

# **DUTY FAITH**

**BY**

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**With Recommendation By James Wells**

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**“English Baptist Elder John Foreman”**

## **PREFACE.**

These Letters, by Mr. John Foreman, ought to be read by all the Churches in Christendom. They are a wholesome handful of meal, suited to counteract the deadly poison passed off for Gospel in the present day. Never was decision for truth and vital practical godliness more needed than at this time of hollow and superficial religious pretension.

**James Wells,**

**Surrey Tabernacle, Burough Road, London**

**February 20th 1860**

The Reason for writing these remarks

Sir,

I am, from the truth, example, and authority of the New Testament word of God, a Strict Baptist communionist, knowing most assuredly, that no man, living under the profession of the name of Christ, can really regard and solemnly take that holy word for the standard of his faith and sole rule of his life, and not be so. But having, on the 17th of December last, received some papers, in the form of circulars, from the above association, giving an outline of the plan upon which the same is to be considered organized, and requesting my answer, as to whether I approve of, and am prepared to act upon, the suggested plan, and of course to unite with that association; and for me to send my reply to you accordingly, I hereby send you my reply. This is, that I cannot unite with that association, because it has in it those who hold duty faith, or the duty of all men where the gospel comes, to repent and believe unto salvation; and which you have stated to be an article of your faith, in the doctrinal plan you laid down for the organization of that association. And, although your plan has not been adopted, because the majority over-ruled that that point should not be printed as a professed point of the association's faith, still it is there; and it will only wait for an opportunity to break forth, and will nothing alter for the better by

concealment. So that to unite with that association for the purpose of maintaining Strict Baptist communion, I must at once be in fellowship with duty faith; and that I can never be till I really believe the point for myself; and that can never be till the whole system and matter of my faith, hope and experience, be quite broken down upon the ground that salvation is of the Lord only, by purpose and by deed; and by grace only, either as a matter of right, of expectation, of promise, or of final effect; and be remodeled in figure, and exchanged in the nature thereof, into something very different, and upon altogether new premises.

The above, I suppose, will be a sufficient answer to the request of the committee of the above association. But feeling it to be my duty to state why I spurn and abhor the very name of duty faith, as being neither rational nor spiritual, by either the law of works, or the covenant of life and peace; and as being the very spawn of at least one half the errors there are in the professing world, I shall address myself more immediately to you; and especially so, as I am requested to send my reply to you; and also because you belong to that association, and have so fully avowed duty faith to be your own sentiment, both in the doctrinal plan you drew up for that association, and in your reply to Mr. Wright's letter in the Primitive Church Magazine.

### **Duty Faith And The Covenants**

You consider that the obligation of every man to believe unto salvation, depends on 'The rule of universal obedience, which is the very essence of God's law.' This is a most sorry huddling together of things which are fundamentally dissimilar in their nature, order and design, Into one confused, unintelligible and erroneous mass; for it is a making creation obligations, and salvation favours and blessings; the possession of Eden, and the obtaining of heaven, with all the grace, love and glory of God to eternal life there, to be originally by the spirit, mind, and intent of one and the very self-same law and covenant of divine claims and creature obligations. O dear, sir, what a medley!

## **Adam covenant**

There is properly, nothing without covenant system and order, of all things that are of God with man; whether they be gifts or claims, obligations or blessings. For when the Lord made Adam, and the whole human race in him as their head, he made a covenant with him, Gen 2:15-17, and according to which he gave him the good of Eden, and thereby all the good of pure creation; with fixed obligations according to the nature of that good, and the constituted powers and qualifications of Adam personally, and also in him, equally to do what was required, as to enjoy what was given. And as the nature of the good, such was the nature of the obligations; and as the extent of the good, such was the extent of the obligations; and this covenant could never devolve on man obligations it never qualified him to perform; nor could it devolve the obligations of another covenant altogether different in its nature, construction and design. Pure natural man was made with greatest fitness to this covenant of A natural good; and this covenant was made with equal fitness to sinless natural man. Man's capacity to enjoy the good of this covenant, and his capacity with happiness to perform the obligations of this covenant, were of the same holy length and breadth. This covenant could not secure a good beyond its own nature, nor devolve an obligation beyond its own good. just as universal as the good of this covenant is, so universal, and no more, are the obligations of obedience to this covenant. Angels were never partakers of the good of this covenant in its covenant form, as it was never made with them; and so they were never under any of its particular forms of obligation to obey; and by the same rule, man by this covenant is not a partaker of the order of angelic good, and so is not subject to the angelic order of obligations to obey. God has never put to any covenant the obligations of obedience before interest in the privileges or good of it, but after; and so Adam and his race were in the good of this covenant made with him, before they were subject to its claims of obedience; at any rate, God made Adam before he claimed obedience of him; and made him with faculties before he made it his duty to exercise them in any way; and let the same only be said of the new creation, and new creatureship, and the divine covenant therewith in Christ Jesus, and we would lay down the pen and say no more.

## **Abraham covenant**

God made a covenant with Abraham, by which he gave to him and his seed the land of Canaan, and all the good thereof. The whole race of Adam universally were never within this covenant with Abraham and his seed, nor intended to be so; and so they, accordingly, were never universally partakers of its peculiar form of privileges, and so, accordingly, were not under its peculiar form of obligations to obey its claims. And the obligations of this covenant with Abraham were according to its own nature only, and which were in accordance with its own privileges in particular. And these covenanters were as naturally equal to their obligations, as their privileges were suited to their happiness in that order; for as the enjoyment of their privileges was conditional on their obedience, there was nothing in the claims but what was happily practicable, and within their uniform ability to discharge. But the peculiar claims of this covenant with Abraham and his seed, were not the universal duty of the whole race of Adam to obey, because they were not bound to obedience by its privileges; and the Lord has never set up a covenant with claims, but as those claims should righteously grow out of the real privileges of such covenant. Man has, therefore, nothing to do with the obligations, nor with the privileges, of any covenant with God, but as he has really to do with the covenant, and as the covenant has really to do with him; and only let this truth be admitted, and all to the contrary be cast away, in regard to the gospel covenant of the free and sovereign grace of God, and we should hear no more of the natural man's duty to believe unto salvation. But your idea of universal obedience in kind and extent by one and the self-same law only, goes to deny of all this, and to say that all covenant distinctions and relations are nothing at all with you, in regard to the nature and order of obedience, although so clearly and distinctly stated in the word of God.

## **Covenant of grace**

The Lord saith, I have made a covenant with my chosen,' Ps 89:3,4, meaning with David as the type and figure, but with Christ as the true antitype and head, and with his seed, the chosen in him, of the redeemed and represented

by him. And this is called, an everlasting covenant, Heb 13: 20 the covenant of peace that shall not be removed, Isa. 54:10 "a covenant that God will not break, Psa.89:34 "that he hath remembered for ever, Psa.105:8 a covenant on by which he will be a God to the house of Israel, and they shall be to him a people, Heb 8:10 an everlasting covenant by which he will do good to all those whom It concerns, with whom it has to do, and they with that; and will not turn away from them, but to will put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not turn away from and him; but that he will with his whole heart and with his whole soul rejoice over them to do them good, Jer. 32:40, 41 a covenant of but sure mercies, Isa. 55:3. And this is called the better covenant, as surpassing all before it, and as so much also differing from all other be covenants, having Christ for the mediator of it, Heb 8: 6. And this covenant, by another form of expression, is called a testament, a better testament, the new testament, or will, made out in due form, and published and declared to be God's last will and testament; distinct from all others in form and nature, and for its heirs it is better, having Christ for its surety, as God's surety to the people, and the people's surety to God, Heb 9: 15; chap 7: 22. This covenant, as God's will and testament, is sure and without uncertainties, and shall stand fast and unbroken with Christ for his seed for ever, Ps 89: 28-37. This covenant is not indifferent, but special; not general, but particular; not universal, but select; being made only with God's chosen. This covenant is the great scope and scale of eternal life and salvation, as by purpose determined, and by promise declared; and the gospel is but the public proclamation of the truth of this covenant, for the obedience of faith and salvation of the chosen of all nations, in the name of Jesus, and by the forgiveness of sin through his blood.

### **The error of mixing the covenants**

Now I cannot see what the obligations of the Eden covenant of nature can have to do with faith in this covenant of mercy, by a surety's blood, as a duty; because the most perfect obedience maintained in Eden could in no way, from its very nature, be any title, or even any sort of introduction, to any of the mercy favors: of this covenant. And as the Eden covenant, which was but a fair legal contract between sinless man and his holy Maker, could not, from its very nature, embrace one single salvation blessing of this

covenant of mercy, so neither could it devolve one single obligation on man, in regard to the parental and household requirements of this covenant of forgiving mercy to those whom the law of that covenant at once condemns. The law of works is the standard of the natural man's legal, and of the sinful man's penal, obligations to God, according to the Eden covenant; and by that law it was, and is, every natural man's duty to be naturally pure and sinless, as Adam was at the first, and all in him, and had power so to be; but it is no man's duty to be a saint in Christ Jesus; it is a great favor to be so, and it is divine favor only that makes any man to be so, and it is the power of divine favor only, that makes any poor sinner to know, believe, rejoice, and live to God under the truth of it. And this being on so different a foundation altogether to that of the natural covenant with pure human nature in Eden, duty faith in this covenant of mercy to the guilty could never come as an obligation on any man from that covenant with sinless nature; which will not even now know any thing but innocency or death; repentance and faith being no part of the obedience or state of man required by the law of works.

And we might very property ask, are the favors of the covenant of life and peace universal, while the covenant itself is undeniably declared to be particular? Are election, predestination, redemption, justification, peace, pardon, sanctification, and final glory in heaven with Christ, universal favors? Because if they are not, to believe them so, is to believe a lie; and to teach so, is to teach a lie; and to teach any one thing that justly leads to the conclusion that all the rest, to be consistent, must be universal, is but little better than at once teaching of lies altogether. And it must be very fallacious to talk about universal faith without universal interest, since faith and interest are inseparable, according to the word of God. And since faith is the sign of interest, by the promise of God, can it be the duty of all to believe and wear the sign universally, of what is not universally warranted by promise? And are the promises universal? Because, no promise, no ground for faith; for even grace does not give faith where it has not given promise. Or is it the duty of all men to believe unto salvation in such a way, as that by believing they may make that eternally general, which God himself has made eternally particular and discriminate?

**Duty faith makes the gospel a ministration of cruelty and injustice, but men are damned for law-breaking not for failing to savingly believe**

I think we have shown sufficiently plain above, that duty faith in a covenant of grace unto salvation could never grow out of, nor come from the Eden covenant of works; so that such an obligation, to exist at all, must be new, and peculiar to the gospel dispensation as its cause. And then, in reply to this, we ask, and does the gospel give universal life and strength to all where it comes, to become such as the word of God declares to be believers unto salvation? We know it does not, for a natural man under the gospel is no more than a natural man anywhere else. And has any natural man in and of himself, or even had in Adam at first by that covenant, the power to make himself what the word of God declares a believer unto salvation? I say, no; and very few will venture to say, against all truth, that he has. And yet men holding duty faith, will say that the natural man ought to believe, and that it is his duty; and many, if not all of them, will go so far as to say, 'That though the natural man has not the power to believe unto salvation, yet that he will be damned for not believing! But this is charging God foolishly, and turning the precious gospel of the grace of God into a ministry of cruelty and self-inconsistency; because it makes it to set up divine claims, for which, in no state, has the natural man by the hand of God been capacitated, or made equal. And this would at once make the false charge of the Israelites against the Lord true, saying, 'The way of the Lord is not equal,' Ezek 18: 25. And it would also make true the false charge against the Lord, as set forth by our Lord in a parable, saying, 'Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed,' Matt 25: 24. But, contrary to all this, our God never demands usury, but in accordance with his own deposit of principle, Matt 25: 27; and, therefore, if the natural man never was in his nature from its original, capacitated by the laws of his creation to make himself what the word of God really calls a believer unto salvation, then duty faith is usury without principle, and is consequently ungodly and untrue.

Adam had his duties in Eden, but he had capacities equal to them, and consequently, defect is his fault, and the fault of all is in him. Abraham had his duties and his seed with him, by the covenant made with them, but they



had capacities equal to them, and their defect was consequently their fault. And the heaven-born man of God and of covenant favor has his Christian duties, as a son, a servant, &c; but he is capacitated to every command, and to all that is meant in the commands of his Lord, and his omissions of right, or commissions of wrong, according to the New Testament, are his faults, and will be chastised; as the above, according to the different laws of the different covenant conditions, or states. Man by sinning only, lost his ability to fulfill all the Eden duties of his rational and pure creature ship, so that his disobedience to the law of works, his lack of obedience, and his inability perfectly to obey that law, are justly to his condemnation, and all his seed in him, as confirmed by their personal practical transgression. But what man never was, is not required of him; nor is he condemned for not possessing what he never had at the hand of God.

A gospel damnation I have never yet been able to understand; I have at no time been brought to fear it from any conviction, or to know anything of such a point as taught by the word of God. And so for any man to be damned to hell for not believing unto salvation, the very idea appears to me to be as silly as it is false and cruel; because it conceals and denies the just cause of sinning man's condemnation, and condemns him to death without real cause; that is, not for disobedient law-breaking, but for not obtaining favor by means that God himself never put in natural man's power. I know it is written, 'He that believeth not, shall be damned,' Mark 16: 16; but the gospel does not bring that condemnation upon the unbeliever; not does the lack of faith, or the non-believing of the gospel unto salvation, create, make, cause, or bring that damnation; but leave the soul under it, as by law for sin, denounced upon every sinner., as death's sentence by law is passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But as it is the Lord's pleasure to deliver, and save from the wrath, death, curse, and damnation denounced by the law, all on whom he will have mercy, the believing soul through grace, according to the assurances and descriptions of the word of God, is the escaping, saved, and delivered person, from the denounced condemnation; while the unbeliever remains under the death sentence of the law, as though there had been no mercy nor salvation in Christ for any. And so we read, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that beleveth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him, John 3: 36. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death,' 1 John 3: 14. And therefore, the

turning of the gospel of the grace of God into a penal ministry, is of the pharisaic spirit of anti-Christ, and of the devil himself in that character. Because, by that notion, both the law and the gospel are robbed of their real, distinct, and respective honors; and the state of sinful man is misrepresented, for that instead of his being shewn up in truth as he is, a divine law breaker, and upon whom, as such, the sentence of death by the law is already passed, and that he is a dead man in law, and must remain so to endless condemnation, but as the Lord, by his grace and mercy, may be pleased to deliver and save him, he is made out to be a gospel sinner only, for not possessing the grace of a gospel-blest character, and because he does not without ever having had the power in his nature to do so, or any promise from the Lord of any such favor, believe unto salvation, whether the Lord has purposed it, and will save him, or not.

### **The distinction between the two permanent covenants The law of works and the law of faith**

Of the several covenants mentioned in the word of God, there are but two which we may properly call un-circumstantially permanent, and of eternal consequences to the soul of man. The one being the nature covenant with Adam and all the human race in him, having the law of works for its ministry; and which, through man's sin, is called the ministration of death. And the other, the covenant of grace with Christ and all his seed in him, having the law of faith for its ministry, called the ministration of life, because it is the gospel of the grace of God only. And every man of the whole human race is under one or the other of these two laws; either by legal right and contract under the former, or by favor it only under the latter.

If a man by the Holy Spirit, and regenerating grace and favor of God, be under grace, and so under the law of faith, he is not, nor can he be under the law of works at the same time; even so the natural man being under the law of works, cannot be under grace and the law of faith at the same time. And a man's duties and obligations, both in the nature and extent of them, are prescribed and determined by the law that he is under. The truth of this, I consider the apostle most clearly sets forth, by comparing the law that the

soul is under to a husband, and the soul to be bound to the law exclusively under which it is; and so much so, that the soul must be dead to the one law, before it can be under the other, either in a way of obligation or of privilege, see Rom 7. So that every natural man is under the law of works, and is bound thereby exclusively to it, as a woman is bound by the law of her husband to him exclusively, so long as he lives. And while we receive this apostolic argument in the force of infallible truth, it must fairly amount to this, that it can no more be the natural man's duty under the law of works, by the law of faith to believe unto salvation, than it is a woman's duty to think of, yield her person and affections to, and secure to herself, a second husband before her first be dead; she having no liberty whatever from her first obligations, nor another husband any demand whatever, till she be freed from her first husband; and then by marriage only to another, does she come under the new obligations to a second husband. But no natural man is dead to the law of works by the body of Christ, and consequently is not married to Christ: and so neither Christian duties nor privileges are his province or his property; but to keep the whole law of works, and be as naturally pure as Adam was at the first, or death eternal is all that belongs to him as a sinful natural man.

Perhaps this mode of argument will be considered too rigid an adherence to covenant distinctions, order and arrangement; but I feel confident that it is no more than the word of God intends and fully supports, to the very utmost exactness and unfaltering certainty, in drawing the line of order and distinction, between the living by grace, and the dead in sin; the man who is under the law, and the man who is under grace; and also between the law of works and its claims, and law of faith and its blessings; and in the systematic terms and characters also by which those distinctions are denominated. For beside the above-cited scripture from Rom 7, the apostle is very clear and pointed on those distinctions in Rom 4: 14, saying, 'For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is of none effect. I think from this text nothing can be more plain than the fact, that that which is of the law, is not of faith; and that that which is of faith, is not of the law; and that these premises of law and faith are as perfectly distinct, as they are different in their nature; and so perfect is the distinction, that the same thing cannot belong to both. And how then duty faith unto salvation can grow out of 'the essence of God's law,' I am at a loss to know, and believe I shall remain so to eternity; for the law has no power, nor is it any way in its nature

or design to command any man to believe the promise of mercy unto salvation. And whatsoever can be found to be the natural man's duty toward God, is, in truth, most certainly of the law of works only, and is what the word of God would call a work of the law; and to say therefore, that faith unto salvation is the natural man's duty, is at once to say, that faith unto salvation is of the works of the law; for that it cannot be otherwise, to be the duty of the natural man, because all his duties are of the works of the law, and not of grace. But we are sure that nothing can be more opposite to the truth, sound and sense of the word of God, than to say that faith in the promise of God unto salvation is of the law of works; for the law was never given nor entered to command faith in a Saviour, but directly to the contrary, 'That the offence might abound,' Rom 5: 20, and that 'sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful' Rom 7: 13. And that law which arrests, convicts, and condemns the guilty man, can never make it that guilty man's duty to escape from its hand and power to punish him; and then make it further crime, and punish him much more for not escaping.

Whatever is man's duty is God's claim; and whatever is man's duty is demanded to be of him; and consequently if faith unto salvation be the natural man's duty, then faith is accordingly demanded of man, and should be of him, and a great and grievous fault must lie against the natural man for not having faith of himself. This is how the matter must stand for faith to be of man, and to be the natural man's duty. But this is altogether opposed to the apostle's inspired testimony of faith, saying, 'By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast, Eph 2: 8,9. These words were not spoken in any way to find fault with the Ephesians because their faith was not as a matter of duty produced of themselves, nor yet to say that it should have been of themselves, but to commend the great love and free favour of God, and to cut off all occasion of boasting after the flesh, either about the matter of their salvation, or the means by which they obtained and enjoyed it; shewing that the one was as perfectly of grace, and of grace only from first to last, as the other is; saying, that faith is not only the gift of God, but that it is not Of man, either by human production, or by divine requirement; for that God had determined that it should not be of works, and so not of duty, lest any man should boast.

When faith is named descriptively, it is always stated as expressive of grace, in opposition to the duties and works of the law, in the matters of salvation; and it is spoken of as God's own method of grace, to make the promise of his grace sure to all the seed; saying, 'Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed,' Rom 4: 16. Now nothing can be more uncertain than duty faith unto salvation, except it be of a certain failure altogether; and so that can make no promise sure; and therefore duty faith cannot be the faith named in the above text, nor any thing related to it. And as the faith named in the sacred word is named in a way to commend and set forth the perfectly free grace salvation of the Lord, above all law duties and works of the law, that cannot be duty faith; because instead of commending the richness, freeness, fullness, infallibility, and absolute sovereignty of the grace of God to whom he will be gracious, duty faith goes to generalize all the matters of the gospel and grace of God into a loose, indefinite uncertainty; and by introducing impracticable obligations, turns the ministry of eternal love into eternal hatred, of free favor into wrath, of pure mercy into condemnation, of life into death, of peace into hostility, of redemption into a sentence of imprisonment, and of free grace salvation into final banishment to darkness and endless ruin. And all this, properly speaking, so far as I can understand it, because the natural man does not, beyond all power that ever was in him, believe unto salvation; and because the Lord will only have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and will hide the salvation matters of the gospel and of his kingdom from whom he will, even from 'the wise and prudent;' and will reveal them only to whom he will, 'even unto babes,' Matt 11: 25; and will call by his grace to the life and faith of the gospel only those whom he hath chosen by his grace, I Cor 1: 26-29.

And for these two reasons, as real and sole causes, so far as I can see, duty faith goes to say that all where the gospel comes, who do not universally believe unto salvation shall be damned! And this conclusion does but fairly accord with the expressed sentiments of the late Mr. A Fuller, who, on some public occasion, speaking on duty faith, told his hearers 'that every gospel sermon which they heard and did not savingly profit by, the same would rise up in judgment against them, and be to their greater condemnation at the last great day.' And after the service, a person present said to the late Mr. E Vorley, (many years minister of the gospel at Leicester,) 'Well, brother Vorley, and what do you think of Mr. Fuller's sermon?' when Mr. Vorley replied, 'If I could believe all Mr. Fuller has said, I would never hear another

gospel sermon as long as I live.' And to this I must add, that my opinion is, that if the above remarks of Mr. Fuller were the truth of God, it would be safest for all people, against the last great day, to keep out of the reach of the gospel sound; and that it would be as heavy a judgment as it would be any sort of mercy, for the Lord to send his gospel into any country, or among any people; and that all people might justly look upon all gospel ministers as upon men likely to be to them the greatest of all evils, and most dreadful mischief-makers to their souls. Alas, for duty faith while it brings us to this!

### **Implications of faith unto salvation being the natural man's duty**

The two words law and faith are very comprehensive systematical terms; very different in their nature, and occupying perfectly distinct premises. The law occupies the entire premises and dominion of death through sin; and faith occupies the entire premises of life and salvation, by divine promise, through the blood and righteousness of the Son of God. So that we may observe, that as faith cannot be separated from any part of its connection and interest, then,

First. If faith unto salvation be the natural man's duty, then it must be the natural man's duty to be all that the actual believer, through grace unto salvation, really and properly is. And then it must be the natural man's duty to be of God's chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world - to be of the predestinated unto the adoption of sons - to be of the foreknown predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son, to be called, to be justified, and to be glorified - to be a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory - to be redeemed by the blood of Christ - to be born of the Spirit - to be quickened together with Christ - to be God's own workmanship of new creation in Christ Jesus to be of God's will begotten with the word of truth - to be a kind of first fruit of his creatures - to be a saint in Christ Jesus - to be an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ - to be loved of God with an everlasting love - to be ordained, not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ - to be made meet by God the Father, to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light - to be loved of Christ and washed from sin in his own blood to be by Christ made a king and a priest unto God to reign with him for ever, and to be kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. All this, the real believer, through grace unto salvation is, and by the riches of grace is most mercifully made to be; so that a man cannot be a believer unto salvation without being all this by grace;

and so all this must be the natural man's duty to be, if faith unto salvation be his duty.

Second. If faith unto salvation be the natural man's duty, then it must be the natural man's duty to have all what the actual believer through grace unto salvation truly and properly has, according to the word of God. And then it must be the natural man's duty to have the fear of God put in the heart, and his law written in the inward parts, by the Lord's own hand, according to his promise to his own, Jer. 32: 40 - to have the hope of the promise, the hope of God's calling, the hope laid up in heaven, the hope of righteousness, the hope of eternal life, the good hope through grace, the hope of glory - to have the faith of God's elect, the faith of the operation of God, the faith that is not of man or of works, but God's gift only, the common faith of the household of God, and to be of that household; the faith that is the pledge, earnest, title deed and note-of-hand substance of all things hoped for on the promise of God to the heirs of salvation - to have the heritage of them that fear the Lord - to have the seed of God in the soul which the wicked one toucheth not - to have redemption in Christ - to have fellowship with God - to have the Holy Spirit as a teacher and leader into all truth, as a testifier and glorifier of Jesus, and as a comforter dwelling in and with the soul -to have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ - to have an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven - to have a name written in heaven by the hand of electing love, in the Lamb's book of life by the hand of redeeming love, and in the book of life by the hand of quickening love - to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost - to have that repentance and remission of sins that Christ, as a Prince and a Saviour is exalted to give - to have all the fruits of the Spirit - to have a mansion prepared, a house of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens - to inherit all things at the last, and to have a crown of life, righteousness and glory laid up against that day. All this, by divine favor, is the happy lot, property and portion, of all those who through grace do believe unto salvation; and if faith unto salvation be the duty of the natural man, then it must be the duty of the natural man to possess and enrich himself with all this divine property of faith, by sacred promise given to the chosen, redeemed, adopted, and consequent believing heirs of salvation.

Third. If it be the natural man's duty to believe unto salvation, then it must be the natural man's duty for God himself to be to him all what by promise and gift he is to those who through grace do believe unto salvation; and then it must be the natural man's duty for the eternal God to be to him a covenant

God - a Redeemer - a Shepherd - a Saviour - a Preserver - a Comforter - a Rock, Refuge, Sun, Shield, High Tower, Horn of Salvation, and Strength - the God of all grace - a Guide - a Father and portion for ever. All this the Lord is to them who through grace do believe unto salvation; and all this is by promise inseparable from believing unto salvation; and it must consequently be the natural man's duty for God to be all this to him by promise, if faith unto salvation be his duty.

Fourth. If it be the natural man's duty to believe unto salvation, then it must be the natural man's duty for God to do for him, and give to him, all what by promise he does and gives to those who through grace do really believe unto salvation. And so it must be the natural man's duty for God to give him eternal life - to pardon all his sins put away his iniquities, cleanse him from all unrighteousness, and give him peace - to bless him with all spiritual blessings in Christ - to hold him safe in his hand - to keep him as the apple of his eye - to instruct him in the way that he should go, and guide him with his eye - to make to him all crooked things straight, and rough places plain - to make all things work together for his good - to see that all his wants are supplied out of the riches in glory by Christ Jesus - to hold him in that safety so as that nothing shall separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus to give him the kingdom of heaven, and a crown of life there for ever. This the Lord does and gives to those who through grace believe unto salvation; and if it be the duty of the natural man to believe unto salvation, then it must be his duty to secure all this to himself, by the promise of it all, made to them who through grace do believe unto salvation. The above may be considered pressing the point beyond its due measure, but if faith as the root be a duty, every inseparable branch must consequently be included, as the one, according to the Scriptures, cannot be without the other.

Fifth. If duty faith were a truth, it must have some meaning with God in regard to salvation; and such a meaning too, as that if it were the universal duty of all men, wherever the gospel comes, to believe unto salvation, then salvation would be as universal as the spread of the gospel, if all men did but do their duty. And the great reason at last - why salvation is not as universal as the spread of the gospel, will be because all men did not do their duty. And so salvation finally, will not be so extensive as it might have been, if all men had but done their duty; nor so extensive as it ought to have been, if all men ought as their duty to have believed unto salvation; nor so extensive as God himself expected, if, as a duty, he expected all men where the gospel came to believe unto salvation. This brings all the counsels, purposes,



covenant settlements, revealed truths, promises, and acts of the grace of God unto salvation, into immediate subjection to, and a waiting for the duty of man; and that too in such a way, as that the duty of man, and not the good pleasure of God's will, shall and must determine the final issue of the whole! I can make nothing more or less than this, of the duty of all, where the gospel comes, to believe unto salvation. Nor can I make any thing more or less than this of your answer to Mr. Wright's Letter in the Primitive Church Magazine. But, in my view, this is as opposite to every Bible truth, to every thing in the name and nature of the grace of God, to every thing belonging to the great and gracious name of God which he will have glorified, and to the nature of lost man's condition, in relation to the eternal salvation of souls, as darkness is to light, and as Belial is to Christ: see Rom 9: 15,16, 18, 23, 24; 11: 5-7; Isaiah 66: 8; John 1: 13; John 15: 16; Prov 19: 21; John 10: 26. And how any man can hold the above ideas of duty faith unto salvation, and have the countenance at the same time to profess to hold election, and particular redemption, and for the real sight of, and entry into, the kingdom of God, the necessity and indispensability of regeneration, or the new birth, by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost, I am entirely at a loss to know, for I cannot make it out.

