they are generally taught, at present.

As to my commending myself, the charge is false; for I have often, and do still discommend myself. I have need of shame to think, how little I read my Bible, and study the great truths contained

therein. No, I am far from boasting; for, when I have done all, I have done no more than my duty; nay, my all is not a tenth part thereof. I desire to lie in the dust, from all views of myself, yet my soul shall still make her boast in the Lord, and objections brought against me shall fall off easily, because I'm upheld by the everlasting arms of the mighty God of Jacob.

As to what may be objected against in the subject matter of this treatise, it gives me very little anxiety, since the truths it contains will defend themselves; but, as the manner of the performance is mine it most concerns me, being sensible of my own inabilities for so great a work. I know that my readers will be of various dispositions, some learned, and some who will distort my sentences, and put them upon the rack forcing them to speak what they please, and then they will draw their own conclusions from them; and others perhaps, willfully ignorant, who because they cannot take in the things contained in this work, will clamor and make a hideous outcry, and even say all the evil they can of what they don't understand. The next is the prejudiced reader, who is the worst of all, for he is resolved to find fault before he begins to read a single word. From the two latter of these I expect no quarters, and I ask for none; but there is another set of readers, who are unprejudiced, and being governed by a good spirit will pass no rash judgment upon this, nor any other work, but read and try it by the Scriptures; and, if they find it true, they will embrace it and overlook a thousand weaknesses of

the author's pen. I hope that my reader will so treat me, and cover all my imperfections with a mantle of love; and, if my unprejudiced reader prove a man of sense and learning, he will do so, and to such a reader as this I will briefly discover the things contained in the following sheets.

It contains the glory of Adam in his created state, the blessedness of his condition before he lost the original rectitude of his nature, by his disobedience to the Law of his Creation, and also the miserable state into which he hath plunged himself by the Fall, with many dreadful concomitants thereof. It shows the methods made use of by the devil to seduce our first parents; and likewise what the image of God was, wherein Adam was made, which he lost by his transgression, and the love of Christ to his people in their fallen state; where I have endeavored to prove the real existence of his rational soul, as God-Man before the world began, which I hope is proved to the satisfaction of the unprejudiced. My soul longs to have the Lord Jesus Christ glorified above all creatures, in all respects, which can never be done until the doctrine of his antiquity is embraced, as will appear from this treatise. I have also discovered from Scripture and Experience, the rebellion of the unregenerate against Christ, and the means by which it is conquered, with the blessed consequence of this conquest. And I have likewise taken upon me {I hope my reader will pardon me} to show, what is the preaching of this age, and what is the duty of a

Gospel minister, and have concluded with the Saints portion in their glorious Redeemer.

Reader, what I have written hath been {if my heart does not deceive me} with a sincere respect for the glory of Christ, and the honour of sovereign grace, and for the believers peace and joy in the Lord, with his further establishment and growth in grace, and in the knowledge of his only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And that it may answer all these ends, for which it was written, is the prayer of him, who will, according to his measure of light and grace, be ready to serve thee in all things belonging to the everlasting peace,

**Samuel Stockell**

# **THE REDEEMER'S GLORY UNVEILED**

## **THE INTRODUCTION**

The understanding of man since the fall of Adam from his paradisaical state, is not only darkened with ignorance of the glorious grace of the Gospel, and the divine truths therein contained, but it is also filled with prejudice and opposition against it; and there is nothing in nature which can remove or take away this prejudice, or cause this opposition to cease, but the illumination of the mind; and this cannot be affected by any means whatever, but by the energetical operation of the Spirit of God, by the instrumentality of the word in the ministration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by which God's elect are brought to see their undone state, as they stand in Adam, and are under a broken law; and here they also behold a matchless beauty in Christ, and ineffable glory in his grace, by which they are brought to bow their wills to Jesus Christ, as God's only way of salvation; and, as such, they go forth to him in faith, which is attended with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I Pet.1:8. This is the time of love, {"now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine," Ezek.16:8,} for now the nuptial rites, which on

Christ's part were celebrated before the world began, are solemnized on their part by faith of the operation of God. Col.2:12.

This vital marriage union to Jesus Christ is a glorious mystery; yea, such a mystery, that if angels from heaven were to proclaim it to men, destitute of the grace of God, with the greatest perspicuity, they could not understand it, though ever so learned in a human way, as the great apostle saith, "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor.2:14. By the natural man here, humbly conceive, we must not understand the animal or brute, but the rational man; for so the word in the original properly signifies, as those very well know who are acquainted with the Greek language. From this text therefore, it evidently appears, that a man, with all his reason, though ever so well cultivated by the rules of art, in a liberal or learned education, is incapable of taking in things supernatural; since, notwithstanding all his learning, he is still but a natural man; and, if everlasting love and grace, Jer.31:3, do not prevent it, he will live and die a stranger to, and a despiser of, the blood and righteousness, love and grace, of the Son of God, which will inevitably plunge him into an abyss of endless woe.

As this marriage union is a glorious and mystical one, and known to none but such as have Christ in them the hope of glory, Col.1:27; oh, how suitable is Jesus Christ and his fullness to their souls!

These are beheld by them with the utmost pleasure; and they can prize, value and adore Jesus Christ, and that infinite love which gave him. Jn.3:16. The glory, which they behold, in their relation to their great exalted Head and Husband, at their Heavenly Father's right hand, in their names and nature, makes their hearts to glow, and their tongues to give glory and sing praise. Oh, how do they long to be in that blessed world, where they shall see their Beloved, face-to-face, I Cor.13:12, and to be forever free from all lets and impediments that may obstruct the enjoyment of his divine presence! Oh, how does the knowledge of this relation inspire their souls to holiness, and a conformity to Christ Jesus! Rom.8:29. As these happy souls live above the condemning guilt of sin, this love and grace also fills them with strong desires to live above the committing of sin.

But, before a soul is brought to the knowledge and comfort of these things, God is often pleased in the course of his providence, to call them to pass through many difficulties, and to conflict with many evils; and this is done, in order to strip them of that pride wherewith by nature they clothe themselves, Rom.8:7, in some good measure, to destroy their natural enmity to Jesus Christ and the Grace of the Gospel, and to cure them of that innate propensity of love to the Law as a Covenant of Works. Gal.4:24. Yet all these must be done, before the soul can be brought aright to embrace Jesus Christ and his Grace, as they are revealed in the Gospel.

Now, in order to set the soul's vital union to Jesus Christ as God-Man, and many more precious truths of the everlasting Gospel, in a clear and distinct light, which is the design of this work, I shall observe the following method.

I. I shall give a brief account of Adam's glory, in his created state; and of his miserable estate, as fallen.

II. The Redeemer's love to the elect, as considered under the fall; wherein I shall endeavor to prove the real existence of his rational soul, as God-Man, before the world began.

III. What the rebellion of the elect against the Mediator, before conversion is.

IV. The means by which the elect are brought to Jesus Christ, and how their rebellion is conquered.

V. The blessed and delightful consequences of this conquest.

VI. What the preaching of this age is, and what is the duty of Gospel ministers.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### ***A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ADAM'S GLORY, IN HIS CREATED STATE; AND OF HIS MISERABLE ESTATE, AS FALLEN.***

When Elohim had created the Heavens and the Earth, and brought the rude mass into a beautiful form, he rested not, but proceeded to make man out of the dust of the ground, and infused into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul; and this was done in the image of God, and after his own likeness. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Gen.1:27. By the image of God, we are not to understand any perfections of his infinite essence, because it is impossible for creatures to be made like an infinite Deity, and God cannot communicate his essence to any. Therefore, that common received notion of God's communicable attributes is to be renounced and abhorred as a heresy of very dangerous consequence, since it hath a tendency to swelling pride and that great high-mindedness, and directly leads into blasphemy; for, when I am left to conceive myself as possessed of any of the divine perfections, I am then making way for every vain imagination, that can enter into my naughty heart. May the Lord enable us forever to detest and abhor principles of this pernicious nature, and help us always to keep in mind that sentiment of the schoolmen, who taught that there was nothing in God but himself; and, if

so, it is impossible for us, either as Creatures or Christians to partake of his essence.

By the image of God, I humbly conceive, is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; the Man of God's right hand, the Son of Man made strong for himself, by federal stipulation. This was the image of God that Adam was made in; Jesus Christ was the first of the creation of God, his soul had a real, though a secret, existence with God, in the beginning of his works or ways; yea, it was the beginning of his way, for it was before his works of old.

Now, after the similitude or likeness of the Man Christ Jesus was Adam made; for though the body of Jesus Christ had not a real existence before the foundation of the world, yet it was formed in the cogitation of the divine mind, and in council prepared for him, Heb.10:5, and it was to be ready in a real and open existence, in the fullness of time, in the virgin's womb. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Gal.4:4.

But these things shall be considered at large in their proper places. Well, it was the soul of Jesus Christ, then in being, and his body, in decree, which was the image and pattern by which Adam was created; for the Lord made all things by Jesus Christ, by him exemplarily, as Man and Mediator, who, as the eternal God, made all things efficiently. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they

be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him." Col.1:16. Christ as the image of the invisible God was holy and pure; so was Adam in his created state. Christ was also content and glorious, for he was possessed of a glory with his Father before the world began; so Adam, in his paradisaical state, was happy and glorious. His nature was entirely holy, and his person possessed of all the felicities of a created state; he had all the strength, fortitude, wisdom and purity of an uncorrupted nature, which rendered him capable of keeping the law of his creation, in all its demands, which consisted in personal, perfect and perpetual righteousness.

Observe here, that this righteousness did not consist in active obedience only, but in passive also. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen.2:17. From whence it appears that Adam was to suspend acting, "thou shalt not eat," yet, in this suspension of action, he was active, his will being inclined to obey his Maker's Law. This tree of knowledge of good and evil was, I apprehend, a real tree in the garden of Eden; for I cannot, with one of the father's, {Origen,} turn all into an allegory; however, I conceive it had nothing in its own nature which was either good or evil, but it was the commandment of God that made it so. Now, this tree may be properly called the tree of knowledge of good and evil because there was a good and evil that could not be known otherwise than by eating

thereof, which was breaking the Command of God in violating the law of Creation; and we find, that there was in man a strong propensity to be wiser and greater than he was in his created state, which induced him to venture upon the loss of a present and certain good, for a future, and {to him} an uncertain good; nay, and upon no less evil than death itself, both temporal and eternal. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen.2:17.

The devil touched our first parents in a very tender part, and, like a subtle adversary, entered in at the weakest point, fastening his temptation where it might take the deepest root, and bringing forth his designed purpose. Observe how cunningly he goes to work, he enters the body of the serpent, a creature more subtle than any beast of the field, and doubtless, very familiar with our first parents; and he directs his discourse unto the woman, concerning the Law she was under. Upon this subject, he first begins, and says, "yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Eve answers the serpent, "we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Gen.3:1-3. All the trees in the garden our first parents might freely use at their pleasure, except this tree of knowledge of good and evil. The serpent tells the woman, that they should not surely die, for God, he insinuated, kept them back from greater glories, by prohibiting the eating of the fruit of this tree, "for

God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Gen.3:5. Here it was the devil which usurped our first parents, informing them that, "you shall be as gods." The original word doth signify gods in the plural, and it is the name of the great Jehovah in his personalities; but yet this name is also applicable to magistrates. "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." Psal.82:1. It is also applied to false gods, the idols of the heathens, "for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens," Psal.96:5; and even to the devils themselves. I Sam.28:13. Now saith the serpent, "ye shall be as gods," i.e., you shall be as devils, knowing good and evil; knowing the worth of good, by the loss thereof, and the dreadfulness of evil, by sustaining it; and by these cunning artifices our first parents were deceived; but yet, as before, there was a good to be known, that could be known no other way than by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Now, this 'good' was salvation and eternal glory by a Redeemer. It is true, that our first parents, before their fall, were happy; they enjoyed the Lord without interruption, being filled with all the delights of nature, and were superior to the whole creation; for all things were put under them, and they had dominion over all the works of God's hands, which is evident. "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Psal.8:6. In these things

did his glory consist; but, as soon as he listened unto the voice of the serpent, and of his wife, and did eat of this tree, he immediately lost his crown and dignity, and tumbled headlong down from his glory and honour into a dreadful state of sin and misery, being deprived of his power to will or perform any good whatsoever. He cannot help himself, nor so much as think a good thought, for his own relief, II Cor.3:5, for his whole nature is corrupted, and all his actions are wicked; he is not capable of doing anything, except to increase his own misery and everlasting woe; he can destroy himself, but nothing else. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help." Hos.13:9. He is entirely divested of power to keep the Law of God, and the divine precepts vastly surmount all his wisdom as well as his utmost strength. Now, the Law in all its force and rigor takes place not only upon his person and posterity, but also in his conscience; and he is plunged into a gulf of sin, sorrow and despair. "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen.6:5. He is practically a foe to God, and naturally prone to break his Law daily; and as under this broken law he must certainly fall a prey into the hands of incensed justice, since it is impossible for man ever to find the way to eternal life, by a violated law, Gal.2:16, though vain man is, and will be catching at life and everlasting happiness, by his duties and performances; yet, in this way, he cannot take hold of them, because death is threatened by

the righteous lawgiver, who is not a man that he should lie, Num.23:19, so that death shall surely take place, and all the threatenings of a broken law shall be put into execution, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen.2:17. However, notwithstanding all these threatenings, sinners are so stubborn and rebellious, through the blindness of their hearts, Eph.4:18, that they are resolved to attain life by their own doings, though it will certainly prove their eternal ruin; as will appear from what may be said about the tree of life. "This tree," saith an excellent author, {Henry Ainsworth, Annotations on Genesis, 1616,} "was unto Adam a symbolical tree, a sign of a blessed natural life in Paradise, and of eternal life also; but on the fall of man it ceased to be so. It might not now, in the justice of God be so continued unto man fallen into disobedience," and he further adds, "that God having driving man from this tree, would drive him from all confidence in himself, and in his own works, {and so from the abuse of this tree also, which might turn to his future judgment,} that he might seek the life of heaven, which is hid with Christ in God, Col.3:3, who will give to such, as by faith do overcome the world, to eat of the tree of life, Rev.2:7, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

We see here, that this Tree was to Adam a sign of life, and the participation thereof would have put him in the possession of endless joys; but, being fallen, the way of life and eternal bliss is so guarded that it was impossible for man in this fallen state to

have laid hold of them, and if he had attempted the tree he must have died in the action.

The substance of the sign I humbly conceived to be this, that every man, who attempts to have eternal life by his own acts and performances, will eternally miscarry; for in vain do men imagine themselves qualified to run upon the flaming blade of a fiery law, which they themselves have violated. Sure I am, that such men do not think at all, or, if they do, it is in a very dark and confused manner; because, if their thoughts were just and right upon this awful point, their attempts would fill them with horror and amazement, for he that hath obtained eternal life for his people had the flaming sword of a broken law {the sword of justice, Zech.13:7,} sheathed in his soul and heart, and such a stroke as this would at once have struck the united strength of angels and men forever down to the lowest hell.

Therefore, oh proud legalist, whosoever thou art, thou art working hard but to no purpose, for all thy works will leave thee to perish eternally. Thou art striving to make thy peace with God, yet peace shall be very far from thee, Isa.57:21, and all that thou at present doest call peace is nothing else but stupidity, and will prove like the cracklings of thorns, Eccl.6:6, that will soon pass away, and thou wilt lie down in everlasting sorrow. "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Isa.50:11.

Because such despise the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, and trample it under their feet, great will their punishment be. The Lord help them to consider, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb.10:31, i.e., an absolute God, a God out of Christ, a God clothed with vengeance, a consuming fire. Heb.12:29. Sinners, you are fond of attaining life by the law, but do you hear what the law saith? "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident, for, the just shall live by faith." Gal.3:10-11. Now, that it is impossible for any man to keep the law perfectly is manifest from universal experience; for there are none so presumptuously bold as to say, that they can perfectly keep the law; and, if any should be guilty of so much vanity, their lives and conversations will evidently confute their unwarranted assertions, and give pregnant proofs to all impartial observers, that they are far out of that way which leads to the city of God; and, that they have not one of the least qualifications for that country, which is filled only with spotless inhabitants.

From the whole then, we may very justly conclude, that fallen man is quite out of the way to life and happiness, and has no power of his own to put himself into it. If he is in that narrow way that leads up to the world of glory and blessedness, he has been brought into it by the grace and power of

God; for it is a way that men do not know by nature; it is so dark and obscure that they cannot behold it. "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known, I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Isa.42:16. God's way of salvation, by the Lord Jesus Christ, is a way which natural men know nothing of, neither can they know it, but by the supernatural operations of God the Holy Spirit, which must enable them to see, that Christ is the safe, pleasant, easy, and only way to blessedness. John 14:6. Without this assistance they know nothing of Christ the way; nor are they desirous to know anything about it, but rather despise it, and therefore it is absolutely necessary that the divine power be exerted, or else they will go on in the broad way to destruction, Matt.7:13, down to the chambers of death. Prov.7:27. But God, in the course of his gracious dealings, manifests a divine power in bringing his people into the way of life, for he purposed in himself, and covenanted with his Son Jesus Christ from everlasting, that his people should be willing in the day of his power, Psal.110:3, which sufficiently proves, that they could not be willing, before this powerful day; for, if it were possible that sinners would be willing to come to Christ, the way of salvation, there would have been nothing in this covenant promise to the Mediator, thy people shall be willing, &c.

I know that the enemies of grace endeavor to weaken and enervate the force of these words, by

telling us, that the text in the original signifies, that they shall willingly offer themselves; which, if granted, will not serve their purpose. Supposing the meaning of this phrase to be, they shall willingly offer themselves, it is not in the day of their strength or power, but it is in the day of the Lord's power exerted on their helpless behalf, which may be easily proved from the original text. If these gentlemen had done something, they could have proved, that the day of the Redeemer's power had not been in the text, but that it is to be found therein is abundantly manifest, for the word here is not their strength, but it is thy strength, or thy power, i.e., Christ strength or power; for that he is the person spoken to is clear from the first verse of this Psalm. "The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Psal.110:1. Therefore, the Arminian sense of, and gloss upon these words is false, and offers violence to this portion of the sacred Scriptures. An unhappy tribe indeed, for, when truth fails them, they make lies their refuge, and assert anything to propagate their pernicious principles, and diffuse their poison into the minds of men, though they need not be so industrious, since their principles are every way suited to the palate of men dead in trespasses and sins. But some may say, who are those you call Arminians? I answer, show me a natural man, destitute of the grace of God and I will show you in Arminian. But I shall not make it my business here to enter into the controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians, my design being only, in the

ensuing work, as they shall fall in my way, to take particular notice of some of their dangerous opinions; and, according to that measure of strength that God hath given me, I shall strike such blows at their Dagon's and Diana's, as, if seconded by a stroke of the arm of that God who is jealous for his own glory, they must immediately fall before the Ark of his strength.

Thus we have said somewhat of the creation and happiness of Adam, in his Supralapsarian State; and also of his fallen condition, and the miseries thereof, without the interposition of grace and power from the heavenly springs of everlasting love. Jer.31:3.

There is yet one thing more that I would take special notice of before I conclude this chapter, which is whether Adam, if he had stood in his paradisaical state, and had never broken his Master's Law, would have been admitted to any greater glory than what he was possessed of in the garden of Eden? Or, whether he should have been translated to the glory that the saints now possess with Christ eternally at God's right hand?

Answer. I conceive, that Adam had no promise of a better life than what he did enjoy in his paradisiacal state; and we can, in honour to the Person, Righteousness and Fullness of the Lord Jesus Christ, think, that Adam would have had as great glory and honour for his righteousness, as Jesus Christ shall have for his. Now, either there is a greater worth and glory in the righteousness of Christ than that of Adam, or there is not; if there is

not then Jesus Christ is no more than a creature, or his Godhead hath no influence upon his righteousness, and this will necessarily render the hypostatical union of the two Natures and one Mediator needless; and, which naturally follows, it is an impeachment of the wisdom of God in the Constitution of the Person of Christ.

But, if there is a worth and glory in the righteousness of Christ superior to that of Adam, as certainly there is; which appears from what hath been said concerning the dignity of his Person {and this is a truth that all good men will agree to} it then follows, that the reward of the Redeemer's righteousness is a glory beyond that of an earthly paradise. If the righteousness of Adam did entitle him to spiritual and eternal glory, the same that Jesus Christ is now in the possession of, it would follow, that Jesus Christ hath not the full reward of his obedience, which would impeach the justice of God; but Jesus Christ hath the full reward of his obedience; and, if Adam had received such a reward, he would have had more than his due.

From the whole we conclude, that Adam's obedience entitled him only to the felicities of an earthly paradise; for it can never be proved from Scripture Revelation, that there was any superior glory designed as the reward of his obedience. Oh then, what cause have all the redeemed of the Lord to bless God for the righteousness of Christ, by virtue of an interest in which they have an indisputable and indispensable right entitled to a better and more glorious inheritance than ever the

holiness of Adam could have procured for them, because it is an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. I Pet.1:4. Oh glorious grace and matchless love, that we who had lost our original righteousness, the rectitude of our nature, and all the blessings of nature, should by the hand of eternal love have something better and more glorious laid up in store for us. Oh righteous Father, help us to adore all thy grace and goodness, and love thee, and live to thee, under a sense of all thy gracious favors, for evermore. Amen.

## CHAPTER 2

***OF THE REDEEMER'S LOVE TO THE ELECT,  
CONSIDERED AS UNDER THE FALL; WHEREIN  
I SHALL ENDEAVOR TO PROVE THE REAL  
EXISTENCE OF HIS RATIONAL SOUL, AS GOD-  
MAN, BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN.***

The blessed Jesus having loved his church, his bride and spouse as considered in her supralapsarian or her unfallen state, with a love of complacency and pure delight, for his delights were with the sons of men, as they were his, by the Father's free donation. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world, thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." John 17:6. This love was so strong, that when he saw his spouse fallen in the common head of nature, and even wallowing in all the filth of a lapsed state, these things did not break the strong and blessed bands of his love; but he loves her still, and is resolved to comply with all the purposes of infinite wisdom, concerning her restoration from all the miseries of her fallen state.

This glorious Jesus, who is the sovereign Lord and Head of nature, grace and glory, was by his Father begotten to the office of a mediator, and sustained that character, before angels existed, and the highest parts of the dust of the world appeared. Christ was really a mediator before Adam's existence.

Now it is evident, that an infinite God cannot be a mediator, unless he mediates to himself; which I apprehend to be very irrational; since it is what I cannot, nor, I believe, any man in reason can account for; neither are we taught such a notion or anything like it in the sacred oracles, but the Scripture is plain and express in this matter. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." Gal.3:20. A mediator is not of one, that is, is not of one essence or nature, but the great God is of one essence; therefore, a mediator must have a plurality of natures; for, where there is not a plurality of natures, the essentials of a mediator are wanting; and, where the essence of any being is wanting, that being does not exist. But, according to the common scheme of our age, the essentials of a mediator were not till four thousand years after the creation; therefore, Jesus Christ was no mediator in reality, for the Old Testament church, and consequently, if they went to glory, they found a way thither that Jesus Christ was not; from whence it will follow, that Jesus Christ is not the salvation of all that are saved. But possibly, the gentleman that I am contending with, would rather give into the sentiments of the Church of Rome, and believe their doctrine of purgatory, than the antiquity of our Mediator's Most Glorious Person.

Jesus Christ was in the beginning of God's ways and works of old, set up and authorized by his Father to be Lord Mediator, and therefore, he must have the essentials of such an office, which are these.

1. The human nature, or, at least, the nobler part thereof; and this must stand personally united to the second Person in the glorious Trinity.

2. The reasonable part of the Mediator, I mean his soul, must be filled with a divine fullness, and so it was, "for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Col.1:19. Now, I query, who this 'him' is, in whom the Father pleased that all fullness should dwell? Surely, not in Christ, as an infinite, eternal and uncreated Jehovah; for, as such, he had an underived fullness in himself from all eternity. This 'him' then, must be the man at his right hand, Psal.80:17, who was the first of his creation, Rev.3:14, and the real existence of the soul of Christ with God, in the beginning of his ways, is what I shall attempt to prove from both Scripture and Reason. I'm sensible, that in this I shall differ from the common scheme of the doctors of our age, and I am very strongly inclined to think, that I shall meet with very hostile treatment from them, either by tongue or pen; but however that be, I care not for it; and it will appear, from the sequel, that I do not consult nor study to please them, though I would not give them any just cause of offense. Indeed, I cannot apprehend, how they can with any color of reason be offended at such a glorious doctrine, as is the antiquity of the soul of Christ, upon which all the glory of his mediatorial office has a necessary dependence; for if Christ's soul did not exist before that of Adam, then he was not the first of the creation of God, nor the firstborn of every creature, Col.1:16,18; and, as such, he cannot in all things

have the preeminence; which is to give the lie to the Sacred Oracles. From the whole it appears, that his soul was preexistent to his body, which was designed for him in the councils of Jehovah, and was to be by the Holy Ghost curiously wrought out for him in the lowest parts of the earth, as it is gloriously represented in the 139th Psalm, 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> verses, "my substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." How far these words are applicable to the laws of conception and secret generation, I leave to those who are better skilled in anatomy than myself; for there are such secrets in nature that we do not understand, nor are able to account for; yet none of these things are hid from our God, for his eyes did see our substance, and in the book of his knowledge were all our members written and fashioned, when none of them did openly appear. But these words, I apprehend, may very aptly be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose corporal substance was not hid from the Father, and in the fullness of time was made in secret, by the power of the Most High, being curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, i.e., the virgin's womb. The infinitely wise Being did see the substance of Christ's body, when it was imperfect, that is to say, not made or formed, for in the eternal foreknowledge the form of Christ's body was conceived, which in time openly appeared,

according to the secret form, yet from eternity none of the parts of Christ's body did exist; so that I mean, when I say according to the Scriptures, that he was God-Man, the first of the creation, &c., nor that his body, flesh, blood, and bones, did exist, but only his soul, the more nobler part of the human nature. Some of old asserted, that Jesus Christ brought his body from heaven, and that it only passed through the womb of the Virgin as water through a conduit pipe. This is what I utterly deny, for I firmly believe, according to what I have just now observed, that his body was formed by the Holy Ghost in the virgin's womb, and that a part of her nature was made so pure by his Divine overshadowing Power, that it was not capable of the taint of original pollution. This was that which composed the body of Christ, and so Christ took upon him the nature of the seed of Abraham, for the children being made partakers of flesh and blood, he himself also took part of the same. Heb.2:14-16.

Here I query, who this 'he' was that took part of the same flesh and blood that the children did? I humbly conceive it was him of whom we read of in the 40th Psalm, verses 6-8, who was God's servant, and that forever, whose ears were opened, or as it is in the Hebrew, pierced through, or dug open. The former signification alludes to a custom under the Law, that when a servant could truly say, that he loved his master, his wife, and his children, and would not quit his service, his master should bore his ear through with an awl, Exod.21:5-6, and he should serve him forever; so Christ, whose ears the

Father hath pierced through, in an everlasting stipulation, became God's everlasting servant, and this he submitted to from that love which he bore to his Father and to his church. The latter signifies giving of council or instruction, for the right performance of that work which the Father gave him to do, namely, to speak forth, and declare the glory of his grace. "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary, he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Isa.50:4-6. It is manifest that these words are applicable to none but to the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet they cannot be applied to him, as the infinite eternal God; for as such, he was above all instruction, being infinite in knowledge. Psal.147:5. Besides, in the text just quoted out of the 40th Psalm, is held forth local motion, "then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me." Psal.40:7. Now, an infinite Being, we are sure, can neither come nor go, being omnipresent; so that it is the Man Christ which is here intended, as further appears from this Psalm, in which he acknowledges God to be his God, which implies his inferiority to the Father. This is he that took flesh and blood, who was capable of instruction, and whose nature could admit of local motion; and as such, in these senses, he could not be the infinite

God himself. It must therefore be concluded, that the rational soul of Christ, the God-Man, is here intended, who knew God's secrets, and came down into our world to take a body for a sacrifice. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and Offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Heb.10:5. Was this 'me' the great, eternal Jehovah? Certainly not, for the heaven of heavens cannot contain his infinite Majesty. That it was then the soul of Jesus Christ, which was this glorious 'me,' is, without all controversy, and the Man of the Father's right hand.

Objection. A soul separate from a body is not, with propriety of speech, called a man.

Answer. It may be called a man, if the Holy Spirit understands what propriety of speech means; see II Corinthians 12:2, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell." Observe here, that there was a man in Christ, but whether this man was in the body, or out of the body, Paul could not positively tell, and yet it was a man. Now, what was this man that was either in or out of the body, but the rational soul of Paul, let such objectors inform me; until then I shall rest satisfied, that the apostle in these words calls his soul a man.

The soul also spoken of in Scripture by personal characters, as in Job 10:11, "thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews." Who is this 'me' that Job speaks of, doth he mean himself, or some other man? Certainly himself. This me, then, which

sustains a personal character, being covered with flesh, and fenced with bones and sinews, was no other than the rational soul of Job, from all which it appears that the soul of man is called a man, when it is not considered as united to the body, and consequently the objection falls to the ground.

Now, I would take the liberty to demand of these gentlemen, that deny the preexistence of souls to their bodies, but especially the preexistence of the soul of Jesus Christ, how they can prove, that a soul can exist without the body; for if it could not exist before the body, let them tell me how it can exist after the body, for by the same law that my soul existed before my body was formed, by the same law it will live when the present form of my body is dissolved.

Perhaps, they will answer, that they have plain Scripture proof for souls existing separate from their bodies after death, and I have as clear proof that they existed before the formation of their bodies. "The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," Prov.8:22, for so the text must be read, as will be shown hereafter. As from Scripture revelation the Christian world generally believe that the soul lives when the body is dead; so I, from the same revelation believe that the souls lived before their bodies, and all this amounts to an ample proof of the antiquity of the Redeemer's soul.

Objection. All the texts that speak of Christ's being set up and covenanted with as the Head of his church, and his coming down into our world, mean

no more, than that these things were done in Council, Design and Decree; and so God calls things that were not, as though they were, Rom.4:17, for they had in the mind and foreknowledge of God only a decreative, and not an actual existence. Just as a wise architect or great master builder, before he begins to build, draws in his own mind a model of that edifice or building which he designs to erect, and in his own thoughts purposes who shall be the principal workmen, and have the chief management of the whole affair; yet this house is not built, the chief manager is not there, though all this is done in the mind and purpose of the wise master builder. So God the Father did from eternity settle, establish and purpose in himself {according to the counsel of his own secret will} his own glory, the honour of Christ, and the salvation of his people. God, who is infinitely wise, and knew all things before they are, knew that these things should be actually accomplished because of his own immutable decree, and accordingly spoke as if these things were really done by the actual consent of Jesus Christ himself.

Answer. There is no force at all in the objection, and the simile made use of will not answer the end for which it is produced; for I am not writing about the councils and purposes of God in himself, but of his covenanting and contracting with a Person to fulfill and execute these councils and purposes, and of the Person's willingness that was covenanted and contracted with to undertake such a work, as is evident from both the 40th Psalm, and Hebrews the 10<sup>th</sup>, verses 5-9. I freely confess that platform of

salvation was laid in the eternal mind, and that the whole scheme of our happiness was drawn in eternity, infinitely beyond all date, but yet the contract between the Father and Christ was not so, unless the Man Christ be infinitely eternal, or else an infinite Being must contract with himself. Wherefore we conclude that the contract between the Father and the Man Christ Jesus was in the beginning of his ways or works, before the highest part of the dust of the world was created. "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech.6:13. Thus, the great Being, the most wise Architect, when his scheme was drawn, communicates his mind to his chief Manager, whom he first fixed upon, what he intends to do, and they covenant with each other, and agree upon terms, after what manner the whole work is to be accomplished, before ever one stone of the fabric is laid. Now, pray tell me, how this Council between these two can be, when he that is to be the manager is not in being? Can it ever be said, that God communicated his mind to a non-entity? That he covenanted and contracted with a non-being; with that which was to have no existence until four thousand years after Adam's fall? At this rate Jesus Christ was not a real but an imaginary mediator, and consequently it was no more than an imaginary covenant, and that which will necessarily follow is an imaginary salvation only, for it can never be proved, that God covenanted with Christ after his

incarnation, so that we have no salvation but what was founded upon an imaginary Christ, and an imaginary Covenant.

Moreover, God who is infinitely just, cannot be supposed to speak to his people in such terms and modes of expression, that tend to deceive them. Is it to be imagined, that God would tell us, that Jesus Christ was by him when he was not, no more than any elect vessels were? Would he, think you, have told us, that Christ did delight in his church when he did not; nay, could not, if he had no existence? Oh, what do men make of the holy, just, and righteous Lord, who represent him, as telling his people one thing, and yet intending another! May my soul never come into their secret, nor mine honour be united to their assemblies.

Objection. But these texts that you have cited out of the eighth chapter of the Proverbs represent Christ's Godhead, and are ample proofs of his deity.

Answer. I wonder not that Arianism prevails, as it doth amongst us at this day, when such poor, blind, ignorant wretches undertake to defend the doctrine of the Redeemer's Godhead; for certain I am, that going to the eighth chapter of the Proverbs, to prove it, is forever to give up the cause into the hands of the Arians. To say that Proverbs, the eighth, verses 22 & 23, prove Christ's Godhead, Co-Eternity, and Co-Essentiality with the Father, is doing just nothing at all; and a man had better sit still and say nothing, for when he has done, it is nothing at all but his say-so, and such inclusive arguments make the Arians triumph over us, grow

more hardened, and rest more satisfied in their own damnable opinions. The steps therefore that you take are of pernicious consequence to the truth of Christ's Godhead, and as such they are sinful. The words of the Scripture which you make such great use of to prove Christ's proper Godhead are these, "the LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Prov.8:22-23. "The Lord possessed me," here gentlemen, give me leave to interrogate you, which is greater, the possessor or the possessed? Let that be answered when you answer all the rest. He possessed me not {in} the beginning of his way, but he possessed me {the} beginning of his way, as the first and chief of all his ways, as Head and Mediator of his church, both in nature, grace and glory.

In fine, the word which we translate 'possessed' can properly be rendered nothing else but created. Then Christ was created before all things, and on that account he was the first of the creation of God. Rev.3:14. It is very possible, that the sense in which I take these words may appear very novel; but howsoever new soever any man think it to be, it is of an ancient and early date, as appears from the following translation of the aforesaid passage from the Septuagint, "I was set up." Now it is evident, that he who sets up another is greater than he who is set up by him, and he must also be before him whom he sets up. Here gentlemen, at one blow you cut off of the co-equality and co-eternity of Christ with his Father, whilst you

are endeavoring to prove both. Thus you betray your weakness, and so fall an easy prey into the hands of your enemies, with the loss of truth.

Objection. But the text says that he was set up from everlasting, therefore proving his eternity. Answer. That Being which was infinitely eternal was never set up; for to be set up supposes that there was a space or time {if I may be allowed to use such phrases} when the thing or being was not set up; but some there are that do err as much on the other side of the question, by affirming that Christ's Humanity is as ancient as his Godhead, so that they have got an eternal, created, infinite creature; a sentiment so absurd, that it deserves no answer. As to the term everlasting in the text, which the parties in both extremes build upon, it explains itself, as it signifies from the beginning, before God made the visible heavens and earth. Thus, Christ was set up before the whole creation, which the text calls everlasting.

And it will further appear from some other parts of this chapter, that this possessing and setting up of the Lord Jesus Christ was more than a mere decree or purpose, for the language of Jesus Christ in this chapter imports his real existence. As for instance, "before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth...I was by him." Prov.8:25,30. Now, if any should object, that this was only in decree and purpose, by the same rule may the angels say, that they were set up from everlasting, and that they were by him when he set a compass upon the face of the deep; nay, wicked

men and devils, and all the beast of the field, in this decretive sense, may say, that they were with him, when the LORD prepared the heavens.

Thus, the whole of this eighth of Proverbs, which was written as a special revelation of the glory of Christ, the wisdom of God, is no revelation of his glory at all, according to this decretive notion; and besides, it further appears in this chapter, that this setting up of Jesus Christ was more than a bare decree, because he is here spoken of in the active voice, as rejoicing and delighting, &c., which is more than can, with justice or propriety of speech, be said of a non-entity. Nay, if we further inquire into the import of the word 'set up,' we shall find that it is not applicable to the Godhead, nor yet agreeable to the notion of a bare decree; for in the original it signifies, a pouring out or anointing, being derived from the root, he poured out. Now, this cannot have the least relation to his Godhead, because we cannot say that was poured out. This word may likewise denote his unction, and so it may be read, I was anointed from everlasting. In this sense it cannot be applied to his divinity, and I am sure that it is by no means applicable to a nonentity, since it would be preposterous to say that nothing was anointed from everlasting. All the passages of Scripture, which take notice of Christ being begotten or set up by the Father, express it from the root word, as in the second Psalm, the sixth verse, "yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." In the Hebrew it runs thus, "I have anointed him to be my King upon Zion, the mountain of my holiness," which plainly proves

the preexistence of the rational soul of the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides in the seventh verse of the second Psalm, "this day have I begotten thee," can never be applied to Christ's Godhead, for I cannot understand the terms in vogue amongst us namely, eternal generation and essential filiation, because I am positive, that Christ, as the eternal God, was never begotten, since it is impossible for me to conceive the begetter and the begotten to be of equal date. I therefore conclude, that he which begets must be before the begotten, in order of time and superior to him, in order of essence or nature; nay, 'tis impossible that the begotten of God should be of the same essence with God, since self-existence, eternity, and independence are the inseparable properties of an Infinite Essence; so that it is plain, according to this notion, that Christ is neither eternal nor self-existent, for if he was eternal he could not be begotten, and yet to be eternal is proper to the infinite essence, but {according to this notion} Jesus Christ was begotten, therefore, not infinitely eternal, independent, nor self-existent. And here give me leave to advance a former argument, that according to this scheme, the Lord Jesus Christ is not equal with the Father; therefore, this begotten one was the anointed in the sixth verse of the second Psalm, the soul of Christ, the God-Man, begotten to his office, by being taken into an hypostatical union with the second Person in the ever blessed and adorable Trinity. Thus, at last, you see, that I am no anti-Trinitarian, nor Arian either, and I shall endeavor to cast my mite into the

treasury of arguments, for the Godhead of Christ, in a proper place.

I have something more to offer at present concerning Christ fitness, as Man, for the discharge of his mediatorial office, and to qualify him to be a proper and complete Head in and over all things to his church. Eph.1:22. This fitness of Christ, for the full and ample discharge of his mediatorial office consists in that glorious fullness which infinite wisdom treasured up in him, Col.1:19, whereof his people were to be made partakers, and this fullness treasured up in Christ, John 1:16, is in Scripture called by various names.

First, it is called the divine nature and his people are said to be made partakers thereof. II Pet.1:4. Secondly, it is called oil, "therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Heb.1:9. Thirdly, it is called fire, "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Matt.3:11. Fourthly, it is called a river, whose streams are said to make glad the church. Psal.46:4. Fifthly, it is called seed, which is said to remain in the elect that never did sin, nor ever will. I John 3:9; 5:18.

By these, and many more names it is called in Scripture, and the elect are made partakers thereof. Now, I imagine, that none who profess the Gospel can be so ignorant as to think that any of those are infinite; for, if they do, they will not only discover their ignorance of God, and of his grace, but likewise demonstrate, that they entertain the blasphemous thoughts, because it has been proved

already, that the elect are partakers of these graces; and, if these graces are infinite, then are we made partakers of the Godhead; and, if so, we cease to be creatures. But this was sufficiently exploded in the former chapter. The Lord help us to demean ourselves like those, who by the operation of mighty grace, are emptied of themselves. I hope none that are truly gracious, upon a due consideration of this weighty and momentous point, will evermore think they are, in the least, partakers of an infinite essence.

Question. What are you to understand by this divine nature that is neither infinite nor human, that the humanity of Christ and the elect are made partakers of? Answer. When the infinite God had set up, begotten, or created the reasonable soul of our blessed Redeemer, he was pleased to possess it with a glorious fullness. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Col.1:19. This is the fullness that every believer is made the participant of, for "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John 1:16. So that all believers are the Lord's anointed, for of the same grace, and holy oil wherewith Christ was anointed above his fellows, Heb.1:9, as the great Head of his people, his fellows, I mean the members of his body, have their part in portion with him, and from him. This was excellently typified by the unction of the high priest under the law, as we have it in the 133rd Psalm, verse 2, where it is said, that the precious ointment that was poured out upon the head of Aaron ran down his beard, and even to the skirts of his garments. This

Aaron was a type of our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ; and this holy ointment was a figure of that divine grace which fills the human nature of the blessed Jesus, and the skirts of his garment, upon which this ointment ran, shows that all who are near to Jesus Christ in a marriage relation to him, though the meanest in that relation, are made partakers of this divine unction, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Eph.4:7. The apostle John is very express upon this glorious subject, in his first epistle, second chapter, "but ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things," for "the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." I John 2:20-27. It very evidently appears, that this oil or fullness is not infinite, because we are made the partakers thereof; and we are, therefore, obliged to conclude, that this fullness is created, because all beings are either created or uncreated, and that which is uncreated is infinite, and we cannot partake of it; so that it necessarily follows that this fullness of which we are partakers is a created fullness.

Here we are carefully to distinguish between the fullness and the containing subject thereof, which is the soul of Christ, for this divine ointment filled the soul of Christ, and the whole of his human nature in the fullness of time. This divine unction supposes that there must be an Anointer, an Anointed, and also the Ointment. The Anointer is the

infinite and eternal God; the Anointed is the soul and whole human nature of Jesus Christ; and the Ointment is the divine nature, which is the fountain and spring of all those graces that the elect are brought to the experience and enjoyment thereof, from their regeneration to their glorification, for the Holy and Blessed Spirit in our regeneration conveys this divine fullness and holy seed into our souls, and so produces a new creature, or new nature in us, as the apostle Peter elegantly expresses it. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." II Pet.1:4. This holy nature will always escape the corruption in the world, since it is impossible that it should be tainted through the lust of the flesh, or the vile suggestions of the wicked one, for the wicked one touches it not, neither can it sin because it is born of God. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." I Jn.5:18.

