

William Mason {? - ?}

William Mason is not Presbyterian Mason, 1719-1791, who wrote the 'high-grace' devotional entitled "Spiritual Treasury for the Children of God;" but this Mason was an Early Anti-Baptist {note: not Ana-Baptist, or Baptist, but Anti-Baptist}, of whom little is known.

Baptism

Question - But doth not God give us other helps also, to build us up in grace and holiness? What say you of the Sacraments? Is not Baptism of great use in these days of the Gospel? Answer - The word Sacrament is nowhere to be found in all the Scripture, and for Baptism, the Scripture mentions divers baptisms, {Heb.6:2,} as the baptism of water, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, {Mk.1:8,} and of fire, and the baptism of sufferings, {Lk.12:50,} all which were beautiful in their seasons, and some of them are still of great concernment to the saints. The baptism of water was the baptism of John, who was sent of God, to prepare the way of Christ. {Mal.3:1} Israel had dwelt long enough in that Mount of out-side observations; {Deut.1:6;} for although they had their legal washings and cleansings, which were, and might be called baptism, {Heb.9:10,} yet all these could not wash away one sin from the conscience, but served only to cleanse them from legal pollutions, {I Pet.3:21,} though they were not without their significations. But now the baptism of John, and his ministry was mighty, for he came in the spirit, and power of Elias, {Lk.1:17,} and was a sign of a great change of administrations, for he called them to repentance, even to repent of all that out-side, and formal religion, which they had so hotly pursued; {Mt.3:1-3;} for they were generally grown so corrupt, and so blockish, and blind withal, that they imagined, that by the bare out-side performance of those legal cleansings, they were sufficiently sanctified, though they continued in the practice of most gross and notorious sins; {Jer.7:8-11;} but John tells them plainly, that although God had long endured, and born with their hypocrisies and formalities, yet now he would bear no longer, for he had now laid the axe to the root of the trees, and if any tree were barren, or did not bring forth good fruit, it was to be

hewed down, and cast into the fire; {Mt.3:10;} hereby giving them to understand, that unless they did desist from all their wicked and ungodly ways and courses, and amend their evil lives, there was no remission of sins to be expected, nor true sanctification to be attained, notwithstanding all their legal and strict performances; {Lk.3:7-14;} and hereupon calls them to his baptism, declaring plainly unto them, that though many of them thought he was the Christ, yet they were deceived, for he was but sent to prepare his way; {Lk.3:15,16;} and that his baptism was but with water, which could only wash away the filth of the body; but could go no further; but yet by the same they were to be instructed, that there is one among them already in the flesh, even Christ, who shall baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; that is, wash and cleanse their souls, from all the filth and guilt of sin that was upon them; and thus John's ministry was to prepare the way, or to manifest Christ already come; and his baptism did hold forth the baptism of Christ in the Spirit, which was to follow in its season. {Jn.1:31-33} William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Baptism

Question - If John's ministry and baptism served only to prepare the way of Christ, or to manifest Christ in the flesh; and to instruct them, or type out unto them the baptism of Christ; why then was it needful, that Christ himself should be baptized of John? Answer - Christ indeed was baptized of John, but not out of any need to show forth sorrow for sin, he being altogether without sin; nor yet was he baptized out of any necessity to be instructed in the mystery of the Spirit's baptism, but Christ submitted to John's baptism for our sakes only, the Head that had no sin, for the body that was full of sin. {II Cor.5:21} Again, John's baptism was part of the Law, and it was the last and most lively ceremony of it, and Christ submitted unto the same, that he might fulfill all righteousness for us. Now that John's baptism was of the Law, and not of the Gospel, is evident from his preaching; for John preached saying, repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand; {Mt.3:2;} now the Kingdom of Heaven is Christ, not in the flesh, but crucified, risen again, ascended, returned in the Spirit, the Comforter dwelling in the hearts of the saints; the kingdom of heaven is within you; {Lk.17:21;} and from our Savior's words, where speaking of John saith, that among them that were born of women, there hath not risen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist, {Mt.11:11,} because other of the prophets had spoken of Christ afar off, but John pointed him out with the finger, saying, this is he; {Jn.1:36;} but mark what

follows, "notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," meaning, that he that is indeed a Preacher of the Gospel, though never so mean and contemptible in the eyes of men, should do greater works than John did. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Baptism

Question - But there are other baptisms spoken of in Scripture, as well as John's, for the Disciples of Christ did baptize, and Christ at his ascension sent them to baptize all Nations; is not water baptism then an Ordinance of the Gospel? Answer - True indeed, Christ's Disciples did baptize while he was with them in the flesh; but it was with John's Baptism, and so the Scripture calls it; {Acts 18:25;} or indeed, the preaching of John, and his Baptism, was the same with the preaching and baptism of Christ's Disciples; for John preached saying, "the Kingdom of heaven is at hand;" {Mt.3:2;} Christ's Disciples preached saying, "the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." {Mt.10:7} Both John and Christ's Disciples by their Baptism, which was in cold water, could but wash men's bodies, and call upon them to repent, and to expect remission of sins only in Christ Jesus, who was to wash away the filth of their souls, even with a Spiritual water, or Baptism of his Spirit. So that although the Disciples of Christ did baptize, yet their Baptism was the same with John's Baptism, and to continue but for a season; for so John confesseth, "I must decrease, but he {meaning Christ} must increase." {Jn.3:30} And for Christ's Commission to his Apostles, to baptize all Nations, that is not to be understood of Water Baptism, as appears by his own words, when being risen from the Dead, and now ready to ascend into his Glory; {Acts 1:5;} wherein he acquaints them with the work whereto he is now sending them; {Acts 1:4;} commands them not to depart from Jerusalem, until they had received the Promise of the Father, {that is the Spirit;} for saith he, "John truly Baptized with water," {vs.5,} as if he had said, it hath been the Father's good pleasure to appear in types and significations, and to veil himself a while under dark administrations; but now the time is fully come, in which he will show himself clearly in his abundant love and goodness, for ye shall be Baptized with the Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit or Comforter, not many days hence; and then ye shall receive power, {vs.8,} to know what ye ought to do, and be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, &c.; and when ye are thus empowered, or baptized yourselves; then go and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, &c. {Mt.28:18,19} Where by the Name of the Father, and of the Son, &c, he doth not mean, that they should wash

them in water, using that form of words; but by Name, is to be understood the Power of the Father, &c., as Christ saith, "in my Name they shall cast out devils;" that is, by my Power; {Mk.16:17;} and so in this business; "all Power {saith Christ} in heaven and in earth is given to me. Go ye therefore and Teach and Baptize the Nations, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" {Mt.28:18,19;} as if he had said, "All Power is given to me of the Father, and by this power I will come into you, and into your ministry, and ye shall go forth in this power unto all nations, and by the same ye shall be enabled to make them know, and believe, that I am the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God to salvation, to the Gentile as well as to the Jew; {I Cor.1:24;} and that whosoever believes in me indeed, {or is baptized with the Spirit, which is all one,} shall never perish, but have everlasting life." And this was done effectually, for in one day there were added three thousand souls; {Acts 2:41;} and in another place, all that were ordained to eternal life, believed. {Acts 13:48} William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Baptism

Question - But if it was not the command of Christ, that they should baptize with Water, why then did they use it after his ascension, and if Water Baptism was to cease and have an end at that time, why then do not the Scriptures declare the same. Answer - As for the Apostles baptizing with Water after Christ's ascension, it was not from any command of Christ, as one of them doth testify. The Baptism of Water or John's Baptism was very famous, and of great note in that time, {I Cor.1:17,} and therefore could not at present be very easily laid down, as likewise very many other Legal observations. And again, it is not to be questioned, but that the Apostles themselves were ignorant of many things, after they had received the Spirit abundantly; for Peter was ignorant, that he might eat with the Gentiles, or that God had a purpose, by Jesus Christ to bring in the Gentiles. {Acts 10:28-34} Paul must go to Jerusalem to be resolved about Circumcision, {Acts 15:2,} and there were thousands of Jews which did believe, and yet they were all zealous of legal rites. {Acts 21:20} God did not reveal himself all at once, but by degrees. Again, the Apostles used water baptism as they used Circumcision, to avoid contention among the Saints; {Acts 16:1-3;} and further, they used it sometimes when it was desired; {Acts 8:36;} and to stoop to the weakness of many young believers, they became all things to all men that they might not offend any, but save all if it were possible. {I Cor.9:20-22, 10:33} And for the Scriptures to declare against water baptism to be used in

the days of the Gospel, there be many Scriptures that speak much to that purpose, as I Cor.1:17; Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles utterly disclaims it, for Christ, saith he, sent me not to baptize, but to preach. Again, Eph.4:5; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; now water baptism is not the same with the Baptism of the Spirit, for they are two distinct things, one is the baptism of John, and the other is Christ's, {Lk.3:16,} and if they were both one, then they that have the one, must also have the other; and they that cannot have the one {of water} neither can they have the other. Again, it is not water baptism that can make us one with Christ, {Rom.8:14 – Gal.4:6,} or give us a new name, {Rev.3:12,} or make us partake of the divine nature, &c., {Jn.3:6,} and therefore water baptism is not that One Baptism of the Spirit. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Baptism