### **Duty faith fights against God's gospel**

Perhaps it will be said that duty faith, as held by those who embrace it, is but one among many glorious points of Bible truth and doctrine which they hold, and, therefore, not of sufficient importance to divide about. But I must say, from thirty years' observation, that whatever other doctrines are held in connection with It, I have always seen that duty faith is leaven that leavens the whole lump. And that as a disease is contrary to the health, and alters the natural figure and countenance of a person, until he looks not at all like the man of his name; even so is duty faith contrary to the very spirit, healthy fulness, richness, freeness, harmony, and beauty of every truth by which salvation by grace only is revealed and declared, until the whole countenance of gospel truth is altered thereby, and made of doubtful appearance as to which takes the greatest share, man's duty or the grace of God in the salvation of a sinner.

To my apprehension, duty faith is no part of the moral law or covenant, equitably instituted on the day of creation, between God the creator and man

the creature. It is no part of, nor any way belongs to the covenant of grace with Christ for the chosen seed, or to the law of the Spirit of life in him, Heb 13: 20; Rom 8: 2. And so it is neither a doctrine of the law nor of the gospel, but a muddling denial of the true spirit of both, agreeing with neither. Because it is opposed to the spirit of the doctrine of God's for knowledge and purpose of election before time, it is opposed to the proper surety-ship of Christ, to his real and proper redemption, to the plainly stated fact that the saved by grace are the bought with a price, and to the settled imputation of the Saviour's righteousness as the only way of a sinner's justification of life. It is opposed to the Holy Spirit's divine agency in the economy of triune grace, as being the only quickening power by which the sinner first comes into the life of godliness, the natural man is made a spiritual man to understand and receive the things of the Spirit, and the carnal man has his enmity smitten to the ground, and he reconciled to God by the peace-making, peace-speaking, and pardoning-love-declaring blood of Christ. It is opposed to the truth of the real state of the sinner in his nature state, as that of bring really dead in sin till actually quickened by the power of the Holy Ghost; for death under the law, and duty to have the very life of God's favour, can never be made to agree; and, indeed, duty faith appears to put every thing out of order and agreement, in relation to the salvation of lost sinners, and the display of divine favour.

And so we may observe, that between parties in a matter of duty, the oblige acts first, as must be the case in duty faith, for duty faith to mean any thing at all; but in a matter of favor, the benefactor acts first, as is the stated fact in the sacred word in every named case and character of personal faith unto salvation.

Man should be the author and finisher of his own faith, if faith unto salvation be the natural man's duty; but Christ alone is the only author and finisher of faith, and of all the saving faith known in the word of God.

For faith unto salvation to be the duty of the natural man, it must be by man produced from human nature; but the only true and precious faith unto salvation known in the word of God, is obtained through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 1: 1.

For faith unto salvation to be the natural man's duty it must be man's duty to believe unto salvation previous to the new birth; but the word of God puts believing unto salvation after the new birth, as a spiritual consequent of it,

saying, 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, John 1: 12,13.

The word of God makes previous secret relation and interest in grace to be the cause of personally believing unto salvation, John 10: 26; but duty faith avows a denial of this, and makes believing to be the cause of relation and interest unto salvation.

God himself was the author of all the difference in which Israel stood from other nations, and did himself put a difference between Israel and Egypt, Ex 11: 7; but duty faith goes to say that it was the duty of all nations to be exactly what the Lord by choice and favor made Israel to be, and that it was the Egyptian's duty not to allow, but at once to destroy the difference which God himself had put between them and Israel.

God called Abraham out alone, and blessed him, Isaiah 51: 2; but duty faith goes to say, that it was the duty of all the rest of themselves to have come and been as blest.

Duty faith, to be properly named, should be called the faith of all men; but the only faith unto salvation known in the word of God is the faith of God's elect; according to which faith Paul was made an apostle, Tit.1:1.

### **Duty Faith puffs up man in self righteousness**

Faith unto salvation considered and enforced as the natural man's duty, is not of grace, nor of the spirit of grace; but it is, (1) Of the spirit of that zeal by which the Jews went about to establish their own righteousness, not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God, Rom 10: 3. (2) It is of that spirit of the five foolish virgins whose vessels were without oil, who made creatures their first recourse, and then thought by the natural duty, like self-effort of purchase, to establish a right to, and acquire to themselves the possession of all things, which the five wise virgins had and took, without any account of money, price, purchase, or duty faith; but the Lord answered them, 'I know you not.' Not you are come too late, the door being shut; but, 'I know you not,' Matt 25: 12. (3) It is of the spirit of the many who will come saying, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?' All done in the Lord's name, but all self and duty faith like doings, and to whom

the Lord will profess, 'I never knew you, depart from me,' Matt 7: 22,23. (4) It is of the spirit of those many, who shall seek to enter in at the strait gate, and shall not be able, Luke 13: 24; because they sought it on duty faith grounds; or, 'as it were by the works of law,' Rom 9: 32. (5) Duty faith is of the very spirit of all those 'that kindles a fire, and compass themselves about with sparks;' who are bid to follow the delusion they have chosen and loved more than the truth, saying, 'Walk in the light of your own fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled.' But hear the solemn end, for that is the main thing with never dying souls: 'This shall ye have at mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow,' Isaiah 50:2.

Ancient Pharisaiism was self-righteousness with the name of Moses for authority, falsely attached to it; and duty faith is Modern Pharisaiism, with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for authority, falsely attached to it; and done up so nicely too, with 'great,' learned, clever, and pious 'signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it able, they shall deceive and seduce the very elect,' Matt. 24: 24; Mark. 13:22.

### **Examples of confusion in duty faith pronouncements**

Duty faith unto salvation says in the Midland Counties Association, that the power of salvation lies sufficiently in religious means; but the Bible faith says, that the power of salvation lies alone in God the Saviour, sovereignty and severally as he will, Matt 7:13; 2 Cor 4:7; 1 Cor 12: 2.

Duty faith in Mr. H., treating a spiritual state with disdain, as the mere invention of fancy, says, that the natural man can know and receive the things of the Spirit, and that the common intellect of man is sufficient of itself savingly to comprehend all such things; but the faith of the Bible says, 'What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit,' I Cor 2: 2,14,10.

Duty faith in Mr. H., Sudbury goes on to say, that God had committed the salvation of the world into the hands of the church, and of the ministers, and that the ministers and the church are responsible for the salvation of the

world. If this were true, such men as Mr. H. would be the most accursed wretches under the sun, if they did not save every one living all around about them. But do they labor to do so? Not a bit of any thing of the kind. But is such faith the truth? No; for the Bible faith of the gospel says, 'Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase,' 1 Cor 3: 5-7.

Duty faith in Mr. W N., says, that it is the duty of the natural man by absolute command, to believe unto salvation, and, consequently, to come savingly to Christ; but the faith of the gospel of Christ says, 'No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him, John 6: 44. 'Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father, John 6: 65.

The gospel of Christ in the world is according to what Christ himself was in the world, and nothing contrary; and the faith of the gospel says, that Christ is 'harmless,' Heb 7:26; 'Came not into the world to condemn the world, John 3:17; and will not be an accuser to the Father, saying, 'Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father, there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust, John 5:45. But duty faith in a Mr. James, who was co-pastor with an old minister of the duty faith mixed communion Baptist Church at Devizes, in the year 1817, denies this testimony, and sets up the contrary altogether; for after some considerable conversation, in which of course, we did not agree, Mr. James plainly said, 'The Lord has so altered the dispensation of things, as that he does not condemn any man by the law, but sends them the gospel of his salvation, and that if they do not believe and receive that unto salvation, they shall be damned for not believing. I said in reply to this, that the people would do very well as they are, but to send them the gospel was at once to put them in danger of damnation, if this were the truth. The apostle rejoiced that through divine wisdom, mercy and power, he had not frustrated the grace of God, meaning the gospel, nor made void the law; but had maintained both ministries in their due and distinct nature and order, Gal 2:21; Rom 3: 31. But not so Mr. James, for he confounds both. And to my apprehension, duty faith does really and indeed make void the law, and turns the gospel of the grace of God into law - conceals the pure favor of God - denies the sovereignty of the divine will in the gift of eternal life - makes the promises of God conditional, denying their being all yea and amen in Christ, to the glory of God the Father - turns the purposes of God

which he hath purposed in himself, Eph 1: 9,10, into mere proposals to man - makes out God to will and desire, as to numbers, a larger salvation of sinners from his own wrath to come, than his own love, grace, and arm of his power will ever effect; instead of his working all things after the counsel of his own will, Eph 1: 11, doing what his soul desireth, Job 23: 13 - sends men to hell for not going to heaven by grace - makes man, though a sinner, to have the option of his own will over his own eternal state, and God not to determine, but to wait the final issue, with a kind of would be gracious to whom he could; denying him the entire will to be gracious to whom he will be gracious,' Rom 9: 15; Ex 33: 19; and also denying the fact, that 'he hath mercy on whom he will,' Rom 9:18, 22-24.

### **Duty Faith speaks in the terms of the Mosaic covenant**

Duty faith goes by proposals to put the world of sinners in the same position for heaven and eternal salvation, as Moses addressed the Israelites, saying, 'I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live,' Deut 30: 19. As though the world had only to make their own choice in believing, and so obtain salvation, or lose it; yea, more, be damned for not believing unto salvation when it was so proposed to them. But these cases are not at all parallel, because Moses did not hereby propose to the heathen world, much less made it their penal obligation to make themselves Israelites of the seed of Abraham and his seed, so as to possess that land in common with them, or to be cut off from the face of the whole earth for not being and doing all this. But Moses was speaking to them as Israelites, who were already Israelites of the seed of Abraham, not by their own doing, but of the Lord's own will and power, and who were already initiated into all their privileges as the seed of Abraham, and into all the ordinances, statutes, and judgments of the Lord peculiar to the seed of Abraham. And the possession and enjoyment of their privileges in the promised land of Canaan, was their life here intended; and the loss of the enjoyment and possession of their privileges, through disobedience to the Lord's statutes in the land of promise, was their death here intended. They were not hereby required to put themselves into any new character, as that of from unbelievers to believers, and from sinners dead in sin, to living saints; nor to put themselves upon any new premises; as that from aliens to citizens of the household of God; but honorably to maintain their character as the already distinguished seed of Abraham, by obediently observing the ordinances, statutes, and judgments of the Lord, in which they were now

already initiated, and in which they now stood as a people, and which was the way of their figurative, civil and covenant life; while the disobedient neglect thereof was the way of their figurative, civil and covenant death as a people, Ezek 18; Hos 13:I. And as they did depart from the statutes of the Lord, and die in the sense intended, see their correspondent resurrection, at least of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, in Ezek 37. So that this portion of sacred truth cannot, in a gospel light and meaning, with any authority and parallel consistency, be applied to the world that lieth in wickedness; but it belongs to the admonitory and exhortatory branches of truth to the called and believing church of Christ, for their honorable regard of, and obedience of faith to the whole revealed will of God, as their own gracious God, Father and Saviour; and which is the way of life to their comforts, peace, and credit as Christians and professed followers of the Lord. As it is written, 'in the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death,' Prov 12: 28. 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them is great reward,' Psalm 19: 9,11. And ,they that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy, Jonah 2: 8.

### **Duty Faith puts salvation in man's own hands**

If for believing the sinner should be saved, or for not believing he should be damned, and such faith to be the natural man's duty, this would indeed be putting salvation into man's own hands. And if the Lord had thus put salvation into man's own hands as a charge, together with the endowment of sufficient ability at any time to be able to keep and perform that charge, then man would be justly subject to capital punishment, as a sort of spiritual murderer, if he neglected to exercise his given ability to the salvation of his soul.

But is the case so? Is this in fact the truth? No; for Job was a believing man of God, Job 1: 8; but as he was not by experience quite strip, emptied, and brought down to the dust of self-nothingness in the temperature of his mind, but in some few things talked somewhat like a duty faith preacher, the Lord, to bring him quite out of all false conceit, put him as a child of his mercy, under a little further instruction, saying unto him, 'Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightning, that they may go, and say unto thee, here we are? Hast thou an

arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low. Then will I confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee, Job 38: 2,3,34,35;40: 9,10,12,14. This lecture to job fully shews that neither salvation, nor the possession of properties that shall ensure it, are any-part of man's responsibility before God his creator; and its effects upon job were consequently, stripping and humbling until he cried, 'Behold, I am vile,' 40: 4; I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, Job 42: 3, 6.

To me, nothing can appear more plain and self evident, from the above lecture to job, than that the Lord himself intends (1) To say that it is as easy for a man to answer the above great questions in the practical affirmative, as it is for him to save himself, or of himself effectually to do any thing in part thereof. (2) That salvation is no more man's own work and business to perform, and that he is no more responsible for the performance of any thing in whole or in part thereof, than it is man's work, business and responsibility to do and to have the affirmative of the above questions, of himself and in his own person. (3) To say that any sentiment or thought in the mind of man, or language on his lips, as that of the performance, or that it is his duty from God to perform any thing as a part of his salvation, is as proud, vain, false and fruitless, as for a man to say that he can, or that it is his duty, practically to produce and sustain an affirmative to the above great questions. (4) That none but he who can practically answer and sustain an affirmative to the above questions, can save a soul in whole or in part, or can with truth say it is his business so to do. (5) That the Lord's appeal produced a full conviction and humble confession of the truth of this in job. (6) That when any poor, proud, conceited soul is brought to hear and see that of the Lord, and of himself in the light of the majesty and glory of the Lord that job was, he will never after it be able to hold any thing of the duty faith profession. (7) That God will bring all the vessels of his mercy, and heirs of his salvation, as much off duty speculations and expediencies after the flesh, into the true experience of their own entire vileness, and nothingness but guilty helplessness, as he brought job, before he takes them to heaven. (8) With all job's possessions, fine parts and abilities, he never was so largely and manifestly blest before, as he was after being brought to the fully humbling scene and confession, saying, 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes, Job 42: ,6,12.



## **A doctrine opposed to God's Free grace**

Duty faith, or the duty of the natural man to believe unto salvation, is a doctrine, in my opinion, really bad in its nature, being altogether opposed to the spirit, nature, and truth of God's purely free grace salvation; and, consequently, that it is bad in all its branches, forms, and degrees, in which and to which it is carried out by its different advocates. Some hold it in a manner quite contradictory to their other professed sentiments; while others, to be self-consistent, carry it openly to a more awful length, as we have before shewn in the cases noted down; but in any degree it is in itself opposed to the truth and to the spirit of grace, in the salvation of a sinner from his sin's demerit in the dark pit of death, to the glory seat of endless life in the kingdom and presence of God.

## **THE UNIVERSAL INVITATIONS OF THE DUTY FAITH SYSTEM**

One radical and very fruitful evil in the spirit of duty faith is, that it turns all the particular invitations of the gospel into general ones, saying, 'they belong to all alike, and not to any particular characters,' as are named in the invitations. The invitations of the gospel are a very rich and precious part of the word of God, and in them are contained four jewel ingredients of precious truth for special purposes, and which are, first, the nature of a promise; second, the welcome character described; third, the adapted blessing named; and fourth, the welcome expressed, come, &c. And the invitations of the gospel are in every point and property as sure and infallibly amen in Christ Jesus, as the more simple promises are; for the truth of the Lord, of which the invitations are a most gracious part, 'endureth for ever.' Divine truth never did fail, nor in part of it can it fail, in the use and end that God himself intends thereby; and if any part fail in the way that man takes it up and applies it, that is a clear and undeniable proof at once, of its being taken up wrong, and in a way and for an end the Holy Spirit of truth never intended. And nothing is more self-evident than that universal invitations have failed, do fall, and must fail; many of the invited being in a state in which it is impossible for them to come, and are without any warrant from the Lord that they ever will be in a possible state to come, and if the invited to the eternal salvation of God never come, does not the invitation fall? Because it cannot be said in this case as in a mere natural one, 'That I sent for them to come if they please, or stay away if they please;' for the Lord

knows that without his quickening and regenerating power and grace, no soul under the heavens can possibly come into the personal state, character, and blessings of Christianity and endless life. Nor are the invitations vindictive, as seeking a further, occasion of condemnation against them who are already under the death sentence of the law, and cannot possibly of themselves stir from thence; but they are gracious only, benefiting many and injuring none. The invited of God have always come, do come, and will come; and so the invitations have always stood good and effectual to the end of God's purpose and grace in them. For as no part of God's truth is or can be without an effectual end and design, the evident design of the gospel invitations is, the conducting of those very characters described in the invitations, to the blessings, and hope of the blessings named in them, as most happily adapted to their described condition.

Gospel doctrines, as so many truths of standing matters of fact, are to be preached to all men of all nations, for the special purpose In the hand of the Holy Ghost, of convincing men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, John 16: 8-11, according to the Saviour's redemption of sinners out of all nations of the whole world; and the invitations are for the gracious welcome and gathering together into the comforts and blessings of Christ unto salvation, all those who are convinced and reduced in soul state, experimentally to the character described in the invitations; and this is the effectual order of every part of the infallible word of God. But duty faith men do not consider that sinners are preached to, unless universal invitations are held out to them, and which is altogether like saying that the whole of God's infallible truth is not preached, unless something fallible, useless, and irreconcilably opposed to it, be served up with it! I have myself been asked, 'Do you preach to sinners, sir?' meaning, do you invite all? And to which my answer has been, 'Yes, I preach to all sorts of sinners, and never had the honour to preach to any one else;' while I do not consider, that inviting the dead in sins to the living feast of saints, to be preaching the truth at all. But on universal invitations we may further observe:-

**Universal invitations conflict hopelessly with the particular provisions of grace**

First, that universal invitations can never be made to agree with particular, fixed, and eternal purposes; a particular covenant that shall never be broken, is everlasting, immovable, ordered in all things and sure; a particular redemption that is real and eternal; particular promises that are all yea and amen in Christ; and a particular provision which God 'will abundantly bless.' And it is most certain, that if universal invitations cannot be made to agree with those great points, they can form no part of the ministry of those great points, and so, no part of the ministry in the communication of the blessings thereof. The economy of grace can only be sure, as it is particular, and must be as particular as it is really sure. And that it is particular must be admitted, if the Bible be admitted as the standard law-book of the case; for the Lord knew the end from the beginning, Isaiah 46: 10; 'For he himself knew what he would do, John 6: 6; 'That the purpose of God according to election might stand, Rom 9: 11; 'Even so, then, there is at this present time a remnant according to election of grace; and if by grace, then it is no more of works,' Rom 9: 5,6; 'Our God is in the heavens, and he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased,' Psalm 115: 3; 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight,' Matt 11: 25-27. 'So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,' Rom 9: 16; Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe, John 14: 29; that in purpose, God's works were finished from the foundation of the world,' Heb 4: 3.

The provisions of grace are not only made for the certain support and eternal salvation of all them that come to Christ by faith, but are equally and altogether as much made for the purpose of quickening, disposing, and bringing by faith to Christ, all and every one that shall be saved by him; none have ever come to Christ in any other way than by the power of grace, that we can find in any one personal testimony recorded in the sacred word; and none can now say that they have ever come into the life of true godliness and hope of salvation, but by the Lord's own power and operations of grace; and that he alone has made them all that they are as believers unto eternal life, according to the testimony that Paul the apostle bears of his own case, saying, 'By the grace of God I am what I am,' I Cor.15: 10. As it was in the fullness of grace that the Saviour came in the flesh and dwelt among men for their salvation, so it is in the power of the same grace only, by which sinners do or can come into the Spirit to dwell safely with Christ. And as it is by grace only that sinners are savingly brought to Christ for salvation, every thing to the contrary of this fact being unknown by any testimony of truth under the whole heavens; if the provisions of grace, both in fullness and

power, be not particular, but general, how is it that all are not by grace made to be for salvation, what grace made Paul to be? The apostle saith, 'Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,' 2 Tim 1 9. If the provisions of grace be not particular only, why are not all men saved, and called with an holy or sanctifying calling, not according to their works, but according to God's purpose and grace given to all in Christ Jesus before the world began? We know it is not so, and what is the reason it is not, but that grace is sovereign and particular only?

And was Paul quite right with the truth of God, in putting salvation by grace in purpose, before calling by grace, so as for the former to ensure the effectuality of the latter? And if he was right with truth in this, what part of the truth of God is it right with to call all men by universal invitations first, and after that, they are to be saved if they come, and if they do not come they will not be saved at all, after so called, but be damned for not coming? The Ephesians saints had been dead in sin, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but God quickened them together with Christ, and raised them up together with him, and made them sit together in heavenly places with him; and all this was done for the great love wherewith he loved them, even when they were dead in sins, Eph 2: 4-6. Now if the provisions and intentions of grace be not particular, but general, and this great love be general too, how is it that all men are not quickened, and raised up together with Christ, and blest, as the Ephesians were? For it is impossible to find any in a worse, or more helpless state, than God found the Ephesians in, when he put forth the power of his grace upon them.

The apostle, in speaking to the saints at Corinth, in the Christian confidence of having for a happy hereafter, 'A building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' says, 'Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath also given unto us the earnest of the Spirit,' 2 Cor 5: 1,5. If the provisions, intentions, and operations of grace be not particular, but general, how is it that all men are not declared to have the like house of God eternal in the heavens, and they wrought into fitness for the self-same thing, as Paul and the Corinthians were, by the Lord himself only? The Lord saith, 'I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come, and see my glory,' Not, I wish to gather, and it will be most piously prudent for them to bethink themselves and come; but I will gather, and they shall come, and see my glory, Isaiah 66: 18. It is therefore plain beyond all fair contradiction or reasonable doubt, that the coming of any sinner into the life

and saving truth of the faith of Christ, is of the operative power of grace only, and that such operations of grace are sovereign and particularly only, and so at direct war with duty faith and universal invitations to salvation.

All grace unto salvation, and all gospel truth that proclaims it and makes it known, 'come by Jesus Christ, John 1: 17; and they are and must be agreed, for Christ is not divided, nor opposed in his truth, to himself in his grace; if grace was universal, truth in its intent would be so, and salvation would be so accordingly. These three agree in one mind, and divine deeds best tell what that mind is, beyond all theories.

If the invitations of the gospel unto salvation, or to a par-taking of the blessings of the gospel that are unto eternal life, had ever been by the Lord himself intended to be general and all men alike, there never would have been that particularization and description of character which cannot be denied to be contained in them all, but they would have been given out without any such restrictions to character as is now contained in them, and which is as clearly stated a point as the blessing itself is plainly named, and as that the welcome is purely gracious to the sensibly needy. As salvation is determined of God, "according to the election of grace," and according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph 3: 11, so every truth of the gospel, and, consequently, the invitations of the gospel as a part of such truth, are according to the election of grace, and the purpose of God in Christ Jesus, and as entirely so too as the existence of a 'remnant' of God-fearing, truth-believing, grace-saved people 'at this present time' is according to the election of grace, Rom 11: 5. And as all the blessings of the grace of God are determined according to his own purpose and the good pleasure of his will,' in such a manner only he speaks, and in such a manner only he works, as "after the counsel of his own will;" and he authorizes no man or angel to speak otherwise in his name. And, consequently, there is a character described in the invitations as suited to them, and as to whom the invitations are suited; because the very character under which they are described, marks them out as the undeniable heirs of promise, to whom the blessing named in the invitation belongs, and for whom the provisions of the gospel are truly and without fail made. So that the invitations of the gospel are special property, and are consequently maintained as sacred, and made as effectually infallible in all their properties above described, and to their full intent accordingly, as are all other parts of the truth of the Lord that endureth for ever.'

## **Are the self-conflicting doctrines of the duty faith system to be held in tension?**

The fact that universal invitations cannot be made to agree with any doctrine of particular grace and ensured salvation, is forced to be admitted by some of those duty-faith ministers who profess to hold election, particular redemption, free Justification, and such like doctrines of grace. But they endeavour to excuse themselves in their evident self inconsistency, by saying, that 'truth is no system, and that it is impossible for any man to reconcile the mode of address to sinners, authorized by the word of God, with the counsels of God.' See James Smith's Warrant, &c. However this may appear to others, to me it appears one of the most awful conclusions that any man can come to, in the name of the great Fountain of all wisdom and order for the support of a point. Surely our God is not chargeable with this strife, this war, this opposition, this contradiction, this say and unsay with himself in his word; for he is not the author of such confusion, 1 Cor. 14: 33. What! When there is not a term used among men significant of system, but what the Holy Ghost has summoned as a figure whereby to express the systematical economy and settled order of the grace of God to men, as that of the Vine and its branches, and God the Father its husbandman; the Shepherd and his flock, the Husband and his bride, the Father and his family, the Head and its body, the covenant and the Mediator, the Testament, or will, and the Surety, &c.; and yet the truth of it, truth by which it is published, and by which only it is made known to the sons of men in the power of the Holy Ghost, is no system! There cannot be a more pointed self-contradiction. If truth be no system, then God can have no determined method, boundary, harmony of parts, or end in his truth, but all must lie in the hazardous posture of an uncertain adventure. What an awful reproach upon the wisdom of God, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Beside, it is a bold falsehood, for that divine truth is a system, and there is nothing in divine revelation that is out of system; whether speaking to and of man in general, and things as they belong to man in general, or whether speaking to and of the Jews, and of the things that belonged to the Jews, and as they belonged to them peculiarly in regard to the covenant in which they were related to God, Rom ix 4,5; or whether speaking on matters at all relating to eternal salvation, or of persons interested therein, or evidently connected therewith.

In a witness, self-irreconcilable inconsistency invalidates and destroys all his evidence. Now, ministers are professed witnesses for God, as his own

ministers of truth really are; but behold a duty-faith preacher in his witness box, the pulpit, preaching what neither himself nor any man upon the earth can reconcile with itself, as to one part with another! Is such an one a very pious witness in the name of the most High God? Is such an one likely to convince man of their errors and inconsistencies, and to stop the mouth of gainsayers? Is such preaching likely to convert deepread, thinking, scrutinizing infidels? Does it not commend the wisdom of God in the gospel? Is it `sound doctrine?' Titus ii 1. And `sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed,' verse 8. Things that cannot be reconciled are opposed to one another, are against each other, and go to destroy and overturn each other. And Mr Smith himself tells us, what we really did think before was the truth, namely, - that universal invitations, which he calls `address to sinners,' are really so opposed, that no man can reconcile them with the counsels of God. As we therefore cannot be consistent to hold and preach both, we will endeavour, by the help of the Lord, to abide by the whole counsel of God, as Paul did, opposed to universal invitations; and leave Mr. Smith and his companions in duty faith, by their universal invitations, which are admitted to be irreconcilable with the counsels of God. But did not Paul preach the whole counsel of God? Acts xx 27. And what more does he say, that he preached, so as to be clear of the blood of all men? verse 26. And did he not preach to sinners, even where Christ was not named? Rom xv 20. And did he preach what neither himself nor any one else could reconcile, and plead that too, for a justification of his preaching as he did? No, he would be ashamed of it; for amen promises only were his confidence, and amen doctrines only constituted the gospel he preached, saying, `But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay,' 2 Cor. 1: 17,18; `for we are not as many which corrupt the word of God,' 2:17; `but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully,' 2 Cor. iv 2.