Besides, all the supports, assistances, and supplies, that this new nature stands in need of, in order to its nourishment, comfort, growth, stability and perfection, are all treasured up in the Man Christ Jesus, for "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace," John 1:16, the grace of nourishment and comfort for the supporting and strengthening of the divine principle first infused. It is by this new nature that I become a believer; and, as it hath its residence in my understanding, I am

made to see and know a glorious beauty, and divine excellency, in my great containing Head, from whence my life comes, "for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," Col.3:3, for I now behold things in quite a different light, and see not as the natural man seeth. As this grace resides in my will, I willingly bow down before the Lord Jesus Christ for life and glory, as God's only way of salvation, Acts 4:12, with an holy resolution to be saved no other way; and, as it dwells in my affections, I love, John 21:17, go forth to, delight in, Psal.73:25, embrace, with pleasure and satisfaction of mind none but the Lord Jesus Christ, who is my chief joy, Psal.43:4; and, as this hath a dwelling in my judgment, I can take in the great things of eternity, and clearly distinguish between truth and error, I Cor.2:15; and, as it hath a residence in my conscience, I dwell at ease, I am entered into my everlasting rest, Heb.4:3, and have ceased from all my works, from all my obedience to the Law in any sense whatsoever, as the ground of my acceptance with God.

This new creature in me, II Cor.5:17, as it resides in all the faculties of my reasonable soul, I find by observation, is capable of exercising all the senses in a divine way, as feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting; by it, as the means, I feel all the powerful impressions of divine love, under the operation of the Holy Spirit. It is by this new creature that I feel all the comforts of my saved state, and a full assurance of my interest in Jesus Christ, Col.2:2,

the conquest of my rebellious will, and a cheerful submission to the will of God, as best in all things.

I can also now behold a beauty in things, that before appeared dark and as nothing to me, and see a ravishing glory shining forth from the blessed self-existent Jehovah. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom.11:33. Every perfection of his Essence darts down an ineffable splendor of divine light, in the rays of which I behold in my salvation a glory in his wisdom, in contriving my bliss; a glory in his love, John 3:16, in settling it firm, and a glory in his power, in effecting it by the Redeemer. "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isa.42:6-7. I see a glory in his faithfulness in carrying on and perfectly completing this salvation, in the glorification of his chosen, notwithstanding all their sins, corruptions, follies and abominations whatsoever. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my

holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." Psal.89:30-37. I behold all thy other perfections with a dazzling brightness, as they are honoured and glorified by the Lord Jesus Christ. I see those two seemingly opposing attributes of Justice and Mercy agreeing and gloriously harmonious and man's salvation. Here "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other," Psal.85:10, and I will venture to assert, they could not so meet in any other but the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the revelation that God hath made of himself in his word, whereby we are assured, that there is no other way for the harmonious glory of justice and mercy.

Objection. Infinite wisdom might have found out another way. Answer. I know that God could have created ten thousand worlds, and in these worlds ten thousand different species, but my present business is not with what God could have done, but with what he hath done, according to the revelation of himself; and I am sure, that God has taken the best means to secure the honour of his perfections, in the Constitution of the Person of Christ. To deny this is to reflect upon the divine wisdom, for if I should affirm, that God could have taken better means to secure the honour and harmony of his perfections, I reflect upon his conduct, and impeach his wisdom, Isa.40:13, because I say that he might have done better, if he

would; which is such a blasphemous presumption as ought to be punished by the judges. Job 31:11.

I am also by this new nature in me made to smell a divine sweetness in the Lord Jesus Christ and his graces. Oh, what a precious savor is there in this good ointment! His name is as anointment poured forth, Cant.1:3, which omits a holy fragranc; his name, the Lord our righteousness, his name Jesus, and his name, the Lord of hosts, are all sweet. The Redeemer's person is to the believer as a "bundle of myrrh," and as "a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi." Cant.1:13-14. He is the Rose of roses, the Rose of Sharon, Cant.2:1, whose scent is most odoriferous.

I can now hear the voice of Christ, John 10:4, with pleasure; for this new man in me knows it distinctly from the voice of strangers. The voice of Christ in the Gospel is a voice of joy and gladness. Psal.51:8. These glad tidings make sweet melody in the heart, Luke 2:10, which makes the soul to sing upon its high places, Psal.18:33, and to utter forth the glories of divine grace.

I can now taste the sweetness of the bread of life, John 6:48, and relish the streams of that river which give pleasure and gladness to the Church of God, Psal.46:4, and I find them to be in me a well of water springing up into everlasting life, John 4:14, and having eaten of this bread, and drunk of this river, I thirst no more, i.e., I thirst no more after any other waters, being well satisfied with what my soul hath already tasted, for I have tasted that the Lord is good. Psal.34:8. Thus, it appears, that there is

enough in Christ to satisfy, Psal.63:5, refresh, renew, and delight all the senses of the new man.

And truly, there is nothing out of the Lord Jesus Christ that can satisfy, &c., this consecrated, pure and holy nature. It is true, carnal professors can live upon the truth and chaff of their own doings, and the perishing carrion of an empty profession, but the new creature cannot, for nothing short of, or contrary to the purity of its own nature, will refresh and regale it, be food to it, or give it rest. This may be illustrated by the Raven and the Dove that Noah sent out of the ark to see whether the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. "And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth, then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark." Gen.8:7-9. The Raven returns to him no more, and the reason why the Raven returned not again was, I humbly conceive, because it found both rest and food out of the ark, upon, and in those dead carcasses that floated upon the face of the waters, but the dove could find neither, for she could not feed upon carrion; and, as she found no rest for the soul of her foot, she returned again to Noah into the ark, into which she was already received. The Raven according to the law is an unclean bird, Lev.11:13-15, a lively emblem of the unregenerate world, who

show, that they can take their rest and satisfaction out of Christ the Redeemer, the true Ark of all God's faithful Noah's, and can take pleasure, and live upon the very deluge of their own destruction, into which they are daily sinking, and in which they shall be plunged into eternity; whereas the dove shows clearly the inclination and deportment of the new man in the soul, who can find no true rest and pleasure; nay, no rest or pleasure at all, out of Christ the Redeemer, but flies to him as his only resting-place, Psal.55:6, for, as in nature all things incline to their center, and necessarily continue in a sort of restless motion, until they come to their point, so the soul of man is in a restless state, until he comes to Jesus Christ. The new creature ever inclines and attracts the soul to Christ, and never lets it rest, until it comes and sits down in true peace and rest in his person, love, and righteousness, with a full satisfaction of the mind, as with marrow and fatness, Psal.63:5, and it is impossible for such a soul to rest in, or feed upon anything else, for the dove may sooner live upon carrion, than the soul that is possessed of this new nature can live upon anything short of the Redeemer's fullness. Thus, we see that Jesus Christ is the hope and resting-place of his people, Matt.11:28, the food of their souls at present, John 6:55, and their crown and joy in futurity; so that we may say of Christ altogether, as one said {Bernard of Clairvaux} of his name Jesus, "that he is honey in the mouth, music in the ear, and a jubilee in the heart." The Redeemer is all this to the heaven-born child of God, for the soul, having

him, hath all, for time and eternity. As I already described the Person loving, by giving some account of his Person and Mediatorial Offices, I shall now proceed to inquire distinctly into the nature and effects of Christ's love, and particularly his love to his church, considered as fallen.

Our Redeemer thus set up, begotten, or created, united to God in his second person, and filled with all grace requisite for the discharge of his office, stipulated with his Father, in order to save his fallen church, to restore her to her pristine glory, which she had with him before the Fall, and to bring her back from all the ruin of her lapsed state up to a world of everlasting glory. Psal.73:24.

This covenant between God and Jesus Christ is, indeed, a covenant of glorious grace {for there was never any other covenant of grace} to the elect; but it was a covenant of works with a vengeance to Jesus Christ. This will appear, if we consider the nature of it; for, as it was before between the Great God and the Man Christ Jesus, there were the parties at the head of this covenant. The part of the Great God in this covenant was to propound the conditions and promises; and it was the Redeemer's part to engage for the performance of these conditions, in order to enjoy the promises which God in his covenant had made. God the Father, in this everlasting covenant with Christ, presents the church to him, as fallen, in all that deformity, misery and rebellion, which were the immediate effects thereof; so that now, in honour to his justice, he must pour out his wrath to the uttermost, Isa.53:4-

5, for he will never dispense with the glory of any of his attributes, but will have full satisfaction, either of them, or from a surety.

“Well, {saith the Lord,} I cannot, I will not, that they should perish. Hos.11:8,9. I cannot part with them, my love is too great towards them to let them go; yea, and I know that thou lovest them, John 16:27, and that thou wilt accept of my obedience for their restoration and admission into thy eternal and blissful presence. Ah, my love is as strong as death; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. The many waters of afflictions and sorrows that I must pass through for their salvation cannot quench it. Oh, it is a love above and beyond all their desserts, a love that cannot be purchased by all that they are capable to perform, for if a man would give all his substance for an interest in this love, it would prove too low a price. I know that thy justice must be satisfied, and every perfection of thy essence honoured, which they, poor creatures, will never be able to do; rather than they shall perish, I will satisfy thy justice which they have injured, magnify that law which they have violated, and bring a revenue of glory to thy great name. I will work out righteousness for them by my active obedience that will render them spotless before thine eyes. I will, by suffering, so make amends for all that they ever did amiss by transgression, that the honour of all thy perfections shall be secured and stand fast forever.”

The Father consents, and is well pleased for his righteousness sake, because he will Magnify the

Law and make it Honourable. Isa.42:21. "I accept thy proposal; and, as in all this thou dost desire the welfare and eternal happiness of thy revolted spouse, I grant thee all thy desires, and accept thy sacrifice. {"Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice; Selah. Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel." Psal.20:3-4.} I will accept thy righteousness for them, and their sins shall be laid upon thee, Isa.53:6, and I will give them the blessings of time and of eternity, and they shall see all thy glory, and possess it forever. And, that thou mayest be my salvation and covenant to them, Isa.42:6, and completely accomplish all my designs, I prepared a body for thee to dwell in, when thou shalt enter upon execution of these covenant transactions; for I will have satisfaction in the very nature that sinned. I likewise know, that this work is great and heavy, and thou wilt stand in need of mighty assistance to perform it; and, therefore, I promise thee that I will be with thee, my hand shall establish thee, and mine arm also shall make thee strong, and do thou call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Psal.50:15. That is, thou shalt bring a tribute of glory to all my perfections, for thou art my servant, in whom I will be glorified." Isa.49:3. "Well, {saith Christ,} here am I, send me when thou pleaseth; I will go and fetch them home to thee, and set them before thy face, or else bear the blame forever." Gen.43:9.

This was the choice language of the Lion of Judah's tribe; thus the Covenant of Grace and the

Counsel of Peace between them both was settled for an Everlasting Covenant that should never be broken or forgotten, for it is ever in the Divine Mind, as saith the Scripture, "he will be mindful of his covenant." Psa.111:5. Herein Christ our great Redeemer, the glorious Federal Head of his church, did manifest the exceeding greatness of his love to his fallen and revolted spouse. Rather than let her die he will die himself, and that she might be everlastingly blessed he himself submitted to be cursed, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal.3:13. He patiently bore the miseries of earth and hell, that grace and glory might be her everlasting portion.

Pursuant to this Covenant-Contract, the Redeemer descends from the bosom of unspeakable love to take the body prepared for him, to save his children, full of enmity and rebellion against himself; for his kind errand was to give everlasting life to them who despised him; nay, to such as imbrued their hands in his blood, and to win them over by the constraints of mighty love under the influences of the Holy Spirit, II Cor.5:14, to love, embrace, and delight in him as their chiefest good; but, before the Redeemer's love takes residence in the heart, it meets with great resistance and opposition, Lk.19:14, for the soul by nature will for a long time stand it out against Christ, and the truths of the Gospel, until the new creature by the Holy Spirit is formed in the soul; but then Christ and the believer

are one vitally, for he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit, I Cor.6:17; that is, the believer is blessed with the same divine and holy principles that were treasured up in Christ Jesus, so that the same mind now is in him which was also in Christ Jesus. Phil.2:5. The greatness of the love of Christ is manifested various ways, and may be clearly demonstrated from the following particulars.

First, his love to us was free; he might have suffered us to perish forever, for he was under no obligation to deliver us from the wrath to come. I Thes.1:10. It was his own free and voluntary choice; he did it without constraint or compulsion, his Father did not oblige him to do it; and certain I am, that there was nothing in us that could either constrain or attract him, for we were as vile as hell, and as full of rebellion as the devil and our own depraved nature could fill us. Isa.64:6. We were so far from loving him, that we hated him in our hearts, and did not even desire an interest in his love; yet, notwithstanding all this, and ten thousand times more, he did not think his love too great, too rich, too high, or too good for us, but was resolved to love us to the very end, and to love us into love with himself, and into love with all his Father's love and grace to his chosen. Let our sins and follies be ever so great, Isa.1:18, he in loving us will love us out of them all, and bring us through a world of sin, sorrow, and want, unto to a world of purity, joy, and fullness. It is by the freedom of Christ's love that we are drawn to love him, for it is that which doth attract the heart of a poor sinner, and sweetly draws him to

Jesus Christ, as the beloved apostle hath it, "we love him because he first loved us." I Jn.4:19. It is the love of Christ, as it is manifested in the heart by the ministration of the Gospel that melts down the soul, and inclines it to love him with the whole heart. It is like the mantle that Elijah cast over Elisha, which made him immediately run after him, I Kings 19:20, for that soul, over whom the blessed Lord hath cast his mantle of love, immediately runs after him, crying out, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Matt.8:19.

"Oh none but thee, none but thee! Oh that I had wings like a dove, Psal.55:6, I would fly to thy sweetest embraces, and sit down enwrapped in the garment of love in thy dearest arms forever. Oh, I faint! I faint upon a barren shore beneath a scorching sun, in a land where little or no water is, Psal.63:1, for few comforts and delights, or refreshing streams are to be found in this world. Oh, how do I long to be in the bosom of everlasting love, and to drink at the fountain of living waters, Rev.7:17, and to stand upon the banks of that river where grows the tree of life, Rev.22:2, that river which is clear as crystal, Rev.22:1, where all delights are grown to full perfection, to be enjoyed and possessed forever! Oh happy, thrice happy, longed for day, when shall it come! Hast not thou, O blessed Lord, which testified these things unto us, said, surely I come quickly, Amen. Rev.22:20. Even so, come Lord Jesus. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountain of spices; for my flesh and heart cry out

for thee, Psal.84:2, I long to come and appear before thee in the heights of Zion. David, thy servant, the man after thine own heart, did not long with greater vehemence to see the glory in the temple than I long to see thee in that blessed state in which thyself art the Temple, Rev.21:22, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of that state I pant after, and as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after this enjoyment of my God." Psal.42:1.

Thus, we see clearly, that the love of Christ, when once applied, will draw the heart quite up to himself. This love, so working upon the heart, not only fills the soul with these divine joys, but also constrains it to acknowledge its own vileness and unworthiness, Psal.115:1, for we know by a living experience, that the soul which hath felt the power of this glorious love will break out in such language as this, "O wondrous grace! What, love me! Me, who am the worst and vilest of sinners, and hast thou thus, indeed, loved me, dear Jesus! Oh unparalleled love that hath neither bank nor bottom! Oh that I may be plucked as a brand out of the burning, Zech.3:2, who was ready to be taken hold of {as under a broken Law} by eternal flames! That such a one as I should have God for my Father, John 20:17, Christ for my Head and Husband, Life and Eternal Glory, the Divine Spirit to be my Conductor and Guide up to the heavenly world, for my portion, and that forever, is so much grace and super abounding goodness, that I shall never to eternity enough admire it. I live, I love, I die for this love is too great

a flame, too strong to be pent up in this diminutive world, man." Oh, what is the language under all these teachings and divine applications, but "Lord, uphold me according unto thy word, Psal.119:116, this foolish cottage cannot bear such great effusions of thy goodness. Withhold, withhold, in some measure, or else thou wilt dissolve my frame." Oh, how is the soul, at such a season, as it were on tiptoe, ready to be gone! How strongly doth it desire the dissolution of its body, to be in that world where it will be capable of bearing the bright discoveries of all this love and grace.

Secondly, this love of Christ is in itself strong and mighty, for it brought him down from the bosom of his Father, a place of perfect bliss and purity, to a world of sin and misery, where, being stripped of all his visible glory as Mediator, he was reduced to a low, poor, and abject state, I Cor.8:9, yea, it brought him to undergo all the miseries of this life, as hunger, cold, thirst, weariness, and poverty; the rage of men and devils, and temptation, mockings, scourgings, and to a painful, shameful and lingering death. Nay, more than all this, he underwent the fierceness of his Father's anger in his agony in the garden, when he cried out, "O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," Matt.26:39, and in his bitter dereliction upon the cross, when he cried out, "my God my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt.27:46. And at last he died, and was confined to the grave for a time. All these instances sufficiently prove, that Christ's love was stronger than death, the coals of divine wrath could not

destroy, nor all the floods of sorrow and pain extinguish it, so strong was the Redeemer's love to his own. Oh, how desirable is this lovely Christ, for his matchless love! The soul that is possessed with true grace cries out, "oh that I might be enabled more and more to praise the Redeemer for all his love, who hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his own blood, Rev.1:5, and hath made me white and clean to stand before his throne without rebuke," and here the soul sits down in peace and rest, being an object of delight and eternal complacency.

Thirdly, the Redeemer's love is immutable and everlasting, for as nothing in the creature was the cause of it, so nothing in the creature, or by the creature can destroy it. Christ, having once loved his own, will love them unto the end, John 13:1, and it is impossible for any being to separate the elect from the love of Christ, either in heaven, earth or hell. This the Apostle was firmly persuaded of, when he says, by way of challenge, "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom.8:33-39.

This then is the saints glory in and under all the vicissitudes, revolutions and changes in this life, that they have to do with a Redeemer who is in his love eternally the same, and their confidence in this is founded upon the promises of him who is the Faithful and True Witness, Rev.1:5, that cannot lie. Though by woeful experience they often find themselves to be in great darkness, and cannot see a great way before them, yet their darkness shall not be forever, for it is comparatively but for a moment. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me, for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee." Isa.54:7-10. Heaven and Earth may sooner fail and be plunged into confusion, yea, annihilated, and return to their primitive nothing, than the love of Christ fail to his people, for

his love is, like himself, eternal and millions of ages cannot quench it.

If there be nothing in this impure state that can do it, sure and certain am I, that it cannot be done by anything in that state of perfection which is above. Well then, we may rest satisfied that the love of Christ is eternally unchangeable. Thus, the love of Christ appears to be both free, strong and immutable. Oh glorious love, to love one so vile and sinful in all these respects! Oh my soul, what a love is this! I am at a loss to express it! It is a love delightful, engaging, melting and powerful, that all I can say of it is this, "O astonishing and amazing love! Dearest Lord Jesus, fill me more and more with a sense of this thy love, that my soul may rise high in its ravished affections to thee, until it be swallowed up in unspeakable pleasures." I often find that this love makes me more desirous to depart, than to stay here below. I say, "oh, what do I do here, when all my thoughts, wishes and desires are packed up and gone to that blessed world, where my joy, my crown, my glory, and my all are reserved for me. Whilst here I think I am not at home; and I, therefore earnestly long to be clothed upon with my house from heaven. II Cor.5:2. Amen.

## CHAPTER 3

### ***WHAT THE REBELLION OF THE ELECT AGAINST THE MEDIATOR, BEFORE CONVERSION IS, WHEREIN I SHALL MAKE A FURTHER DISCOVERY OF THE REDEEMER'S LOVE.***

The love of Christ, though thus great and stupendous in itself and delightful to the regenerate; yet to persons dead in trespasses and sins, it is all as a thing of naught, and makes no impression upon the heart; so that, until he is converted, the sinner remains full of rebellion against Christ and the light of the everlasting Gospel. These are they that rebel against the light, Job 24:13; and they manifest that rebellion in their hearts by cleaving close either to their lusts or to the rotten rags of their own doings. Nature hath always in it a propensity to act in this manner; and there must be a manifestation of Divine Power to slay this rebellion; especially the legal rebellion which is in the heart of every natural man. It is extremely hard work for such a one to part with his own righteousness for Jesus Christ and his Righteousness; nay, it is harder to part with it than it is to perform it; for, when a poor deluded wretch hath brought himself to live up to such laws, rules and terms, he then imagines that he has acquired something to recommend him to the love and favour of God. Now he looks upon these as his Saviour, and esteems them as his gods and his all. Judges 18:24, for take these away, and he has nothing more; for

he beholds them as the price of his happiness and the hope of his reward. This is the real language of his soul in any of his performances; suppose it to be prayer, with what courage will he say his prayers when he reflects upon his behavior the past day and finds nothing to upbraid himself with, either by omission or commission, {though, if he had eyes, he would see enough in himself every hour to abhor himself for,} then he looks upon God as under an obligation to hear and accept him; but, if he labours under guilt, then his prayer cease, as he is afraid to pray; and, if he doth, he thinks his praying obtains a pardon and his tears make satisfaction. Indeed, they do make satisfaction, but not to God, for they only satisfy his legal conscience and quiet his own mind; and now all is easy and well, and the man thinks himself a very good Christian, and he is so esteemed, it may be, by all his community. Alas! I fear that most of the professors of our day are upon this rotten bottom. If so, how hard then must it be to bring persons off from this sandy foundation, for I am persuaded, that all the laws of moral suasion, and all the Arminianized offers, tenders, proffers and invitations of grace, with all the plainest directions and strongest motives can never do it; because, if it is ever done, it must be by the manifestation of a supernatural Power. The report of Christ and the Truths of the Gospel will never be believed until Jehovah reveal his arm, Isa.53:1, for such a soul cleaves to the Law as a broken Covenant and regards not Christ; yea, in his very heart Christ is disapproved, and the sparks of his own kindling are

preferred to the Son of God. His hopes of eternal life are built upon his own obedience to the Law, not considering that it cannot give life; Gal.3:21, and, as such, is not fit to be trusted to; yet, notwithstanding this, Christ who is the fit, full, and only Saviour is disdained and rejected, though he be the only way of life. Thus, in vain do men seek the living amongst the dead; they seek for living comforts and a living glory in a dead and abolished Law; and they love that {their own legal performances} which can neither give life, nor take away death; for there can be no enjoyment of life and glory, nor a freedom from eternal death and shame, but by Jesus Christ the Redeemer, whose worth is infinite.

Objection. "But, {saith the legalist,} this is a hard doctrine; and such things as these do not become the greatest and best of Beings. Surely, saith he, I shall be saved if I am sincerely good. God will be pleased with me, and accept me, if I do my best. If I do all I can, according to my light, and always strive to do the things that are just and right, shall I not, for these, have an interest in God's favour, and heaven for my everlasting portion?"

Answer. This objection shows how fond men are of their own doings, their all and their best, though the Lord knows, at the same time, that their best is naught and bad, and it can never be imagined, that the favour of God, and the blessings of an heavenly state can be obtained by the doings of those things which are nothing else but sin and corruption, for all their best righteousness are as

filthy rags, or as a menstruous cloth, Isa.64:6, which in the Law, of all things was the most defiled, so that it is impossible for man to go to glory by his own doings, though never so exact, but here we see the vanity of proud man. Oh, how he exalts his own righteousness! How proudly doth he set up his all, his best, his sincerity, while alas, his brightest works are but gilded sins; and, although he makes a great show of goodness, holiness and righteousness, it is all but a fair show in the flesh, Gal.6:12, and spiritual wickedness in the high places of his exalted heart, Eph.6:12, and it will all end in everlasting death for God will not accept of anything short of a perfect righteousness, and nothing will please Him but a complete satisfaction for what hath been done amiss.

I would now persuade myself that there are few, or none, who will so far presume to think that they can perform a perfect righteousness or give complete satisfaction to injured justice. If there be any such, I hope they will give me leave to recommend unto them that old maxim in philosophy that nothing can give that which it hath not, and it is evident from common experience that there is no perfection in the actions and works of the best of men, it must therefore be concluded that God will not accept of the performances of his creatures as the condition of their salvation.

But, if any will proudly dispute the point and affirm that there is a perfection in the works of the creature, they will give me leave to reply to them in the words of Job, by way of interrogation, "who can

bring a clean thing out of an unclean," to which he answers, "not one." Job 14:4. He judges it impossible, no one can do it, and it is manifest from the common corruption of man's depraved nature, for the prophet says, "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores," Isa.1:5-6, and, as this was true of Israel's land, it was no less so of Israel's state and condition. Now, that man who can bring out of this polluted nature a perfect holiness, can bring a clean thing out of an unclean; so that he gives the lie to the word of truth, and, in fact affirms, he gives that which he never had. But an opinion of this nature, as men, we may easily reject upon mere rational considerations, since it is a contradiction in terms, and a confused jumble.

Objection. They who assert the perfection of men's doings, do not consider them as flowing from the principles of depraved nature, but as they are the product of the Grace and Spirit of God in them, who is pure and holy, and cannot be touched with any evil; therefore, what flows from this Spirit must be pure and perfect; and, as such, the righteousness of a good man is a perfect righteousness according to your own principles.

Answer. It is granted, that the Grace and Spirit of God in a believer are, in their own essence, pure and in their quality perfect, but it doth not from hence follow that the actions of a man arising from these principles of grace are perfect and pure; for, though the fountain of our actions is pure, the

actions flowing from this fountain come through a nature polluted, a soul depraved and degenerated, and consequently are imperfect. For instance, the weakest act of faith is the product of the Grace and Spirit of God within me; yet that faith is not perfect, because, as it is my act it is attended with many doubts and fears; and I may say the same of every other grace, namely, repentance, love, obedience, &c. But if, for once, we should grant that the actions of men, as they flow from the principles of Divine Grace are perfect, they can never give a man a right to glory, because they are destitute of a Divine Sanction and lack Heaven's broad seal for it. The eternal Jehovah never appointed them to such an end, for the Scripture is altogether silent in this matter, and I desire not to be wise above what is written. I grant, that this grace in us from which all good actions and works flow, was designed by the Lord to be our meetness for a better state, but that it was designed to be our right and title I absolutely deny; for if it was designed to be our right and title too, as well as our meetness and fitness for the heavenly glory, what occasion is there for the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ? Because, if this notion be true, the Person of Christ, his fullness, righteousness and blood are only accidental and in reality a thing of no value. This then is a principle that all the Lord's people will absolutely abhor, since it leads its embracers, like other heretics, to trample underfoot the blood of the Son of God, and to render his Death and Propitiatory Righteousness altogether ineffectual. Heb.10:29. I mean, that righteousness

without us, which consists in the Redeemer's Obedience and Death; and I'm sure, that the objection cannot be made by a man who has the truth of grace in his soul, because this true grace, this Christ within us, who is our hope of glory, Col.1:27, ever teaches to admire, adore, trust in, and value a Christ without, who is the Fountain from whence itself doth flow. Good Lord, help us all to take heed and beware of these new lights that lead from Christ the Light of Life, down to the chambers of darkness and death. This is the light within, in which so many blind wretches boast and glory; for they tell us, that they are got into a new dispensation, a dispensation beyond Jesus Christ, so that the Man at God's right hand is entirely neglected and forgotten; nay, this Rock of our Salvation is by them lightly esteemed. Deut.32:15.

I know, that through the riches of boundless grace, there is a living in the bosom of infinite love, which gave birth and being to the Mediator, that is the highest dispensation to which creatures can arrive, either in time, or to eternity; but I arrive at this by the Mediator, and in him I enjoy the pleasures and glories thereof. Now, because I am admitted to partake of the pleasures and glories of the great and highest dispensation of love by Jesus Christ my great Mediator, shall I therefore neglect him, slight and despise him by whom I am brought up into this enjoyment. How ungrateful must such a proceeding be? Can I think too high, too well, or too honourably of him! Can my services be too great, or my obedience too much to him who has brought me

up to so high a state? Can any who are got up into this dispensation slight the way that brought them thither, John 14:6, and call his institutions fleshly things and beggarly elements? Certainly, whatever their profession be, concerning this high dispensation, they were never in it; and, therefore their pretended light within is a false light, an ignis fatuus, which leads man into the bogs of misery and perdition, for it fills their heads with the most unaccountable whims, and these fill their mouths with the most unintelligible nonsense, which they account their glory, imagining that they only are possessed of the truth, and that all others are strangers to it, and the reason, why they think so, is because others cannot understand their jargon, but it is very obvious, that these are they who never had anything or little to do with Jesus Christ as God's way of salvation.

But here give me leave to observe that the objection itself is entirely false, and goes by a wrong name, for it very evidently appears that the objector is ignorant of the power and pure grace of the Spirit of our God, since he calls his own whims and homebred nonsense by the names of grace and spirit that are pure and holy. Notorious blasphemy indeed! As if the Holy and Blessed Spirit of all Truth, who is Christ's Glorifier, John 16:13,14, whose work it is to render Christ gloriously delightful to the heaven born soul, should teach and influence them to neglect Him, reject his Righteousness and despise his Blood, which is the practice of all those that have forsaken the true Sacrifice for Sin. Heb.10:26-29. Thus,

instead of having the Spirit of Grace they do despite unto him, in hating, condemning and reproaching those who by the Spirit of Grace expect Salvation only by the Blood and Obedience of the Redeemer Jesus Christ, that died outside the gates of Jerusalem, without anything in themselves as a right thereunto, and look upon all they have in themselves to be simply the effects and consequences of his dying love, desiring also to live in obedience unto Him in all those external institutions which keep his Name up in the world; not that they live upon these institutions, but live upon Him in them. They eat bread at a table to show forth his death to the world, whilst at the same time they enjoy within the living fruits of his death. I Cor.11:26. They drink wine to demonstrate to the world that they believe that he once shed his blood to make reparation for sin, whilst his blood in them {by faith sensibly} cleanses them from all sin. I John 1:7. Thus, in waiting upon Him they find a great reward. Psal.19:11. They use water in baptism in obedience to his command to convince the world that they willingly follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, Rev.14:4, whilst in their souls they feel a heavenly baptism coming down upon them as rain upon the new mown grass, and as showers that water the earth. Psal.72:6. Thus, refreshed with the dews from the everlasting hills, Psal.121:1, they go on to show forth to the world by their obedience to the Lord's institutions, that all the things represented by these are done and finished in the Person of Jesus Christ; and that they themselves

possess the spiritual fruits thereof; and what they do, in all these ways of Gospel obedience is only in obedience to their Lawgiver. From the whole of what hath been said it is evident that man at best with all his great pretenses to purity and holiness cannot save himself.

Observe then, that where there is true grace, that soul is willing to be saved alone by Christ Jesus; for he is sensible that he must certainly sink forever under the load of Divine Vengeance if he be not found in the Redeemer's Righteousness, Phil.3:9, he sees, that nothing short of what Christ is, and hath done, can save him, because Christ alone is able to bear up under the Wrath of God.

However, notwithstanding all this, the legal sinner will not, cannot, and is resolved not to part with his rags and bondage. He hugs his chains with seeming satisfaction, and is fully determined to trust in his sincerity, whatsoever be the consequences of such a conduct. He thinks that his ways may be accepted, when he hath no more to give, and that God will extend to him his goodness, though it be to the prejudice of his truth; which God will never do, for he will stand to his word. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:10. His holiness shall have its demands, and his justice shall never suffer by us, for God will not be unjust or unfaithful for our sakes. We have broken his Law, but he will never break his word, for he hath said, "the soul that sinneth shall die," Ezek.18:4, that his

Law shall be honoured, his Justice satisfied, and all his Perfections glorified. Lev.10:3. "I will," says he, "be glorified," which he can never be, if he accepts of the creature's best doings, for, in doing so, he must dispense with the glory of many of his attributes, but this he will not do, because he is a God that cannot lie. Tit.1:2. The sinner then must be brought to renounce his own righteousness, and to embrace the righteousness of Christ, or else he must be cast down into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Rev.19:20.

The Word of God doth nowhere teach us that we are accepted or saved for our sincerity or anything that is within our power to do; yet we acknowledge that sincerity is found in all believers, and that it is an evidence of their interest in the Covenant of Grace, but not the condition thereof. As I said before, so I say now again, that heaven did never intend upon any consideration whatsoever to confer everlasting salvation upon sinners for their performances, since all that our God and Father gives is purely upon the Redeemer's account; so that, now in this way all boasting is excluded, for the Law of faith admits of none, Rom.3:27, unless it be in the Lord Jesus Christ; because everyone that glories must glory in the Lord, I Cor.1:31, and truly gracious souls can make their boast in the Lord, as the psalmist saith, "my soul shall make her boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." Psal.34:2.

Oh, what a propensity is there in nature to cleave to creature performances! To settle upon the lees of old Adam, and to love its own doings in opposition to the revelation of God in his word, and the evidence of spiritual reason, until the Spirit of God come and show the soul somewhat of its own deformity in obliging conscience to execute its office; but then the terrors of the Lord begin to amaze the sinner, and he is frightened with the fears of hell and eternal wrath. He thinks he beholds the perfections of Heaven setting themselves in battle-array against him, for he sees that he is sinful, and, as such cannot be saved alone by his own performances, but he must in some measure be indebted to the righteousness of Christ to complete the work of his own salvation. Thus, he sets up his post by Christ's pillar, and joins the shreds of his own doings to the perfect robe of the Redeemer's righteousness, Isa.61:10, and so he plunges himself into the error of the Galatians who joined circumcision and other ceremonies of the law of Moses to the obedience of Christ. There were some false apostles, and deceitful workers, II Cor.11:13, that had transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, who in their deceitful works taught the brethren, saying, "except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot to be saved." Acts 15:1. They were not willing to be wholly debtors unto the grace of God, for they hoped that their tears and prayers as joined with the righteousness of Christ would be a matter of their acceptance with God, and that the perfection of his righteousness

would make up the imperfection of theirs, and that their righteousness should be accepted for the sake of his; so that all the use they make of the righteousness of Christ is only as a stirrup to mount their own righteousness upon the throne. Thus, proud self, and not the Redeemer is exalted, as they debase the righteousness of Christ which is most glorious in and of itself, by patching it with their own gross performances, and from the whole it appears that the honours of their salvation and right to glory are divided between Christ and them.

But of this we may be assured, that Christ will be a whole Saviour, and that he will have the glory of all our salvation, as it is his due, or none at all; and though legal sinners despise him, and such as pretend to make themselves co-partners with him in their salvation, by their law works, let them remember, that by this they make themselves debtors to the whole law, and that Christ is of no effect unto them, Gal.5:3,4; and, if ever they make a profession of the doctrines of grace, they are fallen from them. This scheme obliges them to keep every jot and tittle of the law; which if they fail to do, as certainly they will, they must be accursed forever both in soul and body, notwithstanding all their convictions, all the views that they have had of their own deformity in the glass of God's Righteous Law, as the apostle saith, "for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal.3:10.

Here we see the misery of the man who is out of Christ, for he is at best but a co-partner with him, and notwithstanding all he hath done, a cursed creature, as considered in himself.

The Righteousness of Christ is the only dress of a sinner, who is made to see his nakedness, and that he hath not so much as a rag to wrap around his naked soul. This is the man that knows how to prize the Redeemer and value his Righteousness; because, being clothed with it, he shines with a spotless beauty before the eyes of Infinite Justice and Holiness. Now, if our own righteousness was a sufficient covering, and could shelter us from the wrath of God, then, it will follow, that Christ came into our world upon a very trifling and insignificant errand; which is such a reflection upon the Wisdom and Power of God, that it can never be admitted as a truth. Nay, to no purpose did Christ work out this glorious Robe, if our own covering will hide our nakedness. If life may be had, in whole, or in part, by the Law, it follows, that Christ died in vain; and to all those who seek happiness by their own legality, Christ is become of no effect, Gal.5:4, for, living and dying in such a condition, they might as well have been born Turks, brought up Pagans, or lived and died Jews, in the height of enmity against the Lord Jesus Christ, because they should then have had as much benefit by the Redeemer, as, whilst they retain their legal principles, they can obtain by the profession of Christianity.

But there are likewise a certain sort of sinners who see that they cannot be saved by doing; yet,

rather than be indebted to another for salvation, they fall into profaneness, and give "themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Eph.4:19. Once they were professors of grace, and worked hard for life and glory, but all to no purpose. They sought peace and pleasure in their own works, but found none; and so concluded, since they could find no satisfaction in their doings, it was because they could not do enough; and, because they cannot do enough, they will do nothing, but begin to eat and drink with the drunken, Luke 12:45, and treat religion with contempt, and say, that there is nothing in it; that it is all craft, and the design of cunning men to keep ignorant people in awe, though at the same time they loudly proclaim their own ignorance of the power of divine love. They are like that man we read of in the Gospel, to whom Christ compares that wicked generation among whom he lived, many of which had sinned the unpardonable sin, or the sin against the Holy Ghost, as appears from Matthew, the twelfth chapter, verses 24-32. "But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, this fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand, and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I

cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." From the whole of these words it appears that the Pharisees and other of the Jews, that Christ was now conversing with, had sinned the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, in maliciously saying, contrary to their light, that Christ cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. That it was malicious is obvious, from the manner of their speech, this fellow cast out devils, and it was contrary to their light, for they were men of learning and understanding, and knew it was impossible that the devil should dispossess himself and destroy his own kingdom. Our Lord himself, in these words, strikes them with conviction upon this point, "if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges." Ah, they were very sensible indeed that it was by the Spirit of God that Jesus cast out devils, but from the principle of hatred they had to that Redeemer, who was to come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, Rom.11:26, they maliciously said, that the Holy Spirit was a devil, and that the divine power was diabolical. Thus we see, that the sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall

never be forgiven unto men, in this world, nor in that which is to come, is a compound; for it is made up of light in the head and malice in the heart, and the unpardonable sin cannot be where these two ingredients are not in conjunction. For instance, a believer in Christ may sin wickedly against Christ, against the clearest light, and highest knowledge of his Person and Fullness, as Peter did, when he denied him with oaths and curses, saying, "I know not the man." Matt.26:72. A person may also sin maliciously against Christ, and yet be in the election of grace, and belong to Christ, as is evident from many of the Jews, who had a hand in his crucifixion, for he prays for them, in his dying agony, crying, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Some were afterwards converted by the Apostle Peter's preaching, and were added to the church; and, had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Life and Glory. Thus we see, that persons may sin against light, as Peter did, and yet have no malice in their hearts, no more than Peter had who went out and wept bitterly. Men, before their conversion may be exceeding mad against Christ and his Gospel, and yet not sin the unpardonable sin, because they sin ignorantly; but, where light and malice meet, there the unpardonable sin is committed. Accordingly, if a man knows that Jesus Christ is the only Redeemer of sinners, that he came down from God out of heaven, and confirmed his mission by miracles; and that he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by his

resurrection from the dead, Rom.1:4; if such a one as this, that hath believed all these things to be fact, and possibly has had some convincing proofs of the truth of them, should turn a Turk, or a Jew, and maliciously persecute those that believe in the Christian name, and endeavor to destroy the faith itself like Julian the Apostate, what remains, for such a wretch as this, but a fearful looking for of judgment? Or, if a man, after he hath made a profession of religion and piety, and hath made conscience of moral duty, and sought rest and happiness in them, as has been before observed, and can find none, throws up all religion, and so it becomes the subject of his banter, so that he can now break jests upon the sacred word, and rack all the accursed wit he is master of, to load it with inconsistencies, and make it out to be only a cunningly devised fable, "the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." II Pet.2:21-22. The state of such men, and the whole of their religion, our dearest Lord clearly describes, "when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Matt.12:43-45.

By this unclean spirit that is said to go out of the man, I humbly conceive, that we are to understand, {or, at least, it may be applied to,} the spirit of profaneness and open immorality. Such a spirit as this often leaves men for a time; but, if it returns again, it comes sevenfold more immoral, vile and abominable than when it left them. When a man ceases to be immoral, he then thinks himself religious; and, in this moral way of religion and life he expects to find ease and satisfaction. He walketh through dry places, seeking rest, that is, he walks through the dry paths of moral and religious duties, in order to attain his desired end; but it is all to no purpose. He seeketh rest, but findeth none, his dry places of poor bodily worship will afford him none of the waters of consolation; for duties of themselves, although religious, are but dry and empty things, unless the Lord is pleased to fill them with his grace and presence; and they, who trust in their duties, walk in a barren land, and in dry paths, where no water is. Psal.63:1. But the Lord Jesus Christ, our exalted Redeemer, is a river of waters in high places, and opened to the believer by a Divine Hand, as saith the Lord by the prophet, "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Isa.41:18. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Fountain of life and the Well-

Spring of all delights, for all the pleasures of grace and glory flow from him, and he confers upon his people all these blessings. He makes them to drink of the river of his pleasures, Psal.36:8; that inexhaustible river, whose streams do make glad the city of God, Psal.46:4, and its crystal streams flow forth from the throne of the Divine Being. Rev.22:1. It is a place of broad rivers and streams, Isa.33:21, opened in the desert of this world, in the high places of Gospel institutions, to give drink to the people, Isa.43:19-20, who are chosen by the Lord, and precious in his sight, Isa.43:4, through the Person of Christ. These are they that taste the pleasures of heaven, and the sweetness of divine love, before they come to the full enjoyment of them, even whilst they tabernacle in cottages of clay. Thus their duties in religion are attended with inexpressible pleasures, and they have the flowings in of Divine Love, which draws forth love to the blessed Jesus again, in a living way, whilst sinners are seeking rest in their dry places, and can find none.

“Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out,” for there is nothing at all in religion, it is a mere cheat, a bubble, and an idol dream. I will return to my old course of life, take my pleasures in the things of time, and satiate myself with the delights of sense. I will have no more to do with this damned cant and priestcraft, for the teachers of it are a pack of liars. They used to tell me of pleasures and delights that were to be obtained in a religious way, and I was as strict as the best of them. I usually heard three or four

sermons in a day, and was a mighty zealot for everything the parsons exhorted me to do; but the pleasures they talked of I never found; therefore, I have done with it all, for I will take my pleasure while I may. Now, the apostate runs back into all his old excess of riot; he returns into the state from whence he came out, that is, immorality and profaneness, and becomes sevenfold more a child of hell than he was before. And, when he is come into his old state, he finds that all his late religion was empty of true grace, though swept and garnished with moral doings. His taking to himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself denotes, that the man was arrived at the highest pitch of wickedness, seven being a perfect number, and the last state of this man is worse than the first, and, as was before observed, it had been better for him that he had never known the way of righteousness. Of what punishment shall such a wretch be thought worthy of, who "hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace." Heb.10:29. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb.6:4-6. This epistle was written to the Jews, who professed the Christian Faith, and many

of them were obliged to believe the validity of the Christian religion, from those testimonies that were given, to prove its truth. The miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and his Apostles declared that the Gospel dispensation was from Heaven, and by these many of them were enlightened, and saw some beauty in the Christian Economy. They were verily persuaded that Jesus of Nazareth, who was born in Bethlehem, was the true Messiah; and thus, they tasted the good word of God, which said, "but thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Mic.5:2. In this taste they felt the power of Christ's Dispensation, the day of the Gospel, which some of the Jewish Rabbis have called the world to come; and so doth the author of this epistle, speaking of the superior excellency of the Gospel Dispensation to that of the Law, whose ceremonies and institutions were given by the disposition of angels, Acts 7:53, which supposes, that they, who were under the Law, were in some measure in subjection to the angelical dispensation. Now says he, "the world to come," or Dispensation of the Gospel, of which we speak, is not put in subjection to the Angels. Heb.2:5.