Question - The baptism of water hath been used in all the Churches of Christ, from the very time of the Apostles, and that with warrant from Scripture; for Infants were circumcised under the Law, and Circumcision was a seal of the Covenant which God made with Abraham, and the Covenant is the same now as it was then, and Baptism is come in the room of Circumcision, and is a seal of the Gospel-Covenant, and therefore Infants may be baptized; and the Apostle tells the Corinthians, that their fathers were all baptized in the Cloud, and in the Sea; and Peter saith, that Baptism doth now save us, how can it then be denied, that Baptism, even of water, doth not stand us in great stead, even in the days of the Gospel? Answer - Whatsoever was practiced by the Apostles, and Primitive Christians is already declared; how they to prevent contention and strife did condescend to the weakness of many; knowing, that in time, the Baptism of the Spirit, which is a Baptism of Fire, would eat up the Baptism of Water, as the fire that came down upon Elijah's Sacrifice, did lick up all the water that was in the Trench. {I Kg.18:38} But whatsoever hath been done in Water Baptism since that time, it is hard to say, is, or was done with warrant from Scripture; but is to be feared was rather a part of that mystery of iniquity, which began to work even in the Apostles time. {II Thes.2:7} And that Baptism is come in the room of Circumcision, was never yet made good by Scripture, nor never will. It is true, God made a Covenant with Abraham, and gave him also Circumcision as a sign or seal thereof; {Gen.17:10,11;} but the Covenant which God made was twofold. Inward and Outward. The Inward part respected his soul, in the sweet enjoyment of God's love and favor by Christ Jesus, both in this life and

in eternal glory. The Outward part of it, respected the outward man, the enjoyment of the land of Canaan, with long life and prosperity therein. Now so far as the Covenant was inward and respected his soul, so far Circumcision could not be a seal thereof; for nothing could seal the true spiritual love and favor of God to his soul, but the Spirit, whereby all believers were, and still are, sealed to the day of redemption. {Eph.1:13, 4:30} But as the Covenant was more outward, that he should be the Father of many nations, that in Isaac should his seed be called, and that he would give the land of Canaan to his seed, for an everlasting Possession; so far Circumcision was a seal of the Covenant. But now in the days of the Gospel, the new Covenant is a single Covenant, that old, weak part of it being vanished away; {Heb.8:13;} and it is now established upon better promises, than earthly Canaan; {Heb.8:9;} or the Covenant which God makes with his people now is altogether inward, and Spiritual, which is Christ; and there is no seal of this Covenant, but that Spirit, or the Lord Jesus, called the Spirit of Promise. {Eph.1:13,14} And to make Water Baptism, or any carnal thing, to be a seal of a Spiritual Covenant, which is Christ in the soul, sealing up the love of God to the same to all eternity; argues much ignorance in the mystery of God, and carnal mindedness in the things of God, in a great measure. And whereas the Apostle tells the Corinthians, their fathers were baptized in the Cloud and in the Sea; {I Cor.10:1-6;} that is no warrant for Baptism at all, but he speaks it rather to take them off from depending upon outward Ordinances, &c. For thus he seems to speak; "your Fathers were high in outward Ordinances, but they were not very high in God's favor, for they were overthrown in the wilderness, and these things were written for your example, &c. And for that of the Apostle Peter, where he is speaking of the Flood, and that in the Ark but a few, even eight souls were saved by water; {I Pet.3:20,21;} and that by a figure Baptism doth now save us. First, we must understand, that the Ark saved those eight souls from the water; and then that the figure here spoken of is not between the flood, and water baptism, but between the Ark which saved them from those great waves, and Christ who saves us from the sea, even the red sea of God's fierce wrath; as they that did believe, and obeyed, and prepared an Ark, were put into it by God and so saved from death; {Heb.11:7;} so all that do believe are shut up in Christ, and made one with him, and so saved from wrath. {Jn.3:36} For so saith the Apostle, that Baptism doth now save us, but not the washing away of the filth of the flesh with water, but the answer of a good conscience to God by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. If Christ be not risen in the soul, and if he raise not the soul from death, that man is not baptized indeed, though he be washed in water a thousand times.

And as for Infants that they should be baptized, there is not the least intimation in all the Scriptures that they, whilst they are such, ever were, or ever should be baptized. If Water Baptism were anything, or had anything in it, yet infants are in no capacity at all to apprehend it, no not so much as in signification; yet they which make a prop of it to hold up their tottering Kingdom, can see good reason for it, and draw goodly consequences from Scripture to help forward the practice of it. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Baptism

Question - Though there be nothing in it, as indeed there is not, it being an outward sign; may we not use it therefore in obedience to Christ's command, as a sign of our engrafting into him, and as an ordinance that gives us admission into Church Fellowship with the Saints? Answer - The commands of Christ are not empty and barren commands, but full of power and efficacy. When Christ comes forth in a command, then there is a work wrought indeed. If Christ say to a dead man live, then is he quickened indeed. {Lk.7:14,15} If he commands a man to believe, then there is faith and confidence wrought indeed. If he commands the saints to love one another, then it is effected indeed. Christ's commands where they come and he himself come along in them; {else they are not his commands;} they never return in vain, but do certainly accomplish their work, not in imagination; but in reality and truth. {Isa.55:11, Heb.4:12} Now if Christ had commanded to baptize a man, or an infant, in water, certainly some notable work would have been wrought thereby. But we see in experience, that to dip, or to sprinkle, in, or with a little cold water produceth no effect in the inward man. Therefore to baptize with water, as a command of Christ, is to offer injury to Christ and to make the commands of Christ {which are full of power and life – Jn.6:63} to be empty and fruitless commands, which is not safe to imagine. Moreover, Christ's Kingdom is a Spiritual Kingdom, {Lk.17:21,} and is altogether inward; and as it is not attained, so neither is it enjoyed with any outward observations. Indeed under the Law, they had their outward Ordinances, and Services, and all of them had their significations, showing forth something of Christ, of his death, and resurrection, &c., and this Kingdom was more Carnal than Spiritual; {Heb.9:10;} and they were led on in it by outward and carnal observations. But now Christ having finished all his work in the flesh, and being come again in the Spirit, he exerciseth all his Kingly power in the soul; and this Kingdom of Christ is the Kingdom of Heaven, {Rom.14:17,} and there is no signification in it at all, but all

is real. For it is the glory of God begun in the soul, {II Cor.3:18,} not in imagination, but in deed and in truth, which is to be perfected by degrees in this life, though not fully until the life to come. Neither is there any outward ordinance, or observation, that can hold proportion or correspondence with this Spiritual Kingdom, it being exalted above all the Hills, and infinitely above all significations. {Is.2:2} Now Water Baptism can no way show forth our union with Christ, for that is a Spiritual union, {I Cor.6:17,} and Water Baptism is a Carnal ordinance, and holds no proportion with the former. Again, we are not made one with Christ, as we are one flesh with him, but as we are one Spirit with him. Christ by taking our flesh became Immanuel, or God one with us in the flesh, but now the Lord, who is that Spirit, {II Cor.3:17,} takes us into the same Spirit, and so we are made one spirit with him. To this very end the glorious God did abase himself, and clothed himself with our flesh, and took it into union with himself; that so by this means, he might also receive all them that do truly believe in him, into union with himself by the same Spirit. So that it is not the Baptism of Water that can engraft us into Christ, or make us one with him; but by the Baptism of the eternal Spirit, {Jn.3:6,} are all the Saints united to him, and partake of the same Divine nature with him. {II Pet.1:4} And further, water baptism can give us no true fellowship with the Saints, for where the Saints have true fellowship one with another, they have this fellowship together in Christ; {I Jn.1:7;} so that this fellowship consists not in being of the same opinion, or form one with another; but in partaking of the same Spirit, and being united into one body together in Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles. {I Cor.12:13} So that it is not water baptism that can give any true fellowship with the saints, but only a carnal admission into an outward fellowship with men of the same form, which may hold for a time, and afterward come to nothing. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Christ – the Fountain of Life