### **Universal invitations misapply the addresses of the word of God**

Second. Universal invitations are supported, and can only be supported, by a perversion and misapplication of the addresses of the word of God. It is pretended that universal invitations are used in the word of God, and accordingly to be used now on that authority, although no man can bring them into harmony with any truth of a particular nature. I have read those who have collected their supposed authority from the sacred word, and the whole appears to me to be altogether without the true mind and intent of one

text cited for the purpose; and to be a direct misapplication of them, both to persons and things; and a mere catching at sounds, with a gross perversion of sense, to make it fit to the predetermined favorite point. I am confident that with such a catching at sounds, irrespective of the real mind and intent of the text, which is evident from the connection, the occasion, the parties addressed, the nature, subject, and design of the address, opponents may find as much and just about as good ground in the sacred word for the denial of the divinity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Ghost, the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, salvation as all of grace, the final perseverance of the saints, the endless punishment of the wicked, &c., as they have already done. And if by such a catching at mere sounds, irrespective of sense, and directly opposite also to the greatest truths in the Bible, as is made for the support of duty faith and universal invitations, one sentiment is considered made good and supported as by due authority, why may not any sentiment be so, however bad and opposed to the mind and spirit of all divine truth? For a point being a favorite one and going down well and sweet among men, does not made it one particle the better, or less false, with such an authority only for its support.

The Lord himself made a difference between the Jews and the heathen nations, putting the former into a peculiar situation by the covenant of the land of Canaan that he made with them, and according to which he was their God and they were his people, Rom xi 4. And the Lord himself put a real difference between the personally called disciples of our Lord, and the Jews as a nation, Rom ix 7,8. And the Lord himself puts the vital difference there is between the quickened in distress, and the dead in sins, Luke vi 21,25. And the Lord himself has put a vital and salvation difference also between the churches of his called saints and the world that lieth in wickedness, 1 John v 19; 1 Cor. 1:2. And a distinct address to these respectively, according to their state, is intended in the sacred word; and which is as proper to observe always as their difference of state is real; for the same kind of address to all alike can never be applicable, nor consistent with their different states; and which must consequently always involve the truth of God in confusion and self-contradiction, as we have above shewn and complained. But if these distinctions are duly observed in scripture addresses, according to the mind of the Spirit, there would be no jar between one part and another of God's holy truth; ministers would not belie themselves in God's name, with contradictions which neither themselves nor any one else can reconcile; and there would then be none of the now pretended authority for universal invitations, or duty faith either; nor would



it have to be said, as an excuse for self-contradiction, that 'truth is no system,' nor that the truth of God can never be reconciled with itself.

Our Lord observed and marked the distinction there is between the living by quickening grace, and the dead in sins, and between the churches and the world, saying, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,' &c Matt xi 15; xiii 9,43; Mark iv 9, 23; Luke viii 8; xiv 35. And in Rev ii and iii it is seven times said, 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.' And our Lord said to his disciples, 'Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear,' Matt xiii 16. And on the manner of our Lord's speaking to others, 'The disciples said unto him, why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to them it is not given,' Matt xiii 10, 11. And the apostles, in all their epistles, particularized the characters to whom they wrote, and what is said to them belongs to them, and to persons in their state and character, and belongs to such only; except what is said of others, and then their characters too are described, as according with what is said of them. And if truth in the name of the Lord, in its reality and harmony, be a man's object to have and maintain, this irrefutable rule must always be maintained.

### **Universal invitations contradict the doctrine of regeneration**

Third. Universal invitations fully imply and really breathe the spirit of a total denial of that personal change of state, which, according to the word of God, must take place in the person for the soul to be saved; and which change of personal state is declared to have been wrought in all them who, according to New Testament record, have been believers unto salvation, and that also to have been God's own work only. And this indispensable personal change of state is set forth in the word of God, by such figures of expression as defy any commixture of agency in the thing itself, and all power but the power of God alone to produce the same. And out of the many, we will take notice of four of those forms of expression by which this change of state for the kingdom of God is set forth.

1) It is set forth under the figure of being generated, saying, 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth,' James 1:18. Surely the Holy Ghost never

inspired this figure without a correspondent meaning; and with this fact duly considered as the truth of God in his own holy word, universal invitations must appear most senseless and opposed to all the laws of truth, unless it be good sense and quite consistent with the laws of truth, to invite the unbegotten to beget themselves into a new begotten state, and to say that is it the duty of the unbegotten so to beget themselves. And if, according to the word of God, no person can come into the Christian state, and the blessings of that state, without being thus begotten, then universal invitations must be an inviting of people to beget themselves into a new begotten state, and duty faith must go to say, that it is the duty of all men to beget themselves into a new begotten state! If such a thing were possible, and any one did in very deed so beget himself, he would belong to no race or family ever yet heard of in heaven or on earth, and so not at all to the family of God, for they are all begotten by himself, 'of his own will,' and 'according to his abundant mercy,' into all they are, and unto all they have and shall have, as a Bible people in state and character for the kingdom of heaven.

2) The indispensable change in personal state of the soul for the kingdom of God is compared to a birth, saying, 'Ye must be born again,' John iii 7. All therefore who are believers indeed unto eternal salvation, are first born of God, John i 13; and 'of incorruptible seed,' 1 Pet i 23; and are come into divine life 'as new-born babes,' 11 2. Now we know nothing of inviting the unborn to effect their own birth, and we know nothing of duties devolving on the unborn, as relating to an after-birth life; and we know nothing of children remaining in the womb to die and rot, because they do not produce their own birth as a matter and course of duty; and yet duty faith and universal invitations, with their awful penalties, amount to all this to the soul, in regard to that spiritual birth which must take place for the soul to enter the kingdom of heaven; and which, by our Lord's double verily, must be wrought of God himself, and which is accordingly compared to the mystery and power of the wind blowing where it listeth, as to any power there is in man to cause it or prevent it, for that like the wind's blowing it is of God only, John iii 8. And why is this all-important and indispensable point of fact to be smothered over, concealed, and tacitly denied by duty faith and universal invitations? Why is not this point of truth maintained as plainly as our Lord stated it, since its indispensability and importance are not at all abated? Why? because pulpit men, many of them, however, are vain enough to think that they can effect more good to souls by their fleshly pleasing schemes of piety, than God himself will do through an honest and simple statement of his own plain truth. And so, instead of the great first

point in all true personal godliness, the new birth by the Spirit and power of God, being kept most prominent as its real importance demands, duty faith and universal invitations are substituted in the place thereof, and a mere change of habits, with an outward profession, is put for newness of personal state; not saying, 'Ye must be born again,' as the solemn truth is.

3) The indispensable change in the personal state of the soul for the kingdom of God, is compared to creation, and every believer unto salvation is such a piece of divine workmanship as that of being 'created in Christ Jesus.' A man must be all this, to be a believer unto salvation; and no soul is a believer unto salvation with less than this newness of state by the creating hand of God. For a believer unto eternal life is in Christ, and a man cannot be a believer unto salvation without being so in Christ, and a man cannot be in Christ without being a new creature. 'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new; and all which new things are of God,' 2 Cor. v 17,18. This is called creation, to show that none but the creator of all things could effect it, and that it is his work, and his prerogative alone to do it. And it is called new creation, to shew that it is not a mere reformation of the old creation state, but is distinct from it, is no part of it, is in principle altogether a new state of being, which was not included in, nor in any way of principle, privilege, or duty, belonging to the first creation state of man. And as all the duties of creation must lie within itself, and cannot lie beyond itself by any sort of anteriority, even so, it is no more the duty of any man to create himself anew in Christ Jesus, than it was the duty of nonentity to create dust, and then form that dust into a man, and make that man to become a living soul in the first creation; nor is there any more truth, reason or propriety, in the talk of duties, and invitations to such duties in the one case, than in the other; while short of a new creature in Christ Jesus, the soul has no mark or property for the kingdom of God.

4) The indispensable change in the personal state of the soul for the kingdom of God, is called a quickening, and raising up together with Christ. This is and must be God's work alone; and as none but God himself can quicken and raise the common dead, so none but God alone can quicken and raise a soul into spiritual and newness of life in Christ Jesus; and to declare which as the truth of the case, the figure of speech used is employed in our text, Eph ii 5,6. And it is no more the duty of the soul to quicken itself into new life in Christ, than it is the duty of the dead in the grave to raise themselves up into the life of the world to come; and there is no more truth or propriety in

universal invitations, or invitations to the dead, in the one case than in the other.

I am aware that the force of the above figures of speech will be artfully attempted to be shuffled and frittered away, as not meaning all they would seem to imply. But let them mean much or little, what is meant, is so called as to set forth what none but God alone could perform or produce, and to mark it as God's work alone, and as that which must be as much out of man's duty, as it is of God's grace only. And, therefore, according to the fair import and evident truth of the Holy Ghost in the above forms of expression, duty faith and universal invitations must, to say anything at all, go plainly to say, that it is the duty of the unbegotten to beget themselves, and should be invited to do so. That it is the duty of the unborn to produce an after-birth state, and should be invited to do so; and that, too, whether conceived or not. That it is the duty of nonentity to create existence, and should be invited to do so. That it is the duty of the dead to quicken themselves, and should be invited to do so! Wonder, O heavens! at the wisdom, experience, and honesty of duty faith preachers on these points; and be astonished, O earth! at the people's blindness and folly in receiving such stuff for the gospel of the grace of God, the glorious gospel of the blessed God!

### **Did the Lord take opportunities to preach duty faith and universal invitations?**

If duty faith and universal invitations unto salvation were really truths of the divine mind, and of revelation, they would claim a place in the gospel ministry as first principles, and would have been held by our Lord and his apostles as of so much importance, as, for that reason and for our example, to have used them on every fair occasion, and not let one real opportunity escape the enforcing of them upon unbelieving persons. And did they do so? And have they set us any such an example? No, but altogether the contrary, as the following examples of their conduct will shew: 'Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ,' Matt xvi 20. On duty faith and universal invitation principles, we should suppose that all men would have been invited to come, that through seeing they might all believe, not missing such a fine opportunity, if duty faith and universal

invitations had ever been in the Lord's meaning; but instead of which it was 'tell no man' to come and see.

And when our Lord talked with the woman of Samaria, he neither told her that it was her duty to believe unto salvation nor invited her to do so, but pointed at her conscience through the medium of her rationality, saying, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water,' John iv 10. Here our Lord preached a cluster of truths in few words to this unconverted woman, and that without any contradiction to other truths, or jar with the free and sovereign grace counsels of God; and also without telling her that it was her duty to believe unto salvation, or inviting her to do so; but it was a shewing of her, that if she were convinced of the truth and knew what was true, she would pray; and that if she were a praying person she should obtain, as all praying souls shall and do obtain, the blessings prayed for. 'Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband and come hither,' verse 16. This was neither duty faith nor universal invitations to salvation; but a home appeal to her conscience, through the medium of her conduct in life; for Jesus knew that she had no husband, verse 17, and an honest statement of God's truth will find out all such things by the power of the Holy Ghost, without the minister's even knowing the person; whilst duty faith and universal invitations neither detect nor destroy them, but cover them over, and deceive the soul with a false piety. And our Lord further said, 'Ye worship ye know not what,' verse 22. This was an appeal to her conscience through the blindness of her devotion; while true worship must embrace in it a knowledge of God who is worshipped, and the heart engaged accordingly. If we want to know how to address sinners in the name of the Lord, here is an example which cannot be excelled, an example which needs no reconciling with the counsels of God, an example that is in harmony with all the particular truths of free, sovereign, and absolute grace, an example from the spirit of which we have no warrant to deviate in the ministration of the gospel of the grace of God.

When the Jews were on one occasion disputing with our Lord about his being the Christ, he said unto them, 'Ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you,' John x 26. Sometimes our Lord spoke to the Jews in a manner peculiar to them in relation to the covenant under which they were, as we have before hinted, and shall make some further observations upon before we close these remarks; while at other times he spoke to them on things immediately relating to external salvation; and then it was in a

manner agreeing with every special doctrine of the gospel of salvation, as is the fact in our text, in which our Lord did not tell them it was their duty to make themselves sheep, and then to believe in him as such; nor did he tell them it was their duty to believe, and so become his sheep; but plainly told them that their state was that which bore no mark of a sheep, and so no mark for eternal life; chewing, also, that God and not man, grace and not human duties or works, are first in a soul's belief unto salvation; striking, also, at the pharisaical pride of man, which strove then as it does now, to place human works and duties first in the order of action to salvation interest with God.

### **Did Peter, Philip and Stephen take opportunities to preach duty faith?**

There could not have been three more favorable opportunities for the enforcement of duty faith and universal invitations than Peter the apostle had. First. In opening his gospel commission, in the first really and properly new testament sermon to the Jews, on the person, death and resurrection of Christ, Acts ii. Second. In his explanatory defense before the high priest and the Jewish council, Acts iv 9-12; v 29-32. And Third. In opening his gospel commission in the first properly new testament sermon that was preached to the Gentiles, Acts x 34 to the end of the chapter. Now these were not only opportunities, but occasions which must have made it Peter's duty to have enforced duty faith and universal invitations, if any such things had been in his gospel commission from his Lord and Master; but we hear nothing about any such thing, as though nothing of the kind was ever known, thought of, or heard of, by him, either from the scriptures, the Lord's own mouth, or the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. On all those occasions Peter spoke out plainly and boldly, as being filled with the Holy Ghost, but on none did he advance anything in address to the unconverted that was not in perfect harmony with the counsels of God and the doctrines of sovereignty and distinguishing grace. Not one word is found of duty faith in Philip's address to the eunuch Acts viii 35; nor yet in his address to sinners at Samaria, or of universal invitations either, for he `preached Christ unto them,' verse 5. Nor is there the least shadow of duty faith and universal invitations unto salvation in the forcible appeals made in the speech of Stephen, Acts vii; and we might have expected by all means to have found them in such a speech as that, had they been any part of the truth of God, or any way belonged to the gospel.

## **Did Paul take opportunities preach duty faith?**

And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ,' Acts xxiv 24. This was a most favorable opportunity for duty faith and universal invitations to have been advanced and enforced; and such an opportunity too, as could not have justly or innocently been suffered to pass by unembraced and unimproved, had any such doctrines, sentiments, principles, thoughts or ideas been contained and known in the apostle's great commission 'to bear the Lord's name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel,' Acts ix 15. But is there anything of the kind to be found here in Paul's address? No, not one word, for at verse 25, chap xxiv it is said, 'And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.' Here was no duty faith nor universal invitations in this, but a fair and honest statement of facts, supported by sound and solemn reasoning. This was a mode of address to a Gentile sinner that needed no reconciling with the counsels of God and other truths of the faith of Christ.

And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds,' Acts xxvi 29. Here was a good opportunity, and one in which we might reasonably expect to find something of duty faith and universal invitations principles, in some one form of countenance or another, if any such thing had been in either Paul's creed or commission. For 'Agrippa said unto Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,' verse 28. And why did not Paul snatch up this opportunity that was so widely opened before him, and at once tell Agrippa and all that heard him that day, that it was their duty to believe unto salvation, and to be altogether as he was in the faith of Christ: and accordingly exhort and invite, and enforce upon them to be so without delay? He did not do so, and his not doing so could not be from fear, for he spoke freely before the king, verse 26; nor could it be from a want of zeal for the cause of God, for he counted not his life dear compared to that, Acts xx 22-24; nor for want of love to souls, because he wished all that heard him that day to be altogether as he was in the faith and hope of the gospel, if the Lord's will. But he did not appeal to Agrippa and the rest, or any of them, on duty faith principles, saying that it was their duty, and that they ought to be so; but made his appeal to God, if it were his will, to make them so; as that it was in God's power only to make them so, and that the divine will, and not

man's, must determine whether it should be or not; and that with all his best wishes, Paul had no authority to speak otherwise of the matter. Here the apostle said not a word that was not in harmony with the counsels of God, and all the truths of the free grace gospel and sovereign salvation of God. And why did he not? but first, because he had no such thing in his commission from the Lord; second, because he knew of no such thing in his own faith; and, third, because he knew of no such thing as duty faith and universal invitations in his own personal coming into the faith of Christ and hope of eternal life: nor as any way relating to his own free grace salvation, which he so fully maintained to be by the power of God, according to eternal purpose.

In the two epistles to Timothy, and in the one to Titus, in which Paul the apostle gives them respectively his most solemn, faithful and affectionate charge, in the name of the Lord, on the truths, and on the order and manner of life they should be careful to maintain in their ministry and example to the end of their days, not a verse, line or word, can be found which can, even in sound, be decently made to imply the least shadow of a charge, hint or intimation to enforce, preach or name faith unto salvation as the natural man's duty; nor anything of universal invitations, or invitations of the dead in sin to believe and come into the love, peace and blessings of God's salvation.

### **No apostolic example for duty faith preaching**

And to what can we possibly attribute this apostolic silence on points which, if true, must give feature and figure to all other points of the gospel of God? I cannot possibly, for myself, account for this dead silence on duty faith and universal invitations otherwise than that these points were nonentities in the apostolic gospel of God; and that it is of the devil, antichrist, and the pride and false piety of men, that they have either name, place or being for gospel, the truth of God, or anything related thereunto now. Duty faith men make duty faith and universal invitations to give countenance and cast to the whole of their gospel; and how is this, that our duty faith men make that to be so much in every thing, which the apostles were as silent upon as death in every thing? This awful difference has not come from God, but from the parent of those spirits, 1 John iv 1, and is of their fraternity only.

Our God is of one uniform mind, and the Spirit of truth speaketh one and the same thing, in the same ministry, through all ages, without contradiction.



And most certainly, that which was not gospel truth in the mouth of the apostles' public ministration of the `whole counsel of God,' of `all the words of this life,' declaring all that they had heard, seen, and handled of the `word of life,' 1 John i 1,2, cannot now belong to the truth of God, the gospel of his grace, and ministry of the word of life, as delivered by the understanding, inspiration, and public labors of the apostles; and I know not, for myself, by what law, in the name of the Lord, we are to take that for gospel truth, that has no apostolic testimony or example.

The apostles, in their ministry, fully and plainly maintained the very same doctrinal truths, to the very letter of them, as those which the prophets had done, concerning Christ, and salvation by grace in him only; according to the sovereignly settled will of God the Father, and operative power of the Holy Ghost in Christ's name, Acts xxvi 22, 23. And in my opinion there cannot be a greater evidence of a spirit of error in the ministry of any age, than when that is made of all things most prominent which the apostles were totally silent upon; and that which the apostles maintained most prominently, as paramount points of revealed truth, is kept most carefully and cautiously in almost total silence; and which to an awful degree is the unconceivable and undeniable case in the present day. And in proportion as duty faith is maintained, the doctrines of sovereign, determined, and distinguishing favor must be kept out of sight; these two being in absolute opposition, and impossible to be maintained together in relation to eternal salvation. And as duty faith, in the very nature and spirit of it, does and must deny all necessity of the Holy Spirit's agency and power, and being also, in most sweet and perfect harmony and agreement with the universal pride and delusion of fallen human nature, about doing something as a duty whereby to acquire eternal life, this of course takes best among men, is most popular, as the very sentiment of nature without one word of revelation; and this buttered side being discovered by the schools, the ministers keep this side most upwards, as standing first in importance, and as giving the only allowable countenance to all other things relating to godliness, although it be in direct opposition, First. To the state of man, as `without strength' under the law. Second. To the sovereignty of the divine pleasure of the universally offended Lawgiver, who saith, `I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.' Third. To the fact that eternal life is the free gift of God, and divine gift only. Fourth. To the total silence of our Lord and his apostles on every thing that belongs to duty faith unto salvation; which silence we have above observed, and shall further observe in due order.

## **Is it the duty of all men to be what grace makes a christian?**

It has been said, 'That it is the duty of all men to be what grace makes the Christian.' This is plain, and the plainer it is the better we can understand it, and the less likely we are to make mistakes. But in reply to this, let us observe:

First. That so it would be the duty of all men, if Adam had been as a head to his whole posterity exactly what Christ is as a head to his believing church, and the whole posterity of Adam had been in him at the first exactly what the quickened and called church is in Christ; but not otherwise, since it cannot be any man's duty now, to be more than man was at the first. And taking Adam as a pattern of the whole, that he was in his moral uprightness, in his life and standing in Eden, and in his meetness for Eden, just what the Christian man by grace is unto salvation; and that the man of God by grace unto eternal salvation, is but a repetition of Adam's first constitutional state and standing figure before God in Eden, either personally, systematically, properly, or prospectively, I challenge and defy any duty faith man under the heavens to prove by any one text in all the word of God. For that while Adam had in his first state but a pure earthly paradise, he stood in the very height and perfection of the bliss for which he had a personal meetness, and that on condition only of his upright continuance in the moral rectitude in which God had made him; while the Christian, by grace 'a new creature,' has a meetness for the incorruptible inheritance of heaven itself, and that ensured to him in the very life of Christ, John xiv 19. The word of God, in speaking of Adam in his own order of first state, never calls him a spiritual man, but a natural man; and in speaking of the man of God by grace, in his own order as such, never calls him a natural man, but a spiritual man; and according to the word of God, these two cannot mean the same thing and the same state of being, but differ as greatly and distinctly in meaning as does the law and the gospel, the letter and the spirit, the ministration of death and the ministration of the Spirit, the old and the new covenant, the earthy and the heavenly, 1 Cor. xv 47, 48; 2 Cor. iii.

Second. The idea of its being the duty of all men to be what grace makes the Christian, reduces, lowers, diminishes, and levels down the whole work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all the quickening, teaching, comforting, Christ-glorifying work of the Holy Spirit, to the mere restoration and re-establishment of the first natural Adam state and obedience as required of man by creation law. And which idea also goes to declare, that all that is so

richly said in the word of God of the great, the everlasting, unchangeable, and inseparable love of God; of his great and everlasting mercy, his manifold grace, his deep counsels, his mighty works, his truth which endureth for ever, his many exceeding great and precious promises, his covenant that he will not break, nor remove, but remember for ever; and all his gracious names that he savingly bears in his holy word; and all that is therein said by his saints with grateful wonder and praise for all his greatness in goodness, love, and mercy toward them, is only about God's doing for some men what was the duty of all men to do for themselves, and amounting to nothing more at!! O what a robbery is the notion of duty faith unto salvation, upon the exceeding riches of grace, upon salvation's deep and sweet mystery, and upon God's holy and gracious honor and glory! O what a pious fraud is duty faith unto salvation, gravely played off upon the self-willed, self-righteous, gracelessly pious multitudes, who like to have it so! And O how liberal and free is all this too from all such heavenly and Bible religious bigotry which holds, with so much narrow-mindedness, that a soul must be born again of the Spirit and grace of God to be a Christian, or to commence one step in the path which leads to eternal life, and that salvation is wholly in and of the will, pleasure, hand, and power of God only! But how will it be in the end?

Third. The idea of its being the duty of all men to be what grace makes the Christian, makes our Lord Jesus Christ to be nothing more as a head to his grace-made Christian seed, than Adam was and would have been to his whole natural posterity had he continued to stand and had not sinned. And so all those high and glorious, spiritual and heavenly distinctions of gracious and salvation excellency, which the word of God ascribes to Christ alone, as Head of his church, and to his church in him, by an everlasting covenant of life and peace, above, and all surpassing Adam, and his natural posterity in him at the first, are by duty faith at once thrown down, denied, and destroyed, to make room for itself, in the place of the things of the Spirit, while itself is but of natural origin, and not of the Spirit by saving grace.

Man's original state must embrace every duty of the natural man, and as those duties were in accordance with nature's constitution, and within nature's own inherently constituted power to perform them, we call them natural duties to God the Creator by the law of nature. And if it be the duty of every man to be what grace makes the Christian, while it cannot be the duty of any natural man to be any thing more or less or any thing otherwise than as God made man at the first, then the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ

must be after all nothing more than the religion of nature, and Christ must be only a natural head, as Adam was at the first, of natural religion; and so, godliness altogether by grace is but the mere restoration of the religion that Adam lost; and so, according to this, all that is said of the mystery of godliness, the mystery of Christ, and of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, &c, they are nothing more than what were the commonplace things of nature before Adam fell! Only you must be a duty faith saint to believe this!

We see, however, by this idea of every man's duty, that duty faith is but natural faith, the faith of nature by the law, in nature's Author and Lawgiver; and which natural faith took the lead in Adam's pure nature, in his obedience to God's law of nature to man in the Eden state. We do not deny natural faith, but believe in the truth of it, and that it is a natural duty under the law of nature toward the Lawgiver; and that the obedience to this natural faith is the fulfilling and keeping the law of God's common revelation of himself, as at first made to Adam. But if every man had as much of this natural faith as Adam had at the first, and as pure, it would not then be the faith of the gospel that is unto salvation, nor any thing related to it; for so taking it is a deadly deception altogether; and here lies the awful but popular error about duty faith, as having any thing to do with salvation.

And here, I perceive, lies your own great mistake, Sir, about Christian obedience and faith unto salvation, as growing out of, and as being 'the essence of God's law.' I am aware that the duty faith system virtually, and some at least of its advocates declaratively, deny there being more than one kind of faith; and then the faith of nature under the law, is blindly, fondly, and self-righteously taken up for, and made out to be, all the faith the Bible means, and to stand for every purpose, end, and intent of faith; while the supernatural 'faith of God's elect,' 'that is of the operation of God,' is obtained 'through the righteousness of God,' and that is not of man, nor of works, nor of duty, is artfully put away as no reality; and natural faith, which is a duty under the law, is turned into a duty faith unto salvation under the gospel; and this is the thing I oppose under the character of duty faith. The faith of nature under the creation law of divine claims and human obligations, and the faith of the seed of Abraham under the law of conditional privileges by the land of Canaan covenant, and the faith of God's elect, made to stand in the power of God, and within the saving grace of the everlasting covenant with Christ the elect head for the whole 'election of grace,' are by no means the same thing; but are as different as the respective premises are, and as much so, as the fact is, that the two first could hold

nothing of Eden or of Canaan secure, but on the respective conditions of human doings; while the latter has all in free promises in Christ, secured by divine faithfulness in him, 'Yea and amen;' 'that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed,' Rom iv 16.

## **CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE WORK MAULED TO JUSTIFY UNIVERSAL INVITATIONS**

As it is impossible to give any thing of a tolerable countenance to universal invitations on particular redemption premises, so, as a sort of plea for universal invitations to salvation, the work of our Lord Jesus Christ is mauled about into all manner of shapes and forms of a something universal; but forced to be therewith of consequent uncertainty, and perishable fallibility. Because none pretend to affirm that salvation is or will finally be universal, but intimate that on the work of Christ being universal, salvation might be if men would. But according to this, so far as salvation fails to be universal, just so far the whole work of our Lord Jesus Christ in life, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ever living intercession, must fail, prove in vain, perish, and come to nothing. Universal invitation principles must bring us to this awful, God-dishonoring, yea, God-denying conclusion; because, according to the word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham, came into our world, and did, suffered, and accomplished all he 'finished,' with no other object, aim, end, and intent, than that of salvation; so that if salvation fail in any one instance, the work of our Lord Jesus Christ is declared to fail, perish, be in vain, and come to nothing in every such case. Universal invitation men must admit and come to this conclusion, or accurse their own universal notions to the public gibbet of condemnation, there to hang till they be dead; and God in the glorious Trinity of his persons, and in all his perfection, and in all his God-like works and ways, be honored, magnified, and declared God over all, blessed for ever, in having mercy on whom he will have mercy, and in saving with an everlasting salvation all whom he will save.

### **Did Christ die intentionally for the elect and provisionally for the rest?**

It has been said, that 'Christ died intentionally for the elect, and provisionally for all the rest of mankind, and that there is merit enough in the blood of Christ for the redemption of all men, if they would apply for it.'

This is as easy said as any thing else, and is very pleasant to flesh and blood, but it is not easy to be proved and sustained for truth by any one text in all the word of God; because in relation to eternal salvation, God has borne no such testimony in any part of his word, either of man, or of himself, of his will and intention, or of his work, or the worth that is in it. The Lord's plans are all drawn in his own mind before he begins his work; the counsel of his own will, indeed, is his one great and entire plan, and to this plan he will work all things until he has fulfilled all he has purposed, promised, meant and intended; for as he is of infinite understanding, and sees the end from the beginning, all his provisions, operations, promises and intentions, are in conformity to, and all tend infallibly to secure that full end and design; for 'I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it,' Eccl iii 14; so that 'All God's works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him.'