These words of the Apostle evidently prove that the Ministration of the Gospel is called the world to come, and it further appears from this Epistle that the Gospel is a new world, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit saith, Christ hath "once in the end of the world

hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb.9:26. By this sacrifice, as soon as it was offered, he immediately put an end to the Jewish world, for the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, Matt.27:51, to show that he had entirely abolished that dispensation. Thus we see, that these Jews tasted the powers of the world, that is, the Gospel dispensation; they tasted of the heavenly gift, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ; and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, not of his graces but of his privileges, and they will say in the great day of judgment, "Lord, in thy name have we cast out devils, and done many wonderful works," yet will Christ declare to them, that he never knew them, and will say, "depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." Thus far in religion did many go, and yet, after all this, they might fall away from a profession of Christ, and turn Jews again; and in so doing, they crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. From hence we may learn, of what little service a bare profession of Christ, and the truths of the Gospel will be, to them who have nothing more. A man, we find, may be in a great measure enlightened in the knowledge of the Gospel, and taste the heavenly gift, that is, he may be convinced that Christ is the true Messiah, the gift of God, and be made a partaker of the gifts of the Spirit, may taste the good word of God and feel the powers of a Gospel Dispensation; and yet, after all, he may perish forever. Oh, how many towering professors are there, in our age, that have not so

much religion as is here, who think very greatly of themselves, and yet here is all this religion, without one dram of true grace. The apostates of our age can rise no higher in religion than a bare attainment of gifts, for true grace, and love from, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, they are utter strangers to, and generally when opportunity offers, they make shipwreck of the doctrines of faith, and of a moral good conscience. "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear, clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." Jude 1:12-13. May the gracious Lord God Almighty, if it be his holy and righteous will, help all legal sinners to see the misery of doing in religion, without the Lord Jesus Christ; or all will end in a total and final apostasy, and their portion is the hottest place in hell.

Thus, we see the rebellion which fills the heart of man by nature against Christ and the Gospel, and the miseries that are the infallible result thereof, with the impossibility of anything making an alteration, but the mighty Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Operations of the Holy Ghost.

## CHAPTER 4

### ***THE MEANS BY WHICH THE ELECT ARE BROUGHT TO JESUS CHRIST, AND THEIR REBELLION IS CONQUERED.***

In order to slay this rebellion, and to bring the soul to a blessed and comfortable union with the Redeemer, God is often pleased to lead the soul by the gates of hell, and jaws of everlasting death, by the law in the hand of the Spirit, which takes hold of the sinner, and strikes him with horror and amazement, saying, "pay the debt, or to jail eternally," which so terrifies him that he cannot look up; and, when he looks upon himself, it is as upon a poor, lost, undone and condemned criminal. Oh, how do the curses and threatening claps of Sinai's thunder tear and rend asunder his rocky heart, and make him to cry out, "oh undone, undone forever! Oh that judgment will overtake me! I am cut off eternally, for there is no hope concerning me! Oh that I had never been born, that mine eyes had never seen the light, or that I had been the meanest insect, or the basest worm, yea, a crawling toad, rather than have been of the rational species, having a soul endowed with noble faculties, which have all been employed as so many members and instruments of unrighteousness. Woe is me! I am miserable! I am ruined to eternity!" In these bitter agonies his soul is a perfect Magormissabib, a terror to himself, and to all near him; his guilt and fears are so many and great, that he dreads dropping into

hell every moment; he is persuaded that hell is his portion, and that every minute of his life brings new terrors upon him, so that he is almost distracted. In this wretched state he cannot live; and therefore, he wishes that he was struck dead and sent to hell, to know the extent of his misery; and, oh how doth the devil hurry him on to be his own executioner! Possibly, he shall in some measure attempt it; he shall rise up with an intention immediately to put an end to his miserable life, but he dares not, for he dreads the thoughts of adding further rebellion to his sin. Now the devil steps in and says, "you may as well do it, for you have sinned the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost," and then he forthwith suggests horrid blasphemies to the sinner, and injects, as it were, the very repetition of these blasphemies, which prove in a manner, the very instruments of death to the soul. Oh, how fast are these blasphemies repeated, and how doth the soul as often repeat, "God forbid, God forbid," and can say in sincerity, "Lord, thou knowest all things, knowest that I hate them." Nevertheless in these chains the devil holds the poor soul fast in bondage and terror, and it concludes that it must forever perish. By these, and such like humbling methods, the soul is brought to Jesus Christ for life; and now, the soul is made to give up all for lost, it's duties and profession of religion, and everything else that was dear to flesh and blood, to be found in Christ exclusively, not having on its own righteousness. Phil.3:9. It is thoroughly persuaded now that the Law cannot save, and although its demands are

great and righteous, it is so weak through our frail flesh, that it cannot advance to life and glory. It commands working, but it gives no strength for the performing of it.

The poor soul now sees that if it ever be saved it must be by Christ and his Righteousness alone; and, if it be not saved in this way it must be lost forever.

Here I would take notice of an error that poor souls are guilty of under these Divine Awakenings. The error, I must confess, is natural, but it is strengthened by the daubers of untempered mortar in our age who call themselves ministers of Christ, and the Gospel, and yet are but babes at best, and so unskillful in the word of righteousness, that, instead of being teachers of others, they ought themselves to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God; for it evidently appears from their general scheme, that sinners are too filthy to come to Christ, and that they must have previous qualifications in order to their reception into the enjoyment of the Redeemer's love. This is the error that their ministry daily strengthens, but blessed experience teaches, that it is an error; for, when the Lord was pleased to convince us that there was salvation in no other, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that there was no other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we could be saved, how fearful were we of coming to this Jesus, this Fountain of Life, the Rock of Ages whose righteousness is a garment of salvation. We saw his purity, we beheld his love, we longed to come to

him, but we saw our own vileness and were therefore afraid to venture. We said, surely, one who is so pure, so holy, harmless and undefiled, will never look upon such polluted worms as we. We thought, if we went to him, he would spurn us from his presence. "What, {says the poor soul,} can such an unholy wretch as I ever think of being accepted by the holy Lord Jesus Christ? What shall I do that I may go to this blessed Redeemer and be found in his everlasting righteousness? Oh, that I was qualified for the reception of his Grace and Favor!" Now the soul is looking for some good qualities to recommend itself to Jesus Christ, for he cannot tell, how to think of coming to the Lord naked, for it imagines that it must bring something in its hand in order to be accepted. "Oh, {saith the poor soul,} if I was but heartily sorry for my sin, if I was but humbled as I ought to be, I might then with some comfort go to Christ in hopes of acceptance." A gross error! Ah poor divinity! As if the Sovereign Lord of all should expose his grace, righteousness and the comforts of his love for sale, and that these were to be bought by the prayers and tears of poor awaken sinners.

Sure I am, if sinners stay upon Christ, they that are fit to come unto him, as in themselves, they will never come, but Christ and they must keep an everlasting distance.

But what madness it is for men first to wash themselves, and then go to the fountain for cleansing? Or, first to heal themselves, and then go to the Physician for a cure? Such things as these are

great demonstrations of folly and vanity, and for sinners to imagine that they must wash themselves in their own tears and humiliations, renders Christ a needless fountain. If I am washed, I need not go to Christ for cleansing; if my tears have a healing virtue, then I am my own physician, and Christ, as Job's friends were to him, is to me a physician of no value. At this rate, the blood of Christ is not the healing balm of my diseased soul, but such an imagination is an evidence of great unbelief, for there is no cleansing without faith in the Redeemer's blood. He that comes to Christ must come as poor and miserable, blind and naked, he must see himself as vile as any out of hell, and be made sensible that he can do nothing to recommend himself to Jesus Christ; he must apply to him for all that he wants, who he is fully convinced, can alone supply all his necessities. And, when he comes to Christ in this manner, he makes bright discoveries to his soul, manifests himself in all his mediatorial glory, and displays his super-abounding grace and love, enabling him to see what an excellent Redeemer he is, both by price and power. Now, the awakened soul beholds, as in clear daylight, that Christ can save to the uttermost such as are lost in themselves, having given unto God a full ransom for his people. He can lift them up from the lowest ebb of woe, to a spring tide of joy and bliss; from the depths of guilt and sorrow to the highest pinnacle of joy and freedom; and these are what make the soul cleave to Christ with full purpose of heart. The believer is entirely satisfied with him and desires no other way of

salvation; he is willing that Christ should have all the glory, and that he should be exalted most high.

The poor believer {for so I may now very justly call him} is willing to be nothing that Christ may be all in all; he is willing that Christ should do all both in him and for him, and have all the glory thereof.

Now, the believer comes to Christ naked to be clothed with his righteousness; filthy, to be cleansed in his blood; guilty, to his grace for pardon; poor and empty, to his immense fullness, to be enriched and filled; weak and feeble, to Christ for strength, as the strong Rock of Ages; ignorant, to him for instruction; and perishing, to him for Salvation. The believer comes to Christ as a Prophet, to be taught; as a Priest for atonement; and as a King, for freedom from the dominion of sin, and to be supported and protected in his walk through this world to a better; he desires his kingly presence, that frees from all fears, though in the worst of times, which made David to say, "yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Psal.23:4. By this rod here which was the psalmist's comfort and support, I humbly conceive, we are not to understand the rod of affliction, as the generality of expositors do, though afflictions are of singular service to the people of God; yet that they are comforts to them, when exercised thereby is what I do not understand; nor can I believe it, either from experience or revelation. The author to the Hebrews tells us that, "no chastening for the present seemeth

to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb.12:11. Mark it, the effects only of the rod of affliction are peaceable and joyous, and not the afflictions themselves, but the psalmist says, that the rod itself was his comfort. By this rod, then, I understand the monarchical rod of Christ Jesus, his rod of government, by which he rules the world and the church, which is called the rod of his strength, Psal.110:2, and by this he protects his people from the rage and cruelty of their enemies. This rod is the saints comfort in all their pains and troubles, for they know that the Lord reigns, and therefore they will rejoice. "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Rev.19:6. The rod and reins of government are in the hands of their Redeemer, so that they fear neither man, nor devils; they are sensible, that he hath an absolute authority over them, so that they fear no evil, for their King is ever present with them; and they have comfort from the promises, which are their staff that supports them in dark and perilous times. Thus, they come to Christ, and live in the enjoyment of him; they come to him with all their maladies to be healed, as to a Physician of great value; they come to the Redeemer as unjust, and by faith fly to his blood for Justification and Peace here, and they have ease from all their burdens; they see that injured Justice is satisfied, that Heaven is secured, that the Curse is removed, that the Law is answered, and that all their Debts are paid, and every Obligation canceled, which stood

in the way of their everlasting participation of divine bliss. The believer can now say of Christ the Redeemer, "this is he whom my soul loveth; oh that he would communicate more of himself to me! Oh, let the blessed Spirit come down upon me, like rain on the new mowed grass, and as showers that water the earth! Oh may he come down upon me, who have been cut down from my pride and glory in the flesh, for I once did triumph in my own doings, and thought very highly of them; but oh, through the riches of boundless and never to be forgotten grace and love, I now count them all as dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, Phil.3:8-9; yea, I look upon them as dogs meat, as trash and excrement, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. I have no righteousness of my own, for of myself I can do nothing but sin and rebel against Christ and Gospel Grace, but this is my glory and joy, that Christ hath ascended on high, and led captivity captive, and hath received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell amongst them." Psal.68:18.

Thus, the believer sees, that his whole salvation lies entirely in Christ Jesus, and that all the blessings thereof are handed forth, without money and without price. This indeed is wonderfully sweet unto him, because he seeth that he hath nothing to buy with, and that grace is free to the worst and vilest of sinners; and, though once he came to Christ

with his duties, prayers, and tears, expecting to have an interest in his Righteousness for them, he now breaks out in language quite different from his former apprehensions, and saith, "I view such deformity in myself, that there is no room left for me to think great or well of myself; I see so much sin attending my holiness, so much enmity in my love, so much hard-heartedness in my sorrow for sin, and unbelief in my acts of faith, that I cannot value myself upon anything but the Redeemer and his Righteousness; and, as Divinely assisted, I will wait for the supply of all my wants at the feet of rich and sovereign grace, where I shall see his love, and behold his glory shining forth; and, with deep impressions of love my soul shall be raised to the highest pitch of delight, when in a holy ecstasy and divine rapture, I shall thus break forth."

"Oh glorious Redeemer, blessed Lord Jesus Christ, all divine! Thou incomparable one, who art more beautiful and desirable than all the creatures of both worlds! Thou art fairer than the children of men, Psal.45:2, thou art ten thousand times more glorious than all the hosts of angels, even those of the highest order. Oh, none but thee! I desire none but thee, none but such a Redeemer for me! For, whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.' Psal.73:25-26. That is, I desire none in comparison with thee, 'for who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD, who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto

the LORD?' Psal.89:6. For my Lord Jesus Christ who is the wisdom of God, is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared unto him, Prov.8:11; for he is my life, my crown, my glory, my all, my everlasting delight."

"Oh lovely Lord Jesus Christ, oh that I could now come into thy blissful presence, and possess thee forever! My soul fainteth for the longing it hath for thee; oh, when shall I come and appear before thee! For why should I wander up and down in a barren land where clouds are thick, and that hide my Beloved from me? Well, my dearest Life, since it is not thy pleasure that I now come to thee; oh, be pleased to be frequent with me, and make my soul thy hourly, yea, thy minutely resting place, and dwell with me continually. Be not to me as a wayfaring man, that turneth in only for a night, and is gone, but be my constant guest, and let me grow up into a daily likeness of thee, that I may be made meet for the inheritance that thou are now in the possession of. Lord, I am thine, forever and ever; and as helped by thy grace, I ever will keep close to thee; and as I am sensible, that nothing can part thee and me, as to my state which is to me joy unspeakable; so grant, that nothing may part my comfortable enjoyment of thee. Oh that my frame may be always pleasant and joyful, if it be consistent with thy blessed and holy will."

Here we see, how that the Redeemer and the soul of an elect vessel are virtually united; now, it is become a visible member of Christ's mystical body, and can triumph in its near relation to Him. Now, the

floods and crystal streams of everlasting love which have run underground, ever since the fall, rise up and overflow all the banks; yea, the mountains of a lapsed state powerfully tear down all before them; and the soul sits down entirely satisfied with its completeness in the Lord Jesus Christ. Col.2:10.

But here it must be observed, by the way, that notwithstanding all this grace received, the soul at certain times, will find motions and inclinations to its own works, and be ready almost to say, "well done," when it performs a duty in an enlarged frame of mind. This itch of legality, the soul's greatest plague, will never be perfectly cured, till it ascends up to the realms of brightest bliss and glory; there, indeed, it shall have a perfect holiness, and shall forever set the crown upon the Redeemer's Head.

In that advanced state, the saints shall drop their crowns at the feet of Christ and he shall be all in all. There nothing in the saints shall be a rival to the Redeemer, or ever claim the least share of honour with him; but, now alas; we find too often, that we love our graces too much, for we are apt to prize them more than the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ. We rejoice very much in received grace, but very little in the fullness of Christ, our great Head, in whose hand all our stock of grace, both of the right to, and meetness for resides. How often do we grieve more for the want of comfortable frames in the dispensations of grace, than for the want of Him in whom all fullness dwells? Oh, could we but see more clearly, what Christ is, and what he is of God made unto us, our walk would be more full

of peace and satisfaction, and our frames more steady and unshaken; but when men dwell too much upon their frames, and not immediately upon the Person, Love, and Righteousness of Jesus Christ, give me leave to say, that they are committing spiritual adultery with their own graces and holy dispositions.

This was charged upon Israel of old by the great Jehovah, as one of the greatest crimes that a gracious people could possibly be guilty of. The Lord had decked them with very glorious ornaments in an external way, so that their renown went forth amongst the heathen for their beauty, which the Lord their God had put upon them, but this was their sin, that they trusted therein; and their sin was nothing less than playing the harlot. All these bright ornaments put upon them were typical of the internal beauty and glory of the saints under the Gospel. Now, this their glory, as we have said, they profaned by trusting in it, and playing the harlot, because of their beauty; and the way in which they did it was this, the fair jewels of gold and silver which God had given them, and beautified them withal, they took them and made images thereof and committed whoredom with them.

“Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee,

and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil, and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD. But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on everyone that passed by; his it was. And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon, the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them, and tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst them, and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour; and thus it was, saith the Lord GOD. Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast

borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them? And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and wast polluted in thy blood." Ezek.16:8-22.

The improvement that we are to may make of the case of Israel in these respects is this, that we are far too prone to put our graces in Christ's stead, and prize and value them too much, in trusting to and resting upon them. When this is the case, we may very justly say that such a one hath forsaken the Fountain of Living Waters, and lives upon the streams which are short of the Fountain. Sure I am, this is playing the harlot with our graces and frames, because we ought to live upon nothing but Christ, what he is in Himself, and what of God he is made unto his people.

Believer, it is an infallible and eternal truth, that Christ never gave thee the principles of grace and love, faith and holiness, to live upon, trust to, and rest in. No, no, he gave thee grace to love Him, to live upon Him, to rest and trust in Him forever; and these are the principal and ultimate designs of the Divine Donation of all Grace.

But when believers are left to themselves, to live upon and trust in their own comfortable frames and graces, they then lay a foundation for fears and darkness. For instance, if I live upon my frames and graces received, I too often to my great grief

experience that my comfortable frames are all fled, and can scarce tell, whether I have any grace or not. What must I do when my comforts are fled, my joys have forsaken me, all my living frames have given up the ghost, and I am left to question, whether I ever had the truth of grace in my heart at all? Now certainly, such a one must be plunged into the very depths of sorrow, and that for a very good reason, because he hath lost his all. The very foundation of his comforts is taken away, and therefore, he concludes himself to be an hypocrite, a formal professor, one who only hath a name to live; he concludes that the death which once he had escaped will seize him again, and though formally he could have triumphed over it, it is now become his fear and his dread, and he imagines that God hath cast him off forever.

However, upon the return of his comforts and pleasant frames he imagines that all is well, and he can then believe, that he is the beloved of the Lord, and redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

From these conceptions, I think, I may very justly draw this conclusion, that the Love of God and the Grace of his Covenant are subject to mutation; for, if my frames and graces, according to these imaginations are good and heavenly, then, all is well for eternity; but, if they prove the reverse, then, all my joys are darkened and dreadful evils are expected. Such poor souls as these, who have attained to no greater light into the mysteries of Grace, do really believe, that it is their incumbent duty to be always working hard, to keep themselves

in the love of God, in maintaining a comfortable disposition of soul which they are incapable of doing; and so they are pierced through with many sorrows, and their days are spent in hard bondage; and all this flows from the fountain of ignorance in the stability of the Everlasting Covenant, and the completeness of that Sacrifice that Jesus Christ hath once made for sin.

Now, that which should make us, and all good men abhor such a way of living is this, because it is a sinful way of living; for, among many other things, it leads us to a coldness and indifferency to the Lord Jesus Christ, his Person and Personal Excellencies, and insinuates that God is Changeable.

I must confess by the way, that I heartily believe, there are many that almost all their lives long are subject to this bondage, who are gracious believers, and such for whom Christ died, and these do often find in experience the sealing evidences of Christ's love to their souls, and in these sealing seasons are helped to live above their frames and graces or anything else short of Christ and his righteousness.

Oh then, how happily do such live, who continually live above all their frames, and above their highest attainments; for that promise is made good unto them, "he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure," and, "thine eyes shall see the King in his Beauty." Isa.33:16-17. He shall surely dwell on high, above all things below Covenant Love and Mediatorial Fullness; he shall

dwell safely, for the "place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks," where he shall have rich provision, for his bread shall be given him, and his waters shall be sure. "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." John 6:35.

He shall have all the delights of a regenerated state for his solace and safety; he shall have the eternal God in his entire Person to be his defense, this glorious munition of rocks. He shall have for his provision the dainties of heaven, for he shall live upon the bread that came down from that world, and the water that flows from the throne in that state, to strengthen and refresh his renewed nature. He that lives above his frames and graces received lives upon as great glories, if not greater than those who are of the angelic order; for, as we have already observed, he lives upon the eternal and immutable love of God, in the Lord Jesus Christ the Redeemer, the stability of the Covenant in and with Christ, the un-alterable worth of his Fullness, and the Glory of his Everlasting Righteousness. Let his frames be what they will, let his measure of sensible enjoyments be never so small; nay, let them be quite fled, he knows that his peace is made with God by Jesus Christ, and his life, his joy, his glory, and his crown are all in his Dearest Lord and Redeemer; and he can say with the prophet in a spiritual sense, "although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be

cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Hab.3:17-18. So the believer, under the want of all spiritual frames, though there be none of the fruits of the Spirit in a sensible way to his soul, but all are entirely cut off; yet he can rest satisfied in the love of his God, for he knows, let his frame be what it will, his Redeemer and what he is made in a sovereign way to him are always the same in the sight of God. Whatever his attainments be here, he goes on in an even way, his feet tread a smooth path; he doth not now meet with such ups and downs as formally, for his judgment is enlightened and sanctified, so that from the clear conceptions he hath of things he goes on unshaken in his Christian passage, leaning on his Beloved, as his Righteousness and Strength. The new creature gets daily strength, and the soul makes a large progress in holiness; yea, such a holiness as none of Adam's children can attain to by all their form-helps and natural-strengths, for all they do, before a vital union is sin, and in no way acceptable to God. But this is the believer's main comfort, that Jesus Christ hath pleased and satisfied the Father; and all his business, as assisted by daily grace, is to please Jesus Christ by living upon, and trusting in Him, in which he brings forth fruit to the glory of Christ, as the great End in all he doth. And thus, the gracious soul by a secret and internal light travels on from a world of midnight darkness to the daylight of everlasting glory.

Objection: These notions are the principles of the Antinomians, and seem to be calculated at least to weaken those just regards that we ought to have to the Law of God and a holy conversation. Assertion: Hatred to truth, as it is in Jesus, is the cause that the glorious doctrines of the Everlasting Gospel have ever been, by the devil and his emissaries, stigmatized and loaded with hard names, to render them frightful and odious to the children of men. They are like the heathen of old who dressed the martyrs in bear skins, and the skins of other wild beasts, to render them more hateful to the beasts appointed to devour them, in order to their being destroyed with a greater fury; and so, by tricks as odd and unaccountable, the pretended preachers of our age dress-up truth, especially truths which tend to advance the glory of Christ and Free Grace and the liberty of the saints. Such truths as these clip the wings of their ecclesiastical grander, which they cannot bear, but immediately roar out and cry, "heresy, heresy; paving the way to looseness of life, and the casting off the yoke of duty. Oh vile Antinomianism to be abhorred by all good men!" And here their poor servile admirers take all for granted that their preacher saith, and, if it was ten times more they would believe him; and, if you oppose them, they presently fly in your face with their usual knocking down argument, "what, do you pretend to know better than Doctor Divinity, who was eleven years at the University, and has been thirty years a minister? Or the learned Mister Piety, whose learning and great works have

rendered him famous throughout many parts of Europe?" Thus, like poor Ignoramuses, who will cry down Popery and Priestcraft, when they are got over a bottle, pinning all their faith upon the sleeve of some blind teacher, but never with the noble Bereans search the Scriptures to see whether these things be so, or not; or like wise men, by sanctified reason, weigh things impartially in the balance of the sanctuary. No, they take all for granted upon trust, and believe it upon the bare authority, it may be, of a blind guide, and they are resolved to follow him close, until both fall into the ditch, in doctrine and conversation; and certainly the consequences will be dreadful, if Grace prevent it not, for they will both fall into the ditch of perdition, out of which they will rise no more. But, before I pass the objection, let it be observed that their dogmatic and unproven statement goes for just nothing at all with me; it is not their saying, this is Antinomianism or that is Libertarianism that proves it so; and, for my part, I really believe that proof here is such a piece of drudgery that their idleness will never suffer them to go through with it.

Now, if the casting off of all obedience to the Law, as the matter of my acceptance with God, and laying aside all my graces, when they rival with the Redeemer in his perfect Righteousness, and my sole dependence and trust upon Him for what he is, and hath done for me, in my room and stead; if these be Antinomianism, the good Lord grant, that I may be an Antinomian forever. If this is to be vile, I will, as grace shall help me, be still more vile, and account

it my glory; and, whereas it is objected, that such sentiments as these lead men to cast off duty, and to live sinfully, I observe, that this objection appears to come from a person destitute of all true grace, who never felt the love of Christ with power, because I can with confidence affirm the objection to be a palpable falsehood, a most abominable and notorious lie; for I know from my own living experience, that the Absoluteness of Divine Grace in Eternal Love, the Covenant of Salvation, the Fullness of Christ, the Head of this Covenant, and the Sovereignty of the Blessed Spirit in his gifts and operations, which without any of my own works, entitle me to glory, and will fit me and bring me thither, have been in my soul a spring of duty and obedience. Oh how have I, at such a time, been delighted in the Law of God after the inner man! Oh, what praying, what meditating, what reading, and hearing the Word were, then, put in practice! What exactness of walk in the world, in the family, and in the Church of God did the conception and application of these glorious Truths produce! How were they attended with a holy, practical obedience, and all with delight and pleasure! Give me leave to say, that these principles of Free, Glorious and Sovereign Grace do promote such a living to God, for God, and with God, through the Redeemer, that none of those, who cry out against these truths as Antinomianism, are capable of; for it is evident from the objection, that they are strangers to the power of Divine Love and Grace. I wholeheartedly bless my God for such Antinomianism as this; for, before I

knew it and felt its power, I performed duty from a legal spirit, a spirit of fear and bondage, and lived upon my frames, but I found religion was very hard work, and I went on in my legal course very heavily.

But now, through the Riches of Free Grace, since the times of refreshing came from the presence of the Lord, Acts 3:19, I experience, that wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Pvov.3:17. Now, the Christian way is a pleasant way and a believer's duties are his delight.

Objection. But how many are there who take hold of these sentiments, who embrace and espouse them, but who live in all manner of wickedness? Answer. What is all this to the purpose? The objection is of no force whatsoever, nor has it the least tendency to overthrow the principles now under vindication. I pray, is the wickedness of these professors the immediate result of their principles? Would they, think you, have been less wicked, if they had embraced other notions? If you believe they would, how comes it to pass that Arminians and those who are full of legal principles, live in the vilest of crimes? If I am to reject every principle that hath been received and espoused by such who live wickedly, then, I am sure, I must entertain no principles at all. If I should say, that a man's principles are the single cause of his wickedness, then, no principles are good, because some men of every principle are wicked. I cannot apprehend that the objector will affirm that the doctrines of Free Grace are the only ones that lead men into

licentiousness; and if he doth, then, I am at a loss to know what makes a legalist live wickedly. Perhaps, he will say, that the sin of his nature and the naughtiness of his heart, for his principles have no such tendency. If this then be the case, I infer from hence, that those who have received the doctrines of Free Grace do not sin from the principles of a corrupted nature, and a naughty heart, but from the force of received principles; so that the man would have been good, if his principles had been otherwise; and the whole amounts to thus much, that men of legal notions are born into the world with naughty hearts, and Antinomians with good ones. This deserves no further notice.

But I shall observe here that the sentiments of the Arminians have as great if not greater tendency to looseness of life and manners than the principles commonly called Antinomianism. For instance, if I could heartily believe that naturally I have a free will, and can turn to God, and make my peace with him when I please, what need I think of being religious, as yet; it is time enough, I can do it when I think it a more proper season. Therefore my soul thou mayest take thy pleasures in sin a little longer, for thou of thyself art a free agent, and when thou wilt, canst work out thine own happiness, and secure thine own salvation.

Now I appeal to all wise men who will judge impartially, whether this doctrine leads not faster to iniquity than that which we have been stating and vindicating? And for this reason, because we assert

and prove, that holiness from Christ is as certain as glorification with him.

Objection. But there are some who have in express terms asserted that they may commit sin because grace is free, and sin is eternally done away. Answer. I do not know that there are any such in the world who make these improvements of the doctrines of grace. If there are, all I have to say of them is this, that I am sure they are strangers to the powers thereof, because the true grace of God that bringeth salvation will by divine instances teach the subjects of it to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Tit.2:12. Let us not therefore blame the doctrines of God's Free Grace, as if they were the cause of that which flows from a corrupted and cursed nature, for the doctrines of Rich and Absolute Grace are never the worst in themselves, nor less powerful and glorious to a believer in answering all the ends of holiness and peace, because some wicked men have received and abused them.

It must be confessed, that the best of believers sin, yea, and, at certain times, some of them sin very grossly; but never because Grace abounds. No, they say as with one voice, God forbid; for their sins proceed from the strength of a depraved nature; and, through the riches of Free Grace they have that in them which ever inspires to abhor their own corrupt doings, and themselves, on that account. Oh, how do they cry under their sins and corruptions for strength against them, and deliverance from them forever!

As for the charge of Antinomianism, we through God's Grace regard it not. Let our adversary slander, bark and grin, fight against and curse the Free Grace of God, and those who love it, as enemies to his righteous Law, it is a causeless curse, and shall never light on our heads, for we love and keep the Law of God better than they can. Nay, our obedience to God's Law by which we are vindicated is not only preferable to the sinful doings of legalists, but even to all the holiness of the angels and archangels about the throne, those glorious sons of the morning, who never sinned or left their first estate; so that we do not make void the Law through faith, but establish, magnify, and make it honourable.

Objection. The obedience of sinful creatures is not preferable to the holiness of an angelic nature. Answer. The obedience of God's elect, by which they are justified, is preferable to that of the Angels, because the obedience of God's elect is the personal obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, made theirs by an act of Sovereignty in Imputation, as is evident from the parable that the Holy Ghost runs between Adam and Christ, in the fifth of Romans, verse fourteen to the end. Nay, give me leave to say, that the personal obedience of the saints is more agreeable to the holiness and spirituality of God's righteous Law than all the righteousness of them who hope to be saved by their own doings; for the believer performs all his duties from a principle of pure love to his dear Redeemer, but the others from a principle of servile bondage, as the fear of God's wrath and eternal displeasure. The proud legalists

may allege what they will against the doctrines of Free Grace and an Unconditional Salvation in Christ; they may clamor as loudly as they please against them as Antinomian fooleries; yet, through the Grace of God we will adhere to them as our greatest glory and consolation; for they have been our greatest joy, and we have experienced them to be the only motive to the cheerful performance of duty. Let vain legalists know that we can offer up to God a more excellent sacrifice than they; namely, the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Holy Ghost puts his obedience into our hands, whenever we come before the Lord; and we have found by blessed experience that when by the threatenings of the Law a flood of guilt gushes into our consciences, we can stop its impetuous streams with the blood of the Everlasting Covenant. However strict and rigorous the demands of the Law be, we have that to give which will satisfy them all, and to the full; and this is by grace through faith, that true faith, which worketh by love, purifies the heart, and advances truth in the inner parts.

This despised but powerful Antinomian Gospel imprints upon the heart, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, a divine stamp, the image of God through Christ, a holy and simple nature; and, when the blessed Spirit is pleased to shine upon this, his own work, he makes the soul to shine in all the parts of its conversation. Give me leave to observe that such a one is a none-such; for he brings more glory to God, and more honour to his Law than all the work-mongers in the world. Sure I am from a living

experience, that they are wholly strangers to good works, who were never created by the Lord the Spirit, a second time, in Christ Jesus; for the saints are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and all pretensions to good works, without this Divine creation are no better than an empty name. It is too manifest, that such pretenders come short of the heathens as to morality, and yet these are the very persons who boast of their works, and reproach others better than themselves, though their own best works are good for nothing. Thus, they charge us with making void the law, whilst, at the same time, they themselves are far from being friends to it; and it is evident from the tenor of their own principles that they make faith void.

Objection. We do not make faith void, nor do we hope to be saved without it. God forbid that we should not believe in our Saviour who came into the world to die, to save lost sinners. We believe, as well as you, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God is our Lord; that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, and suffered under Pontius Pilate; that he was crucified, dead and buried; that he descended into hell, and on the third day he rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Answer. These things are sooner said than believed; and, if they are believed, it is only by the common faith of persuasion which does not demonstrate a man to be a child of God, or in a state

of salvation. This is a sort of faith that a man may have, and yet be no member of Christ's mystical body; nay, it is no evidence at all of the heavenly state, otherwise the devils themselves would have an evidence of salvation and happiness, who believe all these things and tremble; but for my own part, I should dread to repose my confidence for salvation upon no better foundation than a faith which sets me no higher than the devils. Such persons as these take up their religion upon trust, and go on in the common road; they are indeed religious, because their fathers were so, and believe what they say because they were so taught, when they were first capable of instruction; but they never truly examine whether their grace, as they call it, be of the right kind. They will acknowledge that their sins are bad, but it is their misery not to know, that their faith and hope are so too. They please themselves, in that they were always very good Christians, for they have believed all their days, and are entirely ignorant what it means to be an unbeliever, from which it is evident that they stand in no need of any Divine Power to draw them to the Lord Jesus Christ, in a way of holy and humbly believing. They do not want the gift of faith from God, which they always had; but, alas, this at best is no more than an imaginary faith, and, if they never have any other, it will end in everlasting despair; whereas true faith carries the soul on in the way of its duty, and even when it has made the greatest progress, empties it all of legal intentions, helping it to trust in the Redeemer alone, as the Lord it's Righteousness and

Strength, so that all its services and performances in the paths of duty excel the highest doings of proud Pharisees.

Legalist, remember this, that if salvation according to thy notions may be had for doing, those you call Antinomians have the best claim to it; but, if it is not to be obtained for doing anything the creature can perform, but only for what Christ hath done in the way of Grace and Love for the elect, then these whom you condemn are a happy and blessed people because Christ who is God's way of salvation, is the glory of their strength and the sole object of their trust. From the whole then it appears, that notwithstanding all your boasting, their works are better than yours, and they trust in Christ's Righteousness and Blood more than you do, and are therefore better than yourselves. May the Lord help you to take heed, if it be consistent with his Divine will, of despising the Redeemer's glory, and that which most exalts his grace and greatness, {which he will one day vindicate,} and of reproaching those whom he will honour and acknowledge, and that before God, angels and men in the great day of accounts, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. It is evident then from what hath been said, that the glorious and absolute Grace of God, as it is brought home to the soul by a Divine Power, produces the most glorious fruit, to the praise and glory of that grace which hath accepted us in the Beloved. Eph.1:6.

Observe then, that all our good works flow from received Grace, and are the consequences, not

the causes, of the love of God in Christ Jesus; and it is impossible for us, until we are made partakers of the holy seed, to bring forth any good fruit. It is our being engrafted into this holy stock, that enables us to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, not to obtain salvation, but because we are saved already; not to escape the wrath of God, but because the Redeemer himself hath already delivered us from it, and to show gratitude to Jesus Christ, as an Husband who hath secured heaven for his bride and spouse, and freed her from all dangers and fears of hell. The believer now, being delivered from the hands of his enemies; namely, all his guilt and slavish fear, can serve his Lord in holiness and righteousness all his days. It is to Jesus Christ that we owe all our love; and we cannot but love him, whenever we reflect on his love to us, who hath saved us from wrath, and left us nothing to pay to the demands of the Law, but hath fully discharged all himself. This is the ground of all love and service to Christ; and this love never did, never will, nor can lead to licentiousness of life. No, very far from it, for it kindles in the heaven-born soul a mighty flame, by which the heart is melted for sin, and it is the strongest cord to bind us to the service of Jesus Christ. They who think that this grace will lead to sin, declare, as I have before observed, they never felt or tasted the power thereof; for this grace is holy and can bring forth nothing but what is like itself.

But as for those, if there be any such, who make Christ and the Doctrines of Grace a cloak for their wickedness, and take encouragement to sin

because grace abounds, they are a cursed and abominable crew; and for my own part, I abhor them in my very heart. I do not think that they are fit for human society, because their principles, of all others, are most pernicious, blasphemous and damnable; for they make the holy Jesus a minister of sin, and of course, all the purposes and designs of an infinite Jehovah sinful; as if God had in purpose and counsel, designed to give men a license and authority to do that which his soul hateth, and, pursuant to these purposes, think Christ into the world to be a minister of unrighteousness in the execution of them. This is a notion so intolerably impious, that it makes me tremble in writing it. The persons and principles of the Arminians are bad enough, for their principles lead down to death; yet they are far more to be desired and embraced than those of these vile Libertines, for the following reasons.

1. Because they make God not only the Author, but the very Fountain and Agent of all sin.

2. Because they are not, will not, cannot be good neighbors, and live up to their notions; for, according to their principles, they may rob their neighbors, defile their marriage beds, nay, imbrue their hands in their blood, and yet do no harm. They cannot commit sin because it is done away; they are under no law in any sense whatsoever, and therefore can be guilty of no evil; for, say they, where there is no law, there is no transgression. This is an undeniable truth, but the point in hand is this, either they are under a law, or they are not? But

they say that they are under no law, as such; they commit no sin, do what they will. Now a principle of this nature is for the aforesaid reason to be abhorred, because the worst of crimes with them are no evils; but, if they be under a law, it is either the old moral law, that eternal rule of righteousness, or a new law. Now, to be under a new law is what, for my part, I cannot understand. I know no such law in being, and such a notion supposes that the old law was faulty, which is an impeachment of the Wisdom and Holiness of God. They, who were the inventors of this scheme, are in show no friends to the Libertine, though they are in fact; for this doctrine of a new law, contrived at Rome, and sent into England in the early days of the Reformation has a direct tendency to lead men from the Person and Righteousness of the Redeemer to themselves, to their own sincere obedience for life and happiness, so that here are great pretensions to holiness, which is the difference between a real Antinomian and these Neonomian gentlemen; but, in fact, they are both agreed to despise the Law of God, has may be shown hereafter.

But I conceive that the Libertine will of necessity renounce the notion of a new law, because he is under none, and it will not square with his other sentiments. It will therefore follow that if they be under any law, it is the moral; and this they will be found under with a vengeance. Only let these vile wretches remember this one thing, that Christ the great Redeemer, our common Lord as Mediator, is given by his Father to be Head over all things in his

church, as such; he is not only become their Representative Head, but he is also their Head of influence, so that everyone who is in the election of grace, and for whom Christ died, shall be brought to partake of this fullness, that is holy, pure and sinless, which teaches us to deny ungodliness and to live uprightly, as hath already been shown in this work; and therefore these vile apostates and wicked villains who pretend to all liberty in Christ, {in whom, indeed it is,} are still in bondage to their own lusts. The Holy Ghost describes them exactly, "for when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." II Pet.2:18-19. These are they who justly deserve the name of Antinomians.

Question. Are believers under the Law, the moral law of God, as it is summarily contained in the Ten Commandments, as a rule of life? This question requires a twofold answer, for believers may justly and properly be said not to be under the Law, as a rule of life, and yet in a just and proper sense they are.

They are not under the Law of the Ten Commandments as a rule of life from legal or slavish principles; they do not obey this law because the Lord by Moses hath commanded it, for in this sense the Law is not to a believer a rule of life. The law as

written upon Adam's heart in innocence, and given to the children of Israel upon tables of stone, by the disposition of angels, into the hand of Moses, their Mediator, is established by the Lord Jesus Christ, who came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. This law Adam kept whilst in his paradisaical state, by the strength of his created pure nature; the children of Israel obeyed it, from the authority of the Lawgiver; and believers keep it under the Gospel, from principles of grace, and the flowings in of the manifestations of Divine Love, as the Apostle saith, "the love of Christ constraineth us," II Cor.5:14, and in another place, "for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom.8:2. By the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, I understand the glorious grace of the Spirit of God, as flowing from the fullness that is in Christ Jesus, which produces principles of love to, and delight in, the Person and Righteousness of Jesus Christ, and frees the soul from all that guilt of sin and fear of death, which the moral law takes occasion by our corruptions to charge upon us. Thus, by the graces of the Spirit, and the lively communications of Divine Love, we make the Law the rule of our life; for as the law of the Spirit in us frees us from the fears of all the threatenings of the law without us, so it inspires us to make it our rule. But, if any should object and say, that believers are not under the moral law in any sense, I must take the liberty to advance a former argument made use of against the Libertines, namely this, they are either under a law, or they are not; if they are not

under a law, they {believers in Christ} can commit no sin at all, which gives the lie to their daily experience, in that holy antipathy they find in their new nature against the corruptions of the old man, and in those humble confessions of corruption before God, those pious breathings and longings their souls often have after a sinless state; but, if they are under a law, it must be the law given to Adam, and handed down to Israel by Moses, contained in the Decalogue, or else a new law; but a new law the objector is far from giving into as myself. From the whole it appears, that believers are under the law as a rule; but yet in a more glorious sense than ever Adam or Moses, or any of his disciples were. The former observed it as a covenant, the latter kept it as a letter law from the bare authority of the Lawgiver; but believers obey it from gracious springs of light, life and divine love, not to obtain life by it, or because Moses directs us, but because it is written in our hearts by the finger of God. It was written in the heart of Christ; therefore, he kept it. It is written in our hearts, by grace from Christ; and, therefore the new man in us never transgresses it; but our souls, as under the guidance and direction of this new man principle in us makes the law of God our rule. Now, for men to reproach the persons of those who preach the glory of Christ and Free Grace as Antinomians, and their doctrines as Antinomianism, is nothing less than base slander, as is plain from what we have already advanced; for we love the law of God better than they do, and make it a rule of life from more infallible principles. How

unjustly are we represented by this age of empty professors, as if we were such as said, "let us do evil that good may come of it." Oh, let such our accusers look with horror and amazement upon Romans 3:8, where the Apostle saith, that there were some who slanderously reported and affirmed, that he, and those that preached the doctrines of Free Grace and Salvation by Christ alone, should say, let us do evil, that good may come, whose damnation is just. I conceive this text will bear two senses.