The Jews being carnal, and understanding his words carnally, strove among themselves saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" {Jn.6:52} To which he solemnly answers, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you;" and he that "eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life;" {vs.53,54;} "for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." {vs.55} By all which passages it doth appear very plain, that by eating and drinking the flesh and blood of Christ, is not to be

carnally understood, of eating bread and drinking wine, but rather spiritually of believing in him, and being united, and made one with him. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him." {vs.56} That is, he that believeth in me indeed, he is one with me in the Spirit, and so partaking of the same Spirit together, he "dwelleth in me, and I in him." Again, as the Father who sent me, is a fountain of life, and I live by being one with him; so he that eateth me, or so believeth in me being united to me, even he also shall live by being one with me. {vs.57} To eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood, in an outward Ordinance of bread and wine, is but to know him after the flesh; but they in whom Christ lives, and they being made alive in Him, and taken into union with Him; they do not know him any more after the flesh, nor have any confidence in fleshly Ordinances; {Phil.3:3;} but they believing in him, or dwelling in him, and he in them, from this union in the Spirit doth flow up in them rivers of living waters, abundance of spiritual joy, peace, and heavenly consolations. {Jn.7:38,39} Alas, he that goes to the weak and empty elements of bread and wine, shall not be satisfied, but hunger again and thirst again, because there is no satisfaction in them; {Is.65:13;} but whoso partakes of Christ indeed, and is one with him indeed, he gives unto them such a water as shall abundantly satisfy their souls, that they shall never thirst; that is, they shall never be so destitute of true, and heavenly comfort and joy, as to seek for them in a carnal and fleshly Ordinance, in an empty Cistern, where is nothing to be had. {Jn.6:35} But the water which Christ doth give is Himself, which shall be in the saints a fountain of all true and sound comfort, and joy, springing up to all eternity. {Jn.4:14} In the 22nd chapter of the Book of Revelation, there is mention made of a pure River of Water of Life, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb, {22:1,2,} and in the midst of the street of it and of either side of it, was the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, &c. This pure River of water of Life, is that rich Fountain, or Spirit and Power of Love, proceeding eternally from the Father, in, and by the Son, out of which infinite Love, and Goodness, grows this tree of Life, eternal Life, {which is Christ} proceeding transcendently from the infinite Love of the Father, to all poor saints, in, and by his Son Christ Jesus. In the 46th Psalm it is said, "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." {vs.4} Now, this City, and holy place of tabernacles, is nothing else but the saints in whom the Lord delights to dwell; and this River, whose streams make joyful this City, is that unspeakable and unconceivable Love of God in Jesus Christ, when the Lord is pleased to reveal, or manifest himself to poor saints, so as to let them see and know their adoption by Christ, and to make them

understand their union in the Spirit with him in Jesus. And also that now he loves them as he loves Jesus Christ; {Jn.17:23;} from hence then grows up this tree of life. Then the poor saints apprehend life, life eternal, and they now begin to live indeed. Not any more a carnal, but a spiritual life, not only a natural, or temporal, but an eternal life. - Now they in whom Christ {who is this tree of life} thus dwells, and manifests himself, need not dig for water, or run to broken Cisterns, fleshly and carnal ordinances, and thence return empty; men may like the Prodigal, live upon husks till they are almost pined; but if ever they come to themselves, if ever the Lord be pleased to clear up their eyes, so as to let them see, and apprehend their union with him in the Spirit through Christ Jesus, then they will say, "In my Father's house is bread enough." {Lk.15:17} Then they will see and know, that Christ is this bread of life, {Jn.6:48,} and this water of life, and that whoso eats and drinks thereof; that is, so to believe on him as to be united and made one with God in him, shall never hunger nor thirst after any barren or empty comforts, from outward and carnal Ordinances, {Jn.6:35,} but shall have in them fresh springs of joy, and endless consolations, flowing unto all eternity. But they which believe not in him, and are not thus united and made one with him in the Spirit; though they eat his flesh, and drink his blood, namely, in the carnal and outward use of Bread and Wine; {Lk.13:26,27;} yet they have no life in them, neither shall they enjoy any true comfort in him, nor eternal life by him, but shall go into condemnation. William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Election in Christ

Neither is God unjust, but most righteous, in rewarding every man according to his works; for God is so infinitely holy and righteous, that he cannot do any unjust act. {Rom.9:14} Nay, he neither doth, nor will do anything, but wherein he will appear most perfectly just and righteous; {Ezek.18:25;} for God did not elect man, and afterward reject him, or damn him; love him, and afterward hate him; but the Lord, who is infinite in wisdom, did see and behold all things, before anything was created, for all things were in Him, although they were not brought forth or manifested; and in his fore-knowledge, and in himself, he beheld all men, when as yet there was none of them; yea, even then he beheld them in their several conditions, both in their creation, and in their fall. "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." {Is.46:10} Now God thus beholding man's several conditions at one and the same

instant {for there is neither first nor last with God} did purpose in his eternal counsel, to make man an upright creature; and did also at the same instant fore-know and fore-see, that men by sin would undo themselves; and was pleased also in the very same instant, and according to this foreknowledge, out of the abundant riches of his love in Jesus Christ, to choose out some poor miserable fallen wretches, and to make known to them the exceeding and super-abundant treasures of his grace and favor in Him, {I Pet.1:2,} in their several generations, and so to unite them to himself in Christ; {Eph.1:4-6;} that they should be to the praise of his glorious grace; {Rom.9:23;} and also to let others alone in their sins, by leaving them to their own hearts lust, unbelief, hardness, and impenitency; delighting themselves in sin, and all ungodliness, and becoming one with Satan, and willingly obeying his commands, he might then declare Himself infinitely glorious in justice, in rendering to every man according to his work. And in this respect it is said, "shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?" {Rom.9:20} "For he hath mercy {namely, in restoring men to grace and favor in Jesus Christ} on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," {Rom.9:18,} or leaves them in their sins. Thus God did not elect, and afterward reject; neither doth he love and afterward hate, for whosoever God loves indeed, with an especial love, a love to eternal life, he loves them in Christ; {Eph.1:4,5;} and he loves none in Christ, but whom he hath elected and chosen in him; {Jn.13:1;} and those whom he thus elects he cannot hate, for he loves them in Christ, and as Christ. {Jn.17:23} William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Faith & Works

Question - But doth not the Scripture say, that Abraham was justified by works? {James 2:21} What say you then of good works, as prayer, reading, and hearing the word, repentance, and all other duties of piety and charity; are not they required as good means of our justification. Answer - The scope of that Scripture is not to declare that Abraham did act anything in the work of justification; for it is said, that Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness; {Rom.4:3;} and those good works, whereby Abraham is said to be justified, do rather declare him to believe, and his faith to be alive, than any way to act in the matter of justification; {James 2:22;} for faith, as is said before, doth not justify, but believes it, and applies it; true faith works by love, {Gal.5:6,} and shows what house it comes of, by actions of piety and mercy. There is a faith which is

dead, it being nothing else, but a persuasion of a carnal heart, which is deceitful, and of this many men brag and boast, and cry religion, religion; but they do not walk in love, neither toward God nor men; and this faith profited nothing, or is profitable to no man, and is no better than the faith of devils. But true faith where it is indeed, proceeds from a holy seed, being begotten by the manifestation or discovery of God in the soul, and hath for its ground a word of promise, {Rom.9:9,} not only without, but, especially within, and is real, and not in imagination; so also it acts like itself, and is profitable every way. First toward God, as it gives him the glory of all his wisdom, power, justice, mercy, and goodness, when men can say indeed, "In the Lord have I righteousness, and in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;" {Is.45:24, 26:4;} when a man can say, now I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; {Gal.2:20;} yea, I can do all things, be anything, suffer anything, through Christ that strengthens me. I can be abased, and I can abound; I can as well be content to be hungry, as to be full fed; to be poor as to be rich, to suffer as to reign, to die as to live; {Phil.4:12,13;} when a man can live in God, and unto God, above all this world, and esteem all things but dross and dung, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. {Phil.3:8} True faith is also profitable to men, when it is exercised in godly conference, building up one another, comforting one another, and {if need require} reprovng one another; when it works in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, relieving the oppressed, and by doing to every man as we would be done unto. This is living faith and it is thus evidenced to be alive. Thus we are not justified by, nor for, our good works; for we are his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, that we should walk in them. Justification, where it is indeed, will evidence itself by acts of sanctification. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Gospel of Jesus Christ

Question - What is the Gospel? Answer - The Gospel is glad tidings of good things, good tidings of great joy, {Lk.2:10,} a message of Peace, a ministry of Reconciliation, the ministraton of the Spirit, {II Cor.3:8,} the Word of Salvation, {Acts 13:26,} the Word of Faith, the Word of Life, {I Jn.1:1,} the power of God to salvation, {Rom.1:16,} the immortal Seed, the sword of the Spirit, {Eph.6:17,} the Word of God, &c. In a word, the Gospel is Christ, and Christ is the Gospel, {I Cor.1:23,24,} Christ is he that answers all the types and significations of the Law, and in whom is fulfilled all the prophecies of the Prophets; it is Christ alone, in whom God is well pleased, {Mt.3:17,} and it is

only Christ, who enables the Saints to walk in all well pleasing. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Gospel Repentance

Question - But doth not the Lord in Scripture call men to repentance, and promise them life upon condition of the same; yea, the Lord doth solemnly protest, that he delights not in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he should repent, and turn, and live; and again, why will ye die? Repent, and turn, and live ye. {Ezek.33:11} And our Saviour saith, "except ye repent, ye shall all perish;" and the Apostles exhort them in the Acts, to repent for the remission of sins; and that their sins might be blotted out. And again, "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Doth it not from all these places appear very plain, that repentance is necessarily required, as a means, or at least a condition of life? Answer - There is in Scripture a twofold repentance spoken of, a repentance of the Law, and a repentance of the Gospel. The repentance which is of the Law is suitable to that Covenant of Works, which the Israelites were under for temporal blessings; when they at any time acted contrary to the command, then the Lord plagued them, sometimes with famine, pestilence, war, captivity, &c. until they did repent; and when they repented, or ceased from their wicked ways and works, then the Lord would also repent, {Note: Repentance as attributed to God declares the outward acts of God, as they relate to our acting towards Him; or the manifesting the visibility of God, as it is in our view, and not to measure the immutability of God in the unchangeableness of his love towards His elect in Christ,} or remove the judgment; for temporal blessings were promised upon condition of outward obedience, and temporal punishments were diverted, or turned away, upon their legal repentance, and ceasing from their evil ways. {I Kings 8:33,35,46,47} In the time of Ezekiel's prophesy, the Israelites were many of them in captivity already, and the rest of them were threatened; and when the Lord by the Prophet called for repentance, the people thought it was to small purpose to repent, seeing their fathers had eaten sour grapes, and their teeth were set on edge; and that it was but a light business to promise them any good, upon condition of repentance, seeing they did but pine away in their father's sins. {Ezek.18:2 & 33:10} To which the Lord commands the Prophet to tell them, that it was no such matter, it was their own sin which was the cause of their misery; and that if they would return from their idolatries, and other abominations, he would cease from punishing them, and hereupon uses that solemn oath, "As