### **Did Christ die for all sin, not persons in particular?**

It has been said, 'That Christ died for sin, for all sin, and not for persons in particular.' This is a very convenient loop-hole for the bringing in of universal invitations, and human conditions for the personal acquirement of eternal life; but is this the truth of God that endureth for ever? Death is the wages of sin, and if Christ died for all sin, then is there now no more death for sin to any one. Death is the full penalty of sin, and so much of sin as Christ hath died for, so much of death that came by sin hath Christ for ever destroyed. And if Christ died for all sin, then hath he for ever abolished, swallowed up in victory, and destroyed all death, that came by sin, or by dying he hath not destroyed death at all, and in that case what has he done by dying? But according to the truth of the word of God, so far as Christ hath died for sin, so far death that came by sin, and is the wages and penalty of sin, is destroyed, so as to have no more power or existence in relation to the sin for which Christ died; and as far as sin was condemned in the flesh of Christ, so far is condemnation for ever ended on the sin for which Christ died, Rom viii 1,3. For wherein Christ by dying for sin is death's destruction, there, and to that full extent, is he life's sure, full and happy fountain for ever, John xi 25,26; and to this truth the Holy Ghost leads the convinced heirs of salvation for the hope of eternal life, and to realize, by humble persuasion under his divine testimony, that on the ground of this truth, 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made and doth make them free from the law of sin and death,' Rom viii 2; with the happy, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,' verse 34. Sin is called a debt, and that

Christ should pay off that debt by dying, without an immediate regard to the debtor, appears to me most senseless. Sin is an offence, and that Christ should suffer death, which is the utmost penalty for the offence, without an immediate regard to the offender, and his sure escape too, appears to me to be anything but divine truth, reason or common sense; because we might just as well say, that Christ died to pay debts and to suffer penalties without any regard whatever to either debtor or creditor, offender or offended; or without any real design.

### **Is redemption universal but men do not avail themselves of it?**

It has been said, 'That redemption is universal, and that the reason why salvation is not universal, is because men do not avail themselves of the advantages of redemption.' This gives plenty of scope for universal invitations, and just suits the pride of the human heart, because it gives to man a sort of self-dispensing power over the eternal favours of God, and denies God's sovereignty in the dispensations of his own blessings. This also makes the redemption work of Christ to come a certain distance toward the sinner, but not to reach all the way to him as a sinner, without strength, dead in sins, and at enmity against God, in order to fetch him out from that very state. But if the ladder which Jacob saw had not come all the way to the earth, it could have marked out no way of intercourse for him with heaven, or heaven with him: and so the work of Christ would do nothing if it did not reach all the way to the sinner's case as a sinner. But quite contrary, and very happily so, to the above nonsense of the sinner's availing himself, the apostle Paul declares the work of our Lord Jesus Christ to extend to the sinner as a sinner considered, and not to him merely considered as a coming saint: saying, 'When we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly,' Rom v 6; 'While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,' verse 8; 'When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,' verse 10. And this the apostle calls God's commendation of his love to us, verse 8; and considering this being done in the great love of God, that there is now a much more abundant certainty, that all shall be finally saved from wrath, for whom this work of Christ has thus been done.

And this notion of man's 'availing himself of the advantages of redemption,' leaves the Holy Spirit's work out altogether, as having nothing to do with the matter of personal godliness and salvation in such gentlemen's theology; although our Lord himself hath so plainly said, 'When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of

judgment,' John xvi 8-11; 'He shall testify of me,' xv 26; 'He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you,' xvi 14. And this notion of self availing' goes also to say, that man's not availing himself of certain things in his own strength and of his own will, does more for the saint's everlasting ruin in hell, than all the good will, the love, the promises, and all the gracious works of the Lord will finally avail to save it; and that Christ has redeemed in vain, or redeemed with a redemption that may turn out to be no redemption at all, unless the ruined will consent to its being effectual! And I think how happy and pleased such men as the above must feel in their dear good selves, as being so good as to avail themselves of the advantages of redemption, while there are so many who are so much more naughty and wicked as not so to avail themselves, Luke xviii 9. But when God by mercy shall take in his prodigals, and righteously turn out his never-offending, and shew up the full truth to effect, that nothing but God's workmanship, and none but new creatures in Christ Jesus, who are born of God and of incorruptible seed, shall inherit the kingdom of God, how will this self-availing scheme stand then in the judgment of God?

### **The work of Christ is particular and effectual, not universal and uncertain**

It has been said, 'That redemption is universal, but the application particular; and that a universal redemption is a necessary preliminary to a particular application.' What can men of learning and talent think the redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ really to be, to speak of it in this way? For the word redemption itself must be well known to have no such meaning, acceptance, or use among men by any analogy under the whole heavens. It is well known that the word signifies buying back, a rescue, a release, a reclaim, a freedom obtained by an adequate price paid for the same, with the consideration that there is no such freedom without such price, and that no such price is paid without such freedom being obtained and secured without any further consideration, and which is accordingly called 'The price of redemption.' Lev xxv 51,52. And the word redeem will apply to land mortgaged, to any thing put in pledge for money, to a person who has forfeited his liberty by misdeeds, and to persons taken prisoners in the field of battle, and led away captive by the conqueror; and in all these and such like cases where redemption is required, and is to be effected, the price of redemption is the full price of complete freedom and deliverance always. Deliverance by



power, without any other immediate outlay, is called redemption, Jer xxxi 11; but no sort of price paid is ever called redemption without deliverance effected and secured thereby. The apostle useth the word in regard to saving of time by Christian diligence, watchfulness, &c., saying, 'Redeeming the time,' Col iv 5. Now it is the time saved, the deliverance wrought, the rescue and freedom actually effected and secured, that is called, and is properly the redemption; and not the diligence employed, the power outlaid, or the price paid, for they are but the means; so that whatever be the price paid, the power or outlay employed, the deliverance and salvation itself only is the redemption, as we so fully and plainly read in the word of God saying, 'The angel which redeemed me from all evil,' Gen xlvi 16; 'The Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity,' 2 Sam iv 9; 'Out of all distress,' 1 King i 29; 'Who redeemeth thy life from destruction,' Psalm ciii 4; 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death,' Hosea xiii 14; 'That he might redeem us from all iniquity,' Tit ii 14; 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,' Gal iii 13; 'From your vain conversation,' 1 Peter i 18; 'Which were redeemed from the earth,' Rev xiv 3; 'These were redeemed from among men,' verse 4; 'Which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt,' 2 Sam vii 23; 'And hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,' Rev v 9.

From the word of God, therefore, so full and so plain on the point, it is undeniably evident, that a real deliverance only effected and ensured is redemption; and that without a real, proper, and actual deliverance and freedom ensured from the thralldom considered, whatever is done, it is in no shape redemption at all, by any known meaning and proper use of the terms redeem, redemption, redeemeth, redeemed, redeemest. And on what ground, then, our Lord Jesus Christ's proper redemption of souls, by the full price of 'Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe,' Ex xxi 23-25, in suffering, bloodshed, and obedience even unto the death of the cross, should be so mauled about as above, and subjected to those drawbacks, imbecilities, failures and defects, contrary to all and every idea of a real and proper redemption in every other matter, case or instance known among men, for which the true and proper sense and meaning of the word redemption is known to stand, I cannot make out or understand; otherwise than that such men, professing to receive the truth of God, at the same time cannot bear the plain, free, discriminating, absolute grace, shape and order of that truth, and, consequently, not its real nature and design.

I hope I have as large a heart and soul for the salvation of sinners as any man living, and subject to the sovereign will and operative power of God, work as hard at least as any second-rate laborer in the Lord's name, to promote that end; but I must confess that I have never been able to make that out to be redemption at all, which does not really and properly redeem, but leaves its intended objects, from certain still existing causes, enthralled, undelivered, un-rescued, and liable, after all, to all the misery and woe to which exposed without such a falsely called redemption. Nor that to be atonement that does not really and properly atone, by `making amends for the harm done,' Lev v 16, by `covering the sin,' Ps xxxii 1, so as to ensure forgiveness of all offences concerned, according to the word of the Lord, saying, `And the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him,' Lev iv 26,30,31,35; v 10,13,16,18; vi 7. Nor that to be reconciliation that does not really and properly reconcile, but leaves the disagreement so far unsettled, as that the parties concerned are liable to be as far off as ever on the old grounds of offence. Nor that to be a propitiation that does not really and properly propitiate, but leaves all the offence, anger and frown, liable to remain and to break out in full effect after all; and even the more so by far, from what has been done to appease than otherwise, according to the duty faith gospel! Nor that to be justification that does not really and properly justify its intended objects from all condemnation and the causes thereof, but leaves them still subject to certain liabilities of charge and condemning consequents. The above five plain words (i.e. redemption, atonement, reconciliation, propitiation and justification) are employed in the sacred scriptures, to declare the good will and truth of God in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; but there is not one of them that is or can be allowed, by the duty faith and universal invitation system, to have its proper meaning finally and effectually carried out and established by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ alone, without being suspended on the hazard of some creature conditions, which subjects the whole to a wide extent, according to that scheme, to an entire failure; but which failure, and the system that must admit it, duty faith men are much more prepared to receive, love and hold fast, than they are to embrace the divine doctrine of `I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy;' but in which form will the last great day shew up the dispensation of God's favors?

The work of Christ is salvation; and whatever he has done for the salvation of one soul, the very same he has done for the salvation of every soul for whom he has done any thing at all for salvation. So that if the work of Christ to save be universal in any part of it, it must be universal in every part of it;

and in such case every part of the work of Christ must fail and be in vain in the case of every soul that is lost. But if the work of Christ be salvation to one or more, as it really is, and from which alone he is called the Saviour, how is it that every one is not saved by the work of Christ, if that work was done alike for all?

I think I may safely challenge all the duty faith schools, divines, and advocates in the world, to prove from the sacred text that the redemption of souls by our Lord Jesus Christ is more or less than one complete and uniform redemption, or that it is at all divisible into sections of different lengths, strength, character, design, or effectuality, in relation to any different portions of the redeemed, as arising from any difference of circumstances whatever on their own part. If such a thing can be proved, where is the sacred text in the evident mind of the Spirit to prove it? We claim the right to take our stand at this point, because if this cannot be proved by the word of God, then redemption in itself must be as particular as salvation is and has been in all ages discriminate; by redemption I hereby mean the entire saving work of Christ as a systematical whole; for redemption being but one, what it is to one soul, it must be to all the redeemed; and what it is not to all the redeemed, it cannot be to any one. If one redeemed soul be lost, why not all? And if the redemption of Christ be the salvation of one soul, so it is and must be of all the redeemed; and the reason why all men are not saved, is that they are not redeemed; for while the eternal salvation of the soul lies, by divine purpose, embodied and secured in redemption, the available essence of redemption lies in the worth and merit of it, solely as wrought out and obtained by Christ himself in his life and death; the gospel of it, operative power about it, application and personal evidence of it, being no additions whatever to it, but consequents growing out of it, as ensured by it. For as redemption can and doth make singers of its redeemed, while singers cannot make nor add anything to redemption, Rev xiv 3; so redemption grace will make and produce believers, but believing never did nor can make or add any thing of interest or security to redemption, but openly declare, as by grace given evidence, such souls to be redeemed ones; for 'the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head,' Isaiah li 11. They are not redeemed for returning, but return because they are redeemed; nor are they redeemed for singing, but their redemption shall make them all sing for joy; because it is the redeemed, without pointing to any part, or to any circumstance relating to one part of them more than

another, for God names only their being the redeemed, as the who shall return, and as the why they shall return.

We are not opposed to a large redemption, but to the notion of any being lost whom Christ hath redeemed; and to that of his having done any part of his saving work for those who will be lost. In my opinion, it is as far off from the truth of God, and as awfully opposed to the truth of God, to say that Christ, who is the God-Man mediator of the better covenant, hath wrought out a universal redemption, but which will prove all in vain, perish, and come to nothing, from certain causes in man, as far as salvation fails to be universal, as it is to say, 'that Christ hath wrought no redemption at all, and that he only lived a good and holy life, and died a martyr, to set us an example, that by following the same we may go to heaven by a good moral life.' Both these notions are alike opposed to the truth of God, only one holds that he hath done the greatest and most glorious of all his works, to a vast extent in vain; and the other holds that he hath done no such work at all. Both these are strongholds of Satan, but the first in the present day commands the popular piety.

### **Scriptures which seem to support universal redemption**

Whether universal redemption as the ground-plot of universal invitations, will universally stand, or be particular only in its final effects, perhaps may be considered to be not so much our business to enquire, as it is at once to admit that redemption in itself is in some way universal, by the clearest Bible testimony, which at once plainly declares that Christ did die for all; and that 'as it is so said in the holy word, it is for us so to believe, receive, and speak of it.' But while with heart and soul we receive and revere the Bible as the infallible truth of God, and believe that every sound of it is intended to convey some true and solemn sense, we ask, is there not a possibility of taking sounds in a sense never intended? Spiritual things would bear comparing with spiritual things in the apostle's day, and by their harmony gave instruction, confirmation, and consolation, by the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, 1 Cor ii 13. And as spiritual things are now just what they always were, I think in order to come at the truth of God and the mind of the Spirit in the sacred word, we cannot do better than compare spiritual things with spiritual things now, by the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.

And if upon examination it should be found, that the word all, &c used in the holy revelations of the will of God, in relation to other parts of the salvation work of the Lord, cannot possibly in truth be taken with universal intent, meaning and design, would it be quite safe to conclude that the word all, &c as used in relation to the redemption work of Christ, is by the Holy Spirit intended to express individual universality of all men? And would it be doing injustice to the mind and intent of the sacred text, to take those ails in relation to redemption, as other ails of equally universal sound in the sacred word must be taken? If there be an evident good sound sense and reason for the use of the words all and all men, in regard to other parts of the salvation work of the Lord, without a possibility of their meaning in truth universally all men individually, will not the same evident good sound sense and reason for the use of the words all and all men, equally apply and stand well in regard to the redemption work of Christ, without the universality of all men being ever meant or thought of? I am of the opinion that the same reason there is for, and propriety there is in the use of the words all and all men, in relation to one part of the soul salvation work of our God, there is in regard to every part of it, and that that sense and meaning upon the words all and all men, that will not possibly in truth apply to every part of the soul salvation work of the Lord, was never intended by the eternal Spirit of truth to be applied to any part of it, and so not to the redemption work of Christ in particular.

Entreating to be guided by the Spirit of all truth, we will now collect, compare, and so try the ails used in the word of God in regard to the salvation of souls, and classing them off in their own order, we will - First, notice some of those which relate to the deeds, dying and redemption work of our Lord Jesus Christ, such as the following:

### **"Who gave himself a ransom for all"**

`Who gave himself a ransom for all,' 1 Tim ii 6. This evidently and simply means, all sorts and grades of society of men, whom the apostle exhorted Timothy that they should be prayed for, verse 1,2, `that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness;' and also because that such all men `God will have to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth,' and

the same to be testified in due time.' It is not said God would have all men to be saved, nor would have had all men to be saved; but 'Will have all men to be saved,' and this will extends quite as far as the gift of the ransom; and all intended by both sayings is 'to be testified in due time.' Now take the whole connection from the first to the close of the seventh verse, and then take the testimony of these now for ever gone by eighteen hundred years, and see whether any thing like individual universality in either the 'will' or the 'ransom,' could ever be understood and intended by the apostle, as by any sort of 'testimony' that can be gathered to have been borne in any way whatever to that point, through all this length of time now gone by. For the apostle tells us most plainly that the truth he stated, and intended by his statement, should 'be testified in due time:' and while in the conduct of providence, the ministry of the gospel, and the manner of the effectually working power of God therewith, it has long and mercifully been 'testified' that all sorts of characters and grades of society of men, are included in the 'will' and 'ransom for all' in our text, there is in no shape the least testimony borne to individual universality of souls unto salvation as being ever intended. And while the Lord did out of one savage blood-thirsty persecutor, raise up and make one 'apostle to the Gentiles,' how is it that thousands of such preachers were not raised up and sent at once into every kingdom, province, city, and village of the whole world to testify the same, if the will of God was to have all universally saved, and as universally 'come to the knowledge of the truth?' Was the will of God ever limited by his want of power? Could he not raise up workmen for a universal work, if such had been his will? Was God ever really short of workmen for his own purposes of grace, further than to make it a matter of prayer with the church for him to send, as well as prosper them he hath sent into the ministry?

### **Use of the word world'**

'For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved,' John iii 17. 'And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world,' John vi 5. 'And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world,' 1 John ii 2. These portions of sacred truth, from the use of the words world, and the whole world, are considered to involve an evident universal intention and consequent universal virtue, provisionally, if not determinately, in the redemption work of Christ. But while God in the Trinity of his persons is as mighty to save as he is willing to save, and saving being the sole act of his own good will and pleasure, and the saving

display and conduct of his power having been in all ages discriminate only, I cannot take any text to mean any thing of individual universality of intention, provision, or virtue, in the redemption work of Christ; while, notwithstanding, every text and every sound has a meaning harmonious in the perfect whole.

It is well known that the Gentiles are called the world, in distinction from the Jews, and such passages as the above are intended to declare the Gentiles equally included with the Jews in the redemption work and salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Jewish notions and prejudices generally, as a body, were that they exclusively were to partake of the benefits of Messiah's work, and be of his kingdom; and these sayings of the world, in relation to the redemption work of our Lord Jesus Christ, are intended to destroy all such notions, and to declare that with God there is no difference of national distinction, in the great matters and designs of Calvary. And while some of the Jews, from their own prophets, held that the Gentiles should partake, yet this was but a partial notion, and that such favors were only to be extended to such nations of the Gentiles as were distantly related to them, (the Jews,) by the blood of their forefathers, and to such as had been most friendly towards them, or who had done them any kindness as a people; so that the favor was to be for their sakes only, and so applying Deut ii; while all the rest of the Gentile nations should be destroyed. And the words, 'every creature,' 'all nations,' 'the whole world,' 'all men every where,' are beyond a doubt, in my opinion, used to contradict and destroy every thing of this notion, and to declare that, by the will of God, without any such secondary cause or reason, redemption and salvation eternal should extend to every nation under heaven equally, as to the Jews in due order and time. But this does not declare the redemption word of Christ to be in any thing individually universal, nor any thing beyond the election of grace, of all nations, kingdoms, kindred, tongues, and people; any more than the apostle's speaking so much of the manhood of Christ to the Jews, in the beginning of the gospel ministry, for the establishment of the fact of his being in truth the promised seed of Abraham, and son of David, according to the flesh, was any denial of his proper divinity, as the Unitarians would have us to believe.

**God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself**

`To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,' 2 Cor v 19. This text, from its sound, has been taken to deny the personal divinity of Christ; but it was never intended to express the personal constitution of Christ, so much as it is the nature, order, economy and design of the incarnate life, deeds, and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. For when Jesus as mediator moved in obedience, worth and merit, the Triune God moved in design. And what was that design? Reconciliation! Of whom? The world; Gentiles of all nations, and Jews of all ranks. How? `Not imputing,' charging or reckoning `their trespasses unto them.' `Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin,' Rom iv 8. So that as far as God hath and doth reconcile, so far he imputeth not sin; and so far blessed is the man, the men, or the people to whom the Lord will not impute sin. And, consequently, if reconciliation were individually universal, non-imputation of sin must be so too, and then blessedness must be individually universal accordingly, without fail; but neither the word of God, nor the face of things by the operations of the hand of God, have ever borne any testimony to such universality of grace, either in purpose, thought, word or deed.

The word reconciliation, in scripture truth, has evidently three branches of application. First, legal, as by the meritorious blood-shed and perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby justice is satisfied, the law is magnified, all righteousness is fulfilled, and the insulted honors of God's holiness are vindicated and established for ever in behalf of the ransomed. Second, personal, whereby the redeemed, by virtue of the work and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, for them in the first point, are, by the power of the Holy Ghost, brought personally into vital heart and soul reconciliation and agreement with God, on the endearing plan of grace in Christ Jesus, for their eternal life. Third, practical, whereby the man of God, and the church of God, confess and acknowledge the righteous government, works and ways of the Lord, and bow to his commands and ordinances, in obedience acquiescence and active agreement with all his revealed will, declared for the order and observance of his church, and his saints' personal and social obedience in faith and love; and to which the apostle exhorted and besought the confused and disordered church of Christ at Corinth, 2 Cor v 20. Now duty faith and universal invitation men, to make things to look to agree with their generalizing scheme, turn the first of these three points into something of an indefinite provision; and then chiefly deny the true nature of the second, and the effective power of God alone therein; and then put the third in the place of the second, and then make out the apostle, not to be, by the



grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, exhorting and beseeching the church to order and consistency among themselves, as becometh saints, but to be exhorting and beseeching the whole world of ungodly men to be reconciled to God, on the authority of a something of universal provision supposed to be in the first point. It certainly is to me a most strange and unaccountable thing, that in Paul's writing to the church as he does at verse 20, for reasons so plain and self evident through both epistles, any man living and professing 'the wisdom of the just,' should take him to be exhorting and beseeching the ungodly world to be reconciled to God, while in his real and direct addresses to the world, in different places and under various circumstances, not one word or breath of the kind is anywhere to be found expressed or implied; and surely if he had ever meant any such thing, when writing to the church behind the world's back, he would, at some time, and in some way, have declared it to the world, when speaking to their face.

### **Some scripture ails' which cannot be universal**

Having set down some of the principal texts which from their sound are, on duty faith principles, considered to declare the redemption work of Christ, to be in some way universal, we will now try that conclusion by a second class of ails, &c, which in their sound must imply as much universality as any one of the ails used in regard to redemption; while the sense and truth of which it is impossible to make out universal; such as the following.

### **And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together'**

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;' not may see it, might see it, or ought to see it, but shall see it, 'for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it,' Isaiah xl 5. Now we know there cannot be a more universal sound than this of 'all flesh,' while here it is declared from the Lord's own mouth, that all flesh together shall see the glory of the Lord, and which glory is declared to be 'the salvation of the Lord,' Luke iii 6; and so it is declared that 'all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' And here are now eighteen hundred years passed away, and not a single feature of evidence has ever appeared to give the truth, meaning, and intent of this text, a universal countenance; and it is too late, by all that time, possibly to give it that countenance now.

### **And it shall come to pass, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh'**

And it shall come to pass, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;' not would, nor would have done, but will, Joel 11 28. There is no word used in relation to the redemption work of Christ that sounds more universal than this text, and we know that nothing universal has ever yet been made of its meaning, and that it is too late to take it in any possible truth with that meaning now. And beside, the apostle Peter applies this text to the out-pouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, saying, 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: and it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,' Acts ii 16, 17. And now we know all flesh individually universal were not present on the day of Pentecost, nor was the Spirit poured individually upon all that were present, for some 'mocked,' verse 13; but 'there were devout men out of every nation under heaven,' verse 5, both Jews and Gentiles, pretty well of all sorts, tongues, and countries; and to these the apostle applies as the divine meaning and intent of the text, the words 'all flesh;' agreeable to the words of God by the prophet, saying, 'I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory,' Isa lxvi 18; my salvation, Luke iii 6; and according to our Lord's words saying, 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me,' John xii 32. All nations of men individually have never been gathered to see the salvation glory of the Lord; nor has the Lord drawn all men individually of all nations unto him, nor all men individually of any one nation, nor has the Lord ever, in any age, sent out ministers, or employed other means, in any such way, shape, or form; and, consequently, no such individual universality could ever be intended.

### **General comment on universal sounding texts**

To me it appears the plain truth of God, and mind of the Spirit, that the alls and universal sounds, in texts relating to the redemption work of Christ, are of the very same meaning and intent as those in the texts relating to all flesh seeing the salvation glory of the Lord - of the Spirit's pouring out upon all flesh - of all nations and tongues being gathered to see the glory of the Lord - of all men being drawn unto Christ - and of the Holy Spirit's reproofing or

convincing the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, John xvi 8. And now to attach individual universality to the first class of these ails, &c must be to hold a perishable redemption, with the wreck of all involved in it, to an extent as far as the whole world is not saved. And to attach individual universality to the second class of these ails, must be at once to give God the lie, and say that his truth does not `endure for ever,' nor his `word for ever settled in heaven.' In my opinion, however, it is a decided error to consider that either of these classes of ails are at all intended to express personal numbers, few or many, in the redemption and salvation work of the Lord; but to declare the extension of the redemption and salvation work and goodness of the Lord to all nations every where, as in truth has been, is, and shall be done; and which meaning they sing with so much joy before the throne, as though nothing indeed is lost that God ever meant to save, and as through redemption itself is certain salvation; saying, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation,' Rev v 9. `These were redeemed from among men,' Rev xiv 4. If all men alike individually and universally, were redeemed, it would not be common sense to say, that with the same redemption some were redeemed out of and from amongst the rest.

The personal numbers of the redeemed, as comprehended in the mind and will of God, are set forth in the sacred word as well known, but that is in a different form of expression to the above two classes of ails, as in the following manner, `By the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous,' Rom v 19. `The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many,' Matt xx 28. `By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities,' Isaiah liii 11. `I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb,' Rev vii 9; `Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his,' 2 Tim ii 19. And thus, if a proper distinction be made between reference to all nations alike, and that of the personal numbers redeemed out of all nations, much error, confusion, and contradiction is easily avoided; for that while the Lord's redeemed and saved church is out of all people, tongues, and nations of the whole world, the whole world of all people, tongues, and nations, are not the Lord's redeemed and saved, for it is out of, and from among, and so not the universal whole, first redeemed and then lost.

## **Some scripture nails' which eliminate any notion of conditional uncertainty**

There is another, and which for order sake we may call a third class of ails, which may not be amiss here to set down, but I shall not stop to remark thereon, otherwise than just observe, first, that they are chiefly connected with some divine fact stated, which at once does away with all notions of any conditional uncertainty. Second, that they include a whole, but evidently upon a definite relationship; some of them referring to the headship of Christ, in contrast to that of the headship of Adam; and others referring to the whole church, as under equal obligation, without partiality, boasting, or cause for pride, fear, or strife; and which are the following: `For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,' 1 Cor xv 22. `Even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life,' Rom v 16. `If one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again,' 2 Cor v 14,15. `But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal,' 1 Cor xii 7,11,12. `That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,' Col 128; from this verse to the end of the epistle is a most excellent comment on these words, in regard to the faith, life, and good order desired of the whole church, as the every man. I cannot, for myself, see how any thing loose, indefinite, general, conditional, and so, uncertain, can be made out of these ails, as a bit of food for the poor appetite of duty faith and universal invitations; and they cannot live nor find being in God's purely free grace certainties.

## **The Lord's intercessory prayer shows that his redemption is particular**

Our Lord's prayer in John xvii evidently stands opposed to, as at once condemning every notion about any thing loose, indefinite, general, conditional, and so, uncertain, about his redemption work, or its final effects; unless as Mediator he would pour out his soul unto death for those for whom, as Mediator, he would not pray, saying, `I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine,' John xvii 9. This prayer was not for them that believed only, but `for those

also who shall believe,' verse 20. 'Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring,' John x 16. 'All that the Father hath given me,' vi 37; 'that of all that the Father hath given me, I should lose nothing,' verse 39.

Let us consider, first, why our Lord prayed for them that he did. (1) It was because they were God the Father's peculiar and especial own; 'For they are thine.' (2) Because they are Christ's own: 'Thine are mine,' verse 10; 'which thou gayest me out of the world,' verse 6. (3) Because 'they are in the world,' verse 11. (4) Because 'they are not of the world,' verse 14. (5) Because 'He was no longer in the world,' in personal presence to be any longer so seen by them, verse 11.