1. That they who affirm that the Apostles and Ministers of Christ, by their preaching the Free Grace of the Gospel did encourage their hearers to do evil, to commit iniquity, from these considerations, justly deserve damnation, because they have raised a lie upon the doctrines of pure grace.

2. They who affirm such things in their administrations justly deserve damnation, viz., all who assert that a man may do evil deeds in order to advance the Grace of God, for that is a good, and a great good, the condemnation of such is just.

These two senses seem to contain the whole of the text; and the first seems to have as much strength in it as the latter. Therefore legalist, cease to slander, for in so doing you may reproach those who are greater friends to holiness than yourselves. We, whom you unjustly call Antinomians, dare not sin because through grace, our language is "God forbid." Shall we, being dead to sin, live any longer therein? For under the influences of the blessed Spirit we cease to be slaves either to its curses, or allurements; and it is the love of God that shines

forth brightly in the Redeemer's Person, that draws us very sweetly to his service, and in the strictest performance of all duties, to live above them all upon the personal fullness of Christ, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### ***THE BLESSED AND DELIGHTFUL CONSEQUENCES OF THIS CONQUEST.***

In the treatment of the glorious and happy consequences of this gracious and powerful conquest, {the conquest of grace,} which mighty grace hath made upon the hearts of God's elect, in bringing them down from their innate pride and vainglory, which naturally fills their hearts, to the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, without their own works, with a holy and humble willingness that Christ should be all in all in their salvation, and have all the praise and glory thereof, I would observe the following things, as the necessary result of their being made gracious and upright before God, in and through the blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

A Conscious-Justification, or a sense of justifying love in and upon our own hearts. Justification is an act of Righteousness, wherein God accepteth the elect as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. Justification is a law term, for it does not constitute a person righteous, or make him so, but it is a judicial pronouncing him so, who upon trial is found to be just. It was a custom among the ancient Romans, in their courts of justice, to give to persons, who upon trial were found innocent, a white stone, as a token of their justification. This was their acquittance, because they were found not guilty. To

this our Lord alludes, when speaking to the Church in Pergamos, for he saith, "I will give to such," as do, by living principles, "overcome the world," not only to eat of the hidden manna, but I will give him also a sense of his justification. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Rev.2:17. I will pronounce the sentence of justification in his soul; and his conscience shall be the witness of it, which shall carry with it an evidence of its relation and union to me and my Father; and he shall know me with comfort by my name, "the Lord our Righteousness," which none can know, but those that receive the sentence of justification into their own breasts. How miserably is this portion of sacred writ abused and mangled by the daubers of untempered mortar of our age, who are generally agreed to call this white stone of conscious justification, the stone of absolution or pardon, and so carry off the text from its genuine signification; for absolution or pardon supposes guilt, but justification does not. For those, who were found guilty amongst the Romans, had a black stone given to them, which was their sentence of condemnation, as being upon trial found guilty.

I confess, that the pardon of sin is an inestimable blessing; yet it is not contained in the text under consideration. The Great God, then, does not justify persons, as sinners, but as righteous, in

and for a righteousness which is not their own, but the Redeemer's, so that the justified are perfectly righteous before God, or else he justifies the wicked, which is impossible.

Objection: But God is said to justify the ungodly. Rom.4:5. Answer: It is granted, that the elect are justified, while ungodly; but it does not therefore follow that they are justified as such. Indeed, the text serves gloriously to prove, that the elect, while in a state of ungodliness, are in a state of justification; but believers are nowhere in Scripture called by the terms of wicked, ungodly, &c. It is therefore evident, that the Great and Holy God is a Justifier of the elect, whilst in a state of sin and corruption; yet not for the sake of that sin and corruption, but for the sake of the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, which he hath been pleased to impute to his people; for Christ is of God made unto them righteousness. I Cor.1:30. Thus, it appears from this objection, and the text brought to prove it, that the justification of the elect, before faith, is a truth; and the doctrine itself is established. If I'm justified before faith, as it is plain that I am, why not as soon as Christ became my Surety. If we are justified alone by, and for the righteousness of Christ, it is a necessary consequence, that we are justified in the sight of God, not only before our faith, but before our open existence; yea, before the world began; or else the Righteousness of Christ had not a sufficient merit and virtue in itself to do the work, but needed the assistance of my faith to give it an additional value. This is to treat the Righteousness

of Christ and his Sufferings as so many ciphers, which stand for nothing, till a figure come before them, to make them tell; so, till my faith precede what Christ hath done, it is all as nothing, but must wait the motion of my believing for all its glory.

Now, the case is plain, that this way of going to work is no better {which I have already charged in this work upon Arminians and others} than a trampling underfoot the blood and righteousness of the Son of God, because they account them as things not holy enough to justify without faith. Let those that espouse such a notion consider the dangerous consequences attending them; for, notwithstanding all their pretended airs of sanctity, they will be found guilty of robbing the Redeemer of the Glory which is his due. But, perhaps, they will object and say, my charge is false, for they do not affirm, that there is not a sufficiency in the blood and righteousness of Christ to justify, without faith; but only, that according to Scripture Revelation, which contains the whole mind and will of God, there is no such thing as justification before faith; and that, therefore, God hath appointed that justification shall succeed believing.

Answer: The reason why these gentlemen so strenuously endeavor to hide the glorious doctrine of Justification before believing from their hearers is what I am not able to comprehend; unless it be to keep them in ignorance of their liberty in Christ, and to bind them down to a servile admiration of themselves. The objection is partly true; but the greater part is false. Doubtless, the Scriptures

contain a perfect Revelation of the mind and will of God; but that in this revelation there is nothing of the doctrine of justification, without faith, or before it, is a blatant falsity. Let us once more take a view of that passage in Romans, where we read with an impartial eye, and the doctrine, now under consideration, will shine forth with a convincing light. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly." Rom.4:5. Observe in the words, that the object of a believer's faith is he who justifieth the ungodly; and if ungodly, then consequently unbelievers, and he that justifies them, as such; for he that justifies the ungodly justifies unbelievers; but God justifies the ungodly; therefore, he justifies unbelievers, prior to their personal faith, which faith evidences their justification in Christ.

I could have offered many other arguments upon this great and weighty subject drawn both from Scripture and the Perfections of God in order to show that the contrary opinions have a tendency to introduce Arminianism and Atheism; but this is not my present business, and I must beg pardon of my readers for so long a digression. My design is only to speak of a Conscience-Justification, which is no more than bringing home to the soul that justification, already spoken of; and I am, now to explain, how a sense of this is communicated to the soul, and proclaimed in the conscience by the Holy Ghost, as a glorious Consequence of Grace, in the conquest it hath made upon our hearts, in

destroying the rebellion, in some degree, that filled our wills.

A Conscience Justification then is a knowledge of our justification in the sight of God by the Righteousness of a Redeemer. This knowledge is conveyed to us by that Spirit who is the Enlightener of our understandings, by whom we are brought to see that Christ hath given to God a full satisfaction for all our sins, and that he doth for the sake of that Satisfaction justify us in his sight; so that we perceive it to be impossible for us to come into eternal condemnation; for, being once justified in his sight, we shall never be condemned. Oh, how sweetly is all this done upon our souls by the Holy Ghost bringing home to our conscience the blood and righteousness of Christ; so that by faith we are enabled to put on this righteousness with joy, and walk in the daily comforts thereof. We can now say with Paul, "who shall lay anything to our charge; it is God that justifieth;" or, "who shall condemn us; since Christ hath died for us," hath reconciled us to God, and saved us from the Law, Death and Hell. Now we know, that "God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death," Psal.48:14, and we are sure, that we shall never come into condemnation, but shall arrive safe at the haven of everlasting glory.

Likewise, a Conscience-Justification implies a freedom from guilt and fear; for it doth always cast out terror, and dispossess the soul of all slavish and servile apprehensions; so that it fears not the Law, though its threatenings are many and terrible, being

sensible that it hath a righteousness that hath answered all its demands, and banished all its threats, and hath magnified the Law and made it honourable in every part of its rigorous and righteous demands. Such a one fears not sin, because he sees that it is finished and done away forever by his Redeemer; and that, though it be sought for it shall never be found; for Christ hath carried it away into the "land of forgetfulness," into an everlasting oblivion, so that sin creates no fears, no condemning terrors or horrors in his sanctified and holy conscience.

But, lest I should be blamed, and thought an Antinomian, I shall take the liberty to explain myself a little further upon this point. Though a believer does not fear sin, as to its condemning power, yet he fears sinning, and as he is enabled by grace abhors sin and will shun all occasions leading to it; for, being a new creature, he cannot, as such, live in sin. I would therefore be understood, that a believer does not fear sin as damning, for he is not afraid of eternal damnation; for otherwise he would not be perfect as pertaining to the conscience, since all that are subject to such horrible apprehensions are still under the Law, being guided by a legal spirit and walking in bondage. It was a weakness of the Law dispensation that it could not make the comers thereunto perfect as pertaining to the conscience, for there was a continual remembrance of sin, Heb.9:9, but under the Gospel, in coming to our Great Sacrifice, our consciences are set at liberty; and the soul reads bright inscriptions of Divine love

upon that Altar, the Lord Jesus Christ, to which legalists have no visible right, that casteth out all fear. There is no fear in love; love that comes into the soul under the sprinklings of the blood of Jesus Christ, which casts out all guilt and bondage. Hence the bond-woman and her son are turned out of doors, and must have no part, nor possession with God's holy Isaac's in whom the Divine seed is found.

Ah, such a soul as this fears nothing, neither death nor hell, but can say, "O death, where is thy sting? I fear it not, for my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath taken it into his side, carried it down into his grave, and left it there. Thou wast once a part of the curse, under the law, but thou art now become an ordinance for my good, to be an outlet from all my troubles, and an inlet into all my perfect joys and endless delights, a state of true peace, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest from a world of toil, sin and sorrow." The believer also lives above the fears of hell, for the flames thereof, which sin had once kindled in his conscience, the application of the Redeemer's blood hath extinguished, so that he now goes on undaunted; and he is not dismayed, he cares not, though ten thousand set themselves together around about against him, but he is cheerful; for he knows that Christ overcame the world, and he can say with the psalmist, "though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear, though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." Psal.27:3. He can likewise with the psalmist be still, with the confident assurance that

despite all, the LORD shall be exalted. "Be still, and know that I am God, I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." Psal.46:10.

Furthermore, a Conscience-Justification implies a holy triumphing in a Redeemer. The believer's language is, "my soul shall make her boast in the Lord; and I will sing of his salvation. I will bless him from day to day, and speak of the glorious honour of his Majesty." Psal.34:2, 96:2. God's Church of old, under a living sense of their justification in the righteousness of Christ, breaks forth with joy and triumph, saying, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isa.61:10. We see here, that the ground of all this holy joy and triumph in the Lord God was extracted from a conscience justification; for the clear apprehensions by faith of an imputed righteousness gives the soul a quietness in the worst of times, and enables it to love the Redeemer, to cleave unto Him, and delight in Him more than in all the glories of time and sense.

Another consequence of the truth of grace in the heart, made by this powerful and holy conquest {the conquest of grace} is a Conscience-Pardon of Sin. Remission of Sin is a glorious act of Grace, for by it I am forgiven all my trespasses; it finds me a sinner, but forgives all my sins. Pardon of sin is a Divine Favour that more immediately flows from the

nuptial love of Christ to his Church. It is he, as a Husband, who forgives the sins of his wife, heals all her backslidings, and loves her freely, because he is married to her.

Question: But do we not sin against our God and Father, the Great and Infinite Being, and doth not he forgive us our sins? Answer: In a strict and proper sense, the Infinite God doth not forgive sin, for it is readily granted by all who are sound in the Faith, that Jesus Christ hath given full satisfaction to Divine Justice for all sin, and hath fully paid the debt of his Church, his bride and spouse, whom he represented as a federal Head; and God himself hath declared his being well pleased with the Redeemer's Righteousness, which is a full demonstration of his Satisfaction. "The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the Law, and make it honourable." Isa.42:21. Now, Christ hath, by his active and passive obedience, magnified the Law and made it honourable; by which he gave satisfaction to Justice; and, if Christ hath satisfied the Justice of God for all the sins of his people, how then can it be justly, or with propriety of speech be said that God pardons our sins and transgressions? Sure I am, that debt can never be forgiven which is paid. For instance, suppose I owe a man a thousand pounds, and he should demand this debt from me, I must pay, or be imprisoned; my adversary is about to deliver me to the officer, that I may be cast into prison. I acknowledge, that the whole of this proceeding is just; but, in the interim, a third person interposes, who formally loved me and

demonstrates that he still loves me, in engaging {as my Surety} to pay my debt. "I love him," saith he, "he shall not go to jail, for I will pay the debt. Here I give my bond for the payment." This being a Man of great worth and credit, his bond is accepted; and, at the time appointed, {"the fulness of the time" Gal.4:4,} he pays off the bond to the uttermost farthing. Tell me now, did my creditor forgive me my debt? I'm certain every wise man will answer in the negative. This then, is the true state of the case in hand; for the wrath of God might have been sent down upon us, as soon as ever we had our existence in a way of strict Justice; and it must have been inflicted, if Christ the Redeemer had not stepped in, and as our spiritual Moses, {our eternal Surety,} stood in the gap for us. Ezek.22:30. Absolute Justice was ready to apprehend us and commit us to the everlasting prison of darkness for our iniquities, but our glorious Head and Husband, Jesus Christ, who had loved us in our Supralapsarian state, as his bride and spouse, did as our Husband lay himself under an obligation to pay our debt; he became our Sponsor or Surety, and gave {to speak after the manner of men,} a bond for our debt, for all was placed to his account, and he did, at the time appointed by the Father, dip his pen in his own blood, and cross the black lines of all our sins, by which he made to God a full payment of our debt. Tell me now, were my sins forgiven me in a strict and proper sense? This must be also answered in the negative; and God {give me leave to say} is more glorified thus, than if he had absolutely forgiven sin,

without any Satisfaction, for then he must have forever let the honour of his Justice fall to the ground, which is in this way advanced and fully satisfied.

Objection: This way totally eclipses the freedom of Divine Grace which is so abundantly displayed in the Holy Scriptures. Answer: It does not eclipse the glory of Free Grace as will appear as we consider in what sense God may be said to forgive the sins of his people. Our God may be said to forgive sin, with respect to us, though not with respect to Jesus Christ; for our parts, we never were able to pay anything, and yet on us he takes no vengeance. But God may also be said to pardon sin in another sense, as he was pleased from everlasting to find a satisfactory price to his own Justice; it was a price of his own finding, and a price of his own accepting; his Justice is satisfied and our debt is fully paid; yet it was his own free love and grace that found the matter and way, by and in which it was accomplished. In these and such like foreign and improper senses God may be said to pardon our sins, when he manifests the freedom of his Grace, for all our sins are fully pardoned and God hath nothing against us, because all things between him and us stand fair and clear; so that, in all our prayers to God for pardon of sin we do not ask Him to issue out a fresh act of pardon, but only to reveal his love and grace to us afresh, and to seal to our souls a sense of pardon in the blood of Christ. "Oh, {saith a gracious and truly enlightened believer,} Lord, lead me to Christ's Blood and Satisfaction, or bring that

blood and satisfaction home to my soul by which means I shall see that fury is not in thee towards me, and that will satisfy my conscience, that I am a pardoned man. Oh, give me daily manifestations of pardoning grace into my heart, that my soul may sing thy praise, and triumph in thy Holy Name." In this light the soul perceives God to be at peace with it, and carries about, in itself, a sealed pardon into which it looks with a daily delight and pleasure, as knowing that its Redeemer hath removed all its sins out of God's judicial sight forever; so that, under such a dispensation, it is dispossessed of all fears that may arise from the apprehension of Divine Wrath, and it perseveres in a course of cheerful obedience to Christ, it's glorious Husband, and the great Paymaster of its debt. Our Redeemer, having paid our debt, in the relation of an Husband hath thereby delivered us from the Law by a powerful divorcement, and married us unto himself in a sensible way, {"wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" Rom.7:4,} and we are now to live to Him, to be faithful and holy, cleaving to none but Him; and, if we ever play the harlot with other lovers, it is he alone that can forgive us. We may with shame confess that we often commit spiritual adultery with the world, and the perishing delights thereof, in several respects; for whatever we love more than Christ with that we commit adultery, and there are none who can say, as to these things, that their

hearts are pure. These are sins against Christ our loving and tender Husband, who is our Redeemer, our Maker, the Lord of Hosts, and the God of the whole earth; and therefore, to him are we to cry for pardon, and a sense of free forgiveness, by the endearments of his love and mercy, which carry along with them more spiritual affection and sensible delights into the soul, and with more ease and pleasure, than wine can enter into the body to cheer the senses; for, according to the spouse in the Canticles, his love is better than wine, and answers all those valuable ends to the soul that wine doth to the body. The senses of the one cannot be more refreshed, delighted, and exhilarated than the faculties of the other. In this sense doth Christ forgive his people's daily sins, and it is to him that we are to pray for pardon and forgiveness every day, because we daily sin against him.

But oh, how great is our mercy, that we cannot sin ourselves out of this relation, or dissolve the marriage bands. If we revolt never so far from him, and should live in sin with others, and take up our delight with them; yet, here is sweet, heart attracting, and soul ravishing language, "turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you." Jer.3:14. We see here, that notwithstanding all the revolts of his people from him, he cannot let them go, he will not forever part with them; though their sins are many, he cannot give them up; though they are bent to backsliding, yet will he not quit his hold of them, nor let them fall into eternal ruin. Hear more of his delightful

language, "and my people are bent to backsliding from me, though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him." Hos.11:7. What could we reasonably expect should be the portion of such a people? Surely, nothing but wrath and the fierceness of the Divine indignation to overthrow them, as he did the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, but his dealing with them is quite the reverse; he breaks forth in bowels of mercy and compassion. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the city." Hos.11:8-9. How graciously doth the Lord here speak? With what bowels, with what strength of affection, doth he express his love to his fallen and revolted people? Notwithstanding all their sins and iniquities, with their aggravating circumstances, he cannot deprive them of his love. Oh, how fully doth this prove the impossibility of breaking the union, or dissolving the relation in which we stand to our Redeemer! Oh comfortable doctrine, filled with a divine sweetness, the sense of which is beyond all comparison, and pleasing beyond all expression! Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ hath died for all sin, that rendered us guilty before God, and that sin was Adam's offense. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be

made righteous." Rom.5:19. All the fruits and effects of this first sin are particularized by the apostle. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal.5:19-21. All these, like so many branches, proceed from that corrupt root of bitterness, which seized Adam's soul upon his disobedience; his offense rendered us guilty, and left us obnoxious to the Divine Vengeance; and his filthiness have rendered us unmeet for the enjoyment of our God. For the former Christ died, and took away its condemning curse; and the latter is by the Redeemer's power conquered, and its remainders are by him, after their breakings forth, daily forgiven, in a sensible way, to the great joy of the pardoned soul.

Another consequence of this divine and holy conquest, in the formation of the new creature in the soul, is sanctification. Sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, whereby the work of grace is carried on to its perfection in Christ, and the new creature is strengthened and made to grow up into Christ its Head, in all things. In wisdom and knowledge; it becomes so wise, as to know its own Father, to know the spring and fountain from whence it came, and it is never more delighted, than

when it is made to dwell in the ocean of purity, its own original. It's knowledge of the Redeemer, and the truths of the Everlasting Gospel increases, until it attains to a familiar and full acquaintance with them. It is not always a babe tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive; but it becomes a strong man, and a father in Christ, and perseveres until it comes to the stature of the perfect man in Christ.

Secondly, it grows up in holy obedience, for this also is a part of Gospel Sanctification. An evangelical obedience consists in a cheerful submission to Christ as God's way of salvation; and, where this is wanting, there can be no Gospel Obedience; and, where there is such an obedience to the Faith, there will be the practice of good works, a denying wickedness, and living honestly and soberly in the world. If a man is destitute of this obedience to Christ, as a Redeemer, let him talk ever so much about sanctification, it is only talk, and no better, if so good, than the morality of the heathens. Men may make great harangues upon piety and virtue, and call them holiness and sanctification; but, if obedience to Christ, and of the dispensations of sovereign grace be wanting, they after all their noise, are still unsanctified and unholy.

Thirdly, sanctification discovers itself in a holy and humble resignation to the will of God, and a quiet submission to all his providential dealings with me, as knowing they are all in love, and being assured, that he hath fixed the bounds of my

habitation, and settled in his eternal purpose all things that concern me, so that I am persuaded, that I shall have nothing more by all my anxious cares, nor nothing less by all my holy indifference. This hath a blessed tendency to quiet my mind; yea, it gives me the most substantial satisfaction, sweetly strips me of all my perplexing cares, and drives away all those tumultuous companions that would otherwise dwell in my breast, namely, my anxiety, perplexity, disquietude and uneasiness, so that I sit down in a divine and serene silence, in the enjoyment of my God, judging his will as best in all things. Thus, I cease from my own proper will in pouring of it out, by the power of this sanctifying grace, into the will of God; by this I forsake the creature, and take up my delight in my own God, the origin of all I am, and of all the good I do and shall enjoy. Here I dwell, free from all the noise and clamor of the world, in silent raptures and ecstasies of love. This indeed is the truly happy soul, whose meditations are sweet, for he is in union with Christ, who is his resting-place, where he finds true peace and lasting rest, which makes him, in heart and affection sit loose to all creature excellencies, and dwell on high, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God in the realms of glory. This resignation to the will of God, I humbly conceive, with that learned and godly prelate, Archbishop Usher, to be the greatest degree of sanctification attainable in this life. To me it appears, that it is so, because in the heavenly state, which is the perfection of beauty and holiness, the blessed inhabitants thereof have not the least

remainders of rebellion in their wills, having no other will but what is the will of God. Such an attainment then, in this world, which comes so near to the perfection of that heavenly state above, must be acknowledged to be an advanced degree of sanctification, which is another effect of the Divine Conquest.

Fourthly, another consequence of Divine Grace and Power upon the soul in bringing it to the Redeemer's feet is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. These are generally the result of the grace of God; and, though all believers have not the same measure of joy, no true saint is wholly destitute thereof, I mean as to its root and principle, and sometimes as to its exercise and fruits, rejoicing and triumphing in Salvation Grace, by which it is enabled to sing forth the praises of the Most High, of God the Father, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit.

First, the praises of God the Father, for his electing love in the Redeemer, before the world began. "Oh, saith the soul, Father I will praise thee, for thou art my God, who hast loved me with an everlasting love. Oh wondrous grace, that I should be the object of this free and sovereign favour, whilst thousands are left to go down to the chambers of death! Ah, not to me, not to me, but to thy great Name and matchless Grace be all the glory! Oh help me to praise thee, my God and King, and to extol and bless thy name forever, for thou art great, and greatly to be praised, and thy goodness and thy greatness are unsearchable, to love such a poor, sinful wretch as I am. Oh, how I long to be fixed in

that state where my soul shall be forever full, and meet with no interruption; where in constant strains of hallelujahs and holy triumphs, I shall praise thee aright, for thy eternal love and electing goodness.

Sure I am, that none can tell, that those joys are such that believers, under such contemplations as these, experience, but only believers themselves. Oh, they are made willing to die on the spot, if it be the will of God; there joys super-abound and their peace is so great, that they are, at certain times and seasons, blessed with more than their little vessels are able to contain, which make them breathe after the speedy appearance of Jesus Christ to take them up into that state, where they shall be forever with the Lord, their God and Father, and shall bless and praise him, where they shall possess a fullness of joy, and pleasures forevermore.

Secondly, such joys as these, according to experience, arise in the soul from contemplations on the redeeming love of Christ. The soul can sweetly bless and praise its Redeemer, for all his love, whether in Covenant-Engagements, or in the execution of them. "I will praise thee, {is his language,} who with love to my soul hath delivered me from the lowest hell." "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is

renewed like the eagle's." Psal.103:1-5. Bless the Lord, O my soul who hath redeemed thee from sin, hell, the law, death, and thy own self, and hath blessed thee with right and left hand blessings; blessings of the upper and of the lower springs, for in thy Redeemer's hands, thy great exalted Head, the wisdom of God, are the blessings of time and eternity, for in his right hand are strength of days, days of eternity, endless bliss and glory, and in his left hand riches and honour, i.e., the comforts and blessings of life in nature and grace here below.

Thirdly, the same joys are to be found in the souls calling to mind the love and grace of the Holy Spirit. The believer esteems it wondrous love, power, and wisdom, which found his soul in sin, and wallowing in the mire of all manner of abominations; and that he should be taken out of this mire and clay, which in so many have sunk and perished forever, constrains him to break forth into this, or such like language, "oh love divine, powerful goodness, omnipotent grace, which hath brought me forth from a state of sin and corruption to a Redeemer, and has made me to behold the glorious excellency of his person and eternal things, in a divine and heavenly brightness; so that all the glory of terrestrial delights appears comparatively as nothing! By this divine light, not only shining roundabout me but in me, I am taken up into the enjoyment of heavenly objects, and am willing to suffer and to do all that my God is pleased to call me to. Oh, the exceeding greatness of this power, that have taken hold of my wretched and unbelieving

heart, that once was glued to sinful and legal practices, and hath made it to hate every false way, and to cleave to Christ alone, for righteousness and strength!”

“Oh, thou glorious Lord, thou hast wrought all thy works in me, of thine own good pleasure; and I take delight in praising and magnifying thee, and not my own free will. Lord, not unto my own sufficiency, but unto thy all sufficient and mighty grace be all the praise. Oh, blessed Lord, keep me, thy poor unworthy worm, from burning incense to my own net, or sacrificing to my own drag; may I be ever helped to give unto thee that tribute of glory and honour which is thy due. My dear Redeemer, when he tabernacled here below, manifested a very tender regard for thy glory; oh do grant, that in this, as well as in all other respects, the same mind may be in me, thy poor unworthy child, who by thy glorious and powerful grace am devoted to thy fear and service.”

The soul of a believer experiences, in his meditations upon these great and noble subjects, inexpressible joys; when he sees that all the comfortable knowledge he hath of everlasting love, the covenant of grace, the fullness of a Redeemer, and his love in his twofold state of humiliation and exaltation is the work of the Holy Spirit alone; it makes his very soul to melt within him for joy, he longs to be dissolved, that he may enter into the fullness of this joy. This is joy and peace indeed! “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you

all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:26-27. It is of a lasting nature, for neither men, nor devils can take it away.

Should I write a large volume upon this divine joy and peace, all the natural men in the world would not understand it, because it is the peace of God that passeth all understanding, i.e., the understanding of men destitute of grace, for such meddle not with the joys of believers; they have no notion thereof, and can form no just ideas concerning it. Tell them of it, and they think it is a whim, and the product of a brain sick imagination, and make it the matter of their contempt; they treat both it and its subjects reproachfully, whilst they rejoice in that which will prove their everlasting sorrow. For, give me leave to say, there is a sting in the tail of all the joys of this life, which at present, the cunning serpent hides; yet, at length, they will put forth their tail, and sting with everlasting pain, when the joys of the righteous are grown to full perfection and glory.

There are, we grant, some troubles and sorrows that attend the people of God, and their joys are mixed with some embittering dispensations; yet, I must beg leave to observe, that the nature of their joys, whilst in this world, are such, that their life is far more delightful than that of the wicked, for wisdom's ways "are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Prov.3:17. They can with

delight and joy use the creaturely blessings of this life, for their holy religion does not prohibit the use of them. "Behold that which I have seen; it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him, for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart." Eccl.5:18-20. He can eat his bread with joy, and drink his wine with a merry heart, because he knows that he is accepted of the Lord, and this is his comfort, that no trouble nor sorrow can follow the lawful use of those earthly blessings the Lord bestows, with the delights and pleasures thereof; so that religion is not that dull, melancholy, heavy and lumpish life that many imagine, from the instigation of the devil, and the surly carriages and hypocritical grimaces of many professors. It is the incumbent duty of believers by a cheerful deportment to recommend the true religion of Christ to the world. For my own part, I verily believe, that there is very little real religion under so many sour aspects; and, if there be any, I am sure that such make religion appear in a very unpleasant form, for they dress it up in frightful garments, by which they bring reproach on the good ways of God, and give the world occasion to say, "see, how they whine and cant." Cannot our pure religion, and undefiled, be attended with gestures

suited to a heavenly born mind, and our carriage under the profession thereof, with a pleasant aspect and a cheerful sound of voice? Certainly, a bold, heroic, and manly way of talking for Christ, and his cause, best becomes his followers. To conclude this point, it may be affirmed as a certain truth, that where there is the most true religion, there is commonly the most joy, and the greatest pleasure of life.

Objection. But perhaps there is nothing at all in religion, and these joys are only fancy, upon which are built all the hopes of the future glory. Answer. If there be nothing in religion, according to our way of thinking, we have still the advantage on our side, as we have possession of those pleasures that practical atheists are strangers to. We have the healthful use of the blessings of this life, by them often abused to the destruction of their natures; and, if there are neither future blessings nor punishments, we and they die upon a level; but, if it prove the reverse of their bold and unwarrantable assertion, what a glorious and remarkable difference will there be between us and them? And that religion will prove the contrary of their sentiments is very evident from Reason, as well of Scripture and Experience. My reason tells me, that I exist; and that I am not self-existent, because I am not independent; but I know that I am not independent, because I am mortal. I conclude then that I am an effect; and when I have, as far as it is possible for my finite mind, inquired into the various causes of my being, I am obliged to resolve all into a first cause; and then, as a man, I

must infer that the first cause must be God, the cause of all causes, and as such, my Creator. Now, I cannot conceive, that this Being, who is infinitely wise, should make me, and endow me with such noble faculties, as he hath done, with no other intention than for me to act a brutal, and at best, but a sinful part, whilst here upon the stage of time, and then annihilate me, or, at least, strike me into senseless atoms, at the distillation of my body.

Now, whether these ends, in the creation of the human race, become the wisest and the best of Beings, I will leave to the wisest of men to determine. If I may be allowed to offer my sentiments upon so weighty a point, I humbly conceive, that the great God had an end more great and glorious, which was certainly the honour of Himself. Doubtless, God made his creatures for his own honour, for he could do nothing to his own dishonour; but the dissolution of these beings, which he made for his honour, dissolves his honour also. The annihilation or striking into senseless atoms, of beings that existed for the display of his declarative glory, strikes all the displays of that glory dead; so that, upon the whole I am obliged to think, that, as God's manifested glory will be eternal, the subjects unto whom, or upon whom it is to be manifested, must be eternal too; and therefore rewards and punishments are before us to eternal ages to declare the glory of the mercy and truth, love and justice, of the Eternal First Cause. Hence it appears that religion is not a mere fancy, because it hath the first cause of all things for its foundation, and the

everlasting objects of the heavenly world for its enjoyment, where it shall show forth the glory of him who made all things for himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. Prov.16:4. Thus we see that the religious enjoyments of the people of God are celestial and divine, and far more glorious than the joys of wicked men, which end in eternal damnation, but theirs in eternal and boundless pleasures.

But another effect of this divine conquest is repentance. Repentance is a grace wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost, whereby the believing sinner is enabled to turn from sin to God with all his heart, truly hating his sin and himself for it; and wishing in his very soul, that he had never done amiss. Repentance is a doctrine at this day very much insisted on, but very little understood by the men who make the loudest proclamations of it, for they mistake the causes of it, and extract it from the fountain of legal apprehensions, such as the wrath of God, fears of hell, and eternal condemnation; or else state it as a condition of salvation, and so put it upon the power of the creature to perform. Sure I am that such repentance as this is, though attended with very great grief and sorrow for sin, is a repentance to be repented of; for it may be found in the breasts of wicked men, yea reprobates, that shall never come to everlasting glory, such were Cain, Ahab and Judas. But all the moans and cries that flow from the fear of wrath and hell are like Esau's loud cry, when he lifted up his voice and wept; or as the prophet Hosea calls it, "they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they

howled upon their beds, they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me.” Hos.7:14. The gracious Lord grant that I may never be left to think my state good upon such a legal repentance that those have had who are gone to hell; but that I may more and more by daily communications of love, experience the repentance to life, never to be repented of, which the Redeemer is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give unto his chosen Israel, who are faithful Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. This is an evangelical repentance, flowing from divine grace in the heart, whereby from clear views of my justification, pardon and salvation, I am melted down at Christ’s feet with a holy mixture of delight and self-abhorrence; delight in Christ, the object of my salvation, and abhorrence of myself and doings. Oh, when I see my Lord and Saviour in his dying gore upon Mount Calvary, bearing the wrath due to sin, yea, my sin, it makes me to admire matchless and discriminating grace! I cry out in my repenting frame, “dearest Lord Jesus Christ, why for me, for me, who am one of the vilest and worst of sinners, having sinned with a very high hand, and have maintained the weapons of my hostility according to the uttermost of my rebellion against thee. Oh, eternal grace and boundless love, who can tell its height or depth? Oh, wretch that I am, that I should sin against so much love and goodness, against that God, and that Saviour, who hath always loved me, and ever done me good! Oh, that I had never sinned as I have done, and that I could love my God more, and serve him better, who

hath loved me, and saved me from all that could hurt me, as Sin, Satan, and the World, and will bring me at last to his Eternal Kingdom and Glory! Oh, that I was fixed in that state, where I should never offend, nor make work for repentance forever! My soul longs for such a presence of the living God."

This is repentance unto life, which was promised in Zechariah 12:10, "and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." From hence it is obvious that there must be the truth of grace by the Spirit, before there can be the truth of repentance. The soul must be enlightened, before it can see Jesus Christ as a sacrifice; and it must see Christ, as a sacrifice, before it can mourn. Thus, it is evident, that the grace of repentance is the effect of faith, and the result of that conquest which the Redeemer hath made by the Spirit upon the soul in regeneration or the implantation of the new creature.

Another consequence of this holy conquest of grace is pleasure and delight in divine worship. All the parts of instituted worship drop fatness into the soul who is born from above, and fill him with delight and gladness. In singing the praises of God, he is elevated and raised to the highest pitch of pleasure that he is capable of on this side of the grave; he is filled with as much joy as he can hold, which makes

him earnestly long to be with his dear Redeemer, and with the spirits of just men made personally perfect, where his felicities will be always the same, and he prays for eagles wings to soar aloft into the blessed regions of Immanuel's Land. The soul in this heavenly rapture is like Paul, who could not tell whether he was in or out of the body; for sure am I that believers at these seasons can hardly tell where they are.

In prayer to God, for with what earnestness and holy warmth can the soul pour itself out before the Lord? Then it is that its pleasures are great. Oh, how doth the heart swell with love, and to what a height will the flowing tide of the affections arise, insomuch that the strong banks of our flesh cannot restrain its impetuous floods that have their rise and spring from the Fountain of Divine Love, but will force a passage through the dribbling sluices of our eyes. Oh desirable frame! These are golden seasons which are seldom known.

What hath been said of these may be affirmed of all the other parts of divine worship, from our own blessed experience; so that we are assured, that the worship of God in which we are engaged, is of Divine Institution, for we conclude that the Holy Ghost will not give testimony to false and anti-Christian worship, because false and anti-Christian worship is a lie, and hath not God for its Author. Our sealing evidences then of God's love unto us, and of our interest in Christ, in our attendance upon the worship which we practice, is an argument that our worship is of Divine Institution.

Objection. This is the plea of all sorts of heretics, therefore there is no force in the argument, and it is nothing else but an enthusiastical cheat. Answer. The objection is not true, for there are various denominations of professors who pretend to none of these things; namely, Arminians, Pelagians, and Neonomians, for these deny the doctrines of eternal love, assurance of an interest in Christ, and the irresistible working of the Spirit of God upon the heart of an elect vessel, to seal to him the certainty of his glory and salvation.

But whatever may be the plea of heretics, it doth not affect the argument, for we are sure it is the real work of the Holy Ghost, and not whim and imagination, unless whim, fancy and imagination can bring a soul to hate whatever is dear to flesh and blood when set in competition with the Redeemer, to love him above all things, and to live above the world, with a humble dependence upon him and his all sufficient righteousness, with a will resigned to the will of the Lord; and this too, when all sensible enjoyments are fled, the elevation over, and the soul is left to sit in a low place; even then it lives on high, on God's faithfulness in the Everlasting Covenant, and is preserved in its Christian Course with courage and confidence to the end. Now, if whim and fancy can affect all these supernatural things, I am constrained to assert, let men say what they will, they are divine and heavenly, and are capable of affecting as much as the gospel of Jesus Christ, mine enemies themselves being judges.

I query whether the Gospel of the Redeemer as it is the glad tidings of salvation ever did more in the hand of the Spirit in bringing souls to everlasting happiness than what our fancy and whims have done as our antagonists are pleased to call them. For instance, did it ever do more than enable its followers to hate everything dear to flesh and blood, when set in competition with Christ and Heaven, to love him more than all things, and to live above the world with a dependence on his Righteousness and a resignation to the Divine Will, let the calls of Providence be what they will. And that these things have a residence within us, we have many living witnesses to prove, and many also who are gone to glory in chariots of fire, i.e., persecution by the rack, the gibbet and the stake, in several or most parts of Europe, especially in these kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland. How many in England have died for the things now under vindication? It is very easy to prove that the martyrs in the days of Queen Mary died for these truths, for they died for non-submission to the Great Whore, who would have abolished them; and, since their time, many more, who for the sake of these whims, loved not their lives unto the death. From the whole then it appears that there is no force in the objection; and, that our way of worship is a pure institution of God, though called heresy. The Lord grant that I may be always enabled after the manner which the world calls heresy to worship the God of my fathers, since this worship is attended with such real and lasting pleasures.

Another effect of this Divine Conquest is a full assurance of the love of God in Christ. This, among many other glorious doctrines of grace is treated with the utmost contempt and ridicule; and they who plead for it, and glory in it, are judged as persons guilty of the vilest presumption; but these things, through grace, they do not regard, being resolved to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of their salvation; and that God whom they know hath saved them, and will bring them to his eternal kingdom and glory, and thus they make their boast in the Lord, as their own God and Father. Here I shall take the liberty to say that without such an assurance, all religion is but an uncertain thing to the soul, and all the duties thereof must be a heavy and troublesome task. It is certainly true, that all delight in divine worship, and secret triumphs in the God and Rock of our Salvation, arise from no other spring, than a sense of an interest in his divine love; and, where this is wanting, all delight and pleasure in religion are wanting also. Assurance is that infallible certainty which an elect soul hath by faith of her own salvation, and of the promise of grace, that is true, and belongs to herself. The Papists are enemies to this assurance; they grant a probable and conjectural, but deny an infallible insurance, because man's will {say they} is mutable; whereas our assurance depends upon the unchangeable will of God. Full assurance is a certain strong persuasion of our salvation in Christ. That this grace of assurance is to be enjoyed in this life is very evident from the Scriptures of truth. "In whom we have

boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." Eph.3:12. "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col.2:2-3. Here the apostle speaks of a full assurance of understanding, from whence it appears, that it is possible for a man to come to such knowledge and acquaintance with the Mysteries of the Grace of the Father, and of Christ, as to have comfort and joy in his soul, which arise only from clear conceptions of an interest in that grace, and being firmly persuaded of an enjoyment of the consequences thereof forever. The apostle, in Hebrews 10:22, saith, "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," Heb.10:22, as if he had said, let us, as freed from guilt and fear, by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, and the sanctifying and cleansing virtue of his grace, make our solemn approaches to God in full assurance of faith, that he is our God, and will be forever and ever in the Person of our Great and Exalted Saviour, whatever troubles befall us, whilst on this side of the grave; and that Jesus Christ will be our Saviour and Redeemer, and will infallibly bring us to glory and honour through a world of sin and trials, wants and temptations, to a world of endless and perfect pleasure, and that the Holy Ghost will never quit his habitation in our souls, but

will perfect that which concerns us, and carry on the work of grace with power in our hearts, until it come to a perfection in Christ; and of these things we may be very certain, according to the apostle, "being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil.1:6. These things are the foundation of the saints assurance, and of all their holy boasting in the Lord, whilst in their Christian pilgrimage through a strange land; they know that the divine love is immutable, and admits of no alteration, but is firmer than the pillars of heaven and earth. It is this that makes them to ride upon their high places with divine songs in their mouths, uttering forth the delight and satisfaction which they enjoy in the firm persuasion of their being the objects of eternal love. Oh, how have such marched on with undaunted courage and unshaken confidence! Observe their language, "for I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:25-27. Blessed assurance! Heroic and holy boldness in Christ! Happy Job, though thou hast nothing, though thou art stripped of all thy worldly delights, and yet thou possesses all things! This is such a paradox that none but gracious souls can account for or understand. How sweetly doth the psalmist express himself upon this point. Oh, what heavenly and

divine language flows from his enlarged and exalted soul, "as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." Psal.17:15. Here is indeed a glorious assurance, I will behold thy face. He knew that he had an interest in Christ's righteousness, and was certain, that in it he should see God's face with joy and peace. He was also persuaded that all his present remainders of corruption should be done away from his body, as well as his soul, in the blessed morning of the resurrection. "I shall awake with thy likeness." In conformity to thy image, I shall be like thee, and see thee as thou art, and that for myself, Oh Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer! This is that which will give me everlasting satisfaction. These things are uttered by the psalmist in the most positive terms. The apostle Paul also is very express upon this point, for, he saith, "I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." II Tim.1:12. And again, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." II Tim.4:7-8. Here we see full satisfaction of soul, without the least degree of doubting; so that, from the whole of what hath been said, it manifestly appears that assurance is a truth of Christ and the everlasting Gospel; and there are some, who

through grace know, what it is to be assured of the love and favour of God through Christ, in this age, and can sing upon the top of the Rock of Ages, their Redeemer. They can tell what it is to sing the Lord's song in a strange land; ay, and what it is that inspires them to it. Oh, it is the breakings forth of love to them; the streams of the celestial paradise that sweetly glide into their souls, and raise them up to such a pitch of assurance, that, if it was the will of heaven, they would immediately be dissolved into their Redeemer's arms, crying out with the apostle Paul, "I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." Such souls often celebrate their Father's praises for his ineffable favors and grace, and it is their duty so to do.

But none can bless God for his grace and love aright who are not assured of their interest in them; for how can they bless God for that which they do not know they have any part or lot in? From whence it follows that the doctrine and grace of assurance is a truth of God, and absolutely necessary to the right, or, at least, the comfortable performance of religious duties, and is a consequence of heart conquering grace!

Oh thrice happy is the man who hath a well-grounded assurance, that his joys will be lasting, when the conceited pleasures of carnal confidence shall vanish into smoke and disappear forever!