I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" {Ez.33:11} Why will ye die; or why will ye be slain, or die by famine, or pestilence, &c. And so our Saviour tells those, which spake to him of the cruelty of Pilate, that unless they did repent, they should likewise perish; {Lk.13:3;} meaning that some temporal judgment would overtake them; and thus legal repentance served only for the preventing or diverting of temporal punishments. {I Kings 21:27-29} But repentance which is of the Gospel, is not any means or condition of life; for eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord; {Rom.6:23;} and it is a free gift, and not purchased by repentance, nor yet promised, nor given upon condition of repentance; for it is not sin, nor Satan, nor death itself, that can make a separation between them that are elected, and the love of God in Christ Jesus, which is eternal life. {Rom.8:38,39} The Lord who hath promised, is not a man that he should lie, or the son of man, that he should repent in this respect. {Num.23:19, Tit.1:2} Now this repentance is called godly sorrow, {II Cor.7:10,} and it is wrought by the working power of God's love in the soul apprehended by faith, and is a fruit of faith. There is a worldly sorrow, which causeth or worketh death, being wrought by the apprehension of death or punishment, and this is in wicked and unregenerate men, a fear of death driving them to a kind of repentance; {Mt.27:3;} yea, and the saints sometimes having attained but a small measure of the apprehension of God's love in Jesus Christ, being under a spirit of bondage, {Rom.8:15,} and looking upon God as he manifested himself upon Sinai, are so filled with fear and terror, which causeth abundance of sorrow, even mourning and grieving exceedingly, because they can grieve no more; and that merely upon this ground, that if their sorrow were in any good measure answerable to their sin; then they hope that God will pardon them, apprehending in themselves; and being told so by others, {legal taskmasters,} that if they do not soundly repent, mourn, and grieve for their sins, heartily and seriously confess them, with a resolution to leave and forsake them, that God would not, nay could not, pardon them; and all this from a misinterpretation of Scripture, as "he that hideth his sin shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall find mercy;" {Pv.28:13;} and "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive, &c.," {I Jn.1:9,} concluding from the very letter of these Scriptures {not having the true meaning thereof explained unto them by the Holy Ghost} that unless they first grieve, and mourn, and confess, God will not pardon; and so go heavily under this burden for want of better light; but true repentance, which is repentance indeed, doth not proceed from a bare

hope of pardon, but from sense of pardon already apprehended, for as no man can believe his justification, until God hath revealed it to him by Christ, so neither can any man repent truly and indeed, until he first understand and believe, that God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven him all his trespasses; and this repentance is called, a repentance unto life, or a repentance flowing from life, or evidencing life; {Acts 11:18, II Cor.7:10;} and life {which is Christ} is very desirable unto all them who have but the least sense or taste thereof; and it is also active wheresoever it is, and puts men upon all enquiries, what must we do that we may have life, those Converts in the Acts, {Acts 16:30,} had but a little before been very forward in the crucifying of Christ, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go; {Acts 2:23, 3:13;} yet now when they hear the Apostles preach remission of sins in his Name, and that there is no other name given under heaven whereby they must be saved, but the name Jesus only, and that God hath advanced him on high, and given him all power to bring all those to life and salvation that desist from their evil ways, and believe in his name. {Acts 2:36} Now when they heard this they were pricked in their hearts; {vs.37;} now Christ, who is Life, began to stir or act a little in their hearts; and now what shall we do men and brethren, that we may have and enjoy more life? To whom the Apostle answered; "Repent," {vs.38,} not that repentance doth purchase pardon, but if ye do indeed believe in Christ, and if he be come into your souls, then ye can repent indeed, and by your true and sound repentance ye may be assured, that your sins are forgiven, for ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which shall seal the same unto you; and it is further said, that the same day there were added three thousand souls. {vs.41} And for that which the Apostle John saith, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive, &c.;" {I Jn.1:9;} the Apostle seems in this place to deal with two sorts of men. The one sort are very high in notion and opinion, and think themselves to be the men that are in Christ, and have fellowship with the Father in the Son, and yet notwithstanding they walk contrary to him in their practice; nay, saith the Apostle, that cannot be, for "God is light, and with him is no darkness at all;" {vs.5;} God is a holy and righteous God, and will do, neither can he do anything, but what is most pure and just; and if any say that they have fellowship or communion with him, and yet are not conformable to him in holiness and righteousness, they lie, and do not the truth; {vs.6;} and if they say {as many do} that they have no sin, Christ hath finished transgression, and made an end of sin in them, so that let them do what they will, they cannot sin, they deceive themselves, saith he, their deceived heart hath turned them aside, and there is no truth in them. {vs.8} The other sort are such, as in whom Christ is revealed,

but yet in a low degree, and these are still in fears and doubts, and would gladly know how they may be assured, in some comfortable measure of the favor of God, and of the pardon of their sins. To these he answers; "If ye walk in the light, as he is in the light, &c." {vs.7} God is a holy God, a most pure Spirit, with whom is no iniquity; and if he by appearing in your souls, hath wrought you to a love of purity and holiness, and also to a loathing of all sin and wickedness, then ye may be sure ye have fellowship with him, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth you from all sin. But if they further say; {as many a poor soul doth;} yea, but we find that sin is not dead in us, but lively; and corruptions strong, a Law in the members leading us into captivity, the good that we would do we do not, the evil which we would not do, that we do. {Rom.7:19} The Apostle answers, your condition is good, if God by his Spirit in you, hath brought you to see and confess this; {vs.9;} ye need not be discouraged, for God is a faithful God, he never begins a good work, but he will perfect it; he hath already pardoned your sins, and he will more and more assure your hearts thereof, by cleansing you by degrees {as to any personal perception thereof} from all your corruptions. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Justification

Question - What is Justification; or how may sinful men be said to be justified, or made righteous before God? Answer - Justification is an act of God's Free Grace and Love, whereby he {"through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ" – Rom.3:24} hath freely forgiven the sins of all his elect, and accepts of them {in Him} as perfectly just and righteous. But more plainly; Justification is that whereby God himself is pleased to condescend, {Phil.2:7,8,} and to clothe himself with our flesh, and in our nature, and our flesh, to fulfill all the righteousness of the Law for us; and also to subject himself in the flesh to death and curse, hereby paying all our debts, and satisfying Divine Justice on our behalf, and so became our Righteousness for Justification; {II Cor.5:21;} all which he hath done freely, without any desert, or merit, on our part. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Justification & Faith

Question - But doth not the Scripture say, that we are justified by faith? What is faith? And how are we justified by the same? Answer - There be in Scripture divers kinds of faith mentioned, by reason whereof, many think, that they believe to justification, and are deceived; {Mt.7:22;} for justification is free on God's part, and without any condition at all on our part, for if faith were a condition of our justification, then it were not free, justification being an act of God in his eternal counsel and purpose, before the world began; {Rom.8:29;} if faith were a condition thereof, then are we justified for some fore-seen grace in us, and not freely by his grace. Now faith is neither a means, nor yet any condition of justification, but rather an evidence, or demonstration thereof; {Rom.11:5,6;} for true faith is that, whereby we close with God in the promise of life and salvation, in and by Jesus Christ. {Rom.4:19,20, Jn.6:44-47} Now this faith is not in us by nature, but is wrought in the heart, by the manifestation of God in the soul. When the Lord is pleased to reveal Christ in the soul, and to discover to the same, that he is well pleased with him in Christ, and that he hath freely forgiven all his sins, merely for the merit and righteousness of his Son, and that now he accepts of him as righteous, in his beloved Son; and that in Christ he hath adopted him to himself, to be his Son; now when the soul apprehends this, then it is thereby enabled to believe it, {Rom.4:21,} and rests upon it. And thus true faith doth not act in the works of justification, but only believes it when it is revealed in the soul; and then believing, hath peace with God, and can look upon him with comfort, and can joy in him in all tribulations. {Rom.5:1,2} Now no man can believe in Jesus Christ, until he be revealed unto him by the Father; {Jn.6:44;} and according to the measure or degrees whereby God is pleased to discover Himself to any man, so he can believe or confide in him more or less; so that it is plain, that faith is no means or condition of our justification; but by faith we believe it, and rest confidently assured of it when it is revealed, and so have joy and peace in believing. William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