Second. Observe what he prayed for on their behalf. (1) That the Father should keep them through his own name, verse 11. (2) That Christ's joy might be fulfilled in them,' verse 13. (3) That they should be kept from the evil of the world, verse 15. (4) That they should be sanctified through the truth, verse 17. (5) That they might be united in one, verse 21. (6) That they might be made perfect in one, verse 23. (7) To declare the love with which they are loved, verse 23. (8) That the love with which they are loved might be in them, and himself in them, verse 26. (9) To assure them that they should be with him where he is, to behold his glory, verse 24.

Now since there is scarcely a point in the mediationship of Christ, nor branch of Christian interest in Christ, that this all comprehensive prayer, which lies along in full length through the Christian's whole course, even to heaven itself, does not in some sweet and important way refer to, can it be possible, that that is a redeemed world by the love, power, blood, soul suffering, and atoning death of Christ, which he himself, before the throne of majesty, wisdom, goodness, and final judgment, so fully and distinctly declared to be excluded from all interest and petition in this prayer? I am sure both truth and reason must say, no! But perhaps some will say, If all the world had believed, they would have been prayed for, and would accordingly have had the benefits of redemption.' It is true that all believers are included, but how is it that there is a world not prayed for, and yet there are those prayed for who had not believed? And if a person's believing be considered a causation of interest in Christ, and not a 'fruit of the Spirit,' on the ground of previous grace interest, how is it that the prayed for by our

Lord, were in the order of love and wisdom's arrangements, God the Father's purely divine property, before they were Christ's mediatory property, according to our Lord's words, saying, 'Thine they were, and thou gayest them me?' John xvii 6. Mediationship must precede all saving faith, because the whole of faith's salvation business with God is through the Mediator only. And our Lord declares an interest for the prayed for, above mediationship; and which is the cause of mediationship, and of faith unto salvation in the Mediator too. For 'thou gayest them me;' and then Christ is given to them, and faith is given to them to believe in and receive Christ, and then he openly receives and saves them, as the `called according to God's purpose.' But this allows no truck for duty faith, nor trade for universal invitations, but is it not the truth?

There are five points of glorification determined on, as the ensured issues of the Lord's own economy of grace, and which are, (1) Christ's glorification of the Father, in the honor of finishing to full effect the work which he gave him to do, John xvii 4. (2) The Father's glorification of Christ, in the honor of approving, with every blessing, the work done, to the full and final design, verse 1. (3) The Holy Spirit's glorification of Christ, by his full and effectual testification of the things, works, and person of Christ, John xv 26; xvi 14. (4) Christ's glorification in them, to whom it is the Father's will that he should give eternal life, John xvii 2,3,10. And is not this all the redeemed? (5) The Lord's glorification of his church, in making her to be what in his love he hath purposed and promised her to be, and will have her to be; saying, `I will glorify the house of my glory,' Isaiah lx 7. `And thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God,' Isaiah lxii 3. `And upon her head a crown of twelve stars,' not one truth of the twelve failing, nor one soul of the redeemed missing, Rev xii 1. A loseable redemption could not ensure all this; nor can the anomalous and ineffective notions of duty faith and universal invitations to eternal salvation, ever be made to accord with this; for this can only be the result of settled fore-knowledge and determined counsel of grace; so to testify before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and, with equal confidence, the glory that shall follow, 1 Pet i 11.

**Universal invitations incompatible with the very concept of redemption**

We are aware that while the Arminians will, irrespective of what the truth of God really is, or what awful consequents such a saying must involve, as that of making out God to be but like one of themselves in the final issues of the mightiest work of his arm, unreservedly say that 'There are thousands in hell for whom Christ died, who might have been in heaven.' Many of the duty faith and universal invitation men will not out and out say so much, nor speak so plain on the absolute failure and coming to nothing of the redemption work of Christ; but with much more studied cunning, aim at a sort of middle way, by so construing Christ's

redemption as that all men individually might go to heaven by it, and so as to make it out the duty of all men to do so, and that all men should be exhorted and invited to do so accordingly; and so making out the redemption of Christ as a kind of might be universal, and yet so as to be complete, and in no way failing, though it be finally but particular only in its real saving effects.

And to establish this more cunning than wise, more subtle than true, more diabolical than righteous and divine scheme, no pains have been spared to denounce and discard every thing in the shape and character of a direct and honorable commercial transaction from the atonement and redemption work of Christ; because any thing in the nature, order, and character of a commercial transaction considered therein, would determine the work of Christ to be too exact, definite, particular and certain, on grounds of equity, and not leave it loose, vague, indiscriminate, unmeaning and uncertain enough, to allow place for universal invitations with any sort of countenance; and so it has been said, 'The redemption work of Christ is no bargain.' But the very word redemption of itself carries every thing in it that belongs to the nature, order and character of a commercial transaction; as in that of a real outlay or price paid, one that pays it, one that receives 'the price of redemption,' and an object freed and rescued by such price paid, or outlay made. Sins are compared to debts, sinners to debtors, and the offended to a creditor, Matt vi 12; Luke xi 4; vii 41,42. And the church is said to be 'bought with a price,' 1 Cor vi 20; and to be the Lord's 'purchased possession,' Eph i 14, 'which he hath purchased with his own blood,' Acts xx 28. If to purchase with a price ever was a commercial transaction, the redemption of Christ is hereby declared to be in the very nature and order of such a transaction, by a real purchase, with a real price, to a real possession.

And as to a bargain,' there is so much of the specific nature and order of a determinate bargain in the redemption work of Christ, that he is at once called a surety, with an 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?' Heb vii 22; Luke xxiv 26. And from whence comes this ought on Christ, but from a contract-like engagement entered into according to all the afore-written scriptures concerning him? Luke xxiv 44,46. And what is this glory that he ought and will enter into, but the entire possession of all the mediatorial rights and claims stipulated to him on his accomplishment of his sufferings? Luke ix 30,31. And what are those rights and claims of Christ, as Mediator, less than the full and immortal possession and life, in his own life, of

all and every one for whom he made 'amends for the harm done,' Lev v 16, whom he redeemed from the curse of the law, unto God by his blood, made peace for, and reconciled to God by the death of his cross, through his full discharge of his contracted ought of sufferings for them, saying, 'It is finished?' The glory of Christ lies not in his sufferings, but in the issues perfectly secured, according to the purposed ends and designs thereof; and so he suffers first, and then enters into his glory of a perfect possession of the fruits thereof, without defect or failure; even as the Holy Spirit in the prophets 'testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.'

Now to say, for the purpose of making out some sort of a plea for universal invitations, that Christ's redemption is really in any way or form universal, while salvation evidently is not so to a large extent, is, - (1) To say there was none of that order and regularity in it, nor final issue determined, as recorded of it in the truth of the above scriptures. (2) That there is that in the redemption of Christ that might be for good, but will in reality be altogether fruitless and in vain to as large an extent as salvation is not universal. (3) That the sins of all those who are not saved, will, contrary to all laws, human and divine, be twice punished, and that in the full penalty of the guilt thereof by law each time; first, in Christ being made a curse to the full amount the righteous law of God could curse their sins on him as their surety, and next in their being fully damned for the same sins, as though Christ had not suffered for those sins at all; while the sins of those who go to heaven, are but once punished in the sufferings of Christ; and which sufferings were for them a complete atonement and eternal redemption obtained, without once



consulting their goodwill or their ill will, whereby to make it to them effectually, eternal redemption. (4) That the will of men, and not the sufferings of Christ, is to determine his entry into his final salvation glory, and the final number of the redeemed inhabitants of heaven. (5) That in regard to the lost, God the Father knowingly punished Christ in vain, and that Christ suffered knowingly in vain, or God the Father must be denied the perfection of his foreknowledge of the 'end from the beginning;' and Christ's Godhead and foreknowledge must be denied, and he be considered to suffer in ignorance, and as a short-sighted man only, as to the final effects thereof.

These appear to me to be awful conclusions, and yet they are only what universal notions of redemption, as an only plea for universal invitations, must bring us to. The first sin on earth was a sort of religious sin, in man's aspiring to be as God; and now the awful religious sin on the earth is, a making God out to be as one of us, and to wait for the will of man; but without this there is no footing, countenance, or plausible plea whatever, that can be made out for universal invitations; as they must ever stand a direct contradiction to every doctrine of discriminating and sovereign grace; and especially so to the scripture truth of the atonement and redemption of Christ as particular, and as the infallibly determinate boundary of God's salvation covenant, purpose, and promise in, and by Christ Jesus our Lord; and for these reasons I have drawn out my remarks to the length I have on redemption, and shall now pursue another course of ideas on duty faith.

## **SUPPOSED SCRIPTURE COMMANDS TO DUTY FAITH EXAMINED**

### **THE PHILLIPPIAN JAILOR**

#### **A word of instruction to the spiritually awakened**

We are told that faith unto salvation is the natural man's duty 'by express command.' And if we ask where such a command is to be found, we are answered, 'The Jailor, for instance, was commanded to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that he might be saved,' Acts xvi 31. And this one text 'is selected as alone sufficient proof.' And as this text is selected to answer for all, we may, I suppose, safely conclude that this is considered as much to the point in proof as any one text in the whole scriptures, and that nothing in all the scriptures can be found more to the point in proof than this text; and thus stands the best proof that faith unto salvation is the natural man's duty.

But in putting this proof, and so this duty, to the test, allow me to say, that the apostle's words to the jailor are not all in any shape in the place, nor nature, nor order, of either a command, and exhortation, or an invitation, but of instruction, in a plain, pertinent, gospel-truth answer to an earnest enquiry made. The jailor spoke first, and the answer was simply according to the question proposed; and this even you, Mr. Editor of the Primitive Church Magazine, call 'an express command.' This is very strange, because neither Paul, nor Silas said anything of the words of our text to the jailor over-night, when he 'thrust them into the inner prison,' nor while he was busy in making 'their feet fast in the stocks;' though they were not too sad to speak, for at midnight 'Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises to God.' And there being 'a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, all the doors were opened, and their bands were loosed;' but the words of our text were not uttered to one single soul of the prisoners, though they heard when Paul and Silas' sang praises unto God.' And when the awaking jailor drew his sword and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled, 'Paul cried with a loud voice,' and so he was in good earnest for the man's life, 'do thyself no harm, for we are all here;', and even then he uttered not one word of our text, although it was so fair and solemn an opportunity, if any such thing as our text had laid in the shape of a command, in either Paul's mind or commission from God to the ungodly, natural and unbelieving world. Then the) jailor 'called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas;' and even at this solemn and advantageous crisis, not one word of our text is uttered. And the jailor 'brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' He was now the Lord's convict in soul fetters of guilt and terror, the commandment of the law of God's holiness had come into his conscience, sin was 'revived,' and death's sentence had entered into his heart, by the life

and light of God's quickening and apprehending convictions; and agonizing under alarm, guilt, despair, and death eternal woefully apprehended, he cries out as for his very life, yea, the life of his soul, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' And as the great and gracious gospel truth, for the life and comfort of all such quickened, convinced, and crying souls is, 'He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved;' so the apostle answered, as by heaven's high favor and wisdom commissioned, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,'

And this answer you call an express command!! If a poor, weary, penniless and benighted traveler had lost his road, and he met a gentleman and said to him, 'Sir, which way must I take to go to such a place? for I am in distress to find it;' and the gentleman for answer, simply, but in positive terms, declared to the distressed the true and sure road to the place, would any man, in the name of common sense, and much less in the name of God, the judge of all the earth, call such an answer an 'express command?' I think every one who reacts this question must answer, 'Most surely not.' If a servant boy of yours were to ask you which way he could kill himself the quickest if he were so disposed, and you, answering a fool according to his folly, were to reply, 'Blow your brains out with a pistol,' and the boy were to go and do it, would you like to be considered to have commanded the boy to kill himself, by an, express command,' because you answered his according to his question? I think you would not. And yet this is how you can take and handle the sacred word of God, for the support of the natural man's duty to believe unto eternal salvation, which cannot be otherwise maintained.

And as this is one of your strongest forts 'in proof and support of the point, there need not a clearer demonstration that the point is erroneous, senseless, and hostile to all truth, than its requirement of such an abuse and misuse of the sacred word of God for its support. I do not want to say that this is your willful perversion of the scripture; and yet I can hardly think it an oversight, and ignorantly done, when all things are considered. If a minister who has simply had the commission of God, and qualification of the Holy Ghost only, to preach, teach, and explain the scriptures, were to take our text to be a command, the error would be none the less, but the blunder might be somewhat more accounted for; but for a minister who, beside the commission and qualifications of God, to preach, teach, and explain the scriptures, has been to a minister modeling school, to embellish and finish

up, and to add the super advantages of such a God-helping establishment; yea, I say, for a minister like this, to make such an egregious misapplication of words, as to set down our text for an 'express command,' is altogether unaccountable, unbearable, and abominable! Or is this of itself a peculiar art, taught at such schools? However, I hope this pointed remark or two will be a caution to others, to look well on all sides of a text, so as to come at the proper place, order, and relation 'in which it stands, and the occasion of its being spoken, and who are spoken to, Jews or Gentiles, the dead in sin, or the alive by quickening grace, that the true sense and mind of the spirit may be ascertained, remembering always, that no part of the true system of divine things can stand well upon a false sense on the sacred scriptures, and that no false system can stand well upon a true sense on the sacred scriptures, and that no man can understand nor hold the beauty and harmony of the sacred word, with a false sense put upon some parts thereof.

## **PETER'S EXHORTATION TO THE JEWS ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST**

### **Instruction to spiritually alive souls**

The apostle Peter's words to the Jews, saying, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,' Acts 11 38, are also set down by you in the 14th article of your proposed doctrinal plan for the Strict Communion Baptist Association, as an authority for the natural man's duty to believe unto salvation. And as these words stand in the very same order, and the speech is immediately of the very same nature as that to the jailor I suppose you equally consider this text likewise to be an express command;' and truly this is quite as much a command as that. But these words are neither an express command, exhortation, or invitation; but a gospel reply to the living and heaven-wrought penitent cry and agonizing importunity of the vitally 'pricked in their heart,' verse 37.

From occasions stated in this chapter, Peter stood up and preached Christ, and charged the Jews with the sin of having 'crucified' him, whom God had 'raised up' and made both 'Lord and Christ.' This was plain gospel ministry-like work, with an honest appeal. 'And when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?' This pricking in the heart was God's

gracious quickening, vital conviction, and the seeds of divine life sown of God in the heart beginning to germinate, and which put them altogether into a new state of soul being, as different to what they ever were in before as life is to death, as humbling and heart-dissolving convictions are to obduracy, and as the light of God in the conscience is to the darkness of Satan's undisturbed dominion over the soul; and now brought to repentance, under divinely wrought convictions, and hedged in with guilt, like all other truly and savingly convinced sinners, not knowing God's gracious and merciful \*intentions with them, unable to bear themselves, and not knowing what to do, cried out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' And with suited words of truth and grace, Peter answered them according to their request. And what can the unbelieving world in their unbelieving state have to do with this? And what can this answer to the cry of the grace-living have to do with the sin-dead? Let the whole world be so quickened and convinced as so to cry, and we would gladly answer the whole world in like manner. And have you ever been so pricked in your heart, and so hedged in as to be obliged so to cry, and find no relief but by mercy's voice, in the truth and grace of the gospel? Because to me, from experience, it appears unaccountable, that any man who has, and especially a minister and teacher of others, should so muddle the law of divine claims and penal obligations, and the gospel of the grace of God; the dead in sins, and the quickened by the power and grace of God, all up so together; as though the first two were but one and the same ministry, and the latter two were but one and the same character; the pricked in their heart differing so little from the world that lieth dead in wickedness, as to admit no proper distinction.

And herein lies a great and awful error, in teaching the vital, saving and spiritual conviction work of God in the heart, but as an emotion of nature; and considering the state of the world at large to be so altered, by the mere coming and existence of the gospel ministry, as for all men to be responsible to do, be, have and know, all what the pricked in the heart are crying after of a saved state; and the gracious gospel answer to their cry, to be a new obligatory command of God to the world! Surely your own experience, if you have any, must teach you better than all this, while men of no experience, who work all by the speculations of the head, may well make such refined blunders in spiritual things, as their heart cannot teach their mouth, nor add learning to their lips, Prow xvi 23. Peter's words, saying, 'Every one of you,' will not afford you the least authority to carry out our text beyond the 'pricked in their heart,' because he, to strengthen and confirm

his encouragements to these, says, 'For the promise is unto you, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call,' as these were now called, verse 39-41.

## **'HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?'**

### **Applying texts to unbelievers which were written to the church**

Heb 11 3, saying 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation,' you have also set down in the lath article of your proposed doctrinal plan above referred to, as an authority for the duty of all men to believe unto salvation where the gospel comes. These words were spoken to the church of believing Jews, and to the believing church only they belong. Nothing was more strictly forbidden among the Jews of old, than the mixing and confounding of persons and things that properly differ; but the very contrary to this, appears to be the very soul of the duty faith and universal invitation system, and a standing maxim among duty faith men, as indispensable for the support of their rotten might be, ought to be, should be, generalizing scheme, carnally introduced on to God's absolute and undeniably discriminate premises of mercy on whom he will have mercy, to eternal life. If the cautionary, admonitory, and exhortatory portions of the epistles to the churches are to be applied to the world, why not all the promises, blessings, and privileges directly stated in the epistles, as ensured to the churches by grace in Christ Jesus? For as there is no note or sign of digression from the one and the same people addressed, as the church of the living God, in those different portions in the epistles, the very same people, as to godly character and state, to whom the one belongs, the whole must do, and to none other. And it is an ungodly abuse of the sacred word, and a violent rending asunder what God hath joined together, to take those parts of the epistles that belong to the conduct and conversation department of the grace called living, and believing churches of Christ, and apply them to the world; unless the whole can be taken to the world altogether, as belonging to them in their present

state, just as they are dead in sin. Books, tracts, and sermons abound in the present day, with the above misuse, gross abuse, and awful violation of the sacred word. To apply this or any such text to the world, therefore, is to say that the churches consist only of self-made, self-willed saints, such as all men ought to be, and that the vital grace and power of God have but a secondary hand in the matter of living saintship; namely, that all men should make themselves saints, and then the Lord would make them happy as such, as he has those who have kindly made themselves so!

In our texts are persons, subject and caution to be observed. And first, the persons: 'For we which have believed do enter into rest,' Heb iv 3. 'For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end,' iii 14. 'But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul,' x 39. 'We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle,' xiii 10. 'For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come,' verse 14. From these portions, are we to conclude that the we in our text means the world? I think not.

Second, the subject, salvation. By this is meant the new testament ministration of the gospel of Christ, together with the important solemnities associated in it by the highest authority to the church of the living God, a 1,2; 11 1,2. That the ministry that God gave to the seed of Abraham, as a separate people from the heathen, by the hand of Moses, was solemn and important; but this by his SON to his elect church, is much more so; and also to the Jews as a nation, in a national way, as we shall in some other place observe, if opportunity will admit.

Third, the caution, 'how shall we escape,' &c. Paul himself was one included, and did he fear that he should fall from grace and perish at last, but for his own carefulness? Or to suit this text to the purposes of duty faith, did he hereby put himself upon a level in state with the unbelieving world? Certainly not, by the evidence of all his epistles. But there were many things to fear with a godly fear, and to be cautious of with a godly caution, and that at the chastening hand of God too, arising from the snares of evil many ways, and from a lukewarm, heartless neglect of the things of his honor, and of Christian peace and order in the gospel, see Rev ii, iii; and with such

neglect of principles and practice, the Hebrews were not to expect to escape the like rebukes and chastenings. And as the Apostle wrote also to the Corinthian church 1 Cor x, observing that as God visited the sins of Israel, who were his church, in a figure as a body, so would he visit the follies of his true and living church with his rod, saying, 'Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come,' verse 11.

And so he writes to this Hebrew church, saying, 'I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation,' Heb xiii 22. 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, xii 25. There were those who had professed to receive the faith of the gospel of Christ, in love and in newness of life, 'who had turned back from their profession, and treated the name of Christ with contempt, and his blood as that of a criminal only, and so (as an unholy thing,' Heb x 29, with much subtlety and lofty pretension; and whom the heaviest judgments of God awaited, more than as though they had never professed the Christian name, 2 Peter 1120-22. And against the snares and wicked cunning of these, the apostle cautions this church, saying, 'Cast not away, therefore, your confidence,' x 35; 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering,' x 23. 'Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines,' xiii 9. And as the apostle Peter saith, 'Ye therefore, beloved seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also be led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your steadfastness,' 2 Peter 117. This is evidently the truth and intent of our text, while it has no more to do with the notion of the duty of natural men to believe unto salvation, than it has to do with the duty of saints to become angels, and of devils to become saints; and if you cannot get better support than the three texts we have just noticed, for your duty faith unto salvation, it is a horrid rotten concern altogether, and you must look out some new ground on which to make your own assertion good, that 'Duty faith is taught in the word of God.'

### **'BUT NOW COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT'**

'But now commandeth all men everywhere to repent,' Acts xvii 30. This text has been considered a most clear and full authority for the duty of all men to repent and believe unto salvation. But this 'all men everywhere' we have sufficiently explained elsewhere, showing that this text cannot be taken to



mean individual universality of all men, without doing violence to other texts, such as those of 'all flesh,' nor without direct opposition to the conduct of God's power now for these eighteen hundred years. But a people of all nations and tongues, and of all sorts are intended, the same as they charged Paul with teaching, saying, 'This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere,' Acts xxi 28, and which could not be all men individually everywhere, for no man could do so much as that. And beside, Paul was forbidden to go to some places and people where he was minded to go with the gospel, Acts xvi 6,7; and yet the very same phrase is used for Paul's teaching as is used in our text for God's commanding; and which is of the same meaning in which Ananias must be understood in saying to Paul, 'The God of our fathers both chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth, for thou shalt be his witness to all men of what thou best seen and heard,' Acts I 14,15. And so only is it, that 'All men shall fear and declare the work of God, for they shall wisely consider of his doing,' Psalm lxiv 9.

### **Did Paul's ministerial commission contain the doctrine of duty faith?**

'But now commandeth all men every-where to repent.' If this were an obligatory duty devolving command on all men, or even on any natural man to repent and believe unto eternal life, it must have been Paul's solemn duty to have preached, explained, and enforced the same on all occasions; as he was entrusted with the full commission to preach all that our text intends, saying, 'Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ,' Eph iii 8,9; 'That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles,' Rom xv 16; 'Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me, if I preach not the gospel,' 1 Car ix 16; 'I have shamed you all things,' Acts xx 35; 'I kept back nothing that was profitable,' verse 20; 'for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God,' verse 27. And yet with all this, the apostle in no one instance, on any one occasion that can any-where be found, nor even in this very chapter wherein our text stands with the fairest opportunities, see verses 2,3,16,17,22, and to the end of the chapter, ever declared or enforced anything in the shape, nature, or name of an obligatory, duty-devolving command from God, on natural men to repent and believe unto eternal life; for if the eternal life of our souls depended on our finding such a word in his addresses to the Gentiles, such a word could not be found.

And as the apostle of God to us Gentiles preached no such thing, how is it that there are now so many in our day, the sentimental countenance of whose preaching is scarcely anything else? Their preaching must be from another spirit, and not as Paul's was, 'with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,' 1 Pet 1 12, and 'as the Spirit gave him utterance,' Acts ii 4; Eph vi 19. Surely those preachers can never have been chosen of God to know his will, to bear the voice of his mouth, and to be his witness, as Paul was. There are many of those who profess to hold sentiments of plain scripture truths, 'but do not think it proper to preach them;' and we will admit this conclusion is not of the devil, nor of antichrist, but is right, and as things should be, when it can be proved that Paul held any one truth of revelation, and of the gospel commission, that he 'kept back,' and did not think as proper for him to preach as for God to reveal it. Let us observe,

### **The gospel commission**

First. That by our text is intended the gospel commission altogether, which God hath given, and commandeth to all nations, tongues, and people, by whom he will, as in Matt xxviii 19,20; Mark xvi 15,16; and by which he commandeth the preaching of repentance and remission of sins to all nations and tongues of people everywhere, according to Luke xxiv 46-48; and as the apostles and Paul himself did preach, as to the necessity of repentance, on the fact that all have sinned against the one only living and true God, by whom we all live, move, and have our being; and because of the sinfulness of sin by the righteousness of God's law, and on the sure approach of a judgment day before God, the judge of all, and our Lord Jesus Christ, whom, as a declarative evidence to this solemn fact of a future judgment, he hath raised from the dead; and as God's revealed way of personal remission of sins, and as the only personal state of character in which any sinner shall obtain remission of sins; and as that state of character in which the soul, though the chief of sinners, shall not come into condemnation, but be saved by the name, grace, blood, and righteousness of Christ, as the Lord of life and glory to all such; and from which the gospel is called, 'Preaching of repentance and remission of sins in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,' Luke xxiv 47, 'to take out a people for his name,' Acts xv 14, and 'to gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other,' Matt xxiv 31.

## **The gospel a new dispensation to the Gentiles**

Second. That our text is of the nature and design of mercy's friendly light and intelligence to the Gentiles, and nothing penal, is evident from its being placed in direct contrast to 'the times of their ignorance which God winked at.' For God's winking at the times of the Gentiles' ignorance does not mean that he was indifferent to their sins, uncleanness, and idolatry; but judicially passed by them in righteous but awful silence, according to Rom 1 21-25; adding, 'For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections,' verse 26. And as that was in righteous judgment only, even so, this commanding in our text is of grace and mercy only; and but for grace and mercy designs, no such commanding would ever have been, nor have been heard of in the Lord's name to the Gentiles. And according to this, the apostle spoke to the Jews concerning the gospel commission to the Gentiles, saying, 'Lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so hath God commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth,' Acts xiii 47. And according to this character of the gospel commission, Christ is declared to be 'a light to lighten the Gentiles.' And the apostle, to shew his authority for this ministry to the Gentiles, and why it was now come to them more than in former times, says, that God now commandeth it.

## **God's irresistible commands**

Third. The very sound or name of a command appears to me to be taken by many people, as incapable of any other meaning than that of devolving some sort of obligation on the commanded, and the same to be fulfilled as a matter of duty. We will most readily admit that whatever is man's duty by divine command, the Lord both commissioned his ministers in his name, and even made it their solemn duty to enforce upon men to do as their duty to God. But it is nowhere to be found that the apostles and first ministers of God, who had the 'first fruits of the Spirit,' and who are patterns and examples to us, have ever commanded any man with the command of our text, as his duty unto eternal life. And as the apostles have never done so, we certainly have no authority to do so, nor to conclude that this is a duty-devolving command at all, nor anything of the kind. There is a commandment that is life everlasting, and besides and beyond the mere commission and ministry of the gospel, our text is in the nature, order, and character of that command,

and the very voice of life is in that command, and the commanded accordingly live, Zen. xvi 6; and so that command is but the voice of life, from God who giveth life by his command, wherein the duty of any subject is actively impossible; as, 'Lazarus, come forth! and he that was dead came forth,' John xi 43,44. 'Young man, I say unto thee, arise! and he that was dead sat up,' Luke vii 14. 'Maid, arise! and her spirit came again, ' Luke viii 53,55. 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live,' John v 25. 'Thy dead shall live, with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, in the regions of darkness and of death; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; thy dead men raised to life are for comeliness and multitude as the morning dew-drops on the leaf of herbs; , and the earth shall cast out, yield up and surrender the dead, Isaiah xxvi 19, to God's command of his blessing of life for evermore, Psalm cxxxiii 3.

And this command of life, and of the dead unto life, is also the voice of power, whereby the thing commanded is produced. 'And he cast out the spirits with his word,' Matt viii 16. 'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made,' Psalm xxxiii 6. 'For he spoke, and it was; he commanded, and it stood fast,' verse 9. 'The worlds were framed by the word of God,' Heb xi 3. 'Upholding all things by the word of his power,' Heb 1 3. 'By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing in the water and out of the water; which by the same word are kept in store,' 2 Pet iii 5. And as the creation, upholding, and keeping of every particle of the world of nature, is by God's word in the voice of his power, even so is the creation, upholding, and keeping every particle of the salvation world of his grace, by the commanding voice of his power.