Carnal confidence or presumption and a well-grounded assurance greatly differ, both in their causes and effects. The causes of carnal confidence are ignorance of God, of ourselves, of the divine

Law, or of Christ, as a Head of influence, or else an unsanctified knowledge of the truths of the Gospel.

Carnal confidence flows from ignorance of God, and the perfections of his Essence, for the presumptuous heap up strange and false imaginations of him, conceiving him to be what he is not, and fancying him to be like themselves. It would be endless for me to recite all the conceptions that a natural man hath of God; but, if we only take particular notice of the notions they entertain of God's Justice and Holiness, we may from thence conclude, what his ideas are of all the other Divine Perfections. A man of this stamp looks on God's justice with a very unjust eye; for he imagines it to be what it is not; he thinks, at least it may be dispensed with, and that his own tears and sorrow for sin, with a few cold prayers, will satisfy it; and from these and similar considerations the man grows presumptuous, and extremely confident of his own salvation. Oh, saith he, "I have prayed, I have repented, I have fulfilled all my duty, and I doubt not but God is very well pleased with me. I have nothing to fear for heaven and happiness will be my reward. This is what I know to be the common language of our age, but it is presumption, because this hope of glory is founded upon the dishonour of God; and the conceptions such persons form of his Holiness are as bad as those they have of his Justice; for, when they commit sin, they do not apprehend it to be so vile, as some represent it; and, if their sins are not too gross, they call them by the fine name of infirmities, and take very little cognizance of

them. They do not behold the evil of their nature, and perceive that every sin, though ever so minute, as it flows from their corrupted mass, carries in it a contrariety to the holiness of God; nor do they grieve in secret on that account. They do not abhor themselves before the Lord, but are carnally confident of the goodness of their state, and all because they are ignorant of the holiness of their Creator. From the whole it is evident, that ignorance of God is the cause of carnal confidence.

Another cause is sheer ignorance of themselves; they do not know that they have lost all power and strength to do good; nay, their very will to good in regards to any spiritual matter. They imagine, that they have an innate power, and can secure their own salvation; and so they lift up themselves above all fears of miscarrying.

Another cause is presumption or carnal confidence, which is ignorance of the Law of God. They fancy that it is not so pure and extensive as some have affirmed it to be, and, if upon examination, they find that it is, then they deny it to be an eternal rule, and throw it away, introducing into its room one that will bow to their own vile affections.

Another cause of this confidence or presumption is ignorance of Christ, as a Head of Influence. They know not what the communication of Grace from a Redeemer means, being entirely destitute thereof; for, if they had been made partakers of Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost, he would have led them to Christ's Blood and

Righteousness, as the foundation of their confidence.

Carnal confidence arises from an unsanctified knowledge of Gospel Truths. There are many in this professing age who have clear heads and rotten hearts; heads full of the doctrines of grace, but hearts empty of the grace of those doctrines. They hold the truth, but it is in unrighteousness; they think, because they know more than the rest of their neighbors, that they are the best saints; nay, they will treat others with contempt who cannot be so carnally confident as themselves; they are ever sure of glory, and judge it inconsistent with the truth of grace once to question it. Oh, how they talk of election, eternal love, justification in salvation and everlasting glory above, whilst at the same time they do not lay the reins on the necks of their own lusts! Yet their assurance remains unshaken. Assurance, did I say? I retract it, as an error, for it is only vile presumption because grace from our Head of Influence leads and directs us into different paths. I would not be thought here to condemn a holy triumphing in the glorious doctrines just mentioned, provided through the operations of love and grace they are so sanctified as to make me love my Saviour, and live to his Glory, and thus it becomes me to make my boast and triumph in them. What I condemn is only the abuse of them in turning them into lasciviousness and wantonness, which men void of grace generally do, apprehending that a bare persuasion of the truth of these doctrines is a sufficient proof of their being elected, justified and

saved, without the participation of grace from Christ. I know that there are some who will deny it and say that they do not believe but that they must have grace from Christ the Redeemer. But alas, this is no more than a say-so, for it is manifest to the impartial observer that they never had any grace. If they have anything which they call grace, it leaves them in sin and bondage to their own lusts, which renders Jesus Christ a minister of sin; but this hath been already fully handled. Thus much for the causes of presumption; and now, the causes of a well-grounded assurance are.

First, a due conviction of sin, and a thorough sense of its deserved misery. Secondly, a clear sight of pardon and forgiveness from the Redeemer, by the application of his blood. Thirdly, an unshaken faith in the blessings and promises of the Everlasting Covenant. Fourthly, a firm persuasion of the love of God in Christ to the heirs of the promise. Fifthly, a consistent Gospel Conversation in Christ, for he that knows himself to be saved is likewise sensible that such conceptions do not arise out of the sink of sin and abomination, but from a well-ordered conversation, by the Grace and Spirit of God upon the heart. I do not say that a well-ordered conversation is the procuring cause of my well-grounded assurance. It is only an indispensable and essential action without which, I cannot arrive at the comfortable assurance of my interest in God's salvation; for the promise of the revelation of an interest in God's salvation is made to such as the psalmist describes, "whoso offereth praise glorifieth

me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." Psal.50:23. The person speaking in this text is the Mediator, for "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," me, the Mediator, and he will show God's salvation to that man whose conversation is well ordered by his own gracious influences. Not that he shall be saved or arrive to the pleasures of his salvation, for his regular or spiritual life; no, it is only the path in which he shall advance to a fuller assurance of glory. It may be observed here, that it is the work of the Mediator to reveal the knowledge of salvation unto his people; and that he is fully qualified for such a work, for he knows the secrets of heaven, and as the Prophet of his Church, infallibly discovers them to the hearts of his chosen; and he hath given us his never failing word for it, "I will show the salvation of God." It also plainly appears that the causes or forerunners of a well-grounded assurance and of a carnal confidence are very different, and that they likewise differ in their effects, for the consequences of presumption are.

First, indulgence of sin and hardness therein. The presumptuous do not understand the meaning of sorrow for sin; nay, they judge it to be inconsistent with true assurance.

Secondly, a casting off the true worship of God and speaking contemptuously of it. They can restrain prayer, treat the ordinances of the Redeemer as beggarly things, and live in open rebellion against him, as King of Zion, and in a continual contempt of his laws, as if the LORD had

never set him, as King, upon his holy hill, but the effects of a well-grounded assurance are the reverse of these.

Where there is this assurance, there will be a living opposition made to sin; there will not be the least indulgence of it, but rather strong desires to be out of the body of sin forever. Pleasure in sin is foreign to such a soul, and it cannot indulge any sin, though never so desirable to its flesh; for the believer, who is assured of salvation by grace, can never be hardened in his sin; his conscience is ever tender about it, and he knows what it is to mourn over it, with vehement pantings after the state of spotless purity.

A great delight in the worship of God is another evidence. All worship, as we have already observed antecedent to assurance is a heavy task, which appears from the psalmist's language, "why dost thou cast me off? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? O send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Psal.43:2-3. And the sequel shows what would be the immediate effects of this discovery of Christ to the soul, who is God's light and truth; it would be joy and pleasure in those things relating to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy; yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God." Psal.43:4. Such discoveries fill the souls of believers with praises, so that they cannot restrain prayer, but must go to God with all their suits, accounting it an

unspeakable blessing that they have a God to apply to in secret; and all the ordinances of the Redeemer are, as so many conduit pipes to convey to them the blessings and comforts of eternal love. They love the Redeemer, as their King, and, as Zion's children they are joyful in him, and live above a vain and uneasy world in true rest and peace, and in an assurance of a better, when time shall be no more.

Lastly, another consequence of the Grace of God in this Almighty Conquest is everlasting glory with the Redeemer in the upper world. In the examination of this point I shall as divinely assisted show, what discoveries God hath been pleased to make of this state unto us, that we may in a small measure understand the nature thereof; the excellency of this glory; offer some reasons why all God's children shall safely arrive at it; and characterize the persons that shall be brought to this heavenly state.

The discoveries that God hath made of this blessed state to us in this valley of darkness are but obscure, not that they are so in themselves, for this obscurity arises from the darkness of our understanding, and our incapacity to comprehend them; yet divine wisdom hath not entirely left us destitute of the knowledge of this state. We must confess that we know but very little of it, for it hath not fully entered into the heart of man to conceive, what it is; which led Augustine to say, that it could not be conceived, much less expressed; but yet, where glory is begun, we may from a low degree of knowledge say something, though very imperfectly,

concerning it, which is evident from God's word. "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." I Cor.2:9-10. The glory of this blessed state transcends all the glory of the other parts of the creation, for it is far more glorious than all the glory of thrones, crowns, palaces and kingdoms. If Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like a lily, Luke 12:27, what then is all the glory of this world to the glories of that perfect state, where all the inhabitants are clad with shining robes, with the garment of salvation, the righteousness of their Redeemer, and upon whose heads are fixed immortal crowns. The glory of this heavenly world will extinguish the glory of all created excellencies forever, for in this state the inhabitants shall have no need of the sun, or moon, or stars to shine upon them, for the glory of God and the Lamb are the light thereof, in which all saved ones shall walk. Now, if this be true of a state before the ultimate glory, it is much more true of the ultimate glory itself, if we allow one dispensation to be a preface to another, which might be easily proved, and I shall towards the conclusion of this work, hint briefly at it.

Well doubtless, all perfections will meet in this state of ultimate glory, for in the highest heavens all light and glory will together dwell in one body, and with the brightest splendor shine forth from the glorified body of the Redeemer, {who hath all

communicable light in himself,} into and upon the saints, those many thousands of glorified bodies; and they shall derive such a brightness and luster from this world of divine light, that they shall shine as the sun forever, in full enjoyment of the best company. There they shall have society with the whole of Christ's mystical body, the universal church, and shall behold all believers that ever they knew here below; they shall see all their Christian acquaintances, and all their brethren and sisters in Christ, with their godly ministers and pastors, and will be a crown and joy to one another. But this is not all; for they shall see and know them they never saw before, for they shall there have fellowship with the patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, and all who have died in the Lord; yea, and all the holy angels, those bright sons of the morning, those fiery seraphs, shall be their pleasant companions, and they shall enjoy an ineffable communion with them. Nay, here they shall enjoy the blessed Trinity in the Man Christ Jesus; for I humbly conceive, that in Christ's glorified humanity God will be only seen and known in that state, though in a manner beyond all our present most raised and spiritual apprehensions. The presence and company of the Redeemer, in our nature, one with God in that state, will render it very dear and precious to us. Oh, if a sight of the Redeemer is so delightful to us, now in a state of sin and trial, what will it be when we shall behold him in this state of sinless glory, where he shall be seen without the least interruption forever? Oh, what shall I say? If a company of a few gracious

souls here below is so sweet, how ravishing will all this heavenly company be to our souls?

Objection. It is impossible for us to know one another in that state of glory because all past things shall be forgotten forever.

My answer to this objection shall be in the words of a celebrated author, {Charles Drelincourt, "CHRISTIANS DEFENSE AGAINST THE FEARS OF DEATH," 1651,} who according to my judgment hath done well upon this point. His words are these, "I may affirm for an infallible truth, that the glory of heaven, as well as grace, shall bring nature to perfection, but shall not destroy it. It shall add to it other excellencies, but shall not take away those that it hath already; it shall not abolish any of the faculties, but it shall beautify and enrich them with new ornaments; and consequently, it shall not take away our memory, which is one of the rarest gifts and abilities of a reasonable soul." I know that it hath been queried, whether the memory is seated in the rational faculties or not? I will not here enter into any debate about it, but this I am sure of, that my knowledge of persons and things, as it is superior to that of brutes, must have a place in my reasonable soul; and that my knowledge is superior to that of beasts is evident. For instance, I know, that such a cause will produce such effects; and I know that such effects could not be produced but by such and such causes. I also know that from such particular premises I may justly draw certain conclusions. Now, it must be granted, that my knowledge is more extensive and excellent than that of the brute world;

and if so, then of course, my knowledge hath a place in my reasonable soul, which makes me to differ from the brutal part of the creation.

Now, this our knowledge will be perfected in glory, or it will not. If not, then I shall not be perfect, which cannot be admitted, because it is allowed by all Christian authors of any note, that heaven is a perfect state, and that all its inhabitants are perfect. If then, the soul is perfect in that blissful state, it necessarily follows that her knowledge must be perfect, and if her knowledge is perfect then we shall know one another; and many passages of Scripture seem to speak out this matter in hand. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Rev.6:9-10. Which implies, that they knew that they were cruelly murdered, for they could tell what they suffered in their preexistence state. The parable of the rich man and the beggar, Christ's transfiguration, and other places and circumstances in sacred story, sufficiently prove the truth of the point under consideration. It is then, matter of joy unto us, that we shall not be in the company of strangers, or of such as we do not know; but we shall be fully acquainted with our companions, and they with us; and we shall mutually love one another with a love of complacency forever. We shall go forth towards one another with as much strength and

speed as the wings of our souls can carry us; for all our rational faculties, in this state, shall be perfected and our understanding will be complete in the knowledge of God and all good. Here we know but little, but there we shall know all that we are capable of knowing. We shall know all the secrets of nature in the wonders of creation, and become perfect philosophers; for as the knowledge of the creature was lost by Adam's fall from his paradisaical state, it shall be regained upon our entrance into the celestial paradise, with the greatest advantage. We shall also know the mysteries of religion, and take in all the wonders of ancient grace, in the design and settlement of our glory and salvation; the love that carried it on, and fully accomplished it, and the power that applied it and made us meet for glory and blessedness. Here we shall know our God to our endless consolation; and our wills shall be perfect, because they shall be poured out into the will of God, will all good freely, and forever draw towards the services and pleasures of the celestial world, not in the least biased to sin or anything short of the chiefest good. Here our wills are often rebellious, but there they have an unalterable submission to the will of God. Here they are often bent towards the creature, and draw strongly to temporary enjoyments; but in that world to none but God in Christ, and Christ in God, and the endless felicities of a peaceful state; and it is impossible to be otherwise, because the understanding perfectly knows where all good and happiness are, which leads the will into them, where it dwells steady and

unshaken. Here our affections shall be wholly employed about God, moving continually towards him, and shall rest forever in him; for our judgment shall be without error, and our conscience without guilt, never more charging sin upon us to all eternity.

Our bodies shall also be perfect as the apostle saith, "so also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption, it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." I Cor.15:42-43. It cannot die, for it shall be freed from all possibility of mortality and suffering, it shall there dwell with God to endless ages in the circle of love, full of beauty and brightness; though it be here attended with weakness, pains and sometimes deformities; yet there it shall have the beauty, strength and glory of the Redeemer's glorified body put upon it, as the apostle affirms, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil.3:21. It shall be full of life and spiritual activity, spiritual qualities and agility, and shall be so spontaneous in the service of God as to be no clog to the soul. Thus, soul and body shall be perfect in the state of ultimate glory, where both shall be employed in the noblest and most glorious work, for they shall be continually exercised in the highest services, singing forth the wonders of love and grace.

The wonders of God's ancient love in election, in higher and more exalted strains than they are

capable of doing, in and under all their present peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Oh, in what inconceivable language will glory and honour be eternally given to our God, for his everlasting love, in ordaining Christ the Lamb who was slain for us, in whom we were chosen by an act of divine sovereignty before the foundation of the world; and who, by the same act of rich love and grace was pleased to impute the righteousness of the Redeemer to us, as our own, that we might be justified thereby, and so have a right to this world of glory. Oh wondrous grace! That we should be the objects of his special love, who in our pure mass were no more deserving than others, and in our corrupted mass as hell deserving as any; that such as we should be appointed by our God to obtain this salvation by a Redeemer. Oh glory, honour and renown to his great name! Oh hallelujah, hallelujah to him forever and ever! Amen.

In this state shall be celebrated in more nobler strains than at present we are capable of, the praises of the Redeemer, God-Man, whose love to us was as early as the Father's, as he is the Infinite and Eternal Jehovah. He was pleased to take, as the Second Person in God, our nature into a personal union with his own infinite person, in order to be a fit Mediator and Saviour, and did in the fullness of time, in our nature, fulfill all the designs of infinite wisdom, respecting the glory of God and our salvation. This will raise our thoughts of the blessed Redeemer very high, and open our mouths wide in his praises; for unto him, the glorious Jehovah, one with our nature, shall we sing praises; our songs will

be unto him, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Glory and dominion forever and ever the general congregations of saints shall sing, saying, "thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof," i.e., to show unto us the secret mysteries of the celestial state, and to discover to us the glories that are before us, "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Thy right to unfold unto us the beauties and essential pleasures of this world is founded on thy purchase, "thou art worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, blessing, honour and glory, O, Lamb of God forever and ever. Oh, salvation be unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb!" Oh, millions of endless blessings be to our lovely Redeemer, who hath raised us from the lowest hell, and brought us to an endless and delightful inheritance! Oh, how will heaven ring with the triumphs of his praise! Oh, my thoughts fail me, my apprehensions are too scanty to conceive the thousandth part of that honour which will be given to the Redeemer in everlasting glory! I know it will be great, by what souls are enabled to do, when under the regaling breezes of the Holy Spirit, for they go forth to him in high strains of praise; and yet they think but meanly of them, and long to join the heavenly choir where they shall do it better. As for the present praises and thanksgivings to the Lord Jesus Christ, they have already been insisted on, under the fourth consequence.

I apprehend that Christ will be the object of our worship in the heavenly world as he is the

Infinite and Eternal God; for, as such, he effected our salvation, in and by our nature; and, therefore, in our nature we shall adore him forever and ever. Amen.

Though the Holy Spirit at present is the object of our adoration and praise, as hath been shown in the aforesaid consequence; yet, in the celestial state, he shall be praised in a more glorious manner; for he shall be magnified for all his love to the Redeemer's mystical body. He is the Almighty Lord, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; he is our Sanctifier and Guide to the eternal world, and he it is that capacitates us to grasp those transforming truths of the Gospel that renders us capable of following on to know, obey, and love the Lord; for by nature we are all as an unclean thing, and as such, unfit for heaven. It is he who takes us into his own hand by the infusion of grace, melts us down into a Gospel disposition, and makes us to see sin in its own colors. He leads us to Christ to have all done away; and he applies Christ's blood to our consciences, for our peace and joy in believing. He strengthens our graces, enables us to hold out, and is often pleased to give us a pleasant passage into the other world. Now, if we had been entirely destitute of these graces, we must of been lost forever. Oh blessed be his glorious name, for he hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light! These things, by a few of the saints, are thought upon at present with pleasure as hath been observed; for they can bless and adore the Holy Spirit with joy; but, when they are carried

away into glory, they shall do it after a better manner, for there they shall, without any interruption by reason of sin and darkness, sing forth his glory, and triumph in his all-powerful grace, which hath so effectually brought them to the state of endless bliss. There they shall break forth in high acclamations to him, crying, "grace, grace, oh irresistible grace, towards us and upon us, who deserved less than the least of all his mercies, that we should be the objects of thy love, and the subjects of thy grace, who in ourselves are most vile and hell deserving; that we should be taken out of the stinking mire of our corruptions by thy kind hand, and lifted up to this state of eternal glory and purity! Oh, blessed, blessed be thy glorious name, thou, by thy Almighty power hast built us up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, our Redeemer himself being the chief corner stone; thou hast made us the habitation of God, we are thy building; thou hast built us a spiritual temple, and thou shalt have the everlasting glory thereof. Amen and Amen." But I proceed to show.

The excellency of this glory. We shall enjoy the everlasting presence of God; we shall be ever with the Lord in the beautiful vision of our God, I Thes.4:17, as far as our natures are capable of; which made one to say, "oh what a blessed sight will this be to see God in us, ourselves in God, and God in himself."

We shall dwell in a near union and communion to, and with our God. Our union will be very near, and our communion more immediate than it can be

at present; for it will be without the use of any ordinances, in the perfection of holiness, both in nature and life, attended with full joys and pleasures; we shall rest forever in the bosom of infinite love with crowns on our heads, palms in our hands, and songs in our mouths. Alas! What are the glories of time and sense to these enjoyments? They are temporary, but these are eternal, they have stings in all their tails, but these are ever pleasant, and can never annoy or bring the least sense of pain or uneasiness to their participants; for their essence, being and mode are without tails, i.e., they have no end. But perhaps, some poor precious soul, that is beloved of God, may ask, what grounds may be gathered from God's Word that they shall enjoy this state, because they are under many doubts about it?

Answer. The promise of glory is sure to all the seed of Christ; and, though we believe not, he continues faithful, and cannot deny himself; for faithful is he that hath promised. Be not therefore cast down for your glory is certain, as will appear from sundry reasons which we come to offer in the third place.

Some reasons why all God's children shall safely arrive at this glory. The glory of the saints is sure because God hath from the foundation of the world prepared it for them, as is manifest from that blessed decisive sentence of the Redeemer unto his saints, at the great audit, "then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you

from the foundation of the world." Matt.25:34. It is here that we see very evidently that God hath prepared for them a city; yea, a city that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God, the foundations of which are of eternal duration. Now, if God hath prepared for his people such a city, and heavenly inheritance, they must certainly be brought to the full possession thereof; or else it will necessarily follow, that the Lord hath designed a place of felicity for persons that shall never arrive at the enjoyment thereof; which is such a reflection upon the Divine Being that the notion deserves to be treated with contempt and abhorrence, for it will unavoidably follow, that God was wanting either in his wisdom or his power; in his wisdom to purpose that which shall never be; or in his power in not effecting that which his wisdom and sovereignty contrived and appointed. But these things are repugnant to the Divine Being, for our God is a rock, and his work is perfect; he hath ordered nothing in his wisdom, but what he always effects by his power. It appears then, that all those, for whom God hath prepared his glorious kingdom, shall infallibly come to the enjoyment of it. This is a solid and comfortable ground of peace and satisfaction, concerning a right to the heavenly state.

The glory of the saints is sure because the Redeemer hath purchased that state for us, and us for that state of glory, that we might be brought to the full enjoyment thereof; and therefore, we shall infallibly come to that joy. We are bought with a price, and are purchased with the Redeemer's blood,

that we might live with him, where he is eternally, and behold his glory; and it is by the application of his blood, and the clear revelation of his death and resurrection from the dead for us, and in our stead, that we are begotten to a lively hope of this glorious, incorruptible, undefiled and never fading inheritance.

Now if Christ hath shed his precious blood to these gracious ends and purposes, we may, without the least hesitation, conclude, {if the Lord give us faith,} that not one drop of Christ's blood shall fall to the ground; for Christ did not shed his blood in vain, which he must do, if any of his purchased ones fail of glory; and, if they do fail of the heavenly state, I am sure that they must go down to hell, from whence it follows, that the price of Christ's blood is lost and perishes forever. This is so derogatory both to the honour of God's justice, and the satisfaction of the Redeemer, that all good men will abhor it, for if Jesus Christ hath paid to Divine Justice a full price for his people's redemption, then it can never comport with the Justice of God to plunge such into the bottomless pit; and he never will, for the Judge of all the earth will do right. If any, for whom Christ died, to redeem from hell, go down into that forlorn state, it is a necessary consequence that he did not pay the full debt, or the price due to Infinite Justice, which in fact is a denying him to be the Redeemer. This is treating his blood with contempt, and his righteousness as insufficient, which is putting of him to an open shame; but this none of God's children

dare to do, and for this reason Heaven is sure to all the Redeemer's seed.

The world of glory is sure because by the Holy Spirit we are fitted and prepared for it; the blessed Spirit makes us meet by forming in us principles of a spiritual life whereby we are enabled to love God, to live unto him, and long after the full and complete enjoyment of himself in a better state. Is it possible then to conceive that the Holy Spirit should create such an holy, divine and spiritual appetite, without any intention to satisfy it. Certainly not, so that we may therefore conclude that all who have experienced such divine longings, hungerings and thirstings after the complete enjoyment of God in the perfection of holiness, shall certainly be satisfied, for blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

The saints shall certainly arrive to this world of glory, because the Redeemer is gone to take possession of it in our names and nature, and is entered there with glory and majesty; and he hath told us, that he will come again, and take us to himself, that where he is there we may also be. These full and ample testimonies of the certainty of the saints enjoyments of the heavenly bliss are sufficient reasons and foundations that the inheritance is sure. "Ay, saith a poor tempted soul, I believe that the inheritance is sure to all Christ's seed; but my fears are, that I am not of that number; for it seems that I lack the evidences thereof, and that I am ready to conclude that the characters of God's people are not to be found upon

me." In order to resolve this case, I shall, as hath been proposed, characterize the persons who shall be brought to this heavenly state of bliss and glory.

They are such as are called by grace and have felt the power of Christ's love on their hearts constraining them to part with all for the sake of Christ and the Gospel, and to be found in him, and in his righteousness. This is a call to everlasting glory in the kingdom above.

They have faith of the operation of God, whereby they live on the Redeemer, his Person, Fullness, Righteousness and Love, and are often grieved, that their faith is so very weak as it is; and at the throne of grace, they cry, "Lord increase our faith; Lord we believe, help thou our unbelief," that we may glorify thee more in our Christian course.

They are obedient to the Redeemer and his Gospel; they walk before God as dear children; they submit to him as God's way of salvation; and they obey their Lord and Saviour with all their hearts, willingly following him in all the parts of instituted worship.

They have the grace of evangelical repentance bestowed upon them by their Redeemer, who is exalted to give it, as a Prince and a Saviour.

They have great love to all the saints; and that because they are saints, and have the image of their dear Redeemer stamped upon them. They love Christ in them, and esteem them as the excellent of the earth, delighting in them because they are the favorites of heaven.

They often look with a longing and loving eye, for that blessed hope and glorious appearance of that great God and their Saviour, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. How glad would they at sometimes be to see Christ by his power dissolve the fabric of this world and ascend the throne of glory to judge it. Their language is, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." These are the experiences of those who shall come to the heavenly glory and happiness of the eternal world; and, if we can but truly say, that we have been enabled, but once in our lives, to be willing to part with all for the Redeemer, and his Righteousness, and to follow him in all his ways, according to the best of our light and knowledge, having been made sorry, when we have failed and fallen short, and have longed for his coming, to put an end to all our inherent failings. If this be the case, oh, doubting believer, let thy frames be what they will, let them change and vary as the wind, yet his covenant love is ever the same, he continues faithful, and cannot deny his covenant; and he who hath begun this work will carry it on to the day of Jesus Christ. He will never take away his love; nor forever deprive thee of those gifts and graces bestowed upon thee, which he hath called thee to the enjoyment of, for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. He never will repent of what he hath done for thee in Christ, what he will do for thee through Christ, or what he hath so designed to do for thee with Christ. Oh, may the Great Almighty Lord God, Father of Mercies, and the God of all Consolation, the Spring

and Fountain of all our joy and hope, enable us to live more out of ourselves upon that Redeemer, in whose Person there are treasured up all righteousness and strength, and a fullness of all supplies for time and eternity. Thus we have gone through the blessed and delightful consequences of the conquest, which mighty grace obtains upon the hearts of the elect when they are brought to Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER 6

### ***WHAT THE PREACHING OF THIS AGE IS, AND WHAT IS THE DUTY OF GOSPEL MINISTERS.***

I am very sensible, that it will be looked upon as a piece of pride and vainglory to offer to correct the ministers of this polite, thinking and learned age. As for my correcting those gentlemen, who think themselves polite and learned, I have sufficient grounds to conclude that their pride will not suffer them to stoop to correction or instruction, though the Lord knows, that they stand in very great need of both. For my own part, I do not attempt to do either, but I hope that I may be allowed to speak my own sentiments upon this point, without being thought to set myself up for a dictator or a director. I am not so vain as to imagine myself qualified in any respects for such a work; yet it is indeed possible, that an instrument as weak as myself may offer something, which if attended to, may be a singular service to them, for out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God hath ordained strength, and hath hidden the great things of his Grace and Gospel from the wise and prudent, the polite, the thinking, and the learned in their own eyes, and hath revealed them unto babes, the little and despised ones of the world. Now, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, I am not anxiously concerned, but leave them to God, who can bring down the proudest Ahab amongst them, when he directs an arrow, taken out of the quiver of his word,

and conveyed by the bow of his divine strength, in his own secret hand, between the joints of the harness, when mounted in a chariot of iron. How easily can he enter in between all the fortifications of art and human literature, by which they are lifted up in contempt of those plain messages of Grace, which God's ministers bring to the redeemed ones, because they overthrow their avarice, pride and lordly grander.

In opening the subject matter contained in this chapter, I shall show, what are the general doctrines which are in this age preached by most of our clerics, who assume to themselves the title of ministers of Christ and the Gospel; and what those doctrines are that the ministers of the Redeemer preach, in which is the duty of all those who call themselves ministers of Christ.

To begin with the first, viz., to show the doctrines commonly preached in this age. The doctrines of the Arminians, and their friends the Pelagians, who teach universal redemption and man's free will; heresies that are so destructive to the honour of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and that tend also to destroy the souls of men; for, if the Redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ be for all men, to put them into a savable state, and the rest that remains to be done, in order to our possessing of the Salvation, is to be performed by us as fallen creatures, then we are all in a most wretched condition, because if Adam fell from his original perfect condition, how can we ever expect to stand in our lapsed state?

But the open preaching of these tenants {the false Gospel of Arminianism} hath been by many of our 'great men' exploded, who have represented them as gross and pernicious errors; who have made a thundering noise against them, and talked loudly about Free and Efficacious Grace, when all the while, in fact, this hath been nothing else but a masquerade, for they are Arminians themselves, Pelagians still, notwithstanding all they will say to the contrary. This will appear to demonstration from their general mode of preaching, especially in what they call the application of their sermons, wherein it is to be observed, that the Spirit is commonly excluded; nay, hardly so much as named; and, if he be named sometimes by them, it will not clear them of this heavy charge of Arminianism; for they exhort sinners, as such, after they have been laying down many rules to walk by, in order to secure the doctrinal privileges that they have been insisting upon, to pray for the Spirit, which supposes that they can pray without Him. Thus, they exhort men in a state of nature to do what is entirely out of their power, which to me is downright tantalizing; for it is as much as if I should offer a man my estate which is all in land, and tell him that I offer it to him freely, but he must take it and move it to another part of the country. This in fact, is to offer the man nothing at all; for it is, in reality only game and mockery. We would then conclude that our Doctors and Priests, the leaders of their several parties, are men who would not be guilty of mocking poor souls; as I'm sure that they profess to be blessed with more

holiness, and that they have a very tender regard for the good of souls, which they make a very large profession of, when they enter into their ministerial functions; I mean at the time of there being, what they call, ordained. We are then bound by their own confession to believe that they are sincere and would not be guilty of mocking souls for the world; from whence it follows, that they believe that sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, are capable to do as they direct them. Now, they prove themselves to be Arminians indeed; for listen, and you will hear presently these and such like expressions to fall from their mouths, "sinners, make your peace with God; get into Christ; receive him now today, while he is offered unto you. He is now on a Throne of Grace, and waiting to be gracious. Oh, do not slip this opportunity, this season and day of grace, which is now put into your hands, for you may never have another! Oh, what would the damned in hell give for another season of grace! How do they rend and tear to think that they have slipped their season, and the day of their visitation?" And at this rate they go; adding motives and directions on how to get their interest in Christ secured, and to make a right improvement of what they call a day of grace.

Now, all wise men shall be judges, if this be not Arminianism and Pelagianism, for this universal way of offering Christ, Grace and Salvation to sinners must be founded upon universal redemption, and a sufficient power in all to receive them, and make them effectual to eternal life. It is then very evident, that these gentlemen are Arminians and

Pelagians, notwithstanding all they profess to the contrary; and I will take the liberty to affirm, that all such preaching gives the lie to the Doctrines of Election, Particular Redemption and Efficacious Grace, for to me it is impossible to reconcile a Universal Offer of Christ and Grace with Particular Election and Salvation!

If there be an universal offer of Christ and Salvation made to sinners in the Scriptures, then God hath designed Christ, Grace, and Salvation for all; and if so, where is Election? If you say, God hath not designed Salvation for all, according to the doctrine of Election, then you are blasphemers of God in charging him with deceit and mockery, whom you represent as offering Salvation to all, although he never intended it, but for a few in comparison of the world. My prayer to God for you is that he will be pleased to enable you rightly to look into these things, and the end of them, which will not be peace to your own souls, nor the souls of those who at present admire you. For my own part, I am at a loss to account for this your way of preaching. I am ready to conclude that you do not believe your other principles, for if you did, I think that you could not deliver things so repugnant to them. Gentlemen, suffer a word from the man whom you all despise, that never deserved the treatment he hath received from many amongst you. What I have now to say is by way of query, do you imagine that by your preaching of offers that you shall convert more than the elect of God; or do you think that, if you do not preach in this manner, that any of the elect shall

miscarry, and come short of the glory prepared for them from the foundation of the world? If this be the case, read the scripture which saith, "the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his," and, if you have read it, you not believe it!

Objection. We do not preach offers of Christ and Grace from any such considerations, but from gospel rules and precedents, and to deny offers of grace is to deny the whole scheme of the Gospel. Answer. If to deny offers of Christ and Grace to sinners as dead in trespasses and sins is to deny the whole scheme of the Gospel; then, I deny it, but I deny that the scheme of the Gospel is offers of Christ and Salvation; nay, I affirm that there is not in the Gospel of Jesus Christ one offer to sinners dead in trespasses and sin, or anything like it, i.e., there are no invitations, calls, or exhortations to sinners to perform anything out of their power. Sinners, as such, are not exhorted to come to Christ, to believe in him, or to taste the delights of the heavenly world. Perhaps, by the way, I may be asked, what the Gospel is? I answer that the Gospel is glad tidings of Grace and Peace to the worst and vilest of men; it is a revelation of the love of the Blessed Trinity; but yet it contains no offers, nor is there anything in it, as was said just now, that puts men in a state of nature upon the performance of any spiritual actions, as can be very easily proved.

The text of Scripture which you cite to prove your notion of offers are many, though the word 'offer' found in none of them, but the first text that

you urge is Matthew 11:28-29, "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This text, you plead, hath in it what is equivalent to an offer, though the word be not found in it; you say, it is an invitation to sinners to come to Christ for rest and peace, &c. You might as well have quoted Job 1:1, "there was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job." This would as soon have proved that sinners dead in trespasses and sins are invited to come to Christ for rest and peace. Is this your skill in the original? What, do you not understand the letter of the text no more than you do the nature of the thing? For the letter of the text, as well as the nature of the thing, proves its fallacy; since it is plain, that the invited are such as labor and are heavy laden, and want a rest unto their souls. I do not say with a learned author, {Mr. Joseph Hussey,} that they labored under the burdens of the ceremonial law, as to make it a local coming upon the feet, although it may be a truth; but I understand it of a spiritual labor, and of being heavy laden with sin, and so it is an invitation to come to Christ spiritually, for spiritual rest, and you shall find rest to your souls. It may be now that some will be ready to say, that I have given away the argument. I say not. Yes, says my inadvertent reader, you have, in saying that the invitation in the text under consideration is to spiritual motion and action, so that sinners in the text are invited to come to Christ for rest, that is, to believe in him, which is

equivalent to an offer. I answer, in my first stating of the argument, I said that sinners as such, dead in trespasses and sins, and destitute of all true grace, for so I would be understood, were not invited nor exhorted to the performance of spiritual things. You say, that I myself, from the text under consideration have proved that to be true, which by my concessions I deny as a falsify. Now, for all this seeming triumph, the text stands as a bulwark against their Arminianism, in their offers and invitations; for it contains no invitation to dead sinners whatsoever, but only an invitation to living saints, the living in Jerusalem, who by the life of Christ in their souls have had sin made a burden unto them; unless these gentlemen, who are so fond of offers, can prove that men without the grace of God, can be weary of sin, and labor under it as an heavy burden, which they will never be able to perform; and, if they should attempt it, let them remember this from me, that they will prove one great truth to the world, that they themselves are very rank Arminians, worse than I attempt to make them out to be; and, for my own part, I am very sorry that they are so much deficient in essential Gospel Truth.

Well then, the invited are such as have the first principles of a spiritual life wrought in them, by which they are enabled to discover the burden of sin; for it is life bestowed by Christ that discovers deadness, light, darkness and tenderness of conscience, the pinching burden of sin. In nature, if you load a dead man with never so many weights,

he doth not feel them; he never cries, "take off these, for I am weary and heavy laden, and I labor very hardly under them." No, here is nothing of it, and the reason is, because the man is dead, and as such is deprived of all his senses; whereas these weights would be intolerable to a living man, who would be weary of his burden, and glad at his very heart to have it removed. Now, invite a living man to come to you with his burden, and tell him you will unload him. Oh, with what a readiness will he strive to come to be eased; he comes to you with a humble cry, believing you will be as good as your word. Thus, quickened sinners come to Christ upon Gospel Invitations in Gospel Administrations, to have the burden of sin taken off, and to find rest and peace in the Redeemer; and now that word of the Lord is made good which we find in Isaiah 27:13, "and it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem." When the silver trumpet of the Gospel is blown in the preaching of Christ, and the truths therein contained, then poor sinners who in the light of the Spirit have been made to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, come to the Lord Jesus Christ, where they find joy and peace unto their souls. From the whole then it appears, that the doctrine of offers of grace in Christ to dead sinners is not to be found in this text; and, I conclude, nowhere else in Scripture, for all the text which they bring to

vindicate this fine spun piece of Arminianism, may be rescued from the violence they suffer by the same means and methods, as Matthew 11:28-29.

As for all those texts in the book of Acts of the Apostles, where Peter and the rest of the apostles exhort their auditory to repent and believe, it is confessed that these were spiritual performances; but yet the persons exhorted were not dead sinners, but such as Grace had pricked to the heart, unless a man can be pricked to the heart for sins against Christ, which leads him for happiness and ends in everlasting life without the grace of God.

The second text you bring for offers is II Corinthians 5:20, "now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." These words I conceive contain in them no offers of grace to sinners dead in trespasses and sins, nor any exhortation to a reconciliation to God, in his way of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ; for the persons who are here spoken to were a church of Jesus Christ; such as were Saints by effectual vocation, of whom the apostle had steadfast hope that they should be made partakers of divine consolation, as appears from the first chapter of this epistle. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia," II Cor.1:1; "and our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." II Cor.1:7.

Now, that these should have offers of grace and reconciliation made unto them, who are gracious, and called into the obedience of faith, is, in my opinion, very strange, and what, for my part, I am not able to account for. Neither can I give unto another sense put upon the text, namely, that the church of Corinth was full of disorder, and had not submitted to Jesus Christ as King of Zion, and that the apostle exhorted them, as an ambassador for Christ, to be reconciled to God, i.e., to be reconciled to Christ's Kingly Government, to submit to his Laws and Ordinances, and to keep them pure, as they were delivered unto them. This sense of the words it seems to me at best but foreign, and if there be any foundation for it, which I have ground to query, because those believing Corinthians were indeed a church, and had submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ, in giving up themselves to God, and to one another in a professed subjection to Christ, which profession constituted them a church, and entitled them to that name; wherefore I conclude that the reconciliation intended in these words is not a reconciliation to Christ as God's way of salvation, as in our first conversion, nor a reconciliation to the kingly government of the Lord Jesus Christ in his church. I therefore apprehend that when the apostle in these words saith, "be ye reconciled to God," he means a reconciliation unto God in the various dispensations of his Providence. As if he should say, "my brethren and fellow saints, you are apt to repine and murmur at the providence of God, and are ready to say under your sufferings and trials, are not all these things

against us? Which make you fretful and uneasy, insomuch that you think God deals very hardly with you, when it best becomes you to be dumb, and not to open your mouths, because it is the doing of the Lord. I pray you therefore in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God's dealings; for, though at present his dispensations may be grievous to your flesh, they shall hereafter yield to your souls the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Take all he doth patiently, for his present dealings with you are an argument of your relation to him; for as many as he loves he rebukes, and chastens every son whom he receives. Let me therefore beseech you, as an ambassador for Christ to be reconciled unto God, in all the dispensations of his providence; for a resignation to his will in all things is most becoming a saint." Ah, how necessary such an exhortation as this is, at certain times, to all God's dear children, is well known to the experienced believer in Christ. This I take to be the genuine sense of the text, which is foreign to all offers, tenders and proffers of Christ and Grace to dead sinners.

The third text that you advance to prove the doctrine of offers of grace is Revelations 22:17, "and the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It is evident that these words contain no invitation to dead sinners, for such only are invited as thirst after and have been made willingly inclined towards the waters of life, which proves, that they are partakers of the life in Christ Jesus, and that the

first principles of grace are formed in their souls, in the creation of the divine appetite, unless, as was before observed upon another text, that a man can thirst after and will to be a participant of the wellsprings of joy in consolation which are in Christ Jesus, without the grace of God; the consequence whereof many of the learned gentleman of our age would not care to acknowledge. This then is an invitation to them, who are made alive by grace, to come to the waters of life, which flow from Christ, the living fountain, for all their refreshment, support and joy whilst in this valley of Baca. Of the same import is Isaiah 55:1, "ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Which I understand to be a spiritual coming by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for all joy and strength, and not a local coming upon the feet to a place where a sermon is to be preached, and so an invitation to bring their bodies there to hear, because it is the duty of the ministers of Christ to exhort, and not only such as thirst for the waters of life, but even those, who are dead in trespasses and sins, to come to hear the Gospel preached, because as men, it is in their power to bring their bodies to the worship of God. From the whole therefore it is manifest, that there are no offers, nor invitations to dead sinners of grace and coming to Christ, by spiritual motion; and that all invitations and exhortations to spiritual acts and performances are made only to those that are quickened by the Holy Spirit. Before I dismiss

this point I would beg the liberty to ask these gentlemen unto whom it is that they offer Christ and Grace? It is either to the elect or to the non-elect. They say, to all indiscriminately. Then, they offer them to the elect, which is just nothing at all, because Christ and Grace were theirs before the foundation of the world, for Christ was their Covenant Head and Husband, and all grace was given to them in him, before the world began; and as they offer him to all, so consequently to the non-elect, for whom God hath never designed them, which according to a former argument is nothing else but mockery. Moreover, offers of grace to all promiscuously presupposes a power in all to receive it; but, if all have not a power to receive Christ, and close with Christ, then, a universal offer cannot be true; and, if all have a power, then the doctrine of election is false, particular redemption is a lie, and the powerful and efficacious working of the Holy Spirit in bringing men to believe in, and to close with the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation is a cheat and delusion.