Question - Doth the Law occasion such an enmity or hatred in the Elect also? Answer - The Elect, and they that are predestinated to be conformed unto the Image of Christ, come under a two-fold consideration. First, as they are in the state of nature; and secondly,

as they are in a state of grace. As they are in the state of nature, so they are in the state of enmity, and there is no difference herein between them and all other men {but only in the account of God;} they hate God as much as any, oppose him as much as any, and had a hand, and gave their voice in the crucifying of Christ as much as any men whatsoever; and in this condition the Law is to them the ministration of death, and their hearts rise against it, and they cannot endure to hear of the purity and equity thereof. But when they are once brought into the state of grace, when they once apprehend the love of God manifested to them in Jesus Christ, {Eph.2:13,} who is become their righteousness; then they are delivered from the Law, {Col.2:14,} as it did occasion hatred between God and them; for in this respect Christ took it away, and nailed it to his Cross, so that sin, which was the cause of enmity, {Eph.2:15,} and the Law, which by occasion did quicken and stir up this enmity, were both nailed to the Cross of Christ, and slain together in his flesh; and now the Elect or Believers are delivered from the Law, {Rom.7:6,} that they should no longer serve in the oldness of the letter, in fears and terrors, but in the newness of the Spirit, with comfort and delight. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

Question - The Law, or Commandment, being ordained of God unto life; how then did it become useless and void? Answer - God did indeed ordain or appoint the Law unto life, but not that any man should attain unto life, by any performance or outward observation of the same whatsoever; but that by believing in God, through him who was held forth, and prefigured in and by the Law, they might have eternal life; neither is the Law become useless and void, for heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than that one word of the Law should fail; {Mt.5:18;} for it is a Revelation of God's perfect Righteousness, commanding perfect obedience of all men who are not in Christ; and it is a ministration of death and condemnation, {II Cor.3:7,} and binds over every unbeliever, to answer for every disobedience, before the tribunal of Christ. It serves still to discover sin; {Rom.3:20;} and thereby leaves wicked men without excuse. In these and the like respects, the Law is holy, and just, and good, and shall not be dissolved till all be fulfilled. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

As the Law was spiritual, and concerned the inward man, so their obedience was to be answerable to the will of God herein. Now it was not the will of God, that they should act herein, according to the letter, and think to attain Righteousness by a strict performance of any or all those religious services; {Rom.3:20;} but that they should believe in Him, who was prefigured in all those services {which was Christ} and cast themselves wholly upon God in Him, {Jn.6:40,} for Righteousness, both unto Justification and Sanctification; but now Christ being come in the flesh, and having in himself ended all those significations; it is the will of God, that both Jews and Gentiles should believe in Him, {Mk.9:7,} and rest confidently assured, that God is graciously well with them, in Him, having for his sake forgiven them all their trespasses; {Eph.2:18;} so that the will of God being the rule of men's obedience, it is the will of God, that they should not act according to the letter of the Law for life; but that they should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, in whom is eternal life. {I Jn.3:23} William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Law & Gospel Distinctions

Question - Is the Law then of no use to Believers, or the Elect? Answer - The Elect, while they are in the state of nature, and until they be regenerated, and born anew of that incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever, {I Pet.1:23,} so long they are under the Law, and it threatens them, and curses them; {but it cannot condemn them, because they are in Christ, in the purpose of God;} it commands their obedience, but doth not assist them to obey; it kills them, but cannot make them alive; yet it is in some sense a Schoolmaster unto them, to lead them to Christ {though not in the terrors of it, yet in the true ends, and right understanding of it} for Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness; {Rom.10:4;} that is, the main end, why the Law was given, was, that men should look to Christ for Righteousness. The Law therefore to the Elect, while they are in the state of nature, being rightly expounded to them, and truly apprehended by them, doth instruct them, that they must lay down all their own righteousness, which is {as they think} attained by the performance of the duties of the Law, and rest only and wholly upon Christ for righteousness; for while they remain in unregeneracy, they verily think, that they are bound to act according to the Law for life, or else they shall be damned; they being shut up all this while under the Law, {Gal.3:23,}

as in prison, unto the faith, which is afterward to be revealed; yea, and many times also, when they are quickened, and made alive, and are set at liberty, or when they do believe in Jesus Christ in some measure; yet they are so held under a spirit of bondage, that they still serve in the oldness of the letter, {Rom.8:15,} in great fears and many doubts, and go heavily, and mourning, under the easy and light yoke of Christ, because they apprehend in themselves, and are persuaded by others also, that although they do believe in Jesus Christ for justification, yet it is their duty to walk in a strict conformity to the Law, or else they cannot be saved; and then finding in themselves, that they are not able to walk so exactly as the Law requireth, {Rom.8:3,} {it being weak, and yielding them no assistance in the work,} are many times so cast down, and filled with fear, that they refuse to be comforted; and the best they can attain unto in this condition is this; that when they apprehend their walking to be somewhat, or in any good measure answerable to the holiness which the Law requireth, especially if they find their hearts to be upright in the same {as they are able to judge} then they think that God will accept of them for their uprightness, although they cannot attain to that perfection which the Law requireth; but when they come to believe indeed, when they are enabled to rest confidently upon Jesus Christ for righteousness unto life and salvation, {Rom.10:4,} then they see and know, that they are delivered from the Law, {Rom.7:1-4,} and that the Law, as it is the Law, hath nothing to do with them, and that they are neither under the command of it, nor yet under the threats nor curses thereof; {Rom.7:6;} the Law, in this respect, being dead unto them, and they dead unto it; and that they are to serve now no longer in weakness and fear, but in power and with delight; for they are under the new Covenant, which is a Covenant of Grace, and being under Grace, are thereby enabled and accepted. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus

Christ, who is the New Covenant, is a ministration of Righteousness; that is, in the Gospel Christ is made known to be the Righteousness of God, which the Law required, he having perfectly fulfilled the Law, {Rom.10:4,} in all the high demands thereof, by walking exactly in all the particular commands of the same; and not so alone, but also hath stopped the mouth of the accusing and condemning power of the Law, {Rom.8:1,} by yielding and submitting himself in the flesh to death and the curse; and thus Christ is the Saints Righteousness to Justification, fulfilling the righteousness of the Law for them. And

Christ in the New Covenant is also a ministration of life, and peace in the Saints, fulfilling daily the Righteousness of the Law in them; {Rom.8:4;} that is, the Saints being united and made one with Christ, and one with God in Christ are thereby enabled to act righteousness and holiness, and do not look unto the Law for their pattern, but unto Christ the Truth of that pattern; {"Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith." Heb.12:2;} for he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and thus the Law, as it comes from Sinai, is silenced to believers, they being neither under commanding, nor yet the condemning power thereof; but as the Law comes from Mount Zion, {Is.2:2,3,} as Christ is both the Law and the Covenant, so the Saints are not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ, {I Cor.9:21,} he being a Law of the Spirit, and a Law of life in their hearts, freeing them from the Law of sin and death, and quickening and raising their hearts to life and glory, by and in Himself. In short, the Law, as it comes from Sinai, and is figured in stones, ceaseth to the Saints, and the duties and commands thereof, cease to be the duties of the Law, but are the duties and commands of the Gospel, even the commands of Christ, new commands, or the Law of Christ. {Gal.6:2, I Jn.2:8} - And this is the true reason, why the Saints walk with God so cheerfully and joyfully, because they clearly see, that they are not justified by, or for, any work, or merit, or worth of their own, but merely by the Free Grace and Love of God, in and for the Righteousness of Christ Jesus, {Gal.2:16,} who is the Lord our Righteousness, both unto justification, and also unto sanctification. "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} William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Old Testament Types & Sacrifices Fulfilled in Christ

Question - What were those Ordinances and Services of the Law, or Covenant? Answer - First there was the Tabernacle, and afterward the Temple, which were representations of the flesh of Christ, and also of the Saints, in whom God would please to dwell and manifest himself. {Ps.132:14} And then there was the Priesthood of Aaron; signifying the eternal Priesthood of Christ. {Heb.7:24} And there were also many Sacrifices and Offerings, which did betoken the Sacrifice of Christ, who should by that one offering of himself to God, obtain eternal redemption for them. {Heb.9:12} And there were many and

divers washings and cleansings, which did show forth the blood of Christ, which can only wash and cleanse away all sin. {I Jn.1:7} These and many others being visible representations and significations of Christ in the flesh, his perfect fulfilling of the Law, his making satisfaction to divine Justice, &c., all which were to be fulfilled and accomplished in him, which being done, the significations were to cease, {Heb.9:10;} and to be of no more use. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Old Testament Types & Sacrifices Fulfilled in Christ