And to the truth of this, in regard to the gospel times and subject of our text, the spirit of prophecy, by several figures of speech, evidently bears testimony, as in Psalm xxix saying, 'The voice of the Lord is upon many waters,' verse 3, upon many nations, tongues, and people every where. Isaiah xxxii 16,17,20. 'The voice of the Lord is powerful,' verse 4, commanding to effect all the good pleasure and purposes of his will. 'The voice of the Lord is full of majesty,' verse 4; commanding, but not to be commanded; ruling, but not to be ruled; sovereign, and not to be compromised; 'for the God of

glory thundereth, verse 3. 'The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars,' verse 5; the dignity, distinction, and pride of the Jews, as a people and nation. Isaiah v 5-7, 'And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree,' of Babylon, antichrist, all the lofty and religious proud; 'have exalted the low tree,' of the humble poor, and needy in spirit, who sigh and cry for the mercy, help and salvation of the Lord; 'have dried up the green tree,' of the self-righteous pharisee notion of the Jews as a kingdom; 'and have made the dry tree to flourish,' of Gentile sinners every where, by the truth, grace and power intended by our text. 'I the Lord have spoken, and have done,' Ez. xvii 24. 'The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire,' verse 7; the judgments of his hand, between the wrathful toward his enemies, and the chastening toward his saints; his ministers, in their different gifts, appointments and measures of usefulness; the voice of the Lord divideth as by flames of fire, the chosen and redeemed from the world, and the precious from the vile, Psalm xcvi 3,4; Heb 1 7; jet xv 19; 1 Kings xviii 38,39. 'The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,' verse 8: the wilderness of the Gentiles, as fruit is shaken from the tree in the time of gathering, Is xvii 6,7. 'And all the men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence,' Ez. xxxviii 20. 'Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am the Lord,' verse 25. 'And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come,' Hag ii 7; of all nations a people shall desire him that shall come, Zech viii 21-23; Isaiah Ill 10. 'The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve,' verse 9. This animal is not so much of the house as of the field, Cant 117; is loving and lovely, Prow v 19; and the voice of the Lord making the hinds to calve, is his love and lovely work of calling and regeneration grace, in a fruitful fulfillment of the truth of our text in the Gentile fields, Isaiah xlii 19,20; and according to Psalm cx, saying, 'In the beauties of holiness,' from the shapeless deformities and uncleanness of heathenism and the dominion of sin and an 'From the womb of the morning,' the gospel morning succeeding the heathen night of darkness and ignorance, 'thou hast the dew of thy youth,' thy new-born people in succession about thee, for beauty and multitudes as the dew-drops of the morning, verse 3; and 'as the bud of the field,' Ez. xvi 7. 'So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it,' Isaiah Iv 11.

Now wherein both the truth and fulfillment of the above scriptures appeared, but in the gospel commission and the effectual working power of God

therein, according to Peter's testimony, Acts xv 7,8,9,11; and so showing the gracious matter, and true meaning and intent of our text to be as above set forth.

### **The power of God exercised in the continued ingathering of his elect**

Fourth The manner in which our text reads is not without its meaning ; for if it read, hath now commanded, it would then stand in the round form of a settled precept, and would certainly then appear intended to devolve an obligation; but it does not read so, but 'now commandeth.' The words stand in the passing progressive order, which intimates the matter intended to be begun, going on, and not yet finished, and which does not belong to the nature of a settled preceptive demand, while it well expresses the Lord's commanding the ministry of the gospel of repentance and remission of sins to the Gentiles, and his saving power put forth therein among them, in the authority of his sovereign will, as well as in the riches of his grace. And our text will always stand in the passing progressive order, until the Lord hath fulfilled all his gracious designs, and gathered in his chosen of all nations and tongues everywhere; but then, in the truth and joy of their salvation, will the united millions out of all nations of men under heaven, shout to the great triune Jehovah's praise, be hath commanded all men everywhere to repent: 'Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles!' Rom ix 24. And to this sense of our text agree, in unjarring concurrence, the prophecies; the characters and work o f Christ; his exaltation to give repentance and remission of sins; the work of the Holy Ghost; the nature and character of the gospel dispensation; the testimony Paul gives of his commission from the Lord to the Gentiles, Acts xxvi 15-18; his confession that he held the treasure of the gospel charge but in an earthen vessel of weakness, and that all the excellency of power, giving increase or effect, is of God only; the declared nature and character of the change wrought in the saints; the testimony borne in every epistle to the churches, of what they were, and who it is that both made them all what they are; and the experience of all who truly know what personal repentance into eternal life really is; while not a word in the apostle's addresses to the Gentiles can be found, which fairly suggests the shade of a question to the contrary. And as to the use of the word commandeth in our text, this appears to me most happy, and by no means a difficulty; because the Lord neither begs any man into the ministry of his gospel, nor by that ministry begs any man to repentance; but by will and power commands both; and 'The

commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes,' Psalm xix 8; and 'He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God,' and none else, 2 Cor v 5.

## **'AND YE WILL NOT COME UNTO ME THAT YE MIGHT HAVE LIFE'**

### **An exposing of self-righteous false confidence**

'And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life,' John v 40. Most duty faith men have considered this text to be a good authority for duty faith, universal invitations, and to show that there is eternal life for all in the fulness of our Lord Jesus Christ, only they will not come and have it. Those men never make half so free with those words of our Lord saying, 'No man can come to me, except the Father, which both sent me, draw him,' ch vi 44. 'Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father,' verse 65; and as the apostle saith, 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Spirit;' and without this, there is no coming to him as such, Heb xi 6. And so, to put a construction upon our text contrary to these passages, must be false and not of the truth; because our Lord, without any contradiction to his own meaning in our text, very plainly showed who had come, who would come, who do come, and who shall come, and who only he looked for to come, saying, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me,' John vi 37; adding, 'Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me,' verse 54. Our Lord did not in our text beg, entreat, beseech, nor command any man to come to him; nor say that they ought to come, or should come, or that it was their duty to come and have eternal life; nor did he say will you come? nor that it was his soul's desire that they should come, nor that he should have come into the world in any thing in vain, and would be disappointed and grieved if they did not come and have eternal life; but he said, 'Ye will not come unto me.' And let us observe,

First. That this was but a charging their own folly, presumption, and self-contradiction home upon them, according to their self-deceiving false

confidence. For that in their then present state they looked for, and with great confidence expected, and thought most certainly, eternal life was theirs, or whose should it be? while they were at the same time opposed to, and fighting against, the only way and truth of eternal life, in their persecution of Christ, John v 16. He said to them, 'Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me,' verse 39; as though he had said, 'If ye would have life, ye must come to me for it, and as ye will not come to me, ye cannot have eternal life, as it is in no other way, nor anywhere else to be had. If your confidence was good, you would come to me; but as your confidence is bad, you oppose that which is good, and cannot bear the truth; as is, always the case with false confidence. You profess to be very righteously concerned to have and secure to yourselves eternal life, and yet with all this ye will not come to me; I am not in your concern, and therefore your concern about eternal life is all false, is not of God, nor of the truth, but ye are confidently deceiving yourselves and one another, or you would come to me; 'For every one that had heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me' as you would, if you had as really so heard and learned of him, as you profess to be taught, claim to be wise, to be right, and to have eternal life.' Thus, their religion, their great zeal, their righteousness and their confidence was all turned upon them as false by this evidence, that Christ and his truth were opposed and not received thereby. And from this we may solemnly ask, what does our religion embrace, or what exclude? seeing it is possible to be as righteously zealous and confident as those Jews, and yet be as awfully wrong! The very spirit and intent of this text is, therefore, a direct attack made upon self-righteous false confidence, instead of anything of a warrant for duty faith or universal invitations.

Second. That on principles of truth in general, our Lord by our text very plainly declares, that if it were left to the natural will in of man, not one soul of Adam's fallen race would obtain eternal life; and that of all the ways the self-righteous will of man would devise, the way to Christ, and the only true way of eternal life by him, would never be found, sought, nor desired; and that so, not one soul of the race of mankind would be found an inhabitant of heaven at last, though every one Might be as righteous in his own way as Paul was, till omnipotent grace killed his self-righteousness and created his soul anew in Christ Jesus.



Third. That in the lost state of man, the will is lost, and that while the will is lost the man is lost; and that a willing state is by the power and grace of God only; 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,' Psalm cx 3; and that when the will is saved, the soul is saved. And let all poor doubting, trembling souls think of this and take courage, for it is God that worketh in them to will, as much as it is God that worketh in the strongest saints to do, Phil 11 13; and that so it is, that 'whosoever will,' shall in due time 'take of the water of life freely,' Rev xxii 17.

Fourth. That sovereign, discriminate, free, and determinate grace, 'according to the purpose of election,' does no violence to the will of any man, for those whom the Lord will gather, and who 'shall come and see his glory,' the Lord makes willing to come; and those whom the Lord will not gather, cause to come, and save to life eternal, they are of themselves all quite willing to stay where they are, opposed to everything that belongs to coming to Christ.

Fifth. Our text most clearly shews, that fallen man, in his fallen nature state, is too much a lump of death, without an ear to hear, without will, understanding, or affection, for any thing that savingly pertains to godliness, to be any way savingly affected, altered, or bettered in his condition by the mere ministry of the gospel, though it be preached by the ablest ministers or by an angel from heaven, or by one rose from the dead, Luke xvi 13, or by our Lord himself, as his ministry to the Jews fully proves, and as every minister of the gospel has a practical proof of, and as the apostle confessed, that effectually, 'Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.' And as the many believing through the apostles' preaching is wholly ascribed to the hand of the Lord being with them, Acts xi 2 1; and to the Lord's giving 'testimony to the word of his grace,' Acts xiv 3; and with our text, and with these facts before our eyes, how awfully wicked, proud, ignorant, false and senseless, it does appear in men who can stand up and say, that 'the Lord has committed the salvation of the world to his church and his ministers,' and that 'ministers are accountable for the souls by whom they are surrounded.' If the Lord were to take those men upon the awful responsibility they so presumptuously and

hypocritically assume, for myself, I must cry, Great Jehovah, save my poor feeble soul from their condemnation!

### **'BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK'**

A specific message to a local church, not to a dead world

'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me,' Rev ill 20. Few texts have had more falsehoods lavished out upon them thus than this has; for there are many who will stand up and say, that by this text is meant, that Christ by his ministers, his word, his gospel, his institutions of truth, his general providence, and by many particular events and circumstances, stands knocking at the door of every man's heart for salvation entrance. And Dr. S ... s once stood up in the pulpit at Bethel Chapel, Somers Town, and from this text said, that 'Jesus Christ set upon his throne, as it were, with his eyes suffused in tears, because sinners will not open to him, and come to him.' What potent thing must those preachers think man really to be? and what sort of weakling must those men take the Almighty Lord of the whole earth to be? I cannot for myself account for such an abuse of the sacred text, truth, and common sense, in the Lord's name, except that such men never did know the truth by the Holy Spirit, and that God has given them up as to their own sweetest taste of a lying spirit.

The words of our text are used by the Lord in his address to the Laodicean church, and to the minister of that church, verse 14; and to the church only they belong; for they no more belong to the world at large, than the world at large is the church of Christ under the very circumstances this church, from the 14th verse to the end of the chapter, is described to be in. Nor do these words belong 'or apply even to the church or churches of Christ, but under the circumstances and in the state this church is described to have been in; and therefore no such words are used in the respective addresses to the other

churches, although their several states are described and their faults pointed out; because none of the other churches were in the state this was in; as being 'neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm,' in regard to the revealed truth, order, and ordinances of the Lord; while they were, on the other hand, religiously proud in a vain and false confidence, abounding in everything but the spirit, life, truth, order, and activity of true godliness, saying, 'I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing;' while, as to spirituality and all that pertained to the true figure, life and character of a church of Christ, they were 'wretched, poor, blind and naked,' and did not know it, verse 17; and of course did not believe it, but would count that man their enemy who would venture to tell them it was so with them. And they were like a people with their doors shut, and going to bed, very easy and quiet, as though there was every thing to glory in, with nothing to lament, and nothing to reprove. And to rouse them and convince them of the truth of their condition, the Lord charged them with being in the above state; threatening also to spew them out of his mouth,' that is, un-church them as a body, and take the truth and ordinances of his mouth from them, saying, 'As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent,' verse 19; adding, 'Behold I stand at the door and knock;' with, 'He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith,' not unto the world, but 'unto the churches,' verse 22; ' and if any man hear my voice, and open the door,' as not altogether in the state of the body, 'I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.' I will not bring the same afflictions, and rebukes, and chastenings upon him, that I will upon the body in the above state. 'He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith into the churches.'

The above religious pride and vain-glory, as rich, and increased in goods of almost every professional kind, together with the absence of the truth, and the true spirit of the gospel of the grace of God, appears to me to be the state of the professing church in this land in the present day, to an awful degree; and though I may be counted an enemy for saying it. 'This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation,' Ezek xix 14. 'But God himself is Judge,' 'and the day shall declare it,' 1 Cor ill 13.

**'LABOUR NOT FOR THE MEAT WHICH PERISHETH, BUT FOR THAT MEAT WHICH ENDURETH UNTO EVERLASTING LIFE'**

'Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to eternal life,' John vi 27. This text has been considered as undeniable authority for universal invitations of all men to labor for eternal life, and also that it is their duty to do so. This text can never, any more than any other, be an authority for what it does not mean, and for what the speaker did not intend it. And that this text was never spoken with such an intention, I hope, for the sweet harmony of divine truth, to be able to shew, upon undeniable and even on fairly unquestionable grounds. These words were spoken to those Jews who were at this time seekers of Jesus, both by sea and by land; and such was their zeal, that neither distance, dry land, nor sea, could stop them, verse 24. But they sought him merely because 'they did eat of the loaves, and were filled,' verse 11,12,26; and as they were now only wanting to do the like again, to 'serve not the Lord, but their own belly,' Rom xvi 18; and so they would have made him their bread king, their belly being their God, Phil ill 19; and Christ was, with all their zeal and running after him, to be only a sort of high priest of this, their devotion, to the old lust of their flesh, Psalm lxxviii 18,30. And in the words of our text, our Lord rebuked their low and base carnality, in so running after him, in a manner altogether contrary to every thing that belonged to his character as the Messiah of their own prophets, whom they professed to believe, and also as the promised Saviour of the chosen of God; and he rebuked them in the first, while he explained and pointed out to them the latter, with its greater importance; shewing them all through the chapter, what his true character, work and authority really is, and what is indeed the true bread, meat and drink; but which doctrine of truth they could not bear, verse 60; whereas, had he preached the doctrine of duty for eternal life, we know, as they were in sentiment all for works, they would have received that doctrine, though they would never do the duty, because that is human nature's own darling divinity, and what the carnal world will and do receive, and duty faith and universal invitations just go to serve this taste; and our present contention is, whether there be any authority from God to serve that fruitless, ungodly taste, which in its very root, nature, being, and dwelling place, as in the flesh only, is opposed to the truth of the grace of God. Let us observe,

**An answering of false professors according to their profession and conduct**

First, how the Jews themselves understood and received our text. It appears clearly evident to me, that they understood and received it not as an invitation, an exhortation, or as a command of them to do some other work which they had not done; but as a rebuke and sweeping declaration of their being every way and altogether wrong as a people, both in all their profession of the religion of Abraham which they claimed, and in that sense to be his children, viii 39, and as under the Abrahamic covenant, according to which they claimed to be the children of God, verse 41; and also in their now running after Christ as they did, according to the connection of our text, while they did not really receive him as the Messiah of their own prophets, whom they professed to believe. For they replied, 'What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?' verse 28. They were all for works, and for pleasing God by works; and they fully understood our Lord to say, and as meaning to say, that none of their works were pleasing to God; and which seemed to take them with such surprise, that their answer appears plainly to be of the following tone: 'If we have not pleased God, and having done so many things, and so strictly too, and do even now, and yet we do not the works or things that please God; what is there left undone, and what shall we do that we might work the works of God?' And our Lord, taking them on their own ground, replied, 'This is the work of God, ' what only is pleasing to God, 'that ye believe on him whom he hath sent,' verse 29. And therefore the spirit and intent of our text was, a laying the axe at the root of their wrong principles, motives, and actions, \*in regard to God, and our Lord as the Messiah, and a clearly pointing out what was right, in direct opposition to every thing of their present profession and their zeal. And however little they understood of the latter, it is evident they quite understood the former to be the spirit of the text. And while this text was also to them as Jews, on their own peculiar national covenant and professional premises there is nothing in the spirit or intention of it, as a warrant or example for universal invitations or exhortations of all men to labour for, or believe \*in our Lord Jesus Christ as a duty for eternal life. Man's wrongs are his own, and are chargeable upon him, and truth is explainable to every rational creature, and that should be our aim to do as teachers; but God's gift of eternal life, 'in every department of it, is heaven's height above all creature duty, Isaiah Iv 8,9.

### **A duty faith exposition inconsistent with apostolic teaching**

Second. If this text had any thing in it of the spirit or intention of universal invitation of all men to the things of eternal salvation, it would have been a

plain authority for the apostles to all people of the Gentiles. But we have already most plainly shewn, and again affirm, and challenge all the powers of duty faith to prove the contrary, that the apostles never once did, in any one instance to the unbelieving Gentiles, use any thing of a universal invitation of all men, to the things of eternal salvation as the natural man's duty; and so they could never understand our Lord to mean or intend any such thing; because if they had, they, doubtless, would have taken it for their authority, and done accordingly, and their example would have been a conclusive law to us; but as they did no such thing in any one case, so we have no such law in their example to do so, nor so to take our text.

### **A duty faith exposition of the verse conflicts with the context**

Third. If by our text our Lord had really meant any thing in the spirit of a universal invitation of the unbelieving world unto eternal salvation, would he not, without self contradiction, have uniformly maintained that, countenance through the whole, as the true spirit and intent of his ministry? To be self-consistent, would he not have done so? Methinks you must say - Yes, of course he would. But that he has not done this, but has altogether contradicted and denied this to be the true spirit and intent of his ministry, is most clearly evident. Because in this very selfsame discourse, our Lord declared:(1) A positive shall come of 'all the Father giveth him,' verse 37. (2) A positive cannot come, but as drawn by the Father, verse 44. (3) And he has positively declared, that for any one to come to him at all, is by the special gift only of God the Father, verse 65. So that if we say that our Lord spoke the words of our text in any way conveying, and meaning to convey, the sentiment of universal invitations and exhortations to eternal salvation, we are instantly driven into the awful but unavoidable labyrinth of charging him with direct self-contradiction in sound and sense, in the one and selfsame discourse to the same people.

It is said, 'The Jews then murmured at him,' verse 41; and if our Lord had so spoken in our text, as to convey to them any thing in the shape and nature of a universal invitation, which for all themselves they would have liked, and then, in the same discourse, to say the above direct opposite things; they might then well murmur, to hear such yea and nay - to hear themselves so tantalized and trifled with - to hear themselves told to do for themselves, as the only way of pleasing God, what they are directly told that no man of himself can possibly do - to hear that declared to be general as a universal

invitation, which is directly declared to be as particular only, as the will and operative power of God alone shall determine. But he, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, would never so violate all the divinely given and settled laws of common sense in the rational world, as to set up that for a divine truth which is made up of such direct self contradictions. Truth does not require this, and such is not of the truth; for if such could be truth, what can be falsehood? Self contradiction in the parts of any whole is a division against itself in that whole, be the subject what it may; and our Lord himself has very plainly shown, that no house, city, kingdom, system or subject, so divided against itself can stand, but hath an end, Matt xii 25; Mark iii 24-27; and that no man can serve two such directly opposed masters at the same time, Luke xvi 13. Truth is, therefore, no such two opposed - truth is not so divided against itself by such contradictions truth is a heavenly harmonious whole - truth is of God, and is his will revealed, and the truth of God endureth for ever; being as impossible to be divided against itself by self-contradiction, as the all-wise eternal God of heaven and earth and of truth is, without possible contradiction, in himself.

### **A duty faith exposition inconsistent with all the Lord's ministry**

Nor hath our Lord in John vi only, denied and condemned all possible truth and consistency in every notion of universal invitations and exhortations to eternal life, but in other places also; as

1) In his thanksgiving address to the Father; saying 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight,' Matt. xi 25,26. Is it, or can it be possible, that all universally are to be invited to come of themselves and see what God himself hath hid from many, and even from the wise and prudent? Duty faith divinity says yes, but most assuredly the truth and gospel of the grace of God says no; for moral deism is more self consistent than it is to say, that God invites and makes it the duty of all to see what he himself hath so hid, that many shall not see. Law requirements and man's inability being no argument here, because man was originally equal to all the law requires, and lost his ability by sin only.

2) Our Lord's speaking in parables, and not plain to some, because to them it was not given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, while to others he did speak plain, because to them it was given to know the

mysteries of the kingdom, Matt xiii 10, 11, is a full and clear denial to all consistency in the idea of universal invitations; because they equalize the whole on the ground of duty for the kingdom of heaven, whereas, here is a decided discrimination made for the kingdom of heaven, and that by divine gift only.

3) Our Lord's declaration, that 'whosoever blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come,' Matt xii 31,32, is a full declaration, that there is no truth in the idea of universal invitations; for as there are some characters whom our Lord says shall never be forgiven, he has most certainly never authorized them to be invited. And as they are among the dead in sin, and are not to be invited, and no man can distinguish one from another, that is evidence clear enough that we have no business to invite any of the dead in sin, but preach the truth, and explain their state, and leave the rest in the hand of God.

4) That our Lord prayed for all those who shall believe through the word of truth, and would not pray for the world universally, John xvii 9,20. That to sit with him in his kingdom is not even his to give, but to them for whom it is prepared of the Father, Matt xx 23. That no man is anything for the kingdom of God, unless born of the Spirit, John iii 5. That Christ laid down his life for his sheep only, and that there are some that are not his sheep, John x 15,16,26. That all the vessels of mercy are of God afore prepared unto glory, while there are vessels of wrath, Rom ix 21-23, and that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, verse 16. The total absence of divine truth and authority from universal invitations is hereby fully declared; and that they are not only perversions of the truth of God, the inventions of that sort of pious benevolence toward fellow man, which is exceedingly pleasing to man, but which runs counter to, and despises the sovereignty of the divine will, in the independent dispensation of the blessings of eternal life, as an act of grace, only because he will be gracious.

Fourth. 'Which the Son of Man shall give unto you.' Unto you Jews, as well as unto the Gentiles; and to as many, 'as touching election, are beloved for the fathers' sakes,' Rom xi 2 8, 'even to as many as the Lord our God shall



call,' Acts 11:39; in the same sense as in verse 5:1, saying, 'And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world:' to a people out of the whole world, but not to the whole world of people, for so he would not pray for the world. Upon these grounds, therefore, we conclude, that our Lord never spake the words of our text in the spirit and meaning of a universal invitation or exhortation, or with any intention thereby to give authority for any thing of the kind; the harmony of scripture being divine evidence.

### **'REPENT YE, THEREFORE, AND BE CONVERTED, THAT YOUR SINS MAY BE BLOTTED OUT'**

#### **Different kinds of repentance. The many exhortations of the Jews to national repentance in the new testament**

'Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord,' Acts iii 19. This text has been considered a clear evidence enough for universal invitations and exhortations of all men to repent unto eternal life. But to me this text has never appeared to be an exhortation to repentance unto the eternal life, even of the people addressed; for that while the word repent, with its correspondent repentance, is used in the word of God with various meanings, differing, but not contradicting, I see no reason or divine authority for fixing a certain meaning upon these words, which the apostles never, in no one instance, carried out in their addresses to the unconverted Gentiles; a meaning which would pointedly contradict the plainest and most self-evident meaning of other and fundamental parts of the sacred word of God. On the different meanings with which the word repent is evidently used in the word of God, we will notice two:

#### **Repentance unto life**

First, what for clearness of distinction sake, we will call regeneration repentance, which is that vital and renewing penitence that is produced by the new creating power and grace of God in the vessels of mercy, Eph 1:10; Tit 2:4,5; and is that repentance that Christ, in the mediatory order and

power of grace, came into the world to call sinners to, Matt ix 13, is now exalted to give with the remission of sins to the Israel of God, Acts v 3 1, and is what the gospel is sent to proclaim in his name, Luke xxiv 47, and which the goodness of God by the word commands and leads the called of God according to his purpose to, Rom 11 4, and which, as a divine grant only, the apostles emphatically call repentance unto life, Acts xi 18; because to it is entailed eternal remission of sins, and in it is developed God's gift of eternal life to the soul. I have never been able to learn, upon any corroborative authority in the word of God, that this is the repentance intended by the apostle in our text; although, to serve their turn, duty faith men would have it to be so.

Repentance on account of particular sins In the church, in the world, and particularly, as the text, in the Jewish nation

The second is, reformation repentance, which is circumstantial, and but natural according to the state and order of circumstances; whether it be:

First. In the churches of Christ, as in Rev ii, iii. Those seven epistles were to the seven churches, and to them they belonged, and not to the world; for the things approved thereby were in the churches; the blessings pronounced thereby were upon the churches; the faults and corruptions in principles, order, and conduct, marked and condemned thereby, were in the churches; the threatenings thereby were upon the churches; and the repentance demanded was accordingly of the churches only. And this repentance was for them to cast out the corruptions, in principles, order, and conduct, which had crept in among them, and for them to return to those principles, and to that order and conduct, from whence they had practically fallen and departed, Rev ii 5. The same as the apostle James, in writing to the 'twelve tribes scattered abroad,' James I 1, or to all those of the twelve tribes who professed the faith of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he wrote to none other, all the way through his epistle complained most heavily of the ungodly abuses of all good order, practice, and principles, which had crept in among those Hebrew professors of the faith, as into the churches above; and he laboured to produce a reformation among them, and for them to cast out the vile corruptions from among them, as becometh them, as professors of the holy, lovely, and kind faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the same as Paul had to complain, in a measure, of the Corinthian church, and so writing to them, 'They sorrowed to repentance, being made sorry after a godly manner,' 2 Cor. vii 9. And as job stood corrected, repented, and renounced

the practically wrong course he had adopted, and so reformed, he being a God-fearing man before, Job xl 4,5.

Or, second, in the world, individually or collectively, under extreme cases of wickedness and immorality, for the averting of immediately deserved and to be expected judgments from the hand of the Lord, as the moral governor of the world; as in the case of Simon the sorcerer, who offered to buy the Holy Ghost with money; and to whom Peter said, 'Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee,' Acts viii 22. As in the case of the Ninevites, who repented of their violence, and cried mightily unto God. As Peter exhorted Simon, with reformation, repentance and natural prayer, to do as the case was. 'And God repented of the evil that he said he would do unto them, and he did it not;' and this was their temporal forgiveness, according to the nature of their repentance and prayer, Jonah iii 7,8,10. And as in the case of Ahab, 'Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days,' 1 Kings xxi 29. This was but a natural humbling, and a temporal salvation from immediate judgment And as Daniel said to the king, 'Let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility,' Dan iv 27. And as Lot said unto the men of Sodom, 'I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly,' Gen xix 7.

Or, third, whether in regard to the Jews, on their own peculiar ground, of privileges, laws, and constitution as a nation, that Christ should come of them, of the time of his coming, his having come, and the time being fulfilled to change their times and customs, according to the scriptures; the whole of which they either awfully abused, or spurned from them altogether. As to privileges, natural and moral advantages, as a people and nation, I need not say they were a peculiar people in those respects, above all people on the earth, Rom 11 1,2; ix 4,5. But practically they were extremely wicked, even in wickedness to be, with self-righteousness too, 'contrary to all men,' as the apostles found them, go wherever they might, 1 Thess. 11 15. And they had departed more from the laws of their land, the laws of their temple, Matt xxi 13, and from the God of their fathers, than any nation of the

heathen had from the laws of their nation, their temples, and their gods, Jer. 11 11-13. Their own traditions, by which they set the word, laws, and statutes, of the Lord aside, are said to have been as many as would make twelve folio volumes (see Wright's Life of Christ). And when the time was fulfilled, according to their own prophets, whom it was their duty to credit as God's ministers to them on their national constitution, and whom, as such, they professed to receive, for God to change their times and customs, and the order of things, by the coming of Christ the Messiah, whom they professed to look for according to their prophets, they opposed him by every sort of insult and violence, although to the very eyes, ears, and common sense of nature, he demonstrated the truth of his Messiahship, by deeds infinitely surpassing all the power and wisdom of mere creatureship, and of all nature's common laws. And the more he gave this proof, the more they hated him, and pursued him, with murderous hands, to his blood on the tree; and on this awful matter of cry for vengeance on their heads, Peter enlarged in his address to the people in this chapter.