These gentlemen therefore constrain me to judge, that they do not believe what they themselves assert, because two opposites can never be true in the same sense; for I say again, that the doctrines of particular election, justification and vocation, and universal offers of grace can never be reconciled. If they can, I will give up the point; but until then, I must beg leave to retain my present way of thinking; and I can never conceive, how any wise man can believe them to be both true, and until

they are both proved to be so, I would advise these gentlemen, for once, {and I hope they will not think me bold in my attempt,} either to give up the doctrines of Free Grace or renounce the principles of the Arminians and Pelagians, and then we shall know what they are; but, at present, we are not capable of concluding anything about them, for they make us to doubt by their halting between two opinions. Now, if the Lord be God, serve him; but, if Baal be God, then, serve him. If the doctrines of Free Grace are true, have the courage to own them; but, if the doctrines of universal redemption, free will and universal offers are true, maintain them and talk no more inconsistently with yourselves. Thus, it plainly appears that Arminianism and Pelagianism are part of the preaching of this age.

The doctrines of the Neonomians, who teach that the Gospel is a new remedial law, containing milder terms for sinners in a lapsed state; for, whereas the good old moral law, which they say is abolished did command perfect obedience, this only requires that which is sincere; our doing the best we can, in believing and repenting, which shall entitle us to God's acceptance. A late judicious author, {Mr. Richard Taylor, Establishment of the Law by the Gospel,} hath done excellently upon this subject. He saith, "if one saving benefit were given to a sinner upon supposition of his doing, this would turn the covenant of grace into a covenant of works, and the terms of the Gospel covenant would be more difficult than the terms of Adam's covenant were, because Adam in his innocence had perfect strength for

perfect obedience; but, in a state of unregeneracy, we have not the lowest degree of life and strength for spiritual acts; and, after conversion, our strength is but small. It was as easy for Adam, in his primitive state to obey, as it is for us, in our degenerate state to sin; and nothing could be more moderate and mild than that which was put upon him, for the test and proof of his obedience. It was not to act, but to suspend acting; it was not to put forth any positive act, but it was only to forbear the forbidden fruit, or the fruit of one tree in the garden, when he had liberty to eat of the fruit of all the other trees that were in it. If any act, work or inherent grace in us were made a Gospel Condition of our justification, then, the covenant of grace would be as much a covenant of works, as Adam's covenant was; and the terms of it would be more rigorous, because it was easier for innocent Adam to comply with the condition of perfect obedience, than it is for the strongest believer under the Gospel to offer unto God sincere imperfect obedience."

Now, if our faith and repentance, as sincerely performed by us, be our justifying righteousness in the sight of God, then, the righteousness and blood of Christ are become of no effect. This scheme entirely overthrows all the doctrines of the Gospel, and sets the personal righteousness of Christ and his blood aside, in the points of Justification and Salvation; and that this is too prevailing a notion in our age, is all too notorious; for the pulpit language is, "sinner, be sure thou art sincere in doing thy utmost to come up to what the Gospel requires; be

sure to keep yourselves upright, and free from all your iniquities; and then you may conclude that you are truly gracious, and in a fair way to glory." This is the sound of our day, and what is all this, but to make the Gospel of the Redeemer a Law; and to bring us into bondage, by putting upon our necks such a yoke, as neither we nor our forefathers were able to bear. Yet, notwithstanding all this noise about holiness and sincere obedience, we see no more of it in the conversations of these gentlemen than in others who talk not so much about it. But perhaps, some ill-natured persons who have as little love for the Redeemer's honour, as I have for their remedial law, upon reading of this, may say, the author might have been silent upon this head, for his own conversation is none of the best, or as it ought to have been.

I answer, it is very true, and I would fain know whose is? And I humbly pray and beseech all, who know me, to inform me, what I have done in life that is so criminal as to render me the subject of scorn, of dislike, beyond others in the sacred office? Upon conviction, I will acknowledge it, and, as helped by grace, renounce it, bewail it, and so do no more. I could, if I durst, offer much in my own vindication; but this I will venture to say, that I do not allow myself in the practice of any known sin. I wish I could affirm the same of all that, I know, are too far sunk in this scheme, who appear to the world to be eminent for holiness; but I forbear, being a sensible that I am, in the body, liable to many frailties. And blessed be God for that which the world calls

Antinomianism, for it hath prostrated my soul at Christ's feet, with an humble joy to admire everlasting love, to bewail my own weakness, to lament under my shortcomings in religion, and to long for a greater conformity to the Redeemer. This hath rendered sin most hateful, and holiness most delightful; not a legal, but an evangelical holiness, which is possessed with delight and pleasure, without horrors and slavish fears. Oh, once more, blessed Antinomianism, that promotes, maintains and carries on such a holiness in heart and life, that all the Neonomian schemes are incapable of affecting!

There is a sort of deism preached among us in this age, namely, in advancing the religion of nature above that of Divine Revelation; for the revelation, which God hath made, is much neglected and slighted. I have heard from the pulpit, human reason preferred to the Scriptures in these, or such like, modes of expression, that the Scriptures were to be believed, and taken as a rule, no further than they were agreeable to the eternal principles in man, i.e., human reason. Had I given into such principles as these, it would presently have been the language of the generality of professors and their guides, oh dreadful, this wicked fellow! It is a thousand pities, that there was not some law to stop his mouth, whilst the guilty are, amongst some of them, dear brethren; and the reason of it is, because they came through an Academy, and had, perhaps, half a dozen Presbyterian godfathers, who laid their hands upon them, when they made them, it may be, twofold

more children of hell than before. Possibly, some will be startled at such expressions as these, and think, that I am rigid, and carry the point too far. I think not, and I hope my readers will be of my opinion in this particular, when they understand what I mean by Presbyterian godfathers, and becoming more children of hell than before.

By Presbyterian godfathers, I mean those that ordain their preachers, who, by an act of ordination, inaugurated such wretches into what they call holy orders, whereby they are put into a greater capacity of being enemies to Christ and his Gospel. Had they remained in a private station of life, they could not so openly and easily have propagated their poisonous errors; but their ordination empowers them to delude poor souls, and gives them an opportunity to do greater service to the god of this world, which is evidence that they are twofold more children of hell than before.

How dreadful is it to hear the Scriptures slighted, despised and bantered; jests broke upon them, and profane applications made of them, by such as bear the Christian name, and would think it very hard, if you should say that everlasting confusion will be the portion of such. Oh, that this blessed word, which carries in it its own evidence, should be treated in such a ridiculous manner!

Question. Wherein do the Scriptures carry in them their own evidence, and prove themselves to be the Word of God? Answer. Their predictions prove them to be so; for the predictions of the Old Testament have, many of them, had their

accomplishment in the New Testament times, especially such as have a relation to the Messiah's first coming; and they were such things as had no dependence upon natural causes, as the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the Redeemer, with the most remarkable circumstances that attended them, as can be easily proved, and it is what most in the Christian world acknowledge. And by the same rule we prove the truth of the New Testament; for many of its predictions are already come to pass. I will only instance in one, and that was the utter destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem. We have it in Matthew 24:2, "and Jesus said unto them, see ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." This prediction of the Redeemer was partly fulfilled when Titus with his army destroyed Jerusalem; but it had not its full accomplishment until the time of Julian the Apostate, who, after he had made a profession of Christ, and been a reader of the Scriptures to the church in public, revolted to paganism, became a bitter and implacable enemy to the Lord Jesus Christ and his interest, and endeavored, by fraud and cunning to seduce the Lord's servants to commit spiritual fornication or idolatry. His rage, at last, grew so great, that he called our Lord an imposter, and told the world, that he would make it appear. Upon this, he sent to all the Jews in the Empire, and represented to them, that the Galilean whom they crucified, was certainly an imposter, because, when he was alive, he said, that their Temple should not

have one stone left upon another, that should not be thrown down.

Now, it is manifest that when Titus sacked the City of Jerusalem, and wasted the Temple, he did not throw down every stone of that building; for the foundation thereof stands now, as at the time of its first being laid; and, therefore, there still remain one upon another, many stones, that are not thrown down. This evidently proves that he was a false prophet; and, that all the world may know it, my will is, that you go with me to Jerusalem, and rebuild the Temple upon the standing foundation, there to worship your God, as of old; and this will be an everlasting monument of his imposture.

The Jews readily accept this offer, and go to Jerusalem; and upon their arrival, they set about the work with clearing away the rubbish, in order to raise up a superstructure; but they had no sooner done it, than a mighty wind came, and fire out of the earth, which took up the workmen's tools, and made them fly so vehemently about, that many of the workmen were killed upon the spot; and immediately there was an earthquake which threw up the foundation of the Temple, so that there was not left one stone upon another, that was not thrown down. Thus, the earth, which was made for the Redeemer's honour, trembled for fear, and with strong convulsions threw that out of her bowels which, if it had remained, would have brought an everlasting stain upon the honour of the Redeemer, for whose glory it was created. Julian, about this time, was slain by an arrow that came from a secret

hand, for it was never known from whence it came; and he was heard to say in his expiring moments, "oh, thou Galilean, thou hast been too strong for me." Thus, the Redeemer accomplished his own prediction, at a time when he might most display his Power and Glory, in vindicating the truth of his own word; which sufficiently shows, that the New Testament, as well as the Old is the Word of God; for things of this nature cannot be known to men, who are destitute of the Holy Spirit, because they are supernatural; nor could they be foretold by the devil, in any of his oracles, for they were all struck dumb; and, if they had not been dumb, they would never have foretold what would be so entirely destructive to the kingdom of their God. But I need say no more, the word of the Lord carries in it its own evidence to the hearts and consciences of the children of men; and what reason cannot do, through weakness, Divine Revelation can, to the joy of many, and to the praise and glory of his grace, who hath revealed his mind in the Scriptures of truth.

Another sort of preaching in this age is Arianism, in which the Godhead of the Redeemer is denied, who, according to the scheme of these gentlemen, is no more than a creature. I find this age is run into very great extremes. Some are so afraid of being thought Arians and dividers of the natures in the Person of Christ, the Lord Mediator, that they have deified his humanity; yet, though I cannot divide the natures in Christ the Mediator, I can distinguish them, i.e., the Godhead from the

Humanity, for the hypostatical union of the two natures does not confound; so that when I worship God, I worship an Infinite Being, a God who hath discovered himself to me, to have in his essence a plurality, which I humbly conceive, according to my best light, can be called nothing better than a Person. I consider then, so far as I am capable of understanding both words and things, that this God is personally united to the human nature of Christ; and I worship him, as united to, and in this nature, as in a temple or tabernacle, which God hath pitched, and not man; so that the human nature of the Redeemer is not the object of my divine or highest adoration; not but that a deference is due to the human nature of Christ, as was paid to the temple of old by the Jews; for all acceptable worship was either paid in, or towards that place. This appears from the prayer of Jonah, "then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." Jon.2:4. But they did not, nor were they obliged to worship it; no, they only worshiped the true God, who said, he would dwell in it, and who did in a most peculiar manner reside there. This is manifest, for when the high priest went into the holy of holies; he there conversed with God from above the Mercy Seat, who revealed the brightness of his glory from between the cherubims. Great respect was due to this typical glorious place, and much was shown it. In like manner, great respect is due to the human nature of Christ, but yet it is not the object of divine worship, no more than was the temple of old.

The body or human nature of Christ is the temple to which is confined all Gospel worship; and in this holy place I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms; wherefore, I conclude, that worshiping the human nature of Christ with the same worship which is due to the Infinite First Cause is idolatry, a gross error of our times. On the other hand, many deny the Redeemer's Godhead, and, as was before observed, assert that he is no more than a creature. This error is destructive to the glory of the Mediator, because it is of absolute necessity that he, who is the Saviour of sinners, should be the Infinite and Eternal Jehovah. Two things absolutely prove the Redeemer's divinity; I mean that his Godhead and Manhood are personally united.

His great name Jehovah, which can never be applied to a creature, in a strict and proper sense; for it is derived from a root that signifies self-existence, and is the cause of all causes. Now, this name is never given to any but to Jesus Christ; and if he was not God, in his highest nature, God, in giving him this name, would give his glory to another; for this name contains all his incommunicable glory, or what he is essentially in himself; and he is called by this name. "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer.23:6.

Objection. But this name is applicable to a whole mediator, as God-Man, and, as such, to the

humanity; and, therefore it cannot be proper to the Godhead only. Answer. I confess that it is applied to the whole of Christ, as Man and Mediator, but then it is only in a relative, and not in a strict and proper sense; for the Scripture sometimes apply that to the Godhead which is strictly proper only to the Humanity. Thus, in Acts 20:28, Christ's blood is called the blood of God; not properly, but because it was shed in union to the second person of the Trinity. In like manner, if Christ, as man, is called Jehovah, it is not properly, but because his human nature is united to that Essence which is properly called by this name; and that this name cannot properly be applied to any creature, as such, evidently appears from its signification.

The work, that infinite wisdom designed to be effected by the Mediator, declares him to be God, because it is of such a nature as cannot be performed by a mere creature. This work is satisfaction to injured justice; or else justice, as hath been already observed, must be dispensed with, if the sinner is saved, which carries in it a reflection upon the honour of infinite wisdom, in establishing a way of saving sinners, to the dishonour of one of his darling attributes. Can it ever be imagined according to the light of nature and laws of reason, that a Being who is infinitely wise, should establish a way of salvation which is destructive to his own honour? But the God, with whom we have to do, is infinitely wise and cannot transact anything that is inconsistent with the glory of any of his perfections; and, therefore, his Justice must have a glory and honour

equal with his other attributes in the salvation of sinners, which cannot be effected, as the case now stands between God and fallen man, without satisfaction. Satisfaction must be given or else the sinner cannot be saved; for, if the sinner is saved without satisfaction, then justice must be dispensed with, and it's honour for ever fall, but such a way of saving sinners doth not become the wisest and most Holy Being.

We conclude therefore, that, as the salvation of sinners is no way inconsistent with or repugnant to the honour of God, it must be founded upon Satisfaction. Now, the query is whether a creature, as such, is capable to make satisfaction to the justice of God? It must be answered in the negative, because the justice of God, which is offended by the violation of his Law, is infinite, and, therefore requires, for the security of its honour, an infinite satisfaction, which it is impossible for any mere creature to give. It is an old maxim in philosophy that nothing can give that which it hath not, and it is no less true in divinity, and manifestly so in the case under consideration; for it is impossible to imagine that a finite being can ever give an infinite satisfaction; from whence it necessarily follows, that he that hath satisfied the Justice of God is infinitely more than a creature, however dignified and exalted; but Jesus Christ hath given to the Justice of God full Satisfaction, and God hath declared from heaven his being well pleased with his Son. The prophet Isaiah saith, "the LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and

make it honourable," Isa.42:21, which evidently proves his satisfaction, and also that he is God, God in union to that Nature which obeyed and suffered, whereby an infinite worth and value was given to the righteousness and blood of the Man Christ Jesus. Now, to deny that his Godhead gives a dignity and virtue to all he accomplished, as man, is to confound the harmony of the Divine Perfections in the salvation of God's elect.

Infinite wisdom and love proposed, in the Constitution of the Person of Christ, a revenue of glory to all the Divine Perfections; and it is the very language of the Everlasting Covenant, "thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." This was never done, if our Lord Jesus Christ did not satisfy the justice of God, and he could never do it, had he only been a creature. There are several other arguments by which the Godhead of Christ may be proved, but the recital of them would swell this work beyond the compass proposed. However, there is one short argument I would advance before I proceed, which I draw from the Gospel according to John, "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3. I thus conclude, that if all things were made by the Lord Jesus Christ, and nothing was made without him, and is in himself no more than a creature, he made himself; which is so extremely ridiculous that it deserves no further notice.

The good and gracious God grant me, and all his own children, a salvation from all Arian and Socinian errors which are destructive to God's glory

and the souls of men; which he will do sooner or later. This is too much the preaching of this age!

Some other notions are spread abroad in the world; but, as they are very little regarded, they are not worthy my notice. Perhaps some will object, that I have passed over Antinomianism, though it is an error of the times, and too much preached in the present age. Answer. I know no bona-fide Antinomians, who are men of any reputation in the world, or esteem in the churches, or are taken notice of by any honest men; for, as to what is commonly called Antinomianism, it is, in fact, quite the reverse. It is not what men are pleased to call Antinomianism that constitutes it to be such; for how many have been styled Antinomians, and their principles represented as tending to the greatest licentiousness, who would not have dared to have been guilty of half of what their accusers daily practice. Let the charge against these called Antinomians be proved, and then the world may with justice believe it; but until then, the whole of their faith is but implicit; they believe it because their teachers affirm it {who will, some of them, say anything against those who are no friends to their pride and lordly domineering over God's heritage,} a poor foundation; and it is greatly to be feared, that their faith in higher matters stands too much in, and upon, the wisdom and authority of their preachers. As the prophet saith, "the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so, and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Jer.5:31. Surely, shame and trouble!

Let such remember, whatever their teachers may tell them, that we love the law of God better than they, and give it greater honour than all the legalists in the world; so that we are very improperly called Antinomians; but it hath always been the fate of the Gospel to be thus reproached. The alone exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ, our only Redeemer, and Unconditional Grace have been ever treated with contempt, and aspersed, as leading to a dissolute and sinful life; but sure I am, as was before observed, that the great and glorious things of Free and Sovereign Grace more promote holiness of life and conversation than all their legal stuff. We proceed now, in the second place, to show.

What those doctrines are that the ministers of the Redeemer preach, which is the duty of all those who are called the ministers of Christ to set forth clearly and uncompromisingly. The doctrine of absolute election in the pure mass, above the consideration of the Fall. I do not mean that God was ignorant of the fall of man, but only that election had not its original under that consideration. Election is an act of free love to a certain number of select persons, by which they are chosen out from amongst the rest of the same species, in a Covenant Head and Representative, for the enjoyment of God in the state of everlasting glory, and this from before the foundation of the world. The rest of the creation were left, in their pure and unfallen state, which some call reprobation; and they understand it thus, God made man with an intent to damn him. This I say is what they understand by passing by the non-

elect, and very horrid conclusions have been drawn by the Sublapsarians from our manner of setting forth the doctrine of Divine Election. They themselves have otherwise stated it, and put it in a light that is more agreeable to them. They have asserted, that our sentiments have a tendency to render God cruel and unjust; cruel, to pass by or reprobate sinless creatures; and unjust, to intend their damnation. They judge, that principles of this nature are inconsistent with the Divine Honour and Glory, and they cannot conceive, that an Infinitely Great and Good Being, who is all love and benignity, can disapprove pure and holy creatures; and, according to their scheme, God doth not pass by his creatures, as pure, but as fallen, and designs their damnation as a punishment for sin, so that they are left, or passed by, as fallen. I must confess that I have not any great acquaintance with the writings of the Supralapsarians; but, as far as I am capable of understanding this sublime point, I do see that the Supralapsarian scheme is the most just, and that God, according to it, can have nothing laid to his charge, but will be clear when he judges, and overcome when he condemns; which does not appear so clearly in the Sublapsarian scheme, though calculated to clear the Most High of those aspirations cast upon his Divine Majesty by the Remonstrants, as drawn from the Supralapsarian scheme. We will, with all possible brevity, inquire into both these schemes and endeavor to set them in a true and proper light, and then leave the believer and judicious reader to judge, which of

these schemes tends most of the advancement of the honour and glory of Him who hath created all things to that end. According then to the Supralapsarians, God in the electing of his people to eternal glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer, when they were in a sinless state, above the consideration of the Fall, was in no way injurious to the rest of the creatures; for they were left in a pure state, with a sufficiency of power to abide therein. He did not, by passing them by, lay them under a necessity of being damned by forbidding them to sin; nor did he infuse into them vicious principles to make them sin and fall.

Objection. But God knew that they would fall and perish. Answer. It is granted, but what is this to the purpose? His knowledge was not the cause of their fall; for, though he knew all things and consequently that his creatures would fall and perish; yet he did not, as was before, oblige them to it, for their fall was their own act and deed. They destroyed themselves, by seeking out many inventions; and, as they sinned against great light and love, in violating the law of their creation, God is not obliged by any law or any revelation made of himself, to give them grace and salvation. It is very evident then according to this scheme, that God is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works, with, and upon the children of men; and they can have nothing to object against his equitable proceedings with them. They cannot say that they were laid under a necessity of being damned, for their Creator made them holy, and put them in

possession of the felicities and glories of a paradisiacal state which they have forfeited by sin.

Objection. What is all this to me? I was never personally pure; and, though Adam was, it doth not concern me. Must I perish for another's disobedience? Answer. It was the will of the Lawgiver to make this law, and place innocent Adam under it as a public Head and Representative of mankind. As such he stood; and, as such he fell. Now, the fall of Adam so far concerns his posterity that it renders them guilty; but yet God doth not punish them until they are personally filthy. There is therefore no room for them left to say, "what, must we go down to hell for another's sin?" No, no, they have sin enough in themselves to sink them deep into the gulf of misery. But on the other hand, let us briefly consider the Sublapsarian scheme, which teaches that God passes by none but such as he looks upon as sinners; he beholds their sin in all its aggravating circumstances, and from this consideration he assigns them over to everlasting destruction, whilst he is pleased to show grace and pity to some whom he designs to be monuments of his favour and compassion. This is the Sublapsarian scheme of election and reprobation; it asserts reprobation, or a passing by the creature, as impotent, when it was in a state of incapacity, and could not help itself; whereas, to be cast off, in such a helpless and impotent condition, must inevitably prove the everlasting destruction of all those whom God hath thus passed by, from whence it follows, that all those who hold the doctrine of election and

reprobation, as under the fall do absolutely assert a pre-ordination of those who are passed by to destruction, which leaves a ground of plea for the sinner. He may say, "when I was reprobated, I was looked upon as in a state of sin and impotence, and entirely incapacitated to help myself; so that I am damned, because I must be damned." Now, which of these schemes tends most to wipe off the reflections that are generally cast upon the Divine Being, the former, or the latter, the Supralapsarian or the Sublapsarian? I think the former, but I must leave my readers to judge for themselves; for, if they are spiritual, they can judge all things, whilst of themselves are the subjects of no man's judgment, as the apostle saith. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man," I Cor.2:15; or, as the margin more properly reads it, discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned by no man. The spiritual man can discern spiritual things from temporal, and truth from error; he can discern somewhat of the mysteries of God's world of grace, and of the beauties of his world of glory, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, whilst he himself, in his joys, delights, and rest, in his conceptions of divine things is discerned by no natural man. This is the man I leave to judge the two schemes.

Besides, let it be observed, according to the latter scheme, that the elect themselves must be considered as sinful in God's election; for that they were elected in the Lord Jesus Christ is evident, and will be agreed to by all who hold the doctrine of

election; and consequently, the Redeemer, who was a pure Head, had an impure body, in God's election, which, for my own part, I cannot admit; nor will it hold good, because the head and the body are but one. Now, God's electing love, which was the height and spring of love to Christ and his church, could not, I humbly conceive, unite an impure body to a glorious and sinless Head. From the whole it appears, that it is easiest to admit the former scheme; and we conclude, that to preach the doctrine of absolute election in this high and exalted sense, will bring more glory to God, and greater consolation to the saints, and strike greater confusion into the wicked, than all other schemes; for, give me leave to say, in one word, that the Sublapsarian scheme strikes at the Divine Independency, since it leads the great God out of himself into a sink of sin and misery, to fetch reasons of his dealings towards the children of men, and also makes all the doctrines of the everlasting Gospel to stand upon a false and rotten bottom. If election is founded upon the fall, and all the other doctrines of the Gospel are the consequences of election, then, the whole scheme of Grace and Salvation is founded upon the fall; which sufficiently proves, that Grace and Glory stand upon a rotten bottom, since the fall of man, and not the Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of the elect's Grace and Glory. For these and several other reasons the Supralapsarian scheme of election, and not the Sublapsarian, ought to be preached.

The Doctrine of Union to the Lord Jesus Christ, in its causes, concomitants, and consequences should be preached by all who call themselves ministers of Christ and the Gospel. Now, this union to the Redeemer is either natural, federal, or vital; and the preaching of these is of very singular service to the saints, and greatly tends to their joy in the Lord, and consolation in the God of their salvation.

By a natural union to the Lord Jesus Christ, I understand such a union as there is between a head and its members. In such a union as this did the elect stand to the Lord Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, as can be clearly proved from the Scripture account of the creation; for though the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ did exist before his body; yet, as a Federal Head, he could not exist without a body, because the term head is relative and supposes a body. Now, if Jesus Christ is Head of his church from everlasting, {I mean, before the foundation of the world; for so I would always be understood by the word everlasting, when applied to the Mediator, as Head of the church,} if his church did not then exist, he was a head of nothing; he was a head without a body. This to me is such unintelligible nonsense that I shall never be able, I think, to take it in; nay, I am apt to believe that men who are blessed with larger capacities than I ever expect to be master of will never come into it, because it is monstrous as well as foolish; so that we conclude, that Christ and his Church were one body, in the beginning of God's way.

Objection. This supposes the preexistence of all souls as well as the soul of Jesus Christ. Answer. It doth not only suppose the preexistence of the souls of men, but affirms it, but in this I know that I am going further out of the common road than ever. Here I expect that some will laugh, and say that I am mad; and others, that I am full of nothing but whims and nonsense. They will be enraged against me, and think, and speak, all manner of evil of me; and for no other reason, but because I do not think and say with the unthinking and clamorous of this age. I know that there are some who will tell me that the notion of the preexistence of all souls was Origen's dream from the schools of Plato, yet it is confessed to be true of the Man Christ Jesus. It is no matter to me, if it was the sentiment of the Platonists, for it does not therefore follow that it is false; and, supposing it not to be true, I cannot apprehend that it is any great evil, because I am not sensible that it drags any pernicious errors at its heels; so that, if it be in error, it is one upon the right hand. But to me it appears plain from God's Word that all souls pre-exist their bodies; for, if all things were created in the space of six days, and all very good, all souls were also then created; and, if they were not created until the time of their infusion into the body, it would necessarily follow that the work of creation was not finished, and that God hath not ceased from all his works, and entered into his rest; but this notion is so contradictory to Scripture Revelation that I am constrained to treat it as spurious.

Objection. The pre-existence of all souls cannot be true because it is plain from common experience, that we cannot tell, what were our conceptions in this pre-existence state; but all souls upon their existence are capable of conception. Answer. If they are capable of conception it does not therefore follow that in a succeeding state that I am capable of telling my antecedent conceptions, so that there is no force in the objection; for if I cannot tell my conceptions in my minority, when, according to my antagonists I did exist and conceive, how shall I be able to tell my way of conceiving in a pre-existence state? Let my objector inform me what ideas he had of things when he was born into the world; and then he will demonstrate to me that it is necessary to the pre-existence of a soul, for it to tell its conceptions as soon as it exists. But until my objector can do this he does nothing but raise a dust to blind himself and others. From the whole it is manifest that the soul may exist, and yet not be capable of telling any of its conceptions.

Objection. But this notion of the pre-existence of all souls as united to the soul of Christ, their Head, who was God-Man, makes Christ the Head of the non-elect, and lays a foundation for their salvation. Answer. The Lord Jesus Christ is a Head in a threefold way; namely, of nature, grace, and glory. Now, Christ, as the Head of nature is head of the non-elect, for the apostle saith, "but I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." I Cor.11:3. Jesus Christ, as the Head

of nature, is the head of the whole creation, for all things were made for him, and for his glory, and all souls proceed from him; for, when his soul was created, it was as a great containing magazine of all souls; and as a Vine contains in itself all its fruit before it appears; so Christ, the true Vine contains in himself all souls, until they come forth into the bodies assigned for them. Now Christ, who is such a containing Head must be Head of the non-elect; yet this does not secure their salvation, nor lay the least a foundation for it; for, though these souls are branches of Christ as the Head of nature, yet from this stock they cannot bring forth any spiritual fruit; and, as they are in corrupted bodies, they cannot bring forth any perfect moral fruit. These, saith Christ, are such as my Father taketh away. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." John 15:1-2. Now, I humbly conceive that these branches in Christ, the Vine, which may be taken away are not those who are loved with an everlasting love; for, if they were, then, is the love of God in Christ mutable. If these were the members of his mystical body, and some of these taken away, then, is he maimed, and some of his members would perish. From the whole it is very evident that Christ's Headship in nature doth not secure or lay a foundation of salvation for them, to whom he is Head of nature; and, as the Redeemer is Head of nature, he is Head of every man, and consequently of the elect. The elect were

never broken off from him, as the non-elect were by the fall, because Christ stood as their Head in a double consideration beyond that of nature; for he was their Head of Grace and Glory too, so that they have a divine sap, by which they bring forth good and gracious fruit, and by further communications of Grace are purged, grow, and bring forth daily more fruit, to the praise and glory of his grace, who hath accepted them in the Beloved. Thus, the elect are really united to the Redeemer; he is their Head, and they are his members; and to this union are owing their life and joy. All their graces flow from this Head; their faith, love, repentance, evangelical holiness and obedience are the consequences of this glorious and happy union, though we live in an age that tells us quite the reverse. We are told that our faith unites us to the Redeemer. I would only ask these gentlemen, from whence faith, and every other grace, comes, that unites to Jesus Christ? Their answer will be this, certainly from Jesus Christ himself. From the Lord Jesus Christ? When all the laws of conveyance are stopped up, and the way of communication is broken off. If this is good divinity, I am sure it is bad philosophy; for how my grace can come from a Head to which I was never united is altogether unaccountable. But it will be granted, that this grace to me from Christ, in order to my union, is a demonstration of his love to me; which implies, that he loved one, not united to himself, and this makes the divinity as bad as the philosophy. Wherefore, I conclude that my union to Christ as a member of his mystical body is the cause of all the

graces of God in my soul. This is what I call a natural union to the Redeemer, to whom my soul was united before the world began.

The Redeemer and the elect are federally united, they stand in one covenant; for Christ, in the everlasting contracts of grace represented his people, as the head doth the body. We were in him; and he covenanted for us, as a public person. But this covenant hath been already largely handled in the second chapter, with our vital union, in our participation of the divine life in Christ. Our business here shall be to speak a little to the causes of this vital union.

The efficient cause is the love of God which constituted and set up the Redeemer, as our Head, to whom we are really united, as hath been shown. If there is an everlasting union to Christ, as some affirm, {which is a glorious truth, but not as they assert it, because they deny the existence of the head to which the body must be united,} give me leave to ask such gentleman, whether this eternal union be a union to the Godhead, or to the reasonable soul of Christ? I am sure it is to one, or the other. To the Godhead it cannot be, for it would be blasphemy to assert that creatures are one with an Infinite Being. The dreadful consequences of this may in another performance be displayed if I am called to it, and my God give me life and strength; but I conclude, that none will be so vile as to propagate such a notion. Perhaps it will be objected that this union was only federal? This objection supposes a federal head; but an infinite God cannot

be a federal head, unless he covenant with himself, which hath been sufficiently exploded. It may be further objected that the first Person in the Trinity made a covenant with the second. I answer, this is such a dividing of the Godhead, the Divine Unity, that it amounts to Tritheism, too gross an error to be admitted by any, who are sound in the doctrines of the unity of the Divine Essence, and a Trinity of Persons; for, though I believe, that there are Three Persons in One Essence, and by faith distinguish the first from the second; but if I once divide them I make of them three gods, as they do who represent the persons in the Trinity, as stipulating and re-stipulating one with another. I say again, these are more gods than one; or else God covenants with himself. From the whole I take it for granted that we were not, are not, neither shall we ever be united to the Godhead; nor, according to the sentiment of those gentlemen, can we be united to the reasonable soul of Christ, because it was not; so that here is a union, whilst in fact, there is none, for union to nothing is nonsense. In a word, this union to the Redeemer from everlasting is real and actual, or else it is only decretive and intentional; if it be real and actual, it must be to some head or root; but, if it be only decretive, why is all this noise and difference about it with them who believe the same? In fine, to hold everlasting union, and yet to deny the doctrine of the preexistence of the Redeemer, is building a castle in the air; for, if everlasting union be a truth, the pre-existence of a real Mediator is a truth also; but if the pre-existence of the Mediator is not true,

then everlasting union is a lie as appears from what hath been already observed. If I meet with a reply, I suppose it will be from this quarter; though I imagine the gentleman of the other side of the question will be ready to say, that it is not worth their time to meddle with such an out-of-the-way man as me. However, if I am to have an answer, pray let it be to purpose in this way, and I shall give attention to it, but to nothing else. But, to return to the work, we may see that the efficient cause of this union is the Free Grace of God.

The meritorious cause is the love of Christ, our great Mediator and Redeemer who was our Head of Representation in Covenant, and in the execution of it, in his life and death.

The formal cause is the implantation of grace in the heart whereby an elect vessel becomes a believer, and possesses all the habits of the divine nature, by which he dies to himself, and all created excellencies. Mundane honours are to him but toys and empty bubbles; and he lives to God, and upon things that are permanent and durable, which are everlastingly at God's right hand.

The final cause of this vital union is a meetness for the heavenly world. The graces are handed down to us, not to give us a right to, but to give us a fitness for that glorious state, "for without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Without the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ no man can see the face of God in peace; and it is also impossible, without the holiness of the new creature in Christ to see the face of the Lord with joy. Nay,

heaven, and the felicities of that blessed world, would be no heaven at all, to a man destitute of the holiness of the new creature, for the work and employment of that state is spiritual, and suited only to the senses and faculties of the new creation. This is the final cause of the vital union to Jesus Christ, even a meetness for the heavenly state. The communicants of this vital union, which ministers ought to preach, are these.

Sweet intimations of the love of the Redeemer, a holy earnest cleaving to him, and strong desires after a nearer and closer fellowship with this glorious Lord. The soul cries out with the spouse in the Canticles, "let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine." The holy longings of a gracious soul may be seen more largely, as hath been shown, in the second chapter of this book.

Another concomitant of this union is a visible freedom from guilt and fear. These are taken from off the conscience; the fears of hell vanish and all horrors expire. Ah, this is a happy concomitant of a vital union to the Redeemer; for, though the soul before was in ten thousand terrors about its eternal state, upon this union, they disappear. I will not say, that they never show themselves again; for they frequently do, as we find by woeful experience; yet I believe it is often owing to the preaching which the poor soul sits under, for they, who sit under a legal ministry are often in great danger of being in the greatest darkness about their state. I know it by my own experience, that, when I sat under a law

ministry, I was in continual ups and downs, and could never arrive at any certainty about my state; but, when the Lord was pleased to bring me under the clear light of the Gospel, by the Ministry of his servant, Mister Joseph Hussey, I was brought to live a more comfortable life. My guilt did not return so often upon me; for I had now the blood of sprinkling to go to; and I saw the Covenant in all its stability and firmness, so that my soul came to an anchor, where I did ride sweetly and with abundance of joy.

But in the third place, the consequences of this union are, first, a communication of greater degrees of faith, love and obedience to supply all the spiritual wants of believers, and support them in their Christian journey, whereby they grow up into Christ, their Head in all things, and become strong men and fathers in him; for they are not always babes, unskillful in the word of righteousness, and tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but are growing in grace, and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, wherein they enjoy peace of mind and a satisfaction in their condition.

Secondly, another consequence of this union is preservation. They, being thus united to Christ shall bring forth fruit, even to old age; for the Lord himself, who hath begun a good work will complete it, and they shall hold on their way; and, because their hands by grace are made clean, they shall grow stronger and stronger; for their path is as the morning light that shines clearer and clearer to a perfect day. They shall hold out to the very end; for, being in Christ by Free Grace, they shall never fall

from him. The grace they have from Christ is an argument that his heart is full of love to them; and whom he loves he loves to the end. His love is unchangeable, for he hates putting away, and will never give up his people, but he doth rest in his love, and by continual supplies of his grace bring them to the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls.

Thirdly, another consequence of this union is the enjoyment of the kingdom of glory in the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. This realm is a kingdom of grace, were all the graces of the Spirit shall be compensated; and they, who have laboured for Christ under the delightful influences of the Holy Spirit shall be put in possession of significant glory. Here every man must appear in his own order; Christ first, and they who are Christ's. First the apostles, for in this state he shall place them upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and this can never be understood of the eternal heavenly kingdom, for there all judgment is over; and I am sure that it is not applicable to the present Dispensation of the Gospel. It must therefore be the kingdom referenced in that thousand year reign, where the saints shall live and reign with Christ one thousand years, which is not true of any believer under the Gospel; nor can it be applied to the heavenly state, because that is eternal. After the Apostles in this Kingdom are the martyrs and confessors, being such as loved not their lives unto death, but were willing to forsake honours, glories, crowns and dignities for a Redeemer; the ministers,

and those who have laboured under the impetus of the Spirit for Christ and his Cause; they, who have turned many to righteousness, shall shine like the sun, throughout the whole of this kingdom; and they who have done much for the Redeemer's interest, and for the support of his poor Saints, shall be highly esteemed in this glorious state. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Matt.25:34-36. These are they who were the objects of electing love, and under the influences of mighty grace had lived to the honour of the Redeemer, and the joy and support of his church. They had been made faithful in a few things; and now they shall be made rulers over many things, and must enter into the joy of their Lord. All the saints shall be admitted into this kingdom, for the Lord our God will come, and all his saints with him; and they shall sit down together, as the happy consequences of their vital union with Christ, and the following of him in regeneration. There the saints shall see his face with joy; and all human laws shall be abolished forever. The law shall go forth from Zion, immediately from the mouth of the King upon the throne of glory, and all tyranny shall cease; for the consciences of men shall no more be imposed upon. Here Zion shall dwell safely, and none shall make her afraid; for she

shall be a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, nor one of her stakes be removed, or any of her chords be broken. This state will be a preface to the eternal glory; and this is the Kingdom in which Christ will judge the quick and the dead, and render the bounties of grace unto his servants the prophets. I know, that there are many who treat this great truth with contempt, and do not believe a tittle thereof; but I would here take leave to ask such, what they will do with all those texts that speak of rewards, and their degrees, as they are founded upon grace and holiness? For instance, that text where the Lord saith to him who had improved his five talents, "well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matt.25:21. Here are degrees of glory, and they are founded upon the different degrees of grace; for he, who had the greatest degree of grace, had the greatest share of glory. Now, I would only know where these rewards in their different degrees are to be enjoyed? If they answer in heaven, then I say, heaven is not the reward of Christ's righteousness; for, if it is the reward of inherent grace, it is not the reward of the imputation of the righteousness of a Redeemer, which subverts the very foundation of our salvation. This leads me to conclude that eternal glory is not the reward of inherent grace; nor are there any degrees in that eternal state; for, as it is a reward of the Redeemer's righteousness, and that righteousness is upon all who believe without any

difference, the glory of the heavenly state is the same to all the heirs of promise; and the contrary can never be proved, until it be made out, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed more to one than another. To conclude, I only desire those gentlemen who are enemies to the thousand years reign of glory, that blessed state of light and truth, to give the world a sense of these texts that speak of rewards, consistent with the honour of the Redeemer and his righteousness, with its equal imputation to all the elect. This doctrine of the Redeemer's kingdom is full of comfort and encouragement to the people of God, in their passage through this world, and hath a tendency to promote godliness, in heart, lip, and life; and it is the duty of every Gospel minister to preach it as such.

Another consequence of this union is the heavenly state, when the kingdom now spoken of shall come to a culmination; for it must be given up to God, even the Father. Then the Redeemer, with a pure body, will enter into the heavenly world, where his people shall be forever with him; but the glories and felicities of this heavenly state have been largely handled in the preceding chapter. Thus much for the causes, concomitants, and consequences of a vital union to the Redeemer. These things, less or more, are preached by the ministers of Jesus Christ, and ought to be preached of all who call themselves so; and sure I am, it would bring more glory to God, more honour to a Redeemer, and greater comfort to the saints, than all the legal trash of our age, which

can bring none at all; nay, it is so far from doing so, that it robs God of his glory, Christ of his honour, and the saints of their comfort.

Additionally, Gospel ministers preach the doctrine of an unconditional justification in the sight of God, before the foundation of the world. They preach the pardon of sin in a way of Free Grace, without any conditions on the part of the creature. They preach the Redeemer's divinity, in opposition to Arianism, and are helped to take special heed, that they do not give away the cause, as many do, through their un-skillfulness in the word of righteousness. They preach the Redeemer's Satisfaction against Socinianism. They preach the authority of Divine Revelation in opposition to the Deists. They preach the antiquity of the Redeemer's Person, as God-Man, before the world began. They rejoice, that they have a foundation for all they say of Covenant Grace and Union, for all that others say of an everlasting covenant or union, without the God-Man, is entirely groundless. They preach the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit, and the irresistibleness of his work and grace upon the hearts of the elect. They preach the final preservation of the saints in Christ. They preach the dreadfulness of being found outside of the Lord Jesus Christ in that great day of accounts. They preach the different estates of the righteous and the wicked to all eternity.

These and many more truths, must be preached; and such as are consistent with these and themselves. They are to be preached, not offered;

they must be preached freely, and left to the Holy Spirit to make use and application as he pleases of them. I confess, that I have been somewhat bold in offering to dictate; and I hope that I shall obtain pardon, because what I have done was in love to my God, zeal for his honour and truth, and the comfort and liberty of his chosen in Christ. But do not mistake me, for I do not cry quarters for anything which I have said; no, no, I crave no other favour than to be treated as a man; and I know, if such a one takes me in hand, I shall be so treated. Perhaps, some will say, how can you expect any kind or tender treatment, when you have dipped your pen in gall, and with the greatest bitterness have written against all the faithful ministers of Jesus Christ, whom you have treated reproachfully, and set yourself up to be their dictator.

This is a heavy charge, and what I would not be guilty of for all the world. God forbid that I should ever speak against the faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. All that I have been doing is only a correcting of those who err in some of the glorious doctrines of the Gospel, and preach such things as tend to the dishonour of the Mediator, and the Holy Spirit. I am so far from reproaching the faithful ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I love, highly esteem, and honour them for their works sake, which is the duty of all to their ministry.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### ***THE PORTION WHICH BELIEVERS HAVE IN THE REDEEMER.***

In treating of this point, I shall show what is the Saints portion in the Redeemer, and the properties of this portion. To begin with the first, which is to show, what is the Saints portion in the Redeemer.

1. They have a portion of wisdom, which can never be exhausted. It is by the communication of this that they are enabled to demean themselves wisely in their day and generation. This wisdom is good and pleasant; for when a man is brought by affliction, sorrow and darkness to his very wits end, it will be his guide and director; and he shall know how to think and behave in a becoming manner. He shall understand what others are ignorant of; he shall know the loving kindness of the Lord, the secrets of his Covenant, and the riches of his Predestinating Grace, and walk in the comforts thereof. His portion in his Redeemer makes him wise to salvation, and the spiritual faith which he hath received of the Lord, will acknowledge that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ; unknown treasures, for they are hid; so that, believer, your portion in your Redeemer, in the great and high degrees thereof, is still to come, for when thou comest to glory, thy portion shall be opened unto thee; and there shall be poured into thy soul such measures of wisdom, that thou shalt see and know things which could never have been

understood without this wisdom; and, at present, even under all our follies, this wisdom is our portion in Christ. Our God now beholds us wise in this wisdom, for the Redeemer is of God made unto us wisdom, to cover our foolishness, as well as to direct us in our Christian course. Believer, it is possible that thou canst not account for many of the Dispensations of Divine Providence at present, but by-and-by, when the portion is paid, thou shalt account for them all.