Question - The Law being delivered in so few words, and the Covenant therein contained, being so dark and mystical, how came they then to understand God's meaning therein? Answer - The Lord was pleased in much wisdom and goodness, to explain those words, and to interpret his own meaning therein; both as they concerned them in their duty to Himself, and also as they contained their duty and behavior one towards another. {Ex. 20, 21, 22 & 23} Moses goes up into the Mount, where the Lord commands him in particular how they ought to behave themselves one towards another, naming also certain feast-days, and other observations about them; and Moses writes all the words of the Lord in a Book, and declares them to the people, and they promise obedience. {Ex.24:3,4} And as this Law contained God's Worship, and their duty therein, Moses is again called up into the Mount, where he is forty days and forty nights; in which space God shows him a Pattern, {Ex.24:12,} commands him to make him a Sanctuary, that he might dwell among them; and also gives him rules of a most exact and holy Worship, which he expects should be strictly performed by them; in which both holy place, and holy Worship, he doth really {yet darkly} declare, that unless he dwell among them, and communicate himself unto them, they could not be a holy people. {Ex. 25, 26, 27, 28 29 & 30} For indeed, that very Tabernacle, and afterward the Temple, were representations or significations of the human body of Christ, in which the Lord would manifest himself, and dwell among them, {I Tim.3:16,} as the Vessels wherewith they ministered were holy; so the Lord would have them know, that he could not be spiritually worshipped with carnal hearts and hands. {Ps.29:2} The Ark was a visible Type of Christ, by whom the Lord would manifest himself. The two Tables of the Covenant were put into the Ark, to show, that Christ was both the Law and the Covenant to his own; {Is.42:21,6;} and that the righteousness, which the Law

required, was wholly in Him. {Phil.3:9} The Mercy-seat where God appeared was placed above upon the Ark, to show, that God would not manifest himself in mercy and goodness to any, but only to them that were in Covenant with him in Jesus Christ. {Is.59:21} The Table, and the Shewbread that stood upon it, was to teach them, that Christ was both the Feeder and the Food. {Jn.6:48,51} The Candlestick, with its seven Lamps always burning, did signify the wisdom of the Spirit, without which, there was no finding out the mind of God in these mysteries. {I Cor.2:10,14} The Oil, wherewith the Lamps were dressed, and made to burn, was of pure olive-oil, beaten, and without mixture; {Ex.27:20;} to show, that the true knowledge of God in the mystery of Christ, was not attained by the help of human wisdom and learning, but by the light and wisdom of the Spirit only. {I Cor.2:12} The Altar, and all those beasts that were offered thereon, did signify Christ, {Heb.13:10,} his death and sufferings, who would {by offering up himself to God once for all} both redeem them from the curse of the Law, {Gal.3:13,} and forever perfect them that are sanctified. {Heb.10:14} The blood of those beasts wherewith they were sprinkled, did signify the blood of Christ; wherewith the Atonement was to be made, and whereby their Consciences were to be purged from the dead works of the Law, to serve the living God in Spirit and Truth. {Heb.9:14} The Priests, which offered the sacrifice were holy men, and consecrated, and set apart for that service; to show, that God will be sanctified in all them that draw near to him. {Lev.10:3} The sacrifices might not be offered without a Priest, to teach, that there is not any service that can be acceptable to God, unless it were offered up to him in the Spirit and Power of Christ. {Mt.3:17} The glorious and beautiful garments wherein Aaron did minister, did hold forth the infinite purity, and transcendent excellency and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom only God is well pleased. The Onyx-stones, whereon the names of the Children of Israel were engraved, were put upon the shoulder-pieces of the Ephod; to teach, that true Israel indeed, are kept by the power of the Lord Jesus through faith unto salvation; {I Pet.1:5;} for he is the wisdom and the power of God unto salvation in all that do believe. {I Cor.1:24} The twelve precious stones, which were set with the names of the Children of Israel, in the Breast-plate of judgment, did declare; that Spiritual Israel that were in Christ, were a precious people {I Pet.2:9} in the judgment and esteem of God. {Mal.3:17} The curious Girdle, wherewith all those goodly garments were girded to the Priest, did hold forth the faithfulness and truth of God, in making good all his promises in Christ, {Heb.10:23,} in whom all the promises of God are Yea, and Amen. {II Cor.1:20} The holy Anointing Oil, wherewith the Tabernacle, and all the furniture, and the Vessels thereof were

anointed, did signify the Anointing of the Spirit, which they that did believe should afterward receive; {I Jn.2:27;} which might not be poured upon man's flesh, neither might any man make the like to it, nor put it upon a stranger, upon pain of being cut off from his people; {Acts 1:17;} to show, that fleshly, carnal, outside-hypocritical-holiness, is an abomination to the Lord. {Acts 5:1-6} The Sabbaths were a sign unto them, that the Lord Jesus was their Sanctification; six days might work be done, but on the seventh they must rest; {Ex.31:13-17;} to show, that in the works of civil concernment, they were to labor, but in the business of sanctification, they were not to act one jot; but rest wholly upon Christ the Messiah. {I Cor.1:30} In seed-time, and in harvest, they must rest on the Sabbath, even in times of greatest necessity; to show, that their best services, and most religious performances, were like a menstruous cloth, and in no wise to be rested in; {Is.64:6;} but in the holiness of Christ were they to rest. They were forbidden to kindle a fire throughout their habitations on the Sabbath; to show, that no self-holiness, or self-sanctification, attained by any religious duties, or performances whatsoever, must be joined unto the holiness of Christ, but they were to rely wholly upon the Lord Christ only. {Tit.3:5, I Jn.1:7} The Leprosy, and all those unclean issues, did show forth the horrible and filthy nature of sin. The Offerings, and Washings appointed for their cleansing, did signify the blood of Christ, without which there could be no remission, {Heb.9:22,} nor Sanctification. In a word, {for it would be too tedious to speak of all in particular} there was not the least circumstance in all their commanded Service and Worship; but which did mystically hold forth Jesus Christ; and thus the Law was their Schoolmaster unto Christ, {Gal.3:24,} that they might be justified by grace in Him, {"who of God was made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption"} and not by their own outward observations of the Law. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Particular & Effectual Redemption by Christ

Question - But doth not the Prophet Isaiah say, that he {meaning Christ} was wounded for our transgressions, and by his stripes we are healed; {Is.53:5,6;} and {all} we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all, even all without exception; and that he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; whereby it appears, that his death was an

undertaking for all, good and bad, wicked rich men that saw no need of him. Where then is the difference; or how can God be said to be no respecter of persons? Answer - The Prophet in the former chapter, had largely declared, what joyful and glorious days should be in the time of the Gospel, {Is.52:1,2,} and exhorted them to rejoice in the consideration of the same; yea, and to account the feet of them beautiful, that should bring them such good news; {vs.7:} and under the Type of the captivity of Babylon, whether they should be carried, and from whence they should certainly return, {vs.11,} he prophecies of their deliverance from the spiritual bondage and thralldom of sin by Jesus Christ, who should both deal prudently, and also prosper in his design; and though he should appear in a very despicable form as to men, {vs.13,} and his visage should be marred through sufferings; {vs.14;} yet he should be exalted, and be very high, and sprinkle many Nations {"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Ps.32:12} with his blood, &c. {vs.15} But who, saith the Prophet, will believe this report, or to whom shall this arm, or power of the Lord {even Christ} be revealed? {Is.53:1} Why, what was the reason? Because the people should be very high in expectation, and look for such a Christ as should, even like David, defend them from outward enemies, war, and captivity; but it was the pleasure of God, that Christ should grow up by degrees, as a tender plant, unregarded, and as a Root out of a dry ground, {vs.2,} which no man looks after; to have no beauty or comeliness that we should desire him. A man of sorrows and grief, from whom all men should hide their faces; {vs.3,} yet surely, saith he, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; {vs.4;} he was wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. {vs.5} We all, like sheep, have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, &c., {vs.6;} but who are they that the Prophet is now speaking to? Or who doth he here speak of? Is he not speaking to Israel, a people whom God did own above all people in the world, and whom, by an outward choice, he had brought near to himself, above all Nations whatsoever? Yea, and moreover, was not Israel after the flesh a type of Israel in the spirit, for all were not Israel in the spirit, which were so in the flesh. Yea, and the Prophet often calls them Zion, and Jerusalem, which doth usually signify the saints and believers in the days of the Gospel; {Is.52:1,2;} and in speaking to these, he doth figuratively speak of all the Saints, who should believe in Christ. Now Christ hath for these borne and endured sorrow and grief, for their transgressions was he wounded, and his chastisement was their peace, and they were healed by his stripes. {Is.53:5} These were his lost sheep of the house of Israel {Mt.15:24} which were gone astray,

and turned after their own ways, {vs.6;} and that they might be reduced, and brought home again, the Lord laid all their iniquities upon him. With these he was content to make his grave, though they were wicked in themselves, that so he might be their Righteousness, and make them righteous in Himself; {Is.53:9;} yea, he emptied himself, and lay down in death, that they, who were rich and full in their own apprehensions, might empty themselves, lie down in shame, and receive of his fullness. For these did the Lord bruise him, and for these was his soul made an offering, {vs.10;} and to what end was all this? That he might see his seed, that he might thereby redeem a people from all iniquity, and conform them to himself in all holiness, and so present them to the Father in himself, spotless and blameless, for this was the good pleasure of the Lord, and it was prosperous in the hand of Christ, for he did it effectually. {Tit.2:14} Yea, Christ did prolong his days, {though he died as to the flesh} and saw the travail of his soul, and the fruit of his sufferings, and was satisfied in the same, for his blood was not shed in vain; for by his righteousness many {not all} were justified, {Is.53:11,} because he bare or suffered for their iniquities; therefore God hath exalted him, and made him glorious, because he poured out his soul to death, and bear the sins of {not all; but} many. {vs.12} Thus this Scripture being duly weighed, all men may hence judge, whether the Lord, by the Prophet, intends a general redemption of all without exception; or of a peculiar people, even mystical Israel, whom he hath adopted to himself in Jesus Christ, for sons and daughters; {II Cor.6:18;} for though the Lord be no respecter of persons, as to any outward appearance, he regards not any man, as he is a man, as he is a Jew, nor as he is a Gentile, as he is rich, or as he is poor, bond, or free; but as he is in Christ, and Christ in him. {Eph.1:6} In this sense the Lord doth accept persons, for he accepts of these in Christ, and as for others, who are not in Christ, he regards them not, be they Jew or Gentile, high or low, noble or base; he accepts of none, but in whom he appears, and manifests himself by Jesus Christ. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Particular & Effectual Redemption by Christ