Was there ever a people whose wickedness was more extreme? Was there ever a nation by wickedness more exposed to, and who might expect the sudden judgments of God, in the order of his moral government, upon the ground, not of their spiritual, but rational and national accountability, which they had every way so awfully violated? And was there ever a nation who, to avert the impending judgments of God, more needed to be exhorted to a moral repentance of their state unto a moral reformation, and from their constitution as a nation and people, to a moral reception of the Messiah, the gospel dispensation, and that new order of things their prophets had all along foretold, and the time for which being now come? Indeed, I think not.

And if other natural men and people, according to the above several cases, could be morally addressed on their awful condition in their extreme wickedness, and be exhorted to moral repentance unto reformation, and they did so repent unto reformation, and were so temporally forgiven in the averting of the threatening judgments of God, without their ever being exhorted to perform of themselves what is in God's power and gift only for eternal salvation, and without their ever being eternally saved at all that we know of, - Is it impossible? Is it unreasonable?

Or is it any way contrary to the current testimony of the word of God, that the Jews, whose wicked condition was awful to an extreme above all people, should be exhorted to the like reformation repentance, for the like benefit under the moral government of God, without being exhorted to do that for eternal salvation, which is wholly of the power, grace, and gift of God only? I think it not impossible; and that they were so morally exhortable, and were so exhorted as a nation and people, and that such really and properly is the repentance, the conversion, and the blotting out of sins meant and intended by the exhortation in our text, so following the statement of their awful sin of murderously putting Christ to death, and to the moral end that they might be the preserved, and escaping from the sorest judgments in the times hastening. when one should be taken and the other left,' Luke xvii 34-36; times of refreshing to them that escaped.

And this is the meaning, and such is the repentance exhorted to, independent of the things of eternal salvation, in the following passages, saying - 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' Matt iii 2; 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' iv 17; 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel,' Mark 11 15; 'And they went out,' among the Jews only, Matt x 5, 'and preached that men should repent,' Mark vi 12, 'and believe the gospel to be true, and of God, as they admitted the law that came by Moses was true, and of God.' And our Lord rebuked and passed his woes upon those cities of the Jews where his mighty works were done, for their not so believing and repenting, Matt xi 20-23.

And that nothing more is intended than this moral repentance unto reformation, and the moral reception of Christ as the Messiah, and the gospel as a ministry and dispensation of God, is evident by our Lord's speaking of it collectively, as of whole cities; whereas, the repentance and gathering unto eternal life is individual. 'And ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye hosts of Israel,' Isaiah xxvii 12; 'And I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion,' Jer.iii 14. And if we say that our Lord meant the repentance that is unto eternal salvation, we must add, what an eternal pity it is, that the works of Christ were not done in Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, for 'they would have repented long ago,' and gone for ever to heaven! But no, our Lord means no such thing; for that by such repentance as is intended here, Sodom, as temporally saved, 'would have remained until this day,' Matt xi 23.



'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not,' Matt xxiii 37. If that which is not of the truth be falsehood, and that which is not after the mind of the Spirit, the meaning and intent of the speaker, be not of the truth on a text, I should think there have been as many falsehoods told in the name of the Lord (but I should hope ignorantly) on this text by making it out to be an everlasting gospel text, in regard to eternal salvation by grace in Christ, and in saying that Christ would have saved and gathered the Jews unto eternal life, and all other sinners too \*in like manner where the gospel has come, who are now lost, but that they would not be saved, and that Christ consequently could not save them, as any deceiver ever told falsehoods to deceive on any subject under the whole heavens. Burkitt says on this text, 'There is no longing like unto God's longing for a people's salvation: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee. When shall it once be?' How very different is this to the truth which saith, 'What his soul desireth, even that he doeth,' Job xxiii 13. 'His arm shall rule for him,' Isaiah xl 10. 'He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?' Dan iv 35, saying, 'I will work, and who shall let it?' Isa xliii 13. When a witness contradicts himself, he is considered to know nothing in truth of the case in hand, and that he is a perjured wretch, who deserves to be transported for interfering as a witness in a matter he properly knows nothing of. And a very little time since, a public meeting was held at Dr A R's chapel, and it was said to be 'a time of humiliation, for that doubtless there were many lost who might have been saved if the church had done their duty.' I feel at a loss to know what sort of inefficacious corner such men really assign to the God of all grace in regard to the salvation of sinners. Is not salvation God's own property? and to whom hath he at any time committed the outlay, further than to 'declare the testimony?' 1 Cor. 11 1.

Follow those very humiliation men a little way, and when they come to our text, you would hear them as piously declare, 'That the Lord would save many who are not saved, because they will not believe and be saved, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!' And so at one time human duty performed, might have saved the lost, and at another time, even God himself cannot save the lost that he would save, because they will not believe and be saved. There is no part of the truth of God in either of those points; and how men can stand

up and say such things in the Lord's name I cannot tell, except it is that they know not the scriptures nor the power of God. On our text let us consider,

### **A word to the Jewish rulers**

First, that in the words of our text, our Lord speaks to one class of people concerning another, even to the heads, rulers, and teachers, concerning the general inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 'How often would I have gathered your children, and ye would not.' And did ever one class of people hinder the eternal God from saving another class by his grace with an everlasting salvation? 'Who would set the Mars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together,' Isa xxvii 4. And where the eternal salvation of souls by the grace of God is the subject in hand, it is no where to be found, that God hath ever consulted one party of men about the salvation of another; 'For who hath known the mind of the Lord, and who hath been his counselor?' Rom xi 34. The Lord hath neither lost nor cast away any of his people whom he did foreknow, and so all Israel shall be saved,' verse 26. Our Lord never said, either in our text or elsewhere, I would have taken you to heaven, but you would not go; nor, I would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but you would not be saved; nor, I would have given you eternal life, but I could not get you to have it; nor in our text, I would have gathered you: but how often, by the prophets, from various corruptions of your covenant economy, and so from various foes, invaders, and calamities at different periods, and now at last by myself, as a city and nation, from storms of judgment and from the devouring eagle, the Romans, according to the conditions of your covenant, Ex xx, xxi, xxii, xxxiii, xxiv 7,8, saying, 'Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever,' Jer. xxv 5; xviii 7,8, would I have gathered your children, under the wings of protection, and ye would not. Jesus as a Jewish Man and Prophet

Second, that our Lord is not speaking 'in our text on the subject of eternal salvation at all, nor \*in the language of the 'mighty to save,' nor on the subject, ground or premises of his gift of eternal life; but in the simple speech and language of a minister of the word of that truth that regarded their constituted state as a nation and people, himself being of the seed of Abraham; and in which sense as a man and minister, 'he came unto his own, and his own received him not,' John 1 11; and in which sense also, as a man, he wept over Jerusalem, Luke xix 41, hungered, thirsted, and was weary as a



man; and which was no denial to his personal dignity, as 'the Lord from heaven,' nor to the almighty power and fullness of saving grace in him by the everlasting covenant, whereby 'it pleased the Father, that in him all fullness should dwell; ' but it was in due order of perfect accordance with the Jewish economy, first to be observed by him in his relation to them by the covenant of circumcision; and also as a proof that his manhood was the very same as the manhood of other men, Heb 11 14, sin only excepted, Heb iv 15: even as his servant Paul had his private feelings as a man, for 'his kinsmen according to the flesh,' Rom ix 3, and his official and public feelings as an apostle of the Lord, Acts xx 24.

### **The Abrahamic covenant**

The Jews had held their land on the tenure of the covenant made with Abraham for them, Gen xiii 15,16; xv 16; and with their fathers when the Lord brought them up out of Egypt as above noticed; but which covenant they broke, and continued to break in every perverse way. And as a farmer forfeits his good farm and his good livelihood thereon, by breaking every item of his lease, even so the Jews forfeited their right to the land of Canaan, by breaking every item of that conditional covenant, or lease, upon the tenure of which the right of possession was given them, and upon the observance of which only, their right of possession was to be secured to them. But forfeited first by the ten tribes, in a way of grievous idolatry, they were driven out of the land and scattered abroad, according to the - conditions of the covenant, Deut xi 16,17,27,28, after holding it seven hundred and thirty years, 2 Kings xvii 22,23. Judah not having then so awfully departed from the covenant of the land, continued in it about a hundred and nineteen years longer; 'Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, - Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets,' verse 13. But 'Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they had made,' verse 19. 'And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house which I said, my name shall be there,' 2 Kings xxiii 27. And the Lord's ways being equal, Ez. xviii 29, he drove them out of the land into captivity for seventy years, and then brought them again and

reinstated them in the land, on the tenure of the very same covenant, with all its terms and conditions of possession exactly the same.

And the very same commands of the same kind of obedience as a nation, the same warnings and cautions against their departure from the covenant lease of their possession of the land, and the very same rebukes and threatenings on their corruptions in departing from the covenant, and the very same exhortations to the same repentance, reformation, and returning to their covenant, were as perfectly applicable to them to the very end of their polity as a nation and people, as in the early days of the prophets; without any interference whatever with another covenant, or new obligations. But, in spite of all the warnings, cautions, threatenings, and exhortations, of the prophets of their foretime, Judah departed from the covenant and increased their corruptions, until the coming of the greatest of all their prophets, of whom they were warned; saying to Moses, 'I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him,' Deut xviii 18,19. And when this greatest of all prophets came, he took his position as a minister and prophet, upon the very ground and premises of all the prophets, in regard to them as a nation, and their state in regard to their covenant of the land; and warned, cautioned, threatened, and exhorted them, on their covenant ground, and 'in the language of the very same economy, for their good as a nation, as all the prophets had done; and clothed his instructions, reproofs, warnings, threatenings, and exhortations to repent, reform, and return to an agreement with the lease of their land, and covenant economy of their life and being as a nation, with the significant solemnities, not of the power of internal eternally saving grace, which did not belong to this economy; but of miracles and signs, that in truth he was 'the Son,' and that great Prophet. And they continuing in their hardened degeneracy from the word and statutes of their covenant, and rejecting with hostility his exhortatory ministry thereto, and to their following him in external regeneration of times, customs, and dispensation, according to the word of their own prophets concerning such a new order of things, and which they themselves used to speak of as the new times, when the consolation of Israel should come, but which they now resisted; he said unto them, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace,' as a nation and people; 'but now they are hid from thine eyes,' Luke xix 42-44. 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate,' Matt xxiii 38. What

house is this? Because, if this text were an eternal salvation text, this house must be heaven, now left void and desolate of them who might have inhabited it! But nay, the text is national, and the house is their city and land, and the right of possession which they had forfeited, by violating every item of their lease or covenant of it, and their ejection was accordingly thus determined and declared by the Lord of the soil.

### **Not an eternal salvation text**

Third. That this is not an eternal salvation text is further evident, (1) Because it is not individual as eternal salvation is; but collective, as of the whole city and nation at once. (2) Because if this text, and such like to the Jews, were eternal salvation texts, then 'their unbelief would make the faith of God to them of none effect;' but to which conclusion the apostle exclaims, 'God forbid; and therefore this text and such like, most certainly can have no such meaning, unless the apostle's judgment and conclusion were wrong, Rom iii 3,4. (3) Because, if our text, and such like to the Jews, were eternal salvation texts, their marked unbelief and non-repentance as a body, must be of a nature correspondent thereto, and then their stumbling by their unbelief, must be to their eternal fall: but to which conclusion, also, the apostle exclaims, 'God forbid,' Rom xi 11. And no such meaning can be intended in our text and the like; for the Jews have yet the time of their fullness to come, and to be received as life from the dead, verse 12,15; and which can never be true of the once lost and cast away from God's eternal salvation. (4) Because, as eternal salvation is by the Lord's gift of eternal life, and is above all damage, as 'they shall never perish;' so the awful sentence of a once cast away state of soul from the Lord and his eternal salvation, has no remedy for ever; but the sentence of rejection here passed, is from the mouth of the Lord but periodical only, 'until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,' Luke xxi 24; and then to be graciously superseded by the everlasting life blessings of eternal salvation, but in another form, and by another covenant, Rom xi 15,25-27; as our Lord plainly declares at the end of our chapter, and following our text, saying, 'Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.' And will the finally lost hereafter so see him, so delight him, so love his appearing, and so worshipfully bless him? We know they will not. And as the rejection is therefore but temporal as a nation, the gathering under the protection named

would have been no more; the lines of these two points being perfectly parallel, according to the nature of both, and the above scriptures.

### **Re-statement of the covenants**

Fourth, to make our text and many more like it plain and clear to every reader, as to the real premises they occupy, and which is the only way of coming at the truth intended by what is said, it should always be borne in mind with special regard, that there are three covenant economies which God hath set up, set forth, and declared in the sacred scriptures; as we hinted at our onset of these remarks, and which we will now notice a little further. And in the order in which I would notice them, I would call the first:

The Eden covenant of nature: which God made with Adam, and all human nature in him. This covenant was but natural, as it is written, 'The first man Adam was made a living soul, howbeit that was not first that was spiritual, but that which was natural. The first man is of the earth, earthy. as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy,' 1 Cor xv 45-48. The character of Adam as natural, and not spiritual, and his posterity so likewise in him, declares such to be the nature of this economy, and by which, accordingly, as its entire and distinct extent, he had earthy Eden for his possession, on condition of his obedience. And all the power and property of the obedience hereby required was perfectly in man's own self; so that do and live, by nature's own inherent property only, or disobey and die, was the exclusive nature, order and extent of this economy. And as from its altogether separate and distinct nature and design, no help by any inwrought power of saving grace in Christ Jesus could possibly come within this economy, as any accordant part of it, even so, nothing toward the salvation of the lost can possibly come out of this economy in any way whatever; for by the law is the knowledge of sin, and death for sin, and nothing otherwise. So that if faith in our Lord Jesus Christ were of the law, and a duty of the law, it could then have nothing to do with the sinner's justification to life, because it would be but a deed of the law, and 'by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified; either causal, or evidential.

The second covenant economy is the covenant of the land of Canaan, which the Lord, concerning that land, made with Abraham for his natural seed. 'Israel after the flesh,' 1 Cor x 18; 'the natural branches of the olive tree,' by natural birth and an external adoption to all the external favors of that

covenant 'which the Lord made with their fathers in the day when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt;' and which was but a repetition, explanation, and confirmation of the covenant made with Abraham, Heb VIII 9. This covenant was written on tables of stone Only, and not on the heart, Ex xxxiv 28, and therefore it was but external and natural in its requirements of personal state or of obedience, and external only in its favors. The personal state was not required to be a new creature in Christ Jesus, nor was the obedience required of that nature; nor were the favors spiritual blessings unto eternal life. Because according to this covenant, 'they had ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary,' Heb ix 1, 'which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of the reformation,' verse 10. Now although this covenant 'was a figure for the time then present,' verse 9, and 'a shadow of good things to come,' to the elect heirs of salvation, as a help to their faith in the great reality, yet it was not the very image of the things,' chap x 1; and so it was in itself to them as a people and nation, of external and national favors only, on condition of their own free will natural and moral obedience: supernatural grace by the power of the Holy Ghost being no part of this covenant, and spiritual obedience to eternal life being no part of its requirements of them as a nation.

This covenant economy was perfectly complete, uniform, and entire of itself, after its own kind, and for its own designs; and of which the Lord speaks accordingly, saying, 'And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard; what could I have done more for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?' Isa v 3,4. Why brought it forth idolatry, self-inventions of lies, and running after the customs of the heathen, instead of keeping to the statutes and judgments of the Lord, according to the covenant of their land? If poor mistaken dust and ashes will lift its wormy head and say from this text, that 'God hath done all that he could to save sinners by his grace in Christ Jesus, and that without effect on many souls, for that they would not be saved, and that he is disappointed of their salvation,' I envy not the ignorance, self-righteousness, nor the presumption of such; while they must hold themselves prepared to answer the question, 'Is there any thing too hard for me, saith the Lord?' Jer xxxii 27.

The Lord is not speaking here in the language of his omnipotent grace in Christ Jesus, but in the language and order of this covenant economy of

external favor only; the very same as our Lord speaks in our text, saying, 'How often would I have gathered your children, and ye would not;' and the very same as it is said of our Lord on the very same covenant promises, 'And he could there do no mighty work; and he marvelled at their unbelief,' Mark vi 5,6. Their obligations were but natural and of free-will, and these were the Lord's claims on them by this covenant economy, and their disobedience and rebellion was a robbing of God, Mal iii 8. Their obedience was their life in the land, and their disobedience was their death or expulsion from it by this covenant; and Moses set these as life and death before them, for them to choose; and by their Amen, Deut xxvii, they professed to choose the path of obedience and live in the land, xxx 15,19,20; but from the days of their fathers they went away from the Lord's ordinances of this covenant and kept them not, Mal iii 7. And therefore the Lord said of them and their land, under the figure of his vineyard, 'I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns; and I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it,' Isa v 6. The very same thing which our Lord also declared in figure, when he spoke to the fruitless 'fig tree,' saying, 'Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away,' Matt xxi 19; according to the words, 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.'

This covenant, therefore, was not in itself a covenant of eternal salvation, being but 'a shadow,' made 'nothing perfect;' its sacrifices could 'never take away sin,' it was the 'ready to vanish away,' and was made up of those 'things which are shaken, and do not remain,' Heb xii 27 28. And consequently the removing it, and the people out of their privileges in the land for breaking it, was not a casting away any of God's people whom he did foreknow, from eternal salvation by another covenant, Rom xi 1,2.

The third covenant economy is of unconditional grace in Christ Jesus as its living head, and of internal power to the production of personal and vital godliness by the renewing of the Holy Ghost unto eternal life. According to this covenant, all the fullness, power, and property required, for the repentance unto life, faith, obedience, and the eternal life of all the interested by divine choice, of all nations, people and tongues under heaven is in Christ, and is in the sovereign dispensation of God alone, in the name and person of our Lord Jesus Christ as mediator and surety of this better covenant of sure mercies, by better promises, 'According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,' Eph iii 11. And all human conditions are as totally and entirely excluded for ever from this

covenant economy, as the land of Canaan covenant was wholly and absolutely conditional only, was of external persuasion only to obedience, and was of external favour and privileges only; internal grace by the renewing power of the Holy Ghost forming no part of that covenant with them as a nation.

According to this covenant economy, (1) Christ, as head, is a quickening Spirit and quickeneth whom he will, John v 21; the spiritual Adam, the heavenly, the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor xv 45,48, 'Lord of all,' 'Head over all,' 'Mighty to save,' 'The Almighty;' and we will call this the heavenly covenant, from the character of its Head, and because it is wholly and alone instituted for heaven and eternal life. (2) According to this covenant economy, all the subjects of it are children, and all the children are 'born of God,' and are of God alone 'made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;' all the people of God's eternal praise being formed for the same by himself only, Col 1 12; Isa xliii 6,7,21. (3) This everlasting new covenant economy is called God's 'new thing,' Isa xliii 19-21, in which, 'behold, I make all things new,' Rev xxi 5, as that of 'a new heart,' 'a new creature in Christ Jesus,' 'a new and living way.' And according to which, 'all things are of him, and through him, and to him;' of his will, through his power, and to his glory, Rom xi 36; as the good pleasure of his will is the first cause of all, the counsel of his will is the rule by which he works all, and the praise of his glory is the end to which he will infallibly bring all the things of this covenant, Eph 15,6,11; with the whole church of his 'chosen, called, and faithful,' singing and shouting aloud for joy, 'salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' Rev xvii 14; xix 1,6.

### **The covenants have separate natures and must be kept distinct**

Fifth, the fact that the above three covenant economies are recorded and set forth in the word of God, I suppose no Bible reader will for one moment pretend to dispute; but it is their perfectly distinct and separate nature and constitution, and the fact that the Lord himself and his servants by his commission through the sacred scriptures, do on the respective premises of these covenants, use a mode of language and expression peculiar to that covenant upon the premises of which the discourse, address, or words are delivered; that as these covenants can never be made to be all one and the same thing in their nature and constitution, so the language of the one, can

never in form be applied to the other; and that the things of these covenants are as different in their nature as the covenants themselves are different; which demands our particular attention, observation and care. Because all these held apart according to their nature, and in their own respective place, according to their constitution and design, the harmony of truth is duly and rightfully maintained; but to confound them, is confusion, untruth and contradiction, imposed on the word, works, and revealed character of the almighty God of truth, wisdom and order. And to shew the solemn truth of this remark, we will compare the language of these covenants.

Cain being angry, he reflected on the equity of God's government, and by the Eden covenant the Lord said, 'If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?' Gen iv 5,7, while by the heavenly covenant it is, 'He hath made us accepted in the beloved,' Eph 1 6; 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done,' Titus iii 5; 'That being Justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life,' v 7. But we will shew the difference between the things said by the order of the Canaan covenant, and those said by the order of the heavenly covenant of eternal salvation. It is said by the Canaan, 'I will drive them out of my house, I will love them no more,' Hos. ix 15; by the heavenly, 'I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely,' Hos. xiv 4; by the Canaan, 'Call his name Loammi; for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God,' Hos. 1 6,9; by the heavenly, 'And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God,' v 10,11. By the Canaan, 'My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,' Hosea iv 6; by the heavenly, 'My people shall know my name,' Isa III 6, 'I will give them an heart to know me,' Jer. xxiv 7; 'For they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,' chap xxxi 34; 'and my people shall never be ashamed,' Joel 11 26-27. By the Canaan, 'Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me,' Prov. 128; by the heavenly, 'They shall call on my name, and I will hear them, I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God,' Beech xiii 9; 'Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved,' Joel ii 32; 'For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened,' Matt vii 8. By the Canaan, 'The soul that sinneth shall die,' Ezek xviii 4; by the heavenly, 'I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish,' John x 28; 'For this my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is



found,' Luke Rev 24; 'Your life is hid with Christ in God,' Col iii 3. By the Canaan, 'Why will ye die?' Ezek. xviii 31; by the heavenly, 'Ye are not your own,' 1 Cor vi 19; 'The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep,' John x 11; 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death,' Rom viii 2; 'I am come that they might have life,' John x 10; 'Fear not; behold, I live for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death, "Because I live, ye shall live also,' Rev 1 18; John xiv 19.

By the Canaan covenant the Lord says, 'When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall die; and when the wicked man turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive,' Ezek xviii 26,27; by the heavenly, 'Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works,' Rom iv 6; 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit,' Rom viii 1; 'Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord,' Isa liv 17; 'Who hath saved us and called us, with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,' 2 Tim 19; 'Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation,' 1 Pet i 5; 'Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus?' Rom viii 31-39; 'Having obtained eternal redemption for us,' Heb ix 12. By the Canaan, 'Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes,' Isa 1 16; by the heavenly, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me,' John xiii. 8; 'From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you,' Ezek xxxvi 25; 'The blood of Jesus Christ his dear Son cleanseth us from all sin,' 1 John 1 7; 'His name shall be called JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins,' Matt 1 21; 'In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve,' Jer. i 20. By the Canaan, 'Circumcise yourselves to the Lord,' Jer. iv 4; by the heavenly, we are 'circumcised with the circumcision made without hands,' Col ii 11. By the Canaan, 'Cast away from you all your transgressions,' Ezek xviii 3 1; by the heavenly, 'He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,' Heb ix 26. By the Canaan, 'They shall even bear their iniquity,' Ezek xlv 10; by the heavenly, 'His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,' 1 Pet 1124. By the Canaan, 'Then I said, I have laboured in vain and spent my strength for nought,' Isa xlix 4; by the heavenly, 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied,' Isa liii 11.

By the Canaan covenant, the law was written on stones.- by the heavenly, the law is written on the heart, Heb viii 10; 2 Cor. iii 3. By the Canaan, 'Ye will not;' by the heavenly, 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,' Ps cx 3. By the Canaan, 'Ye will not come unto me,' John v 40; by the heavenly, 'I will draw all men unto me,' John xii 32. By the Canaan, 'How often would I have gathered your children;' by the heavenly, 'I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory,' Isa lxvi 18. By the Canaan, 'Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways and live?' Ezek xviii 23; by the heavenly, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,' Rom ix 11,15,18; Luke iv 26,27. By the Canaan, 'Make you a new heart and a new spirit, Ezek xviii 3 1; by the heavenly, 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will put my Spirit within you,' Ezek xxxvi 26,27.

An Eden heart is of pure upright nature, as God first made man; a Canaan heart is one in moral accordance with the conditional covenant of the land; and a heavenly heart is by new birth and new creatureship in Christ Jesus, the spiritual workmanship of God by grace only, Eph 11 10. An Eden heart was only fit for Eden, by the law of nature; a Canaan heart, required by that covenant, was fit only for the possession of that land, and was neither fit for Eden by the law of nature, nor for heaven by grace; and a heavenly heart is not fit for Eden by the requirements of the law of nature, but for heaven by the grace and mediationship of our Lord Jesus Christ. These things are properly distinct, and if truth be our enquiry, our concern will be to know their proper nature, place, order, and design; and to understand how 'He hath made every things beautiful in his time,' Eccles ill 11; that truth is harmonious without a jar, and that no such thing is known in the revealed will of God, as spiritual duties devolving on natural men, by the sovereign favor, free grace, and eternal salvation of God by the mediationship of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus taking truth in its proper place, order and design, according to the covenant premises upon which the same is spoken through the sacred word, perhaps it will be asked, since the greater part of the old testament scriptures was spoken to the Jews, upon the premises of the covenant of the land of Canaan, and that covenant is now for ever passed away, are those scriptures by the will of God, now of no further use? My answer to this is, that the Jews, as separated from A nations by a particular covenant, and having their all as a nation by that covenant, were an emblem of the true elect, saved and called church of God out of all nations; and that so likewise the scriptures literally spoken to them on their particular

covenant premises and not to the heathen world, are spiritually applicable, not to the world as dead in sin, but to the living, spiritual, and everlasting covenant church, the true 'Mount Zion,' Heb xii 22-24; and that herein was the truth of the vision of God, 'As it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel,' Ezek 116; x 10; and that so they are taken and interwoven by the apostles in their epistles to the churches and believing individuals, as so really belonging to them, saying, 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' 2 Tim iii 16,17.

**'FOR WE ARE UNTO GOD A SWEET SAVOUR OF CHRIST, IN THEM THAT ARE SAVED, AND IN THEM THAT PERISH..'**

'For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other of life unto life,' 2 Cor. 11 15,16. This text has often been explained to say, that the ministration of the gospel of salvation and of the grace of God is turned into a ministry of destruction and divine wrath on them that are lost, because they will not believe and be saved. But the gospel devolves no such new obligations and penalties, nor makes any such proposals to the will of man, nor is such the meaning of the text, by any proof to be found in the mind of the Spirit through the sacred word. Christ in person, name, work, and fullness, is a sweet savour of acceptable smell and taste unto God the Father, Eph v 2; and the truth of Christ is unto God a sweet savour; and the ministers of the gospel of Christ are also, by sincerity, simplicity, faithfulness and honesty, in the truth they preach, unto God a sweet savour of Christ; and which he makes manifest by the arm of his power; and this, too, in them that perish as well as in them that are saved. And being thus unto God a savour of Christ in both, the apostle says, 'To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life,'

The gospel is a descriptive and declarative light on the character and state of men, saying to the wicked, 'It shall go ill with them;' describing likewise the personal state and features of character of the wicked; and on the other hand, saying to the righteous, 'It shall go well with them;' describing also the

personal state and features of character of the righteous; and which the apostle calls, 'commending ourselves to every man's conscience as in the sight of God,' 2 Cor. iv 2; shewing up things and characters simply and honestly as they really are by the truth of God; whereby the ungodly are shewn up in true character to be in an ungodly lost state, and the children of God are shewn up in true character to be in a godly saved state; that the one be not deceived, and the other be duly comforted and encouraged. As in like manner that a case might occur in a judicatory court, when two characters shall be brought before the judge, and the one has his innocence, not made, but proved and declared; and the other has his guilt, not made, but proved and declared; and to the one the judge is a savour of life unto life, but to the other a savour of death unto death, by a declarative test of character by the light of the law, Deut xxvi. And so a real true and honest gospel minister of Christ is either a savour of death unto death or of life unto life, by a test of every man's state and character by the light of the holy word and truth of God; and which appears most plainly to me to be the apostle's only meaning in our text. But we hear nothing here of the Lord's having committed the salvation of souls into the apostle's hands, nor any thing of the apostle's awful responsibility for the souls of them that are lost, according to the pious cant, idle and senseless talk, of some duty faith men in our days; but, on the contrary, of 'Thanks unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ,' though all that heard were not saved; 'for we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God,' by mixing all up together as one and the same, things that essentially differ in nature and design, by misapplying it to character and case, and by making it to contradict itself, and so to say what the Lord never thought or meant; 'but as of sincerity, but as of '\God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ,' 2 Cor. ii 17.

**'AND THIS IS THE CONDEMNATION, THAT LIGHT IS COME INTO THE WORLD, AND MEN LOVED DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT...'**

'And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil,' John ill 19. We should have thought this text and its connections to be too plain to involve any difficulty, and to be such a plain statement of mere facts, on the

hardened, sinful, condemned, and yet self-righteous state of man under the law by nature, and of the truth of which being simply, yet fully made manifest by the light of Christ, truth and holiness, that a misapplication would be scarcely possible to be made of the subject. But this text and its connections have, however, not escaped being twisted about to duty faith purposes; and to say that men are condemned to eternal death for their not receiving the mercy and favour of God in Christ Jesus to eternal life; as though God, in his great love, proposed eternal life to their believing, and then changed his love into wrath, and eternally damns them, for their not believingly receiving the eternal blessings of his everlasting love in Christ Jesus; making man's believing the cause of God's mercy to salvation, and man's not believing to salvation the cause of condemnation!

Most certainly our Lord had no such meaning, unless the apostle Paul was awfully and altogether wrong in saying, 'For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all,' Rom xi 32. These words are a pointed denial to every thing of such meaning on our Lord's words in our text and the connection; and a full proof the apostle never so understood his Lord and Master, either here or elsewhere. And to put any such construction upon our Lord's words, in- our text or its connection, I am sure we might just as well say from the apostle's words, that unbelief is the cause of God's mercy; 'for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' But the apostle's sole and only meaning, is to set forth the perfectly free, sovereign, and unconditional favor of God alike to both Jews and Gentiles, and that their native unbelief is made really to prove, illustrate, and set off the truth of the same; in the same way as he implies, that 'our unrighteousness commends and righteousness of God,' Rom iii 5; and the same as God commended his love, in that while we were not considered as alive by faith, but as dead in sin and unbelief, 'Christ died for us,' Rom v 8. The apostle also very clearly shews, that the mercy of God is the cause of faith, and not faith the cause of God's mercy; and that faith of itself is none other than a bestowment of God's mercy on the heirs of life: as on them a sign, and to them and in them, the witness of God, that they are, as in scripture character, the children of his love, promise, and so of his salvation, Rom ix 30-32.

'He that believeth not is condemned already,' verse 18; and he is so by the law as a transgressor; but his not believing unto salvation does not make him so, but proves and declares him to be so, and he is as a sinner just where he would be if there were no Saviour of any; 'because he hath not believed in the name of

The only begotten Son of God.' This because intends neither moving nor procuring cause, but evidential of the unbeliever's state. The sentence of condemnation is by the law passed upon every sinner, and Christ Jesus is the only name given under heaven whereby there is salvation from that condemnation: and as by the word and will of God, faith in Christ is the face, countenance, and representative sign of the soul's whole and real state, and of interest in Christ unto salvation from all the condemnation of the law; even so, unbelief in Christ is the face, countenance, and representative sign of the soul's whole and real state, as under sin, without Christ, and under the condemnation of the law; the wrath of God, by the sentence of the law, still' abiding on him,' verse 36, he having no deliverance by Christ, of the truth of which his unbelief is a proof, sign, and representation, by the light, truth, and testimony of the word of God. And the root of this unbelief is discovered, and the truth of this condemnation state is further shewn and made manifest, by a man's 'loving darkness rather than light,' but this love of darkness and the condemnation entailed upon it, is not created, but proved and confirmed as to fact, by the light that is but proved and confirmed as to fact, by the light that is come; the light being not the cause, but the test and proof of true character. And this is true, whether it be of the child of light, who cometh to the light for an honest manifestation and proof of his true and real state; or of the child of darkness, who hates the light because he loves darkness, and hates the detection of his loved evil deeds, by the light of truth and holiness.

And this may be illustrated by the figure of a family man, who, taking a light in his hand, and going round to see how all things are in the house as a last thing at night, and going into the room where his several little boys are in bed, all wakeful, he holds up the light, and while with pleasure he reads in their little sparkling eyes his own dear children, they, with enlivened pleasure, read in his eyes and countenance their loving parent, and all is well there. But hearing some noise, he proceeds to another part of the house, enters a room, and there finds some thieves busy at their work of knavery; and at first the thieves try to put out the light, but failing in that attempt, they

scamper out at the window or elsewhere, to escape the light, loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Now the light in the man's hand makes neither children nor thieves, but shews up both in true character. And this appears to me to be our Lord's entire meaning, the same as the apostle's 'savor of life unto life, and of death unto death,' as we have observed on that text.

If, from the mere face of our text, it be yet contended, that our Lord really means that man's not believing unto eternal salvation is the cause of his eternal condemnation by the light of truth and grace that is come into the world by Christ Jesus, then other texts ought, and have a right, on the mere face of them, to be taken in the same way; and then it must be admitted, and cannot be self consistently denied, that our Lord's coming, speaking, and doing what he did, really made men to be sinners! Saying, 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin,' John xv 22. 'If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin,' verse 24. So making out our holy Lord Christ himself, in coming, speaking, and working as he did, to be the cause of the sin, and sinful state, for which unbelieving men are condemned! This is awful in the very sound of it, and yet it is but a direct and fair conclusion on the two latter-cited texts; if the duty of natural men to believe unto eternal salvation and their not believing to eternal salvation the cause of their eternal condemnation, be determined the doctrine and meaning of our Lord \*in our text and its connection.

But if we take all the above texts, as they do really and properly mean, and are intended to mean, the test, proof, and disclosure of men and things in their true character, as in the sight of God, then the whole are plain in truth and holiness, according to the word of the Lord saying, 'Judgment will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hall shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place,' Isaiah xxiii 17. 'And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles,' Zeph i 12. 'Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor,' Matt iii 12. 'And the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is,' 1 Car iii 13. 'Every plant, which my heavenly Father both not planted, shall be rooted up,' Matt xv 13.

## **THE LORD'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

Our Lord's sermon on the mount, recorded in Matt v, vi vii, does not afford the least shade of example or authority by one single word for universal invitations or of duty faith, for the dead in sin of themselves to believe unto eternal life, nor to have the things and blessings of eternal life, nor to do the spiritual acts of the quickened and born again into newness of life by the Holy Spirit; although many things therein have been and are so taken and misapplied. These three chapters were all delivered in one discourse, and the whole was properly an ordination and ministerial sermon, delivered by our Lord to his apostles and ministerial disciples, and was peculiarly for them, although the people heard and were astonished at his doctrine, chap vii 28.

'And seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain; and when he was set his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth and taught them, chap v 1,2; and 'he taught them as one having authority,' chap vii 29. And he declared them to be in the faith though little, chap vi 30, - that God was their Father, who would give them the good things they asked, chap vii 11, that they were the salt of the earth, and were to be careful by a godly sober life and conduct, and by faithfulness, firmness, and honesty in the truth, to preserve the savant of their public ministry from any just suspicion or reproach, chap v 13, - that they were the light of the world, and were to be careful, Tabour, and aim so to let their light shine, as the ministers of truth, true godliness, and of the living and true God, that men seeing their good works, might glorify God their Father which is in heaven, verse 14-16.

These things could not possibly in truth apply to the multitudes, but to the believing and ministerial disciples of our Lord; and the whole sermon was to them, in solemn charge of their ministry and ministerial life. For there is not the least shadow of a variation of the address through the whole sermon, as to any different class of people from the apostles; and it is to them also as the children of God all the way through, varying only from the plural to the singular, and from the singular to the plural personal pronoun: and in the whole sermon God is sixteen times called their Father; in chap v three times, in chap vi twelve times, and in chap vii once: and which is a mode of



expression our Lord never once on any occasion used to the unbelieving, or indefinitely to his believing disciples. And he taught them to distinguish characters as to who were the blest, and who should withstand every storm and flood to eternal life; and so by reflection to shew the character and lot of the contrary, - he taught them to distinguish between the law that came of old time by Moses, and the gospel of his commission, - how to pray as well as to preach, - to have their eye always single in the truth as to principle and motive, - not to seek the praise and applause of men, but the favour and approbation of God in all they did, - to aim to set that example in all the departments of their lives that should be worthy of imitation, - to be very cautious against a spirit of self-righteousness in regard to a mote in a brother's eye, - to beware of false prophets, or public men, who would come to them in sheep's clothing for their sanction, and by them to be considered the ministers of God, - to Judge of every tree by its fruit, - and for themselves always to enter in at the strait gate, and to strive to do so, Luke xiii 24, in all their ministrations of the truth and public labors; whatever errors or popular opinions they might have to oppose, and however offensively, narrow, bigoted, and strait, they may be considered in so doing. And he encouraged them not to fear wants, foes, or persecutions, saying, 'Ye are of more value than the fowls of the air, whom your heavenly Father does not fail to feed, and consequently, will be sure much more to feed and take care of you;' and that, 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.'

If every professed minister of the gospel had this most instructive, solemn, and ever-blessed charge, vitally laid on his heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, a vast number, from various ways would preach very differently to what they do now; the light of truth would be clear from their lips, and the salt of their ministry would have some little savour; and had it been always so beside much else, we should hear nothing of its being the duty of the natural man to believe unto eternal

salvation, and to possess himself of that faith that is alone the free grace gift of God and fruit of the Spirit; nor should we hear anything of universal invitations or exhortations to eternal life; even as now, not one word of the

kind is any-where to be found, from our Lord's, or from his apostles' address to the world dead in sin.

## **PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON**

Many thing in the parables of our Lord, and especially in the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, Matt xxii, have been considered quite to the point, in favor of duty faith and universal invitations, and are of course so taken up and handled. But passing by the fact, that parables have always some general design, and are never intended to mean every thing that the distinct words borrowed to make up the figure, would literally imply, we win look and turn our attention to verse 11- 13, which contain the general design of this parable, and which must at once exclude all warrant for such sentiments, as having no possible place whatever in our Lord's intention by the parable, or by any of the terms used to express it.

'And when the King came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the King to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

(1) Here is the wedding garment named; and which is 'the best robe,' not wrought by the needy, but brought forth and put upon him, by gift and gracious command, Luke xv 22. It is the righteousness that is imputed without works, and which makes the blessed man, Rom iv 8. It is the garment of salvation, with which the Lord himself clothes his church, and makes her greatly to rejoice in him, Isa lxi 10. It is the righteousness of God, Rom ill 21,22, which the Saviour brought in, Dan ix 24, and in which alone Paul most earnestly desired to be found, Phil iii 9. (2) That no man is welcome to this gospel feast of the new testament kingdom of our Lord, without this wedding garment on. (3) That it is a presumptuous self-righteous offence to the king, for any one to expect to come acceptable to this feast, either as proper for the church below, or for heaven above at last, without this wedding garment of imputed righteousness. (4) That, consequently, we can have no warrant from the King to invite any, but those to whom we can in the King's own name guarantee the certainty of this wedding garment of imputed righteousness; and which we can do as sure as

the Lord liveth and is true, to all the characters that are everywhere named and described for us, in connection with the gospel grace and eternal salvation invitations of the holy word; but most decidedly to none others. (5) That we, therefore, can have no warrant for universal invitations, because we cannot guarantee a universal imputation of righteousness; and without this righteousness we can guarantee no acceptance with the Lord by any one word of his mouth. (6) Because the gospel ministry has no such awful malignity in it, as to invite any man into a condition wherein, adding presumptuous offence to all his former sins, he is ordered to be bound hand and foot, taken away, and in wrath cast out, with, 'How camest thou in hither?'

And the King saith unto him, 'Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? (1) Here is a man that had not a wedding garment; he had not one on in the former verse, and here he had not got one at all to put on it seems; not one in his faith as a point of belief; not one in his hope of justification to life; not one in his way of expecting to stand complete and without blame before the Lord in the last great day. And according to the general design of this parable, this man was, first, the Pharisees of the Jewish nation, whose self righteousness was thus shown up in true character and condemned. And, next, this man in figure is every professor of religion who has not got the Lord's imputed righteousness as the only garment of his hope of acceptance before God in his kingdom. (2) 'How camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?' since there is no way revealed, declared, or meant in the sacred word of eternal truth, of a soul's acceptance into eternal life but in the Lord's own imputed righteousness; and so not in the fleshly any way of man's own pious fancy, but in this the Lord's own one, and only one peculiar way of grace, and of Christ all in all. (3) The man without the wedding garment is called 'Friend.' This was, first, in a way of usual common courtesy, and so was suited to the parable. But next and beyond this, true godliness is a matter of real, vital, and soul friendship between the Lord and his blest and saved people; for salvation is the love of God in works and blessings of grace declared, and true and vital godliness is love in such way divinely begotten in the soul and brought forth \*into life toward the Lord; for we love him only because he so first loved us. And, consequently, the professor of religion is a professor of such friendship toward the Lord, and so the more awful the hypocrisy when it is discovered to be after the flesh only, and not in the Spirit, truth, and righteousness of the

Lord. (4) 'And he was speechless.' Hark, the awful silence! For this is not without its weighty meaning. He could give no answer whatever on the authority of anything in the Lord's own word, nor by any way in the Lord's own name; and all else is no speech at all before the Lord. And our Lord declared the man speechless; so that nothing in heaven nor on earth can find or furnish a speech for the man before the Lord, who has not the wedding garment. But if in the counsels of the Lord, or in the word of the Lord, or in the ministry of angels, or in the ministry of John the Baptist, or in the ministry of our Lord, or in the ministry of the apostles, or in the authorized ministry of any of the Lord's gospel ministers, any authority was divinely given for universal invitations, that would be a speech for such a man, and he might then say, 'I came because I was told to come;' but our Lord declares there is no such speech in truth for such a man.

Universal invitations are therefore of men, and not of God; but such as they are, as by many used and contended for, we may suppose them to form a speech after their own kind; and which may be justly considered to be in the following order; 'in answer to 'How callest thou in hither?' 'I came because I was invited to come, and should not have come if I had not been invited; but Mr.... came and said that he was thy servant, and had direct commission from thee to invite all to come, and that it was my duty to come, that I ought to come, should come, and must come; or I should be doubly punished in hell, if not exclusively damned for not coming if I did not come after so invited; and I arose and came accordingly.' But, 'not having a wedding garment!' 'True, Lord, I have not; and am equally ignorant of -what it is; for with universal invitations I have scarcely heard of any such a thing, and never heard of it plain enough to know what was meant by it; and I was never once fully told its indispensable importance for the soul's life; only that I should and ought to believe and come. For the said Mr ..... never preached one fiftieth part so much of imputed righteousness and of the soul's most solemn need of it, as in which only possibly to stand before the Lord and live, as he did of universal invitations, with should come, and ought to come, and the eminent piety of coming. And the said Mr... never did profess to say, that the imputation of righteousness was universal; and as without that it could never go with universal invitations; and so universal invitations have always had to go without it; and so invited without the wedding garment, I came without it, and here I am in my profession without it, as I have been taught and guided; and as far as I am wrong in my profession, I

have been deceived by Mr... who ought to be ashamed of himself if he knew better; and if he did not know better, he ought to be ashamed of himself for professing to be a teacher and guide of others, when he himself did not know the way.' 'Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully,' Jer. xlviii 10.

## **THE USE OF TEXTS IN ISOLATION, WITHOUT REGARD TO THE OVERALL TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE**

There are many who now say, 'that they think it best to take the scriptures and preach from them as they find them.' If this was in the mind and spirit of truth, it would be all right; for although there might be a difficulty in coming at the precise meaning of some circumstantial passages, all fundamental truths would be clear as a sunbeam, the scriptures would be seen to be perfectly harmonious without a shadow of discord, and so uniform as a whole, as not to admit the appearance of self contradiction, jar, or what could not be righteously reconciled. But this is not what is meant; but the taking of the letter of scripture as it stands in mere sounds, without any of that special regard to the mind of the Spirit, on the proper distinctions of the law and of the gospel, of the different covenants, and the language used peculiar to their constitution and design; of characters, the living by quickening and regenerating grace, from the dead in sin; the called and believing churches of the saints in Christ, from the world at large which lieth in wickedness; which is always required, to read the scriptures with understanding. The scriptures can never with self-consistency, harmony, and without irreconcilable contradictions, be made to support any sentiments or religious principles contrary to what God really intends in and by his word; and when men take up and hold principles contrary to the mind of the Lord, they are always obliged to hold the scriptures in a way self-contradictory and self-irreconcilable, to support those sentiments; and which is as certain a sign of error, as when a sentiment is held for which there is not even the mere sound of one text to support it, but many directly opposed. By taking and preaching from the scriptures as they find them, as it is called, by catching at mere sounds, those men make even God to say and unsay, and the scriptures, most of all books under the heavens, to lack the common sense of self-consistency, and to abound with irreconcilable contradictions; for some of them have spoken out and said, that 'No man can reconcile the contents of the Bible;' that 'Christ taught no system;' that 'Truth is no system.' This must be all true of the scriptures, and of the gospel of Christ, or

those men must be all this distance from the truth of the scriptures, and of the gospel of Christ.

The very thing that infidels have strove for ages to establish, is by such preachers tamely given up into their hands; namely, 'That the scriptures are such a Jargon of confusion, that they cannot be made to agree with themselves.' And as one in relation to the Bible said in public print but the other day, 'Why refer at all to a record that is made to say anything?' And from which, infidels boldly conclude, that as contradictions must involve falsehoods on the one side, or the other, further evidence is not required upon which to condemn the scriptures, as neither in whole nor in part the revelation of the wisdom of a God. And can this awful conclusion be wondered at, when preachers and professed friends and advocates of truth, to support their carnal notions, can tax the very sacred text of all revealed religion with such awful and irremediable discrepancies?

From this taking of the scriptures as they find them, it has been said, 'There are as many passages in the scriptures for free will, as there are for free grace;' although the inspired Paul has declared this to be impossible, Rom xi 6; Heb vi 17,18. This preaching from the scriptures as they find them, is a very fine plea for ignorance of the mind of the Spirit in the holy word, and an excuse from the labor of comparing 'spiritual things with spiritual,' the tedious necessity of a spiritual discernment, 1 Cor. 11 13,14, and from the toll of 'rightly dividing from the word of truth,' 2 Tim 11 15; and is very convenient for the preaching of one sort of gospel in the morning, and another in the afternoon part of the day, and another in the weekly lecture, according to the people that attend; and a different gospel in different pulpits according to the sentiments of the people, and especially so if they are after money; what awful trickery this is with the souls of men, and trifling with the solemn word of God; surely that text can seldom strike them, 'Thou, God, seest me.' And this scheme of preaching from the scriptures as they find them, is a nice convenient wide open door for the inlet of carnal men into the ministry and for a carnal ministry altogether; for no speaking by the Holy Ghost as holy men of old did, no speaking as the Spirit giveth utterance, no preaching with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is required in such a ministry; but (1) Self-righteousness, the universal sentiment of human nature, for the main subject, and as the chief feature of countenance to every subject. (2) The possession of sufficient natural ability to make a clever oration. (3) The studied art of neither preaching the doctrines of divine revelation nor yet openly denying them, of theatrically working upon the natural passions, and

of pleasing the carnal; and this is all that is required to make 'An acceptable preacher' in such a ministry. And then follows 'like people like priest;' but at length comes the judgment of God on the matter, Hos. iv 9. For those who take and preach from the scriptures as they find them, I would look up and propose a few texts for them; they may it very convenient, take it kindly, and thank me for my trouble. And I would say:

Preach in the Morning, 'Many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus,' John xii 11. Afternoon, 'And no man receiveth his testimony,' John ill 32. Morning, 'The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not,' 2 Cor. iv 4. Afternoon, 'If ye were blind ye should have no sin,' John ix 41. Morning, 'To open the blind eyes,' Isaiah xlii 7. Afternoon, 'That they which see might be made blind,' John ix 39. Morning, 'I will destroy my people,' Jer. xv 7. Afternoon, 'Therefore my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,' Jer. xxxi 14. Morning, 'And Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel,' Hos. x 6. Afternoon, 'And my people shall never be ashamed,' Joel ii 26,27. Morning, 'Hast thou not known? has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?' Isaiah xl 28. Afternoon, 'I am weary to bear,' Isaiah 1 14. Morning, 'But he is in one mind, and who can turn him?' Job xxiii 13. Afternoon, 'Therefore he was turned to be their enemy,' Isa lxiii 10. Morning, 'I will love them no more,' Hos. ix 15. Afternoon, 'I will love them freely,' Hos. xiv 4. Morning, 'And so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,' Rom v 12. Afternoon, 'If I had not done among them the works that none other man did, they had not had sin,' John xv 24. Morning, 'But the doers of the law shall be justified.' Rom 11 13. Afternoon, 'Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight,' Rom ill 20. Morning, 'There is none that doeth good, no, not one,' Rom ill 12. Afternoon) 'And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just,' Luke xxiii 50. Morning, 'Who will have all men to be saved,' 1 Tim 11 4. Afternoon, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,' Matt xi 25. Morning, 'Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,' 2 Pet ill 9. Afternoon, 'Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour,' Isa xxvii 11. Morning, 'I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel,' Hosea i 6. Afternoon, 'For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting,' Ps c 5. Morning, 'But I will

utterly take them away,' Hos. 16. Afternoon, 'And so all Israel shall be saved,' Rom xi 26.

Now if those who think it best to preach from the scriptures as they find them, will but take these texts in their mere letter and sound as they find them, irrespective of premises relation, and character, I will venture to say their ministry will not be chargeable with sameness, either in itself, or relatively, as to what the apostles preached. And will not the people be fed with knowledge and understanding too, so as to know just as much at twice seven years, end as at the beginning, of their right hand from their left, as to the great principles of revelation? and perhaps may then be told, 'They need not trouble themselves about doctrines, for that piety is every thing!'

### **WHERE DID THE DOCTRINE OF DUTY FAITH COME FROM?**

As there is not one text from the lips of our Lord, or the pen of his apostles, that can be construed to mean any thing in favor of the duty of the natural man to believe unto eternal salvation or of universal invitations, without doing violence to the connection, and to the credit of the sacred speakers; perhaps it will be asked, where then did duty faith, and universal invitations come from? And how is it that so many good men, great writers, and most of those who are called the ancient Fathers, have in a greater or less degree held them? My answer to these questions is, that they came from the early corruptions of Christianity; and of those many spirits that were not of God, that were even as early as the apostles' days gone out into the world, 1 John iv 1; working subtly, though to the apostles evidently, and which they called the mystery of iniquity, and the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, 2 Thess. 11 7,9. And the same continued so to 'work, until the pagan government of the Roman empire was first shaken, and then abolished, and so that which hindered was taken out of the way, verse 7; and then as opportunity suited, corruption advanced, and the countenance and character of Christianity became almost universally changed from individual godliness in conscience by the Holy Ghost, into collective, provincial, and then national religion, by syndical decrees, councils, and then national enactments; these being of course considered binding, as divine, and of equal authority as the scriptures themselves, and the scriptures also were twisted, wrested, and corrupted into a seeming sanction of these things; and it was then considered accordingly, to be the duty of all to be Christians as so prescribed. And so instead of personal, vital godliness in the soul, by the



immediate regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, was substituted a religion of solemn mimicry of scripture spirituality, vitals, words, and ordinances; in mere external rites, forms and ceremonies. And all this as we have said, being determined by syndical decrees, councils and national enactments, and these being gravely considered binding, as divine laws, it was consequently considered the duty of all by law to be Christians and to be invited, exhorted, and commanded, and at length even to be made to be Christians and infants, and all; and the latter to be told they were so and should be so when they grew big enough; and that by such a dutiful submission to be Christians as by such divine law prescribed, they should go to heaven; and this established at once the ought to be Christians and the consequent ought of all, as such, to go to heaven. And this wild delusion of the duty of all, to be saints for heaven, inseparable from national church notions, has stuck fast to a greater or less degree to most even good men, in that connection, ever since; attaching an unwarrantable importance to the ancient Fathers as guides, who were most, if not all of them, so tainted with the above corruptions and delusions, that the rankist papist under the heavens can now quote them for their authority; as Dr Pusey of Oxford does.

From this fruitful source of early corruption, and in this way of commendation, the plausible, self-righteous, and flesh and blood pleasing errors of duty faith unto eternal salvation, and universal invitations of all of themselves to be, and to have, the personal state of character, and the special blessings of the saved and blest of the Lord, found their way falsely into the name of the religion of the true God, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and in that name, have now made their wide spread over the earth, into every denomination of religious professors; and which are now fostered and maintained, (1) By a concealment of the great and discriminating doctrines of revealed truth. (2) By the concealment of the all-important truth, that the soul of sinful man is nothing, and has nothing, whereby possibly to see, or enter the kingdom of God, unless born of the Spirit of God, and the fact also, that none but a new creature, the free grace workmanship of God only, is personally in Christ for eternal life. (3) By applying the scriptures in a way and manner to persons and things, evidently never intended; as that to the world that belongs only to the believing people and church of God, &c; as though the believing, and truly regenerated church and people of God, were only one part of the world, merely self-reformed, as the other part ought to be. (4) By a most corrupt mixing up of things as all one, which are so distinct in nature, design, and language, that they can never be made up into one, and the same thing, without direct self-contradiction; such as the law by

Moses, and grace, and truth, by Jesus Christ, John 1 17 - The less glorious ministration of death and the more glorious ministration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii 7-11 - The inferior and the better, as the first and the second, the old and the new covenants, Heb via 6,7,13 - The better hope, which implies another that was not so good, Heb vii 19 - A more excellent ministry, which implies another that was not so excellent, Heb viii 6 - The two mounts, Heb xii 18,22-24 - The two allegorical women, the bond-woman and the free-woman, Gal iv 20, and to the end of the chapter - The circumcision made with hands, and the circumcision made without hands, Eph i 11, Col ii 11 - The law of works, and the law of faith, Rom iii 27. These things are as perfectly different and distinct in their nature, place, and design, as a shadow is from the substance, a demand is from a gift, and as a death warrant is from a royal warrant of free pardon. But bible distinctions of truth, strictly observed, would anew up duty faith, and universal invitations, in too ridiculous a figure to be endured; for those sentiments cannot properly be kept with any countenance upon their feet, only upon bible distinctions being confounded to self contradiction.

But some will say, we have great and learned authors, and the Fathers to support our side. But our Lord said to his disciples, 'Call no man your Father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven,' Matt xxiii 9. And so his word is to be first taken, in all ages. And others will say, if we err, we err in good company, for many good men have held duty faith, &c. And so the Jews might equally have said, they erred in good company, when they worshipped the calf that Aaron the high priest of God set up; but their wickedness