2. Believers have in their Redeemer a portion of strength; and they can say that the Lord is their rock and strong tower, their refuge and strength in time of trouble. They have in him strength sufficient to bear all the burdens, which in this life, he is pleased to lay upon them. "Ah, saith the soul, I have in him daily strength for daily trials; and I find that in waiting upon him, my strength, according to his promise, is renewed; so that my portion of strength in Christ is handed out to me in proportion to my wants. Oh, blessed be his name, for I have found his word to be true from my own comfortable experience; for, according to my day, so hath my strength been. Strength to perform the duties of religion with delight; strength when I have done, to live above them; strength to trust my God for time and eternity, and to live upon my dear Redeemer's fullness, above all outside religion, and the pleasures of this life; strength to carry me to my dying bed with peace, and to conduct me with joy through the dark valley of the shadow of death. The staff or strength of Christ is my support in this gloomy vale,

for the word of the Lord, in his promises, is strength to the upright, in which the righteous walk, and all the glory of their strength stands only in the Redeemer.”

Believer, perhaps at present thy portion is not in this measure handed out to thee; yet thou hast it, for it is indeed thine; and thou shalt have as much of it in this world as shall be sufficient to bring thee safe to glory, though thou mayest not have so much as to make all thy way thither joyful; but, upon thy arrival there, thou shall have strength enough from Christ, thy Head, to enable thee to perform all the services of that blissful state, without weariness or fainting, to eternity.

3. Believers have in their Redeemer a portion of holiness or sanctification. The communications of it, at present, are but short and scanty; indeed, we have only a small part of our portion of holiness from the Redeemer, but it is not all our portion; for it is only a pledge or earnest of what we are to have, when we come to full age. We are often mourning under a sense of our want of a greater measure of inherent holiness, bewail our leanness and deformity, and pray for an alteration, but this is our glory under all our straits, that we have as much holiness in the Redeemer, as will qualify us not only for the company of angels, but for dwelling in the presence of God; for the believer, when his portion of holiness in Christ is paid him, will be pure even as Christ is pure, holy as he is holy. This is such a holiness as legalists never can attain to, by all their doings; for all their pretended holiness is nothing

else but a sort of spiritual wickedness, because it leads from the Redeemer's righteousness; but this holiness always leads to it; and that Christ hath in him a portion of holiness to, and for his people, is evident from Scripture, for he is of God made unto us sanctification, and in the purity that fills his human nature, as it shall be communicated to us, we shall stand before God forever.

Oh, how sweet and pleasant will this happy day be when our portion in Christ shall be fully given unto us, and the old man turned out of house and home forever! Then shall we be filled with the perfection of holiness, and nevermore have any desires towards the creature, for all our delight shall be in the Lord. We shall never be troubled with an unbelieving heart; no darkness shall remain in our understandings, no rebellion in our wills, no inclinations in the affections but towards our God in the Redeemer; no error in judgment, nor guilt in our consciences forever. This blessed state admits of no fears, it being a state of perfect love, there our portion of holiness shall be fully distributed unto us, and we shall be made like unto the Son of God.

4. Believers have in their Redeemer a portion of all necessary grace in order to their meetness for glory, and their safe conduct through the world. When believers examine themselves, they find that their measure of Grace is small, but that which supports them is, that they have a sufficiency in their Redeemer who will in a way of faithfulness hand out to them all that they stand in need of; and their faith is founded upon the promises of grace,

that they shall receive faith enough to carry them through all their difficulties, bear them up under all their sorrows, and make their way safely to the world of bliss; and, when they are under strong temptations, and are ready to sink in deep waters, they then find a supply from their Redeemer and Guardian, which enables them to keep their standing. It is the repeated exercise of this that encourages them to rest in their full portion; for in Christ there is faith enough, and of every kind; and this is their glory, that in their Redeemer they have a faith of adherence, of reliance, and of assurance. They are satisfied that every act of faith which they are to put forth is already in Christ Jesus their Lord, and shall be given unto them by the Holy Spirit; they can see, that all salvation work is done in God, and is finished, as to their right to glory; and what remains is only to be done in them by grace of a Divine Operation, and all that grace is already for them in their Redeemer, and shall be made theirs inherently. It is true, they feel but little within; and, if they had more without, they would have no foundation for comfort, all hopes of joy and bliss would vanish and disappear. Oh, how miserable must they be who have no more grace than what they have within! If this were all their portion, they would presently come to poverty and everlasting ruin, but they can bless their God forever, that their portion is in their Redeemer, and not in themselves. They see, in all their contracted love to Christ and his people, that they have in him such a spring of love as can never be exhausted, and can, under the

manifestations of this love to their souls, go forth in strongest desires of love to him and the saints; they can look upon Christ as the most delightful and glorious object, and the saints as the most excellent of the earth. But, alas, their love soon lags both to Christ and his people, a coldness overtakes them, and they become indifferent. Now, this is all their glory, that they have in, and shall have from their Redeemer such a measure of love as will admit of no abatement, but be always perfect, strong and vigorous; but this will be in heaven, and not before. Oh, blessed portion of love in Christ Jesus! Blessed, may we all say, be our God forever and ever! Who will fill his people with as much love as shall rebound to his own glory, the honour of Christ, the praise of the Holy Spirit, and the comfort and good of their own and others' souls, whilst in this world; so that in the Redeemer they have all joy in the Lord, as the Rock of their salvation. But alas, their joys are like their other graces, often gone, or else very low; and, if their present joys, which are intermixed with so many sorrows and troubles were all their portion, what unhappy persons would they be? For they are generally despised in the world, and undeservedly reproached. Now, if they had not before them greater joys in view, they would be of all men the most miserable; but this is the matter of their satisfaction, that they have greater joys in their Redeemer, which they shall partake of beyond the grave, in a world of perfect bliss, where they shall delight themselves forever in their God; and it affords joy to them now through the great and

gracious hand of God upon them, that they are not left to go on without their joys in the Lord; for their joy in him hath been strength to their souls, and that they have been made to sing upon their high places. Their joys fill their souls with earnest longings to be in the perfection of joy and pleasure at God's right hand; they want the whole of their portion at once, and desire to depart to the realms of blessedness, where the fullness of their portion resides; so that, at certain times, their joys have been made to abound. Well, blessed be the Lord God, that all their joys are safe in their Redeemer, for he was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, and for his fellows, his chosen and redeemed ones.

There is also a portion of hope for the blessings of the eternal world. Our hope sometimes run very low, but in Christ we have a full portion, and by the daily communications thereof we are made to hope to the end; and if it was not for these supplies we should fail, and our expectations would perish. Hope is a grace of the lowest rank, and where it is wanting there is nothing to give the soul the least degree of quiet; but this we have found, when all hopes have seemed to fail us, that a door of hope, in a valley of trouble, hath been opened unto us, so that a sufficient portion of this grace is laid up for us in our Redeemer, and we are kept in peace and quiet.

Rest is also our portion in the Lord. Jesus Christ rests in his love to his people, and they rest in him; and their portion of rest and peace in Christ vastly surpasses this present rest and peace. As the

prophet Isaiah saith, "thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Isa.26:3. But the Redeemer's mind was stayed upon the LORD, and he was kept in perfect peace; which perfect peace he possesses and holds, as his people's everlasting portion, which, in some good degree, though not to perfection, they enjoy in this life. Peace is brought home to their consciences by the Spirit of the Lord, in the application of the blood of the cross, and they are made to go on in peaceful paths, as foretastes and samples of what they have in return, were all peace shall be enjoyed forever, and shall be extended to them like a river without the least interruption. Here they rest in God, yet meet with many uneasy hours; but, when they receive their full portion in the other world, they shall rest in the bosom of infinite love, wisdom, faithfulness, power, and immutability forever in a divine tranquility. This is their portion, and all their graces are kept alive by daily communications of love. All this and one thousand times more is the believer's happy portion in their Redeemer. Whatever their state and condition be, they have a sufficiency in Christ for their help and relief, support and consolation. If they are poor, they have a portion of riches, which are great and inexhaustible. "Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will

fill their treasures." Prov.8:18-21. Every faculty shall be enriched, the understanding with light, the will with liberty, the affections with regularity, the judgment with discernment, and the conscience with peace. If naked, they shall have a portion of clothing to cover them, and to hide their shame; if sick or wounded, health and healing; if hungry, food; if thirsty, drink; and in a word, all good things in Christ; and therefore, to him do believers look for all supplies, according to the psalmist, and are abundantly satisfied. "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life, in thy light shall we see light." Psal.36:7-9.

5. A portion of glory. The saints have in hand great things, but far greater in reversion. The hope that is laid up for them in heaven is beyond all their present conceptions; and they know that their Redeemer is, now, in the possession of these felicities, in their names and nature, which are nothing less than mansions of glory, houses not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them. But now I proceed to show the properties of this portion.

1. It is an ancient portion. It was put into the hands of Jesus Christ before the world began, as manifestly appears from II Timothy 1:9, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not

according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." This plainly shows that our God and Father was pleased to give unto us in the hands of our Federal Head, grace and glory. The Lord Jesus Christ saith, that he had a glory with the Father before the world was, but this glory of Christ was veiled, whilst he was in this world; it was a glory that he did not then possess, and therefore it could not be his essential glory, as Jehovah. It was then, a glory which he had, as Head of his church, unto which he was then going, as the God-Man, and the same glory from which he came; and this demonstrates that he had in possession for his people both grace and glory, before the highest part of the dust of the world was made. Blessed be God, it is not a portion of yesterday that is conferred upon us at believing. No, no, for our believing, as hath been shown, is a part of our portion. Our portion then hath on its side the glories of antiquity, which proves, that the elect were very early upon the records of love; and that their God and Father hath very highly expressed his love, in the rich provision he hath made for them in their Redeemer. The happy portion given them in Christ was before their open existence or appearance in this world; yea, before the frame of nature was fixed, which renders it amazing, and fills the heaven born soul with such joys and holy ecstasies of delight, that make him break out in great admiration of this ancient love, and say, "oh, wondrous love, which took its rise before time, yea, from eternity, that laid up for me

in my Redeemer all the treasures of grace and glory! Oh, that I had more of this blessed portion in my soul, then would I bless and praise, admire and adore, more than I do, the wonders of God's ancient love in giving to me such a happy portion in my Redeemer before his works of old; but, alas, I must wait until I come to the original of my joy in portion, where I will praise, love, and adore, without weariness or fainting, forever.

2. It is a free and gracious portion. It is given by the donor without money and without price. The Saints portion of grace and felicity is given unto them, without any consideration of their tears, prayers, or any other duties whatsoever; for none of them were ever designed as the causes of any of their enjoyments in Christ. No, for what God gives to his people he gives like himself; he doth not look out of himself for the reasons of his gifts to his chosen in Christ; for if he did, he would not be the efficient cause of his own grace and favour, which carries in it a very dreadful consequence, for it strikes at his Sovereign Independency. I cannot see that there could be any cause in us of our own graces; for, before grace there is nothing but sin and wickedness, which can be no cause of grace, nor of our portion from the Lord. We must conclude then that our portion is free; and it further appears to be so from its antiquity, before our existence; and consequently our goodness could not be the cause of this portion.

Objection. But it was given upon the considerations of our goodness. Answer. From hence

it would follow that there is a good in the creature that never was in Christ, nor derived from him; for, if my goodness was the condition of my portion in Christ, then my goodness is not that portion, unless my portion be the condition of my portion, which is very irrational. My portion of glory also is given unto me freely; I cannot purchase it, for all my graces at best are but preparations for that state. If any call this a condition, their heaven and glory are conditional too; but heaven and its blessedness are not conditional in a strict and proper sense. Indeed, we cannot be saved without grace, yet we are not saved for it; and though we cannot come to heaven without the graces of the Spirit, yet we come there without conditions, because we are brought there not by our own doings, {for the graces of the Spirit are not ours,} but for him who wrought them; so that my portion in Christ is a free and unconditional portion. This consideration leads me to admire the goodness of my God, because it is the security of my peace and solid joy; for, when I seriously consider what my God hath done for me in giving unto me such a portion of grace and glory in my Redeemer, upon the consideration of nothing done in me, or by me, I am filled with steady and unshaken pleasure, for as nothing in me could be the cause of my portion in Christ, so nothing done by me shall occasion the forfeiture thereof. The soul that is blessed with a divine and heavenly principle in these conceptions will praise and glorify it's a Heavenly Benefactor.

3. It is a safe and sure portion, it is out of the reach of all our enemies; neither sin, devils, nor men

can take it from us, for it is laid up for us in Christ where these thieves cannot break through and steal. They do sometimes, nay, very often, plunder us of all our joys and comforts, and carry away from us those golden delights which we enjoy in our passage to the world of honour and renown before us; but, glory be to his great name, they only rob us of a few of our traveling conveniences, whilst our portion is safe before us, in our Father's house. "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel." Col.1:5. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." I Pet.1:3-5.

4. It is an inexhaustible portion which can never be spent. It is such a bank, a mighty fund, that let us draw ever so much, as much and as long as we will, our portion is still the same, and is in no way impoverished. I have read of a Spanish ambassador, that, coming to see the treasury of Saint Mark, in Venice, that is so much cried up in the world, he fell a-groping at the bottom of the chests and trunks, to see whether they had any bottom, and being asked the reason why he did so, answered, "in this among other things, my master's treasure differs from yours, and excels yours, in that

his hath no bottom as yours have," alluding to the mines in Mexico, Peru, and other parts of the Western India. Oh, may not believers say, that they have looked into the portion and riches of time and sense, and perceive that they have all an end, that they may soon come at the bottom of them; but that their own portion in the Lord Jesus Christ can never be fathomed, nor the bottom thereof measured.

5. It is a pleasant portion. It is pleasant at present; and it is pleasant in time to come. Our portion here is attended with such delights in inexpressible joys that all the scepters, thrones and diadems of the whole world cannot yield pleasures to equal them; and the joys and pleasures, that our portion at present gives us, influence us to despise when set in competition with our portion, all the glory of mortals, and that it will be pleasant in the world to come, hath been evinced at large.

6. It is an eternal portion; for when millions of ages shall have rolled over our heads in that bright and everlasting day, in which our sun shall never go down, we have then as long to dwell in the blessed fruition of our God, the enjoyment of whom will be in the Man Christ Jesus, our everlasting portion; where we shall celebrate the praises and glories of the Ever Blessed and Almighty Trinity, as our one only living and true God, and be encircled in the arms of essential love, forever and ever. Amen.

**FINIS**

**SCRIPTURE AND REASON,  
THE STANDARD OF ALL  
RELIGION.**

**A  
SERMON**

**Preached at Redcross-Street,  
London  
April 5, 1743.**

**By SAMUEL STOCKELL,**  
Minister of the Gospel; not of Men, neither by  
Man, but by Jesus Christ, and Pastor of a  
Church of Christ in London.

*"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak  
not according to this word, it is because there  
is no light in them." Isa.8:20.*

**ORIGINALLY PRINTED – 1743.  
COMPLETE & UNABRIDGED**

**Supralapsarian Press**  
**[www.sovereignredeemerbooks.com](http://www.sovereignredeemerbooks.com)**  
**2018 EDITION**

***"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." I Thes.5:21.***

These words are part of an Epistle written by the great Apostle of the Gentiles to the Church of God at Thessalonica, which was a City of Macedonia, where Paul, by preaching the Gospel of Christ Jesus, was owned to gather the Children of Grace into the Fellowship of Jesus and one another; the Lord being pleased to succeed him in almost all his Labours, for wherever he came, store of Converts fell to the Lord, who were brought out of Darkness into God's most marvelous Light, and translated out of the Kingdom of Satan into that of God's dear Son.

This Epistle contains most of the fundamental Doctrines of the Covenant of Grace, and those necessary duties which are incumbent upon all the Followers of the Lamb, and are by Grace their Practice. We have a large account of the Apostle's preaching at this City of Thessalonica, and the difficulties that attended it, in the 17th Chapter of the Acts, at the Beginning. He came to Thessalonica, and went to the Jews Synagogue and preached Christ to them, and the success of his pious labour, we have in verse 4, "some believed." Grace conquers all before it; brings down all the powers of the soul to the feet of a victorious Jesus, and beats down all the strongholds of Hell and Sin; but in the 5th, we have the difficulties that he met with here, "but the Jews which believed not, moved with envy." Mark, if the preaching of a precious Redeemer does not melt the soul into love with him, and into a holy

hatred with Self and Sin, there is nothing to be expected, but a heart rising against Christ, his Truths and Servants, which will soon break out. See how they took "unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people," and indeed the servants of the Devil are good for nothing else, and then they are in their own element. Oh, how are they pleased to make a stand against the Gospel of the Lamb! Well, they set the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people, &c., to expose these servants of Christ to their rage, but they were disappointed, verse 6, "and when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." This was cutting work, they could not bear to be turned upside down, they liked to stand upon their old corrupt bottom of sinful nature without disturbance; this is their rest, because they know not that the Gospel is designed to bring Peace upon all them that receive it in the Love of it; and in verse 7, they charge them as Enemies to the State, because they preached that Jesus was a King; this they construed as an impeachment of Caesar's title and honour; but this they only made use of as an handle to move the Rulers against them and their Doctrine, not from any great affection they had for Caesar or his Government; and this hath been a plea against the meek followers of the Lamb in all Ages.

But that Christ is a King is plain, for he is King of kings and Lord of lords; he it is by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, although they know it not; he is the saints King, and they own him as their rightful Sovereign. These things are a trouble to wicked Men, evil Rulers can't bear them; and as there was no Law against them, they took security of Jason and the other, and let them go. God is pleased often in the course of Providence to cause his own People to find favour in the Eyes of their Enemies, and they are not so ill-beloved in the World, but they can find security for their peaceable deportment. Upon this, the brethren sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea, and when they came there, they presently fell to preaching the Word of the Lord among them, as in verse 10. These Servants of the Lord made use of every opportunity to serve the Most High in the Gospel of his Son; they were afraid of no earthly Powers, for they had received the Gospel into their Hearts, and a Commission from Christ to preach it; and therefore were resolved to make it known at all events. Well, the success at Thessalonica was considerable, for here was a living Church gathered out of a dead World. See the 1st chapter of this Epistle, and Verse 1. Here the Apostle directs himself to them, as a Church in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Observe, they were a Church that stood in the Father's Love, and in the Son's Grace, and knew it by the influences of the Holy Ghost, whom he could remember at the Throne of Grace, with Thankfulness. They were no common rabble, or mob

of swine, under a Profession of Religion got together in common form. No, no, for they were such as had felt the sweet effects of ancient Love upon their Hearts, by the Divine Energy; as such were proper stones for the building of Christ's Church, they came with pleasure to a rejected Foundation; to such is this Epistle directed, these conquered ones, where Christ had obtained a victory. The word Thessalonica, according to some, signifies the other victory of God; and so every City, Town, Family, or Individual, is a Thessalonica; another victory of God, where Grace has changed the Heart, and though we live in a dark day, in which the godly Man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from among the Children of Men, yet blessed be the Name of the Lord, he had, he hath, and ever will have a Seed to serve him in this World, to prove the Victory of his Grace; and they only shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation.

In this chapter, in which is our text, we have a particular account of Christ's coming to Judgment, with respect to the uncertainty of the Time, as a thief in the night, when he will be least expected; just like the drowning of the old World. They were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in Marriage, they had no thought of Destruction, they were regaling themselves in the things of time and sense, until Noah entered into the Ark; and then the Flood came and took them all away. Thus the Day of the Lord will come suddenly; a Day of rebuke and anger to the Wicked, but it will be a Day of joy and triumph to the Righteous. Was this to be the Day that our dear Lord would unpin the fabric of this World in,

melt the elements with fervent Heat, and the Heavens depart as a scroll. It would be a blessed Day to all those, who have washed their Conversation, and made it white in the Blood of the Lamb; the pleasing prospect of this awful but sweet day of the Lord, is altogether owing to free and undeserved Grace through the Blood of a Redeemer, by an effectual Work of the Spirit, upon the Heart of a poor Sinner; so that such cannot be surprised at its coming, for they are Children of the Light and of the Day, who watch and are sober, and pray that they may not with the foolish Virgins slumber and sleep; grow cold with the empty Professors of their Time, and join with them in their Sins and Formalities, and what they call their innocent diversions; but that they may bear a constant testimony against every Evil, and all appearances thereof, by putting on the breast-plate of Love and Faith, and for a helmet the Hope of Salvation; this will cover their heads in the Day of their Warfare, for they are called forth to war against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and that which animates them to the fight, is what is laid down in verse 9, "for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Oh, this is a moving consideration indeed, a most strong and powerful motive. What, has not God appointed me to wrath, but to obtain the heavenly glory by the dying Lamb? Oh, that I could love him more and serve him better! What design such a one as I am for blessedness! Oh, what am I, and what is my father's house? My father is an Amorite, and my

mother is an Hittite, Ezek.16:3, and I an Assyrian ready to perish, and deserve nothing but hell and wrath forever! Oh, then be glory to his excellent name to all eternity.”

The apostle goes on in the next place to inculcate some of those relative duties incumbent upon the saints, verses 14-22; they were to warn the unruly, to comfort the feebleminded, to support the weak, &c., and in everything to be thankful, for this was the will of God in Christ Jesus. Thankfulness for our enjoyments is but our reasonable service; and yet this is such a service, that we cannot perform without the Divine Aid; and thus in the 19<sup>th</sup> verse, the apostle exhorts us not to quench the Spirit. We find then that the Spirit may be quenched or stifled, but not as some expound it, that the Spirit works and strives in the heart of every man, and is baffled by the most, and his work put out; but by the quenching the Spirit, we are to understand it in others; false professors doing all they can to put out the light and experience, and stifle the testimony of those that belong to Christ; which is the Practice of almost all the Denominations in this sinful Age, in which religion is made a Trade. A testimony from Heaven is with them cant and enthusiasm; the workings of the Holy Spirit are treated with the utmost Contempt by most at this Day; yet to the Heirs of Promise, they are most delightful and glorious, and are the very Life and Soul of all practical Religion; it is the fruit of everlasting Love, and the earnest of immortal Glory; and though others strive to quench it, yet it shall never be

extinguished. We cannot do it ourselves, blessed be God, his Work cannot be let. Oh, we have found it so, glory to the Lamb forever, for by this work the soul is melted down and cast into an evangelical mold, and comes forth a new Creature, with all new Principles; for he saith, "behold I make all things new," a new spirit, a new heart, all our powers made capable to love and serve him; so that we cannot quench this mighty work, though others would; the Devil would, our Devilish part in us would, the World would, but none can; for greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World. Oh, sweet Consideration indeed! They have attempted it, as in the case of the martyr Stephen, who tells the Jews, that they did always resist the Holy Ghost, as did their fathers; they resisted the prophets, and the Holy Ghost in them; yea, and even Christ himself; they had not the Spirit in themselves, and as such they could not resist him; and this sense is put out of all doubt by the context, "despise not prophesyings," that is, treat not anything either with neglect or contempt that appears to come from the Lord, though it may appear mean; yet look into it and compare it with the Scriptures, and be not over hasty to pass a judgment; and so we come to our text, "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." I Thes.5:21.

This is an exhortation to a necessary duty, to prove all things; and a direction for the right improvement of this duty, to hold fast that which is good. It is our duty to bring all doctrines and sentiments of men to the standard of God's word and right reason; and that which appears to be

good, to hold it fast, esteem it as most excellent and precious, take nothing upon trust, upon human authority; because the church say it, councils say it, doctors and men of learning say it. No, no, call no man father or doctor upon the earth, "but to the Law and the Testimony," this duty seems to be enjoined because they were too credulous; they, it appears, or like some in our day, ready to believe anything, take up everything that anybody should lay down; they take everything for granted that a good man asserts, right or wrong. Now this is a fault; we should consult our Bibles, and see whether these things are fundamental, which we receive as the Articles of our Faith; this was the noble practice of those at Berea, who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so," Acts 17:11, and in this they were more noble than these Thessalonians. Herein these were reprobable, and they commendable. Search the Scriptures, read them carefully and constantly, and pray for the Spirit to enlighten your understandings, that you may behold the wonders therein contained; try for yourselves, judge for yourselves, for you yourselves must be either saved or damned. But though there are some too credulous among us, yet the far greater part are on the other side the question; who will believe nothing, though ever so well attested, and held forth with the clearest evidence. Things sacred and holy, they always treat with scorn and contempt, and they ever want proofs which are impossible; because they are resolved not to believe. But to them that

believe, God's Word, hath in it a full and sufficient Evidence; and we as helped by Grace, will prove all things by it, and sit down satisfied with its Determination.

In speaking to these words, in a doctrinal way, we shall pursue the following Method. I. What those things are, which we are to prove and try by the Divine Standard; and what this Standard is? II. What it is to hold fast the things that appear by this standard to be good, and here we shall show, how those things are to be treated, that appear to be nought.

We shall begin with the first, viz., what those things are, which we are to prove and try by the Divine Standard; and what this standard is? And here, first of all, let it be considered, that there are some things that may be tried by the Standard of Reason, which are necessary to all Religion; and they are these.

First, the Being of God, and the Perfections of the Divine Essence, may, I conceive, be proved by the light of reason, if duly attended. If we reflectively contemplate the worlds, we see with their several inhabitants, they all loudly tell us, of the eternal Power and Godhead of their Almighty Author; they are continually declaring the first Cause of their being and motions, and that he must be infinitely wise, and that an intelligent Mind appears in all his Works, both of Creation and Providence; for if we look up to the Heavens, and behold their glorious Expansion, with those vast Bodies fixed in them, as the Sun, Moon and Stars, moving in their proper

Orbs, keeping their regular course through days, months and years, silently telling us of a Supreme Being above them all, who orders and directs their steady and unalterable course from one age to another. Besides, if we consider the creatures in this lower world, with their necessary dependence upon each other, and the harmony that is amongst them, we must cry out, "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches." Psal.104:24. Further, if we do but attend to the little world man, that noble structure, how extensively does it speak forth the greatness of the Eternal Mind. He that beholds not an infinite eternal first cause in these things, must willfully shut his eyes; for as to that atheistical notion of the eternity of matter, it is so stupid that it deserves no notice. But yet, that which is still more ridiculous is an imagination that senseless inactive matter that hath no intelligence in it at all, could jumble itself by chance into such beautiful worlds, stored with such a variety of wonderful creatures. These loudly declare the glory of God and show forth his handiwork. From these things reason says there is a God, the great Author of all things, the first Cause, and I think there is hardly a man which can deny it.

Secondly, that all the creation hath a dependence upon this Eternal First Cause may also be proved by the light of nature. I reason thus, if I owe my being to this Great and Holy God; if he is the Author of my Existence, I must be then the subject of his Government, and necessarily at his

disposing; I am then certainly dependent upon him for all things, he has made me, he is the Cause of my existence, and that fully demonstrates that he is a wise and intelligent Agent; as such he must have an end in forming such a Creature. Indeed the light of Nature cannot discover what this end is, yet whatever I am capable of hoping or longing for to make me happy, must be entirely from him, who has given me Life, Breath and Being.

Thirdly, the necessity of a Revelation from this Great Being, in order to our glorifying of him in a right Manner, is clear from the Light of Nature; whatever some of our modern Deists have asserted to the contrary. This controversy I have not time at present to enter into; yet it's plain that as there is a God, and that my utter dependence is upon him, I stand in need of a Revelation from him to direct my ways, and to make the paths of Duty plain, that I may know what is his good and acceptable will, and that I may know how to please him, and do the things agreeable to his Mind. Now, without a positive exhibition of his Pleasure, no Man can tell what will please him, they can never tell what is right or what is wrong, for the light of Nature in these is very defective. Now if I bring this to the bar of Reason, and argue thus; this great God hath made me, I am an intelligent being, and capable in some measure to know and contemplate the perfections of his Holy Nature; which informs me, that I am designed for ends more noble than just to eat and drink, and then to rise up to play, or to spend a few years in Sin and Sorrow; to act the devil and the brute, and to be no

more. Such ends don't become the wisest and the best of Beings, and he cannot act either below or contrary to himself. Now I am certain a revelation from him would set mankind to rights in all these things, which is a full proof of its Necessity. The best moralists among the Philosophers acknowledged this, that there was a God upon whom all nature depended; but what would be pleasing to this God they could not tell. Thus for want of a Revelation, they were plunged into Darkness and Difficulty, and fell into innumerable idolatries and absurdities, all which to my Reason, proves the absolute Necessity of a positive Declaration of the Divine Will.

Fourthly, by the same Law of Reason, we may arrive at some assurance that the Revelation which God has made to us in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament is from himself, and of Divine Authority; and that these carry in them their own Evidence will appear several Ways.

I. The predictions of the sacred Books, which contain an account of things to come; things that were not to have their accomplishment till future Ages, which accordingly fell out at the appointed time, are lively proofs that the Scriptures are the Word of God. For who could tell things to come but God himself; for they were things that had no dependence upon secondary Causes as an Eclipse, which may be an hundred years hence, which we know will happen according to the regular motions of the Planets. But the things of Scripture, are of another Nature; such as the Birth of Christ, the Place where, the Time when, the manner of his Death, his

glorious Exaltation, the overthrow of Jerusalem, and the Destruction of the Temple, all which came to pass; the latter according to Historians, had its Accomplishment in the Days of Julian the Apostate, when there was not one stone left upon another of that stately fabric.

It may be here objected, that these things were foretold by Satan, or some diabolical Powers. Here Atheists and Deists beg what they can never prove, nay what they don't believe; but anything to serve a turn, to put Truth far from them; for how can they tell there are any such beings, as a devil, or demons, or disembodied spirits, but by the Sacred Oracles? A poor shift, and in this they betray their Cause.

If we consider further, reason will tell us that the Word contained in the Bible, is from God or else from Man, from one or the other it must be. Now if it is not the Word of God, it must be the Word of Man; and if it is the Word of Man, it is the Word of good Men or bad Men; the Word of good Men it is not, because they could not come forth with such lies in their mouths, as the Word of the Lord came unto me, and the vision which I did see, and the burden of the word of the Lord, this is altogether inconsistent with their character, for they are his People, Children that will not Lie; which they must have done had these things been the inventions of their own brains, or the forgery of their own Hearts. Well then, the words of good Men they are not, nor the words of bad men they cannot be; for the things they contain are directly opposite to all their interest

and honour, nor could it ever have entered into their Hearts to write such spiritual Things in so heavenly a manner. Besides, can it be supposed that men so vile, lovers only of themselves, would embark in such a cause, in which they were certain to lose their Lives, as an advancement of a new Religion, contrary to the State or Kingdom would certainly expose them to, as it did the Witnesses of Jesus, who loved not their Lives unto the Death. From the whole, it appears to be God's righteous Word, and is well attested, and is the Duty of all wherever it comes to believe it, and own it to be God's Word. These things my reason tells me are true, I prove them to be so at this Standard; and am constrained to say from all my thoughts upon them, that verily there is a God, who hath all Divine Perfections, upon whom universal nature depends; and that there can be no true happiness without a revelation from him; and that he hath in his goodness given to man a complete and full discovery of his will in the Books of the Two Testaments, which carry with them their own evidence to every sober reasonable creature; thus we see how far Christianity is founded on Reason.

II. We are to consider that the most important truths of our Salvation, can be proved only by the Scriptures, and are such as cannot be understood by Reason, but depend wholly upon a positive revelation, and they are these.

First, the Doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity. This is a Truth much controverted in this Day, and by the generality rejected. Men of

learning make light of it, and blasphemously treat it with banter and contempt, and this for no other reason but because they cannot account for it by reason, and so are resolved not to believe it, or anything else, that they can't take in in a rational way. But we should do well to remember that the Scriptures fully declare this Truth, and as such it is my Duty to believe it, and here to lay down my reason at the Feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is indeed, one of the sublime Mysteries of our holy Religion; and that although it is above my reason to comprehend, yet it is not contradictory to it. The Anti-Trinitarians always want such proof as cannot be given, {a full Proof of their Resolution never to believe it,} they must have a Mathematical Demonstration, as appears by their common interrogatives; as how Three can be One and One Three? Or how there can be three Persons in one Essence? How there can be three Subsistences and yet not three Gods? Our answer to these is, we don't know, we cannot tell, but we are certain they are so, because God hath said it in that Word. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." I Jn.5:7. Now these three are in Scripture revealed to us by all personal Characters, and whatsoever is applicable to a Person, is given to these distinct Subsistences. Now, why must not I call these Persons, when everything that is proper to a Person is proper to each of them? They have all the same perfections; and what is attributed to one is also attributed to the two others; as Eternity, Immensity,

the Creation and Government of the Worlds and all things in them; the Salvation and Happiness of the Saints, is owing equally to the Grace of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, though in the Economy thereof, it is variously applied to each Person in the different Parts of it. All the parts of divine worship are equally paid to Christ and the Holy Ghost as to the Father; full proofs of proper Deity from these Revelations. I know that the Father is not the Son, and that the Son is not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost; yet the Holy Ghost and the Son are of the same Essence with the Father, because they are objects of the same Worship, &c. These things appear plain from God's Word, which is the Standard of our Faith and Hope; there are Three, and these Three are One that bear Record in Heaven; three Persons and one God. This is what makes the Anti-Trinitarians quarrel with us, they do not like the word 'Persons,' anything else almost will do. Well, we are not tied to words, so we can but be sure of Truth. If these very ingenious Gentlemen would be so good to find out a better word than Person to apply to the one undivided Three, for my Part, I should willingly embrace it, till then I must beg leave to make use of my old term, Persons, so agreeable to everything that is revealed concerning them. But this text so fully stares their darling Principle in the face that it strikes it dead, and it cannot live beneath its weight. This is what they are fully sensible of, and as such have taken the shortest way with it, viz., implying that it is no part of the Divine Cannon, that it is not in the ancient Copies. If it was not, who may we thank for that, but

their old sires the Arians, for that it was in some of the earliest Copies may be made to appear. Besides, the scope of this part of the Epistle would be very unintelligible, if not downright nonsense without it, and would bear no reading, for the eighth verse must be read in connection with this with the copulative 'and,' and there are three that bear Witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, &c., and there are three supposes and proves that he had been speaking antecedently of another Three; thus it is plain from the scope of the Epistle, that this Text was in the Original, notwithstanding all evasions and wicked arts to establish the contrary, and if we consult maturely the whole Bible, and turn over the sacred pages with a holy assiduity, we shall find this doctrine written as with a sunbeam to the full satisfaction of every humble inquire after truth. But the children of pride, who will not bow their reason to divine mysteries, often fall a prey to Satan and their own lusts; and I have observed these evil seducers to wax worse and worse, and under pretensions to piety and virtue, have been enemies to the life and power of true godliness as appears in the conduct of most of their religious guides. How many of their followers run into all manner of looseness and debauchery? They no sooner come to be men of corrupt minds, but they are presently reprobate to every good word and work, and are filled with a spirit of disdain and envy to those that entertain this fundamental truth, which I think they cannot deny but that it is possible, for I would query whether it be impossible for God to

subsist in three persons, I think there are none can make such an assertion good, nor do I think that any wise or good man would assert any such thing, for they would see the tendency of such an assertion would be an introduction to atheism; and though my reason cannot account for the modus of the Divine Existence, yet it must grant this doctrine of the Trinity to be true, because God has so revealed it. I pass on.

Secondly to consider the doctrine of Eternal Generation as some men call it, for it is a contradiction in terms to be infinite and eternal and yet a subject of an act; namely, generation. This point we will here, God enabling us, prove at the standard, and see if it be good; for this hath been of late a matter of great controversy, and good men have differed about it; for there are such, I apprehend on both sides of the question. This doctrine was received by the 'early church fathers' as appears by their councils, but never revealed in the Book of God; for this method of expounding the doctrine of the Trinity, that one Person in the Godhead begat another, &c., hath been the foundation of all that Arianism, Sabellianism, &c., that hath disturbed the peace of the Church ever since. It would have been well for us if these 'church fathers' could have contented themselves with the bare mind of God in things mysterious, and not have imposed their sense upon us; for there are some now, who with great airs of modesty tell us, that this doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son of God is a profound mystery, yet it must be believed upon

their authority, {and without this blank creedal confession of the same, one cannot become a member of their confessional assemblies, gathered upon the teachings of men, destitute of a true Revelation of Christ upon which his Church is built upon.} But if this is a mystery it is not of the Gospel, for it is one of their own making, and it is plain that they do not believe one word of what they say, for as they go about directly to explain it, they can tell presently how One can be Three and Three One, how the One Infinite and Eternal God begat, &c., the Person of the Son; one begets, the other is begotten, and a third proceeds from both these two; and this is their Trinity and the modus of its existence. Thus their mystery becomes a subject of demonstration, and since they make it by their methods a subject to be accounted for, I would beg leave to ask these gentlemen one plain and modest question, whether he that begets and he that is begotten are of equal date? When pinched with this, they fly to their old refuge, exclaiming that it is a mystery; this is only when the argument fails them, for they will dispute the point as long as possible they can; well then, he that is begotten cannot be co-eternal with the begetter, and this is the ground of the Arian triumph, and they never desire any greater concession for the support of their scheme, than that Christ, as God, is begotten of the Father, and upon this concession, the Orthodox have never been able to support the truth against their opposition. If we ask further what was begotten, some of these gentlemen cannot tell us; but some more penetrating than the rest of their

brethren, say that Deity did not beget Deity, for that would be a multiplication of Deity, and this would plunge us into Tritheism. Asked again, what was begotten? Why, the Person of the Son of God, not his Deity, but his Person in that Deity; mark it, Deity could not be begotten, because it would multiply Deity; but Personality is begotten, therefore the Persons in the Godhead are multiplied, and so each Person is not Infinitely Eternal, in accordance with their scheme. Besides, it destroys the immutability of the Divine Being, in that it changes the modus of his existence; well, here is a Person begotten without Essence, and yet in an Essence, and this is separating the Person of Christ from the Divine Nature, which is little better than the blasphemy of the Arians and their accomplices; and it is setting up a Person without an Essence, which is very ridiculous and foolish; or if any Essence, it can be but a finite one, themselves being judges, because an Infinite Essence could not be begotten, and this is Arianism with a witness. In a word, the generation of the Second Person in the Godhead overthrows the Eternity, Self-Existence, and Independency of his Person.

Let us briefly attend to what these persons have to say for themselves, and the Scriptures made use of by them to prove their point. The first is, Hebrews 1:6, "and again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." This cannot be brought as a proof of Christ's Deity, for that's denied by them before; this Son then, the object of divine worship,

so distinguished from Deity, the Deity is not the object of divine worship by their own hypothesis; the first begotten is the propounded object of my worship, but the first begotten was not the Godhead, but a person in it, and therefore the person and not the Godhead is the object of my worship. Oh, dangerous opinion! For my part I heartily believe Christ to be the Son of God, and that the Son of God is the Infinite and Eternal Jehovah, and is with the Father and the Holy Ghost the Object of Divine worship; yet I must believe that he was God before he was a Son, and that he was the infinite Jehovah before ever he was generated. Now by Christ's being the Begotten, the First Begotten, and the Only Begotten, we are, I humbly conceive, to understand the Father's eternal designation of Him to his Office; for the execution of which, he was to assume our nature, take it into union with his Infinite and Unbegotten Person; this design and execution of it was the begetting of Jesus Christ – God, Man, Mediator. Here the Person of Christ, as Mediator, is the First and Only Begotten of the Father, and as such is the Object of all Divine adoration, because the two Natures in this wonderful begotten Person are inseparable. Now can it from all this be supposed, that the Divine Nature of Christ, or an Infinite Person in the Deity, was from eternity begotten, without relation either to his Humanity or Office, I apprehend not. Thus we see how we are to conceive of Christ's Sonship, and it appears that this doctrine is very far from any dishonorable or depreciating thoughts of the Sonship of Jesus Christ,

as it secures his Godhead against the Arian, and his distinct personality as an infinite, eternal, self-existent, independent, uncreated and unbegotten Person in the Trinity, eternally subsisting with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the same undivided Essence against the Sabellians; and we think by this method, that we are better able to maintain the doctrine of the Trinity and the Godhead of Jesus Christ, than by the common scheme of eternal generation. If in this we are weak, I hope that our stronger brethren will pardon us, when we do assure them that we do not publish these things because we affect novelty, but with an hearty and sincere regard to the honour and glory of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, our opponents tell us in their opinion that the second Psalm, verse 7, fully proves eternal generation, "I will declare the decree, the LORD hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." I grant it proves Christ's Sonship, but whether in their sense or ours let us enquire; for my part, it appears by the context, I think to every impartial and intelligent reader to have relation to Christ as Mediator, and not to him as an infinite God, absolutely considered; for first, this act of generation was the subject of a Decree; and secondly, this Person so generated, was to pray to the Father for some additional glories, "ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," verse 8; now can it be supposed that Christ, as the great God, wanted such a grant from the Father, who as such had a right and title

originally to all things as their great Creator? Nor can I find in Scripture, any one text to favour the Doctrine we are militating against; therefore it will not bear the Standard, and as such not good, but an Arian Doctrine, and now the matter of their glory, though once brought into the Church by Orthodox Hands, who had more honesty of heart than clearness of judgment, as appears from the History of those Times. If I must believe their Doctrine, I must believe that Christ Jesus the Lord, is neither coeternal, coequal nor coessential with the Father. I have shown in my "Redeemer's Glory Unveiled," that he which begets must be before the begotten, in order of time, and superior, in order of Essence or Nature. Nay, it is impossible that the begotten of God should be of the same Essence with God, because self-existence, eternity and independence are the inseparable properties of an Infinite Essence; so that it is plain according to this notion, that Christ is neither eternal nor self-existent, for if he was eternal he could not be begotten, and yet to be eternal is proper to the Infinite Essence, but if Jesus Christ was begotten, {according to their scheme,} therefore he could not be infinitely eternal, independent, nor self-existent. These consequences render this doctrine disagreeable to Truth. This act of eternal generation has never been defined to us, by any of those learned gentleman that espouse it by tradition from their fathers; they would do well to speak out, and tell us whether it be an imminent act or a transient act, or what, &c.? Many things more might have been offered, but I

must pass it for I cannot hold it fast, because by the Word of Truth does not appear to be good.

Thirdly, the doctrine of election is what we will next bring to the standard, for this too is much called in question, and few believe it to be a truth of the Gospel in this dark day in which Providence hath cast our lot. The query is, whether God hath chosen men to salvation in Christ in a way of absolute Grace? Some think not, and they tell us that God loves all men with an equal love and has designed salvation and glory for every man. If this indeed is the case then all men must be saved, or else God's design is frustrated; but all men are not saved, wherefore this so immediately strikes at the perfections of God that it must be rejected with abhorrence. Let us see if the word of God as well as spiritual reason does not furnish us sufficiently with proofs of a contrary nature. It is our mercy that we have the standard to go to which informs us that God chose some in Christ before the foundation of the world. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph.1:4. It is a love from eternity, an ancient love, a love absolute and free, and what shall we say to these things, if God is for us, who can to any purpose be against us? If God has revealed this, his love to his own, how dare any dispute it? But we live in a rebellious and caviling day in which some men think 'tis their excellency to oppose the sovereign truths of God. They call it politeness and learning, a serious thoughtfulness, when they make proud man the first cause of his

own bliss; for they say that all men were appointed to Salvation, we say but some, for what we assigned above; and it is further evident, that all are not chosen to Salvation, because they are not chosen to the Sanctification of the Spirit; every one chosen to Happiness, is chosen to Holiness by a work of powerful Grace upon the Heart, whereby it is brought to see the Evil of Sin, to hate it and loath it, and to fear the Punishment that is due to it, to declare all hopes of Peace and Acceptation with God, from all that it is capable of doing, and to rely on Christ exclusively, and to hope for all from his Blood and Righteousness, and to be longing more and more after Christ, and for the Day of his appearing, when we shall be with him and see him as he is. Observe here how the means and the end are connected together, viz., that he that shall enjoy Glory as the fruit of electing Love shall feel the Operation of Grace, as the forerunner of this Glory.

They tell us further, that God has appointed no man to Wrath, for this they say would be an impeachment of his Goodness, and represents him as the most cruel and tyrannical Being. I apprehend, so far as I am skilled in this controversy, that this is the only show of an Argument that ever was made upon the Remonstrants side. I confess that there is the color of an Argument in it, for their scheme strikes at all the other attributes of God, {which I think I am able by Divine Aid to make apparent,} and this too more a great deal than the Calvinistical scheme, for by their scheme it is possible that none may be saved; for his goodness that they talk so

loudly of leaves all mankind in a liableness to eternal damnation. This is the Arminian idea of the goodness of God, whilst the Calvinists tell us, that God's goodness is certainly extended to thousands and millions, and to such numbers that no man can number, who by this goodness, shall through Christ and Grace safely and unavoidably come to Heaven and Happiness with Christ to all eternity. Now which of these two schemes most impeach the goodness of the Lord? I leave to the saints to judge; besides, we have the positive word of God on our side, as in the ninth verse of this chapter, in which our text saith, "for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thes.5:9. Now if God had appointed none to wrath, the apostle had said just nothing at all; and the Apostle Jude tells us by the Holy Spirit in the fourth verse of his epistle, "for there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," which condemnation we have in the thirteenth verse, "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." Now from the Standard it appears, that God did not design the Salvation of every man, and yet at last will be clear when he judges, and overcomes when he condemns.

Objection. Doth not the Scripture say, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together,

even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt.23:37. Nothing can be a fuller proof of universal Love and Redemption; Christ would, but they would not; its most plain that man's Salvation is left to his own Choice, and that God wills the Salvation of them that are not saved. In answer to this Objection let it be observed, that there is a third person in the text, "how often would I have gathered your Children together, and you would not." It is not said how often would I have gathered you and you would not; nor is it how often would I have gathered your Children, and your Children would not; so that those Christ intended to gather, were not the persons who made the Opposition, but Jerusalem, not her Children. Jerusalem is here to be understood figuratively, the Place is put for the People; the Great, the Learned, and the Rich, are principally intended; and by their Children, we are to understand some poor godly souls amongst them, that were brought into love with the Lord Jesus Christ, the number of which were one hundred and twenty as appears afterwards. Now these were gathered into a body, to manifest the name and glory of Christ; the elect Jews were all brought unto Jesus Christ, and the rest their houses were left to them desolate, they fell in the common calamity of those times. But these taking Christ's direction, fled to the mountains and were safely gathered together as the apostle Peter well observes, I Peter 1:1-9, an ample proof of their election and effectual calling; and by this means the Gospel was sent to distant lands, to answer the great

designs of love and grace in the salvation of poor souls, so that we see that these were gathered notwithstanding all the opposition of Jerusalem; so that this text does not in the least serve the purpose for which it is brought forth, and all those texts which are brought to prove the love of God to be the same to every man, it's most evident prove no such thing. For the conclusion of this particular, I would only ask our antagonists whether God is an Intelligent Being? They will grant I apprehend, that he is, for the consequences of a denial are horrid, and I think there are none so hardy. Well, if God is a Being intelligent, most infinitely wise, then in the creation of all things he had most certain ends in view which can or cannot be frustrated. Frustrated they cannot be, because then his Wisdom and his Power would be both impeached; we must then conclude that the end of the Lord is certain, and can never be overthrown. Now pray what is the end of all the human race? It is either happiness or misery; that some are happy and others miserable is what is granted on most hands, and that forever. These are the ends of all, and so necessarily the ends first designed; if not, then we set God below the human species, who in all actions discovers the just laws of intelligence; such ideas of God would tend to render him a Being most contemptible. Oh, what cause then have we to bless the Lord that his Grace and not our goodness is the ground of our election, and that our election is the ground of all our goodness and grace, and that our goodness and grace is the evidence of our election only, and that his grace enables us to

fly to Christ, to fly from sin, and to fly to the paths of holiness, and to cleave to the Lord Jesus Christ; to his Person, to his Righteousness, to his Precious Blood and healing wounds, as to our chiefest good and glory.

Fourthly, the doctrine of salvation by works, we will now bring to the standard and prove it there; this indeed being the prevailing Doctrine of this sinful and loose Age, Salvation by Works, and yet resolved to do none. This is the Doctrine of the Romanists, and hath its Confirmation from the Council of Trent, but now the Protestant Doctrine of Nations, though it hath no Foundation in God's Word; they tell us that our works are meritorious, that our moral works merit Grace, and that Grace merits happiness; these are what they call the merits of Congruity, and the merits of Condignity; but our Protestant Doctors speak not so full, they seem to mince the matter by giving it a new Name, whilst they hold the same Thing; they say, they are conditions; if so, they are the procuring causes of Happiness. As such the Doctrine is damnable; for it makes the Creature and its Works, the first Cause of Bliss; the Grace of God and the Blood of Jesus is excluded in the Salvation of poor Sinners. If it should be objected that by Conditions, no more is meant, than that without the works of holiness no man can enter into Heaven, we are agreed, we say so too; but many of our modern Protestants have carried this point further, and tell us, that if we sincerely obey the Precepts of Christ, we shall be saved. This is in fact nothing but Merit, call it by what Names,

you please; and I am sure I may go as safe to Heaven by the Merits of the Church of Rome, as by the Merits of any Protestant Church in the World, for they are both agreed to exclude Jesus Christ and his Righteousness, as the meritorious Cause of our Salvation; and as to our being holy, godly, righteous, &c., we look upon them as the result of our Salvation, and in no sense whatsoever the Causes thereof, as some false teachers affirm, who neglect Jesus Christ. For in all their administrations, we never hear anything of Christ from them. This Doctrine of Salvation by Works is repugnant to the Truth, and will not bear the Standard, which tells us, that by Grace we are saved through Faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God; not of works, least any man should boast. By Grace are ye saved; i.e., by Grace in Election, Redemption and Regeneration; through Faith. Here the Believer takes in all this Grace unto a world of eternal Life; this Divine Principle is indeed from Heaven, and is a plant which grows not in Nature's Garden. It is not of ourselves, it is the work of efficacious Grace, as well as the Donation of Sovereign Love; so that Salvation from first to last is of pure Grace, and a glorious Reason is assigned for it, not of works lest any Man should boast; so that the Doctrine of Salvation by Works, lays a Foundation for Creature Glory, which God will have excluded, therefore it cannot be true.

The Apostle also tells us, in II Corinthians 5:21, that God made Christ to be Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the

Righteousness of God in him. He was made Sin in a Law Sense, all Sin was laid upon him; he was accounted the Sinner, Sin was transferred to him, so that he stood in the Law, Room, Place and Stead of Sinners, and as such bore all the Punishment due to their Sins; this was done by the mutual Agreement of the Father and the Son in Covenant, and by this was Christ made Sin. And, oh, glorious Grace, by the same method are Sinners made the Righteousness of God in him. We are Righteous, both in the Eye of Law and Justice; not by an Infusion of Holiness, but by a transferring, a making over, or imputing the Righteousness of Christ to us; as he was made Sin, we are made Righteous. Now he was not made Sin by Infusion, no by no means, for he did no Sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth; so we are made Righteous in a vindictive Sense only, by the Obedience of Christ for us, and not by the Grace of Christ in us; all which fully proves that Salvation cannot be by Works. Then we conclude that this Doctrine cannot be good, for it will not bear the Standard; it is reprobate silver, it must be cast away as good for nothing, for it can never be our Passport into a World of eternal Glory, because it is a Doctrine that sets up fallen Man, makes him the first Cause of his own Salvation, strikes at the Independency of God, cashiers Holy Grace, and makes the Blood and Righteousness of our lovely Jesus useless things.

Fifthly, the Doctrine of Efficacious Grace; this is what we will prove in this Place. Indeed the Pelagians and their Brethren the Arminians will treat this Doctrine with Contempt; but God's Word and

the Experiences of all the Saints will confound them. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:13. A Disposition to Goodness and a Power to act are both from the Lord, and owing to his distinguishing Favour; for if there was no Distinction in the Favour of God to his Creatures, then the Difference in the Creatures must arise from the Power of Nature, and not from the Grace of God; for if all Creatures have the same Power and Measure of Grace, then no Difference can arise from it; and we must then conclude we make ourselves to differ, quite contrary to the Apostles Doctrine and our daily Experiences. This is a Doctrine that blows up the bladder of our vain minds to hellish Pride and Folly, which will ever long be pricked to our Joy or Pain forever, for our God will stain the Pride of all Glory, either in Love or Wrath. If we have then a will and an heart to love the blessed Jesus, a power to trust and depend upon him, and strong affections to him, with earnest desires after the continual enjoyment of him, we may justly conclude it to be the special work of God in us, and at such seasons we are readily disposed to give him all the Glory. "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory," Psal.115:1, this then appears to be good by the Standard.

Sixthly, the Doctrine of the Saints final and total Apostasy is what we will now bring to the trial, which I conceive will not bear the Standard; for that assures us, that he loves his own forever, for he will never forsake the work of his own Hands. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will

not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer.32:40. Now the Doctrine under examination is the reverse of this, for it affirms that a child of God may become a limb of the Devil; be a member of Christ today, and be turned into hell tomorrow; this Opinion cannot then be good. Besides, it overthrows the Faithfulness and Immutability of God, for every one allows that whilst a soul is gracious, it is the object of Divine Favour, and if it may be lost it then becomes the subject of Divine Wrath. This opinion has a direct tendency to introduce Atheism, and to destroy all the Peace and Comfort of God's Children.

Seventhly, the Doctrine of full Assurance of Faith of our Interest in the Love of God to our Souls, that Christ died for us, that he is gone into Glory for us, and that he will come again and take us to himself forever; this is the solid ground of all our Joy and Comfort, and the true spring of all religious Worship. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Heb.10:22. A poor soul can neither have Peace within, nor perform Duty aright, unless it can claim God in Christ as its own God. It is propriety only that can give Pleasure, the still voice of the Holy Ghost, the secret kisses of Christ's Mouth, bring with them unutterable Joys; to take away this Truth, is to take away the Life and Glory of all Religion, and to rob the Saint of all his Consolation, and to make all Religion nothing but mere Drudgery.

Eighthly and lastly, the Doctrine of sinful Liberty, or to Sin because Grace doth abound. This I think will soon be condemned by the Standard, for it cannot bear the touchstone of God's Word, it only hath its Foundation in the Works of Darkness; for the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation teacheth us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and godly in this present evil World. Titus 2:11,12. That Man who can use the precious Doctrines of the Gospel of the Grace of God, as an occasion and encouragement to Sin, is of all Men the most wicked. He that can make light of the righteous and holy Law of God, and say the Doctrines of the Gospel leads him to it, I will with the Apostle say, that such a one's damnation is just, for Grace does not destroy our obligation to Duty, but as it is revealed, is rather an help to the right performance of it. If I know anything of this Grace, I know it will make a Man hate every false way, and love every good Word and Work, and under the full displays of it, the holy soul had rather die than dishonour his God by Transgression.

Come we now in the second place to show what it is to hold fast those Things which appear by the Standard to be good, and here the Antithesis, or how we are to treat those things which discover themselves to be nought. And here let us show what it is to hold fast that which is good.

I. Now to hold fast that which is good is to believe it firmly; we must have a strong Faith in them as the very Truths of God, or we shall soon let them go. If once we come to harbor and entertain

doubts about the great Truths of Heaven, we are but one remove from giving them up.

II. To embrace them affectionately. Truth must be received in the love of it; for where it hath but a cold Reception, it will be treated with Indifference, and will upon Occasions be parted with. Many there are that receive it into their Heads but not into their Hearts, and for want of Root, all dies and dwindles into nothing, but to hold it fast is to love it dearly. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart, for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts." Jer.15:16.

III. To contend for them earnestly; we are commanded so to do. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 1:3. There are some among us that cry out against all Disputations, which I think is quite contrary to this advice of the Apostle; the reason I conceive is, because they lack the Truth, and therefore they chose to be silent, but a Soul born from above, who sees the Glory of Truth, cannot be quiet when it is opposed and blasphemed, but will vindicate it to the uttermost bounds of his capacity, not for the sake of disputing, but for the Truths sake only.

IV. To hold it constantly; they buy the Truth at any rate, and are resolved to part with it upon no Consideration; there are too many at this Day who make light of all the precious Truths of Christ Jesus,

and after they have given them Entertainment many years, can easily give them up at last; but a good man cannot, for the truths of God are the springs of his joy and hope; the doctrines of Election, Redemption by the blood of Christ, and Efficacious Grace, are what gives him the highest degree of pleasure, and thus he is therefore resolved in Christ's strength to keep them unto the end.

But, by way of antithesis, how we are to treat those things which discover themselves to be false; and, we must give no credit to them, but look upon them as the forgeries of Satan and wicked men, and as most injurious to the honour of the God of Truth. We must despise them and treat them with all just contempt and scorn, whilst we pity and pray for them who have embraced them. We must dispute them down if possible, we must make all the stand against them we can, in the Name and Spirit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must give them no Entertainment at all, we must not so much as receive them nor their Propagators into our Houses, nor bid them God speed; if we do, we are Partakers of their evil deeds. May the good Lord help us to hate all evil and fly from it, and to love all good and cleave to it, that we may glorify him here, and praise him to all Eternity. Amen.

**FINIS**

**A**  
**CONFESSION OF FAITH**  
**Delivered**

Publicly, at the Time of my Election to  
be Assistant to Mr. Samuel Harris,  
Minister in Goodman's-Fields.

November the 30<sup>th</sup>, 1729.

**By SAMUEL STOCKELL.**  
Published at the Desire of  
many that heard it.

LONDON

**ORIGINALLY PRINTED – 1730.**  
**COMPLETE & UNABRIDGED**

**Supralapsarian Press**  
**[www.sovereignredeemerbooks.com](http://www.sovereignredeemerbooks.com)**  
**2018 EDITION**

## THE PREFACE

The following articles of Christian Doctrine have ever been my firm belief since my acquaintance with the Scriptures, because, in my apprehension, they accord therewith; and therefore hope, by the grace of God, to abide in the belief of them unto my life's end. The following articles of Christian Practice I have for the same reason endeavored to conform my life unto, and purpose by Divine Grace assisting, to persevere in them so long as I shall live. May the Great God of Heaven, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, follow with his blessing this open Confession of my Faith for the satisfaction of all persons into whose hands it may fall. But if in any point or points thereof I have receded from the commonly received Protestant Doctrine, I shall, upon conviction, openly retract it.

Samuel Stockell  
Haberdafters-Square  
Grape-Street, London, January 18, 1730.

# **THE CONFESSION OF FAITH DELIVERED, &c.**

## **Article I**

I do believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are of Divine Inspiration, and are a perfect rule of Faith and Manners. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim.3:16-17. These sufficiently teach us how to live and act, and are preferable to all human science, because of the matter they contain which is most heavenly, divine and supernatural. They lead us into such things as do far exceed the reach of man's reason, and which it was impossible for any man to counterfeit and feign; but they are so correspondent to reason, that no man can have a just cause to call them into question; and they are the infallible and supreme judge by which all doctrines of men are to be examined; and in whose sentence we are to rest, for we are to build only upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Eph.2:20.

## Article II

I do believe in the one only living and true God, who is a sovereign, infinite, eternal, unchangeable and spiritual Being; who hath his Being of and from himself, and is the cause of all causes, Omnipotent; can do all things that consists with the Perfections of his Being. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou." Dan.4:35. Omniscient, knowing and fully comprehending all things past present and to come, and ordering everything for his own glory, the present good and everlasting welfare of his own people. Omnipresent and Immense, filling all places and things; and is everywhere present at one time, even in heaven, earth and hell. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day, the darkness and the light are both alike to thee." Psal.139:7-12. Eternal, without beginning of days, "before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Psal.90:2. He is infinitely pure and dwells in that

light unto which no mere creature can approach, and live. I Tim.6:16. Invisible, whom no man hath seen or can see; and he is beyond all comprehension gloriously great, so that none by searching can find out this Almighty One unto perfection. Job 11:7. He is immutable, not subject to the least change. Mal.3:6. His justice is inviolable; his goodness extensive, and his truth great. A Being infinitely perfect, who is incapable of receiving any additional happiness, but is the Self-sufficient and All-sufficient Jehovah.

### **Article III**

I do believe that in the Unity of the Godhead there are a Trinity of Persons, who are distinguished from each other; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these Three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, possessing all the essential attributes of the Deity, as eternity, infinity, immutability, omniscience and omnipresence. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." I John 5:7. The Father God, the Son God, the Holy Spirit God; and yet not three Gods; and that divine honour is equally due to each Person, for we are commanded to be baptized in the Name of this Holy Trinity. Matt.28:19. And we are baptized equally into the profession, faith, worship, service, obedience, prayer, praises and adoration of this Holy and Blessed Trinity, that is, of

one Everlasting God in Three Persons, and of Three Persons in One Everlasting God, being equally the Object of divine worship and Author of divine mercies and blessings. This truth is the creed of all sound believers, for he that doth not worship God in Three Persons, and Three Persons in one God, unchristians himself, for he hath revolted from his baptism, and ceases to be a Christian, neither deserves that name. Though this is a mystery far above my weak comprehension, yet I am bound to believe it, upon the word of that God who is not a man that can lie, for he is a God of infinite truth. Titus 1:2.

#### **Article IV**

I do believe that this Great Jehovah hath by his Immutable and Eternal Counsel purposed and settled all things for his own glory, and hath foreordained whatsoever shall come to pass. He hath determined from eternity what he would do in time; it is an Infinite Act of the Divine Essence, by which he doth determine to do or not to do whatsoever is or shall be done, or not be done, from Eternity to all Eternity. These decrees, they are called counsel, because they are done most wisely; all things being so ordered as is most agreeable to truest, {viz., sanctified,} reason, and are called the Counsel of his Will, Eph.1:11, because his will doth determine all things agreeable to that Counsel, Isa.46:10, and are extended to all things good and bad; and the rule of them is his own wisdom and

sovereign good pleasure, the end is for his glory, i.e., the manifestation of his Excellencies; his Matchless Love moved him to decree; his Wisdom orders the decree; his Power perfects it and brings it to pass; it is complete, it's most wise, just, free, certain, eternal and absolute.

### **Article V**

I do believe that in pursuance to his Decree and Counsel, he hath made all Things in both Worlds by the Word of his Power out of nothing, Heb.11:3, in the Space of six Days, and that they were all complete and perfect, whether they be things visible or invisible, or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, Col.1:16, i.e., the Heavens and the Earth, and all things contained in them. The Angels, the elements, light, day and night, clouds, the rein and the sea, the rivers, grass, herbs and trees, the sun, moon and stars, fishes, fowls, beasts and man; many of the Angels, though glorious in their created state, lost by sin their glory, and left their first habitation, and are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the Great Day." Jude 1:6.

### **Article VI**

I do believe that the Matter of which both Worlds consist, and all things in them, are not eternal, but had a Beginning, and were created by God in the

Beginning of Time. In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth. Gen.1:1. For to me it appears, if matter was eternal, then it is infinite; and as such, all the Parts of Matter would be parts of the Deity; which is monstrous to imagine.

### **Article VII**

I do believe that by a Continuation of Creating Power, the Mighty God governs and preserves his Creatures in both Worlds; and rules all by this his Providence. He hath set his Throne in the Heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all, Psal.103:19; yea, he limits and over-rules the sinful Actions of his Creatures to his own Glory; but is in no way the Abettor of them. The Matter or Object of God's Providence is the whole World, and whatsoever is in it; for God cares for, and governs all Things, Substances, Accidents, Things great and little, necessary and contingent. He upholds all Things by the Word of his Power. Heb.1:3. He preserves them all, and for which the Host of Heaven worshippeth him. Neh.9:6. He takes care of the brute Beasts, and every living Creature, and preserveth them in Life. For "the fowls of the air sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." Matt.6:26. Even so minute a thing as a Sparrow shall not fall to the Ground without his Cognizance or Permission, Matt.10:29; his Providence, in a Word, is conversant about everything in this world; for the very hairs of our head are all numbered.

## **Article VIII**

I do believe that when God had made all things, he entered into a covenant of works with man, which is by some called a covenant of life, because life in that covenant was promised upon condition of perfect personal and perpetual obedience, and death was threatened, both temporal, spiritual and eternal upon the non-performance of the condition of it. Gen.2:17. And that man in this estate was pure, and had every way a holy nature, Eccl.7:29, his understanding clear, his will without a corrupt bias, his affections pure, and without the least propensity to run out after anything but him that was the chiefest Good, his conscience always witnessing his innocence, and never charging him with the least sin or guilt. This was the state and condition of man, when God entered into a covenant with him, though he was perfect as a creature, yet subject to mutability and deception, he soon broke his covenant, Gen.3:6, and violated the laws of his creation, and so was stripped of his created glory, Gen.3:23-24, and lost by that covenant his way to happiness; and there is now no way to glory and everlasting blessedness by a Covenant of Works. Eph.2:8-9.

## **Article IX**

I do believe that Man, in the Breach of this Covenant of Works, sinned against God, and plunged himself and all his Posterity into an Estate of Sin and Misery;

because the Covenant of Works was not made with him as a single Person, but as the common Parent and Head of all Mankind, and all Mankind sinned in him. For by his Offence Judgment came upon all Men unto Condemnation; by his Disobedience many were made Sinners. Rom.5:18-19. The whole World of Mankind considered in this Covenant, are under the Guilt of Adam's Transgression, and they want his original Perfections, they sustain the Corruption of his polluted Nature; and 'tis from this corrupt Fountain that all actual Transgression flows, and all of us by this Breach have lost our blessed and happy Fellowship which we had with God before the Fall; we are now, according to all Appearance, under God's Wrath and Curse, and are liable to all Miseries in this Life, to Death itself, and to the Pains of Hell forever; and shall certainly be plunged into that Abyss of endless Woe, {if God should not be pleased to call us by his Grace, and to reveal his Son in us, to make us feel the Power of his Resurrection,} all the Curses of this broken Covenant will be our everlasting Doom.

### **Article X**

I do believe that the Great and Ever Blessed God did not leave all his Creatures to perish in this Estate of Sin and Misery, but that he did, out of his mere good Pleasure, from all Eternity, Eph.1:4-11, elect some to Everlasting Life. Rom.9:11. He chose them in Christ their Head and Husband before the Foundation of the World. Acts 13:48. This Election is

absolute, not conditional, {to me a conditional Election is no Election,} we are not chosen because of foreseen Faith, Repentance and Holiness, II Thes.2:13, these are the Fruits and Effects of Election, therefore not the Antecedents, Conditions or Causes thereof; we are elected to them, not for them, Tit.1:1, we obtain Mercy to be faithful; we believe because we are elected in Christ as an Elect and Covenant-Head, II Tim.1:9, and in him as a common Person we did virtually exist from all Eternity. In him we are chosen, that we should be holy; we are obedient, because chosen to it; and we bring forth the fruits of good works, because God hath ordained it. I Pet.1:2. This glorious Doctrine I do believe hath no tendency to hinder piety and industry in the Ways of God's instituted Ordinances; for he who has chosen us unto the End, i.e., having decreed the Way and Means that leads to that End. For the Lord God is a Sun and Shield, Psal.84:11, he will give Grace and Glory; Grace first, and Glory afterwards. Every one that shall possess that glorious State shall first be guided by his Counsel, i.e., his Word and Spirit. All those who by Grace are made to see their own Vileness and Misery by Nature, mourn under it, and are sensible that their own Righteousness is as filthy Rags, and that there is a Perfection in the glorious Robe and Garment of Salvation, Christ's Righteousness; and from these Apprehensions are made to fly to Christ for Refuge, as the only Hope set before perishing Sinners in the Gospel, and are enabled only to depend with Trust and Confidence upon him for everlasting Life, and

from a Sense of his Grace, desire to maintain good works, and hate and abhor every false Way. These, visibly, are chosen ones, being thus called by Grace, may be sure of their Election, II Pet.1:10, but as for those who perseveringly rebel against the Sovereignty of Heaven in God's Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, God is just and righteous to sentence such to everlasting Misery. God, by the Choice of his People, does no Wrong or Injury to them whom he passes by. Reprobation is nothing else but a Denial of undeserved Grace and Ordination to deserved Punishment. God purposeth only to inflict on Men that Punishment that their Sins have first deserved. This awful, but yet delightful, Doctrine of eternal Election was preached by the Prophets under the Old Testament Dispensation, and by Christ and his inspired Apostles under the New, "for though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return," Isa.10:22, and be saved. Jesus Christ himself rejoiced in spirit, and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke 10:21. So likewise Paul and Barnabas, Acts 13:48, they tell us, that "as many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed." And all Things do work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the Called, according to his Purpose of Grace. Rom.8:28-29. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate. These Things are the Glory and the Comfort of the Saints.

## **Article XI**

I do believe that the Lord our God did set up and constitute the Lord Jesus Christ to be the Great and Only Mediator between him and his Chosen; that this Mediator was possessed, in the Beginning of God's Ways, before his Works of old, even before he had formed the highest Part of the Dust of the World. Then was Christ by him, as one brought up with him, and was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him; and his Delights were also with the sons of Men. Prov.8:22-31. The second Person in the ever blessed Trinity did promise to take that Nature into personal and perfect Union with himself, which was set up in the secret Counsels of Jehovah. And the blessed Redeemer, in pursuance to his Promise, Heb.2:14-16, hath taken our whole Nature, i.e., a reasonable Soul and a true Body into this Union, Rom.9:5, and, as such, continues to be God and Man in two distinct Natures, and one Person of the Mediator forever. He is now openly in Glory in our Nature, before the Throne, appearing in the Presence of God for us, in those bright and immortal Regions of the Celestial World for all his redeemed ones in their Nature.

## **Article XII**

I do believe that this Person, the Mediator, in the Performance of his Mediatorial Function, executes the Offices of a Prophet, Priest and King. The Lord Jesus Christ executes the Office of a Prophet, in

making known to us by his Word and Spirit the Will of God for our Salvation; for God who at sundry Times and in divers Manners in Times past spake unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last Days spoken unto us by his Son. Heb.1:1. The great and good God was pleased in the past Ages of the Jewish World, to make comfortable Discoveries of himself in various Ways unto his People; but those Discoveries were far short of what he hath given of himself, and of his Love and Grace to his People by Jesus Christ. For this great Prophet hath brought into our World the clear Day-light of everlasting Love and Grace; whereas the Shadows of the Evening, i.e., the Ceremonies of the Mosaic Economy were stretched out over the Jewish World; what they saw was by the dim Light of the legal Institutions, but we behold the Wonders of pardoning Love and Grace, by the bright beamings forth of the Sun of Righteousness upon our Souls. This Prophet hath taught us the Wonders of everlasting Love and Grace; he hath led us to see that our Father's Heart is full of Love towards us, John 17:23, and that he hath loved us even as he had loved him.

### **Article XIII**

I do believe also that Jesus Christ executeth the Office of a Priest, in that glorious Offering up of himself a Sacrifice to satisfy injured Justice, and in pleading the Efficacy and Virtue of his Blood and Sacrifice forever for us. The Blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without

Spot to God, shall purge our Souls from Impurity; for Christ was once offered to bear the Sins of many. Heb.9:14,28. And by this Offering Justice is satisfied, Sin is finished, and Sinners acquitted. And now this great High Priest of our Profession is passed into the Heavens; he is entered into the Holiest of Holies, to appear in the Presence of God for us; he is not entered by the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, but by his own Blood, having obtained eternal Redemption for us. This Blood now before the Throne, speaks better Things than that of Abel, Heb.12:24, it cries aloud, and that prevailingly, for the handing forth of all Covenant Blessings, Blessings of Grace, and Blessings of Glory. And this is that which administers a great deal of Consolation to the People of the Most High, that, when they are carnal, cold and indifferent in the Service of God, and know not how to pray to God for themselves or others, the Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, now in the true Sancto Sanctorum, Isa.19:16, prays for them; for all their Names are written upon the Breastplate of his Heart; they are engraven upon the Palms of his Hands, and their Walls are continually before him. Though he be high, and they are low; yet he hath respect unto their Persons, and will never forget their Cause; for he ever liveth to make Intercession for them. Heb.7:25-27. This is the holy, harmless and undefiled High-priest that became us, who needeth not daily to offer up Sacrifice for Sin, Heb.10:14, for he hath by one Offering, forever perfected them that are sanctified. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come

unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25.

### **Article XIV**

I do believe that this great Mediator executes the Office of a King. He is King of Zion and King of Nations. The Government is upon his Shoulders, Isa.9:6, he is King of kings, and Lord of lords; and in his Time will show himself to be the blessed and only Potentate. II Tim.6:15. His kingly Power is made manifest by subduing his People unto himself. For when once the Rod of his Strength, Psal.110:2, is sent out of Zion; he then rules in the midst of his Enemies, and makes stubborn and disobedient ones willing to bow down before the Sceptre of his Grace. Hence it is, that he brings down every high Imagination, and every proud Thought exalted against the Sovereignty of the Gospel, into a cheerful Submission unto his Person and Righteousness, as God's only Way of Salvation. Now he sways the Sceptre of his Grace in the Hearts of his People, and writes his royal Laws there; and by this they are enabled to march after the King and Captain of their Salvation, and to follow him wheresoever he goeth; they are willing to fight under his Banner against all Opposition and Opposers whatsoever. Though this their militant State, is attended with many Hardships and Trials, which they know, they, as King's good Soldiers, must endure, II Tim.2:3, yet that which buoys them up at present is, that their King Jesus is on his March

toward his Glory, to be admired by his Saints, and to be taken pleasure in by all them who believe. II Thes.1:10. He then will conquer all his and his People's Enemies; for the Sword of this mighty King is bathed in Heaven; and it shall come down against Idumea, Isa.34:5, the People of his Curse to judgment, and then his People shall be lifted up on high, and shall reign with him forever and ever. Rev.22:5. In the mean Time we are defended from the Rage of our Enemies; and are in all these Things, we are now exercised with, more than Conquerors, through him that hath loved us. Rom.8:37. The Saints are glad and rejoice that Christ hath the Rod and Reins of Government in his Hands, whereby they are certain, that every Dispensation of his all-wise Providence that governs the Universe shall conduce to their Good and Safety. Therefore to this King Immortal, Eternal, and Invisible, be Glory forever. I Tim.1:17.

## **Article XV**

I do believe that this great and glorious Jesus did humble himself, and vail his Glory, and undergo in his Humiliation State God's Wrath and Curse in the Law-room Place and Stead of Sinners. To bring this about, He was born in a very low and mean Condition, He was made of a Woman, made under the Law, Gal.4:4, He was under the Law Ceremonial, under the Law Judicial, and under the Law Moral. As under the Moral Law he performed all its Precepts, and suffered all its Penalties in Agonies and Trouble

of Soul; his Agony made him to sweat great Drops of Blood, Luke 22:44, he also suffered the Loss of the Divine Presence, which made him in Bitterness of Soul to cry out with a loud Voice, "my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." Matt.27:46. He underwent the Wrath of God, the Curse of the Law, and that Condemnation, which poor Sinners must have undergone forever. And antecedent to all this he suffered the common Pains and Miseries of this Life, as Hunger, Cold, Weariness, &c. He was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, Isa.53:3, he was despised and rejected. Thus he that was high and glorious, made himself of no Reputation, but humbled himself, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross. Phil.2:6-8. He suffered that painful, lingering and ignominious Death of the Cross, that his People might be freed from all the Curses of this Life, and the Pains of Hell in the World to come. Thus he who was immensely rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his Poverty might be made rich. II Cor.8:9. He was stripped of all, ye of Life itself, and was buried in the Grave, I Cor.15:4, and continued under the Power of Death for a Time, though he was not left there, for he never saw Corruption. Acts 2:27.

## **Article XVI**

I do believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the Dead on the third Day, according to the Scriptures, I Cor.15:4, by the Power of the Holy Ghost, and This powerfully declared him to be the

Son of God. Rom.1:4. Though he was put into the Prison of the Grave by Death for our Sins, yet when the Debt by him was paid, he was taken from Prison, and from judgment, Acts 8:33, for the Majesty of Heaven dispatched two Officers from the Celestial World, to open the Prison of the Grave, and let him go free. The Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and rolled away the Stone. Matt.28:2. Thus the Redeemer came forth, because he could not be held by Death; for two mighty Messengers tarried behind in the Sepulchre, to tell the News of the Redeemer's Resurrection to any that should come to look after his Body. He is not here, he is risen, and, as he told you, he is gone before you into Galilee.

### **Article XVII**

I do believe that he is ascended up to Heaven, and that he ascended gloriously, and led Captivity captive. Psal.68:18. For the Chariots of God that attended this Royal Person, in magnificent Equipage, are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels, the Lord is gone up with a shout, the Redeemer of Souls, with the Sound of a Trumpet.

### **Article XVIII**

I do believe upon his Entrance into the Celestial World, the Angelic Inhabitants thereof brake forth, with loud Acclamations, and cried, "lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in," "the

LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle," "the King of glory shall come in." "The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah." Psal.24:7-10.

### **Article XXIX**

I do believe that He is now sitting at the Right Hand of God the Father, possessed in our Nature of Honour and Dignity. Thus Jesus, who being made a little lower than the Angels, is crowned with Glory and Honour, and by Inheritance hath obtained a more excellent Name than they, Heb.1:3,13, for to which of the Angels hath he at any time said, "sit on my right Hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool." And God the Father hath set him at his own right Hand in heavenly Places, far above all Principality, Power, Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named not only in this World, but also in that which is to come, Eph.1:20-22, and hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all Things to the Church. God hath highly exalted him, He is raised up to the highest Pinnacle of Honour, that at his Name, "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil.2:11.

## **Article XX**

I do believe that the people of God shall comfortably enjoy all the Blessings of Redemption, only by the Application of the Spirit in effectual Calling, wherein He doth by his energetical Operations upon our Souls, John 16:8, convince us of the Sinfulness of our Nature, and the Misery that we deserve as Sinners, and makes us to see our own Inability, to rescue ourselves from this sinful and miserable Estate, and as such enlightens our Minds into the Fulness that is in Christ Jesus, and makes us willing by Faith to fly to him for Refuge, and to embrace him, Heb.6:18, as God's Way of Salvation revealed to us freely in the Gospel.

## **Article XXI**

I do believe that Justification is an Act of God's free Grace in the Imputation of the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom.3:24, and that no Man can be justified by his own Righteousness, I Cor.1:30, because it is not a righteousness which can answer the Demands of the Righteous and Perfect Law of God. The Righteousness then that we are justified by, is a complete and perfect one, Col.2:10, and they who are interested in it, are eternally discharged from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, and are complete before God; and stand in his Presence without Fault or Blemish. That all their Sins are pardoned, and their Persons accepted as

righteous in the Sight of God only, for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

## **Article XXII**

I do believe that Sanctification is the Work of God's Free Grace, wherein by his Holy Spirit he carries on a Work of Holiness in our Souls, whereby we grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. II Pet.3:18. As Effectual Calling and Regeneration are the instantaneous Work of the Holy Ghost, forming Principles of Grace, {commonly called the new Creature,} Sanctification is a nourishing and cherishing and strengthening of this new Creature in us, by which, at times, the old Man decays, the new Man grows stronger and stronger. Psal.119:104. Under these sanctifying Operations, the Saints hate Sin and themselves for it, and flee from it as from the Pestilence, and love Holiness, and delight themselves in the Ways of Truth, and Godliness, esteeming it the greatest Blessing on this side the Grave, to be enabled to walk before the Lord to all well pleasing; the pious Cry of their Souls, often is, "Oh, that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes." Psal.119:5. They allow themselves in the Practice of no one {though ever so little} known Sin, because they are assured, that without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord. Heb.12:14.

### **Article XXIII**

I do believe that Man hath Power, as Man, to perform a great many moral Actions, without the Assistance of the Supernatural Influences of the Holy Spirit; but notwithstanding this, he hath not a free Will or Power to perform spiritually good Actions; as Faith, Evangelical Repentance, and Gospel Obedience; for the former of these is the Gift of God, and the two latter flows from it.

### **Article XXIV**

I do believe that all God's chosen and redeemed and sanctified ones shall be so forever kept, that they shall persevere in Grace. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Jer.32:40. They shall never fall finally, but shall certainly be saved; and this their Perseverance depends not upon their own Strength, but upon the Immutable Purpose and Free Love of God the Father, the Prevalent Intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Abiding of the Holy Spirit in them. They may through the Corruption of their own Natures, and Deceitfulness of their Hearts, fall into Sin, to the wounding and grieving of their and others souls; yet though they thus fall, they shall arise, they shall never perish, Phil.1:6, but shall have everlasting Life. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they

shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:28.

### **Article XXV**

I do believe that at Death all God's Children enter into Glory, and their Bodies die and return to the Dust, Eccl.12:7, whilst their Souls in Glory behold the Face of Christ, and enjoy God in him, Phil.1:23, and that the Souls of Unbelievers are reserved in Chains of Darkness to the Judgment of the Great Day. Psal.9:7.

### **Article XXVI**

I do believe that at the Resurrection Believers shall have their Bodies raised, and their Souls shall be reunited to them, and that they shall eternally enjoy God in them Both; though their Bodies were sown in Corruption, they shall be raised in Incorruption, I Cor.15:41-43, sown they were in Dishonour, but they shall be raised in Glory. For Christ shall change our vile Bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious Body. Phil.3:21.

### **Article XXVII**

I do believe that God doth require Obedience from Man, and the Rule of this Obedience is the moral Law, which is an eternal Rule of Righteousness, Matt.5:17, and ever binding upon reasonable

Creatures. This moral Law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments; the Sum of which is to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Matt.22:37-39.

### **Article XXVIII**

I do believe that no mere Man, since the Fall, is able perfectly to keep this Law, but that the best of Men do daily break it, in Thought, Word, and Deed. James 3:2. It is a blessed Thing, when Believers, from Gospel Principles, are helped to walk according to this Rule. For my own Part, I can say, I never count myself more happy than when I experience Grace and Strength to keep close to this Rule. God is my Witness, whom I serve, that I do not take Pleasure in, nor allow myself in the Breach of any one Part of the righteous Law of God, though my Father and my God hath been pleased, for gracious Ends, to suffer the Wicked to asperse me, and vilely to treat my Character, to represent me to the World, and to the Churches, as an evil Person. I do, in the Name of God, challenge them to prove that I live in, or am guilty of any Sin whatsoever that is an open Violation of the Law of God; though I must confess, that I have in me the Seeds of all Manner of Abomination, and that my Heart is deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked; for which the Searcher of Hearts knows that I lie often in Tears

before him in Dust and Ashes, and do abhor myself, and often wish and long, if it were the Will of God, to be out of this Body of Sin, to be fixed in such a State, where I never could sin against God more.

### **Article XXIX**

I do believe that it is the Duty of all who profess Godliness, not to take up any Reports against the faithful Servants, and Members of Jesus Christ, nor to assert anything in such Cases, but what they know to be Matter of Fact; they who do such Things are guilty of one of the vilest Abominations; it is a Thing God's righteous Soul hates, Prov.6:16-19, for it's a setting Ministers and Churches, Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Brethren and Sisters, at Strife with one another. Such vile Backbiters are not fit to live in a Christian Land, much less in Christian Churches and Families. And though I have been severely lashed by detracting Tongues, yet, blessed be God, for all his Grace and Love, who still upholds my Soul in Life, enlarges my Borders, increases my Usefulness in the Ministry. As he hath been pleased in Times past, to use me as an Instrument for the Conversion and Edification of hundreds; he still goes on to own me in both these Parts of my ministerial Labours, and hath not left me without a Witness of himself in my own Soul; and I doubt not but mine Enemies shall all be found Liars unto me. Deut.33:29.

## **Article XXX**

I do believe that all Believers are bound to use all the outward Means of Salvation in Obedience to Christ their Lawgiver, I Cor.15:58, which Means are, the Word preached, reading the Scriptures, public and private Prayer, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and all other standing Ordinances of the Gospel, until his second coming to judge the World in Righteousness, when he shall appear without Sin, unto their everlasting Salvation.

## **Article XXXI**

Finally, I do believe that God hath appointed a Day in which he will judge the World by the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 17:31, whom he hath appointed for that Work, and to whom all Judgment and Power is committed by the Father. Matt.28:18. John 5:22. In this great and glorious Day of Judgment, he will manifest the Riches of his Grace, by acquitting his own Children, and the Glories of Justice in the condemning of the Wicked. He will say to the one, "come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World." And to the other, "go ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels." These shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal. Matt.25:32-46.

# **FINIS**