Question - Is it not said in the Scriptures, that Christ died for all men, and that as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; {Rom.5:18,} so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life? How say you then, that

some go into condemnation? Answer - Christ's death did in some respect reach forth itself unto all men. God had a glorious design in the making of man, and for this end, did bring forth this outward creation of all things, to be subservient to his glory, to help forward this design; yea, and the Lord was rich in mercy, and store, and abundantly provided aforehand to keep this design on foot; for Christ was that Lamb, prepared and slain before the foundation of the world. {I Pet.1:20, Rev.13:8} Now if Christ had not died in the purpose and account of God, before man had actually sinned, then there had been an utter subversion and dissolution, not only of mankind, but also of the whole Creation by man's sin; but now the death of Christ, coming between Divine Wrath, and the whole creation, did still give a being unto the same, that it should be serviceable, in helping forward this glorious design. And upon this account merely it is, {namely, by the death of Christ,} that all men, even the most wicked, enjoy a temporal life, health, riches; yea, all outward things whatsoever; {Ps.36:6;} for in this sense he is said to save, or preserve man, and beast, for he doth good to all, and makes his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall upon the just and unjust; {Mt.5:45;} namely, the Sun and Rain of his outward providence; and thus Christ died for all men, {in this sense alone,} and so he is the Saviour of all men. But there is a more especial Salvation, as the Apostle saith, He is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe; {I Tim.4:10;} and this salvation is not that outward or temporal salvation, but an inward and spiritual one, and is peculiar only to them that believe in him, and are one with him; and upon this ground it is, that the Apostle saith, "as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life;" {Rom.5:18;} as if he had said, that as Adam by sinning brought all men into a state of sin, and so of condemnation, so all that are justified unto life, are made just by the free gift and grace of God, in the Righteousness of Jesus Christ; so that the words do not extend, that as all men fell in Adam, so all, without exception, should be justified and saved by Christ, but only they, who by faith, {through grace,} lay hold on the Righteousness of Christ, the which the Apostle declares at large, in the 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7th chapters of Romans. In the third chapter he proves all men to be under sin, and that by the works of the Law no man can be justified; and that God hath set forth Christ to be a Propitiation, that whosoever believes should be justified freely by his grace, through the Redemption that is in his Blood. {vs. 3:9-11, 20-25} In the fourth chapter he tells them, that even Abraham was not justified by, or for any work which he wrought, but only {by faith} in Christ Jesus, and that faith {the work of Christ} was reckoned unto him for righteousness, and so it shall be

to all that do believe. {vs. 13, 22 – 24} In the fifth chapter he tells them, that justification {as perceived to reside wholly in the Person & Work of Christ} by faith, brings peace and joy into the soul, which justification by the work of the Law could not do, because the work was ever doing, but never done, and they looked upon God in that estate, as ever angry; but now, says he, we have peace with him, and can joy in tribulations; for though in Adam we were under condemnation, yet now believing in Christ, and looking to Him for righteousness, we are justified unto life. {vs. 1, 3, 18} Thus the Apostle is far from intending a general redemption, but an special salvation in Jesus Christ, peculiar only to them, {the elect,} that believe. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Particular & Effectual Redemption by Christ

Question - The Apostle writing to Timothy, exhorts, that prayer be made for all men, because he will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; and further saith, that Christ is the Mediator between God and man, who gave himself a ransom for all; and the Apostle John saith, that Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. How say you then, that salvation is peculiar only to them {the elect} who do believe? Answer - For the clearing of this, the meaning of these Scriptures must be inquired into. The Apostle indeed exhorts, that prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and all in authority, and gives a twofold reason. {I Tim.2:1,2} First in respect of themselves, that so they might live in quietness, and godliness under them. The second reason respects God; as it is his will, being well pleased with our praying for them; {vs.3;} because he will bring some of all sorts {high and low} to the knowledge of the Truth, that so they may be saved. And if he say, what must we pray for the Gentiles, for our Governors are no Jews? Is it lawful to pray for them? Yea, saith the Apostle, God will have all to be saved, {vs.4,} Gentiles as well as the Jews, {that is, God's elect dispersed amongst Jews & Gentiles,} for there is but one God, and he is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews; {vs.5;} and there is but one Mediator between God and man, even the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself, to ransom the Gentiles as well as the Jews, {vs.6,} and this mystery was not known to former ages, but now in due time it is to be manifested; and for this very purpose, saith he, I am ordained a Preacher, and an Apostle, {vs.7,} to bring these good tidings to the Gentiles, and to assure their hearts, that if they

believe in Christ they shall be saved; and thereof you need not doubt, for as Christ, who is Truth, is in me, so that which I speak is truth. And hereto agrees that of the Apostle Peter, that God is no respecter of persons, but in every Nation {Gentiles as well as Jews} he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him; {Acts 10:34,35;} showing plainly, that the purpose of God in bringing in the Gentiles, was a secret to that day, but now was revealed. And where the Apostle John saith, that Christ is the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world; {I Jn.2:2;} he doth not mean, every particular person in the world, but only they, who walk in the light, as God is in the light, even these the blood of Christ doth cleanse from all sin; for, saith he, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" but if we see our sins, and confess that we are sinners, his promise is, to forgive, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; {I Jn.1:8,9;} and these things I write unto you, to warn you that ye sin not, yet nevertheless, if ye be overtaken {as who is not} be not discouraged, for we have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ, who is perfectly righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, who are Jews, but for all them that thus have fellowship with Him, among the Gentiles also, in all Nations throughout the whole world. {I Jn.2:1,2} And that this Scripture is thus to be understood, the Apostle Paul shows plainly, "where {saith he} there is neither Greek, nor Jew, Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond, nor Free, but Christ is all, and in all;" {Col.3:10,11;} he doth not mean, that Jews, and Greeks, &c., are all one, and Christ is in them all, as to every particular person among all these, but only those among them, who, in the verses before, had put off {not as a condition of salvation; but as a result of God's effectual grace, working in them, "both to will and to do of his good pleasure"} the old man, and had put on the new; namely, such as had mortified their earthly members; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, &c., in the 5th verse, and had put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, &c. in the 8th verse, which were the deeds of the old man; and who also were renewed in knowledge, according to the image of God, which is Christ, the new man; in wisdom, righteousness, and true holiness, &c, {vs.10,} among these, saith he, there is no difference, though some of one nation, and some of another, some bond, and some free, for they are all one in Christ, and he is all to them, and all in them. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Prayer

Question - What is Prayer? Answer - Prayer is much spoken of, and much used among men, but it is not very well understood, for many people can, and do utter words and sentences, which the Saints in Scripture have used in prayer, and yet they do not pray. Prayer is not every lifting up of the voice to God, nor every lifting up of the heart to God, for the most wicked man may pray, {Num.23:10,} and that earnestly, and that for life and salvation, and yet not pray aright; yea, a believer, and one that is in Christ, may be very fervent in prayer, and yet not being rightly catechized and instructed in the nature of true prayer, may not be accepted, but offend in praying. {Ps.80:4} Prayer is not a work of wit, or memory, or of any other common gift of the Spirit; but true and right prayer, as it goes up to God through Christ, so it comes down first from God by Christ, and is indeed the intercession of Christ in the soul; {Gal.4:6;} for no man knows how, or what to pray for as he ought; yea, the Saints themselves are compassed with many infirmities, and many of them lie under many outward crosses, &c., by reason whereof, they may, and do now and then use prayer in a carnal manner; now it is the Spirit which removeth or helpeth against these infirmities; {Rom.8:26;} when the Spirit prevails {as He doth for the most part} in the Saints, then it assures them of the love of God, and overcomes all fears and doubts, and carries them up to God with free access, making them to know, that God is not delighted with eloquent words and speeches, or sentences finely framed, and artificially drawn into a method; but that he is well pleased with Christ, and delights in nothing but Christ, and if he be in the soul, though at present they cannot utter many words, or outward expressions; nay, if they can but groan in spirit, he knows the meaning thereof, for he knows the heart, and understands the mind of the spirit. {Rom.8:27} If prayer proceed from a man's own spirit, then it is always for self ends; but if it be the intercession of Christ in the soul, then it is always agreeable to the will of God; for he {even Christ} maketh intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God. William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Prayer

Question - If prayer be the intercession of Christ in the soul, then how is it said, that he is at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us, and is gone into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us? And why then are we commanded to pray to the Father in

the name of Christ. Answer - Christ is indeed at the right hand of God; that is, the Lord hath advanced him into his own glory; {Acts 2:33-36;} and given him his own power and authority, even all power in heaven and earth, {Mt.28:18,} for God doth not manifest himself in any wise unto the Saints, or bestow anything upon them, but in and by Jesus Christ; neither can, or do the Saints enjoy God, or have any true fellowship with him, but in and through Christ; so that whatsoever is done in heaven, or in earth, Christ is the doer of it. Now Christ dwells in the Saints by his Spirit, which is the power of his love, proceeding infinitely from the Father unto the Son, and from Christ into the Saints; and by this Spirit, or power of love, he quickens them up to prayer, and not only so, but also frames and endites their prayers in them, {Zech.12:10,} according to the will of the Father, and so they become acceptable to him; for whatsoever Christ doth, is well pleasing to God; {Jn.8:29;} for the Father loveth the Son, and the Saints being united to Christ, and made one with God in him, {Jn.17:23,} are hereby brought into the love and favor of God through him; and thus he is in heaven, appearing in the presence of God for us. And for that we are to pray to the Father in the name of Christ, it is not meant, that we must often use or repeat the name of Christ, or in word beg, or crave anything at the hand of God for Christ's sake, for so a wicked carnal wretch may do; but to pray to the Father in the name of Christ is {Eph.6:18} to pour forth the soul unto the Father, in the power and intercession of the Son, for God looks not at anything in all this world but Christ. Men may be high in gifts, and notions, and may make admirable prayers for words and sentences, and also for method and form, but if Christ be not there, and if the prayer go not forth in the Spirit and power of Jesus Christ, then the Lord regards it not, but loathes it, and casts it away, as abominable. {Pv.28:9} To pray then in the name of Christ is, when the soul goeth forth into the arms of God's love, by the Spirit and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of his Love. William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Prayer

Question - Seeing that men of themselves cannot pray aright, and that the Lord, to whom we are to pray, knows our wants before we pray; {Mt.6:32;} what need have we then to pray? Answer - As men cannot pray of themselves, so neither can they live of themselves, for the life which the Saints now live in the flesh, is not by any power of their own, but by the power of Christ living in them; {Gal.2:20;} so that there is not only a necessity of life in them in whom Christ lives, who

is the life, but an impossibility of not living. In like manner, though men cannot pray acceptably by their own power or worth, yet if Christ, who is the Mediator, and Intercessor, live in them, there is not only a necessity of praying, but it is altogether impossible that they should not pray, {Zech.12:10, Rom.8:15,} Christ being in their hearts the Spirit of supplication, and of adoption, causing them to cry, Abba Father. Yea, in him they have access with boldness unto the throne of grace; {Eph.3:12;} and though the Lord does know our wants, yet he hath commanded us to pray; {Ezek.36:37;} ask and ye shall receive, &c.; {Mt.7:7;} and ye fight, and war, and have not, because ye ask not. {James 4:2} The Lord would have his people to rejoice, but they must pray. "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." {Jn.16:24} Now although the Lord command us to pray, he doth not intend that we should make idols of our prayers, and think that we receive for our praying, but he doth it, that we may know and consider, on whom our joy, our happiness, yea, our very life depends; {Ps.16:11;} and also that He alone may have the honor and glory of all his goodness, {Ps.30:5,} when we in asking acknowledge him to be the giver of all, and that we receive all of grace, and not of debt; {James 1:17;} and then it occasions much thankfulness, when we return him the praise of all his love and bounty, and live in the use of his mercies, to his praise. {II Cor.9:11,12} William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Prayer

Question - But is not the Lord said to be an unchangeable God, {Mal.3:6,} with whom is not the least shadow of turning; {James 1:17;} and if he hath determined to bestow any favor or mercy, he will do it without our prayers; and if he have not determined us any good, to what purpose should we pray seeing by the same we cannot alter nor change his mind? Answer - Although the Lord be altogether unchangeable, and unalterable in his purposes and determinations, yet he would have his children make known to him their needs by their requests; {Phil.4:6;} neither is there the least shadow of change in Him, when he bestows mercies and blessings upon them, in answer to their prayers; for whatsoever good thing he purposeth to his children, yet before he bestow it upon them, he usually stirreth up their hearts to pray for the same; {Lk.11:1;} now the Lord whatever he gives to the Saints, he gives it them in Christ; and what the Saints pray for, they request and beg the same in the Spirit and Intercession of Christ, {Jn.16:26,} for he is the way, by which the Lord comes down to us in all good; {Jn.14:6;} and he is the way also, by which

we go up to God in prayer and thanksgiving. Now as it is impossible, that God should alter his determinations, in bestowing of mercies, so also is it that the Saints should not pray for blessings and favors, {Ps.32:6,} being quickened up thereto by the Spirit of Christ living in them; {Gal.4:6;} so then, God is not changed, but the change is in the Saints, for many times when God intends a blessing, his children are not fit to receive the same; then he by that Spirit of adoption, quickens them up to pray, {I Thes.5:17,} and yet delays them; that by the continual use of this heavenly exercise and by the spirit of judgment, and burning, their corruptions may be consumed and subdued, {Is.4:4,} and their hearts brought into a more holy and humble frame, and they at length, by this means, made fit to receive the mercy. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Prayer

Question - If men cannot pray until they are moved, or quickened thereunto by the Spirit, how then shall it be known when the Spirit moves; or which, or when, is the most convenient and fittest time for prayer? Answer - That no man is able of himself, without the aid of the Spirit, to make any prayer acceptable to God, hath been already showed; prayer being a work of that Spirit of adoption, called the Spirit of the Son, {Gal.4:6,} and is nothing else, but an effect of that power in the Son, given unto him by the Father. Men may use words or forms of prayer, but none can pray indeed, but they who have received this spirit of adoption, and are thereby become the sons of God; {Jn.14:23;} and they, who are thus become sons, have not the Spirit by fits and starts, but the Spirit, or the Lord Jesus Christ, who is that Spirit, dwells in their hearts, {Rom.8:9,} and is continually exciting, and stirring up their hearts to prayer, and every good thing. But it is not always apprehended alike; for many times, by reason of temptation, want of watchfulness, and other infirmities of the flesh, it is clouded, and acts not so clearly as at other times; yet notwithstanding, it will in due time break through all difficulties, and remove all impediments, {Rom.8:26,} and act like itself, and minister matter of prayer upon all occasions; so then, whomsoever the Lord presents occasion or opportunity of prayer, then he by the same calls for prayer, and then is the Spirit ready to quicken and help, if not quenched with carnal workings of the flesh, {I Thes.5:19,} as worldly cares, worldly sorrows, worldly joys, &c. Now if there be any time, wherein the Lord doth not minister occasion of prayer and praise, then that is no time for prayer and thanksgiving; but there is no time in the whole life of a Christian, in which the Lord doth not minister occasion

of prayer and praise, {I Thes.5:17,18,} therefore the saints ought to pray continually, and in everything to give thanks. Furthermore, as the saints ought upon all occasions to lift up their hearts to God, so also they are to take the fittest opportunity; for prayer is not a light business, but of great weight and concernment; it is called, a pouring forth of the soul to God, {I Sam.1:15,} a wrestling with God, {Gen.32:24,} a crying {Psal.142:1} earnestly to God, &c. Now the fittest time for this serious business is when we can set about it with least distraction; when we can best isolate ourselves from all other occasions whatsoever, and attend upon that work with freedom of spirit. And as we must take the fittest time, so also we must watch unto it; {I Pet.4:7;} that is, so order our outward affairs, that there may be convenient time; and so watch over our own hearts in the strength of Christ, that they may be always well disposed to prayer, {Eph.6:18,} and not to faint, {Lk.18:1,} though we meet with many delays, and other discouragements, but to continue instant in the same, {Col.4:2,} watching when God will give an occasion of thanksgiving. William Mason {A Little Star – Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}

Union with Christ

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, &c.” {Is.61:1-3} The Saints, though they were in the state of election in the purpose of God, yet for the present being fallen under sin, were in a condition of darkness and death, and were in slavery to sin and Satan; and being no way able to free or deliver themselves, therefore was Christ God’s elect, or his Righteous Servant, that he by undertaking for them in the flesh, and by raising and quickening them in the spirit, {I Jn.3:8,} might bring them out of prison and captivity, make them free men, and present them to the Father in Himself, without rebuke. And so also means the Apostle, when he tells the Ephesians, that now it is God’s design, in the dispensation of the fullness of times; to gather into one sweet agreement, or holy fellowship, all the saints that are elected in Christ, {Eph.1:10,} or which are in Christ in his purpose, which is all one, which are in heaven, and in earth; whether they be Jews, or Gentiles; circumcised or uncircumcised, bond or free; even in Him, as the saints are in Christ by virtue of God’s election; so God will gather them together, and so raise them by Christ, that they shall now know, and believe their union with God in Christ, and their union one with another, even in Him. And to this end, all things were made by

Him, and for his glory, and still consist, to help forward his great design; for in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead, and the Saints are complete in him. {Col.1:16,17, 2:9} William Mason {A Little Star - Giving Some Light into the Counsels and Purposes of God Revealed in the Scriptures, 1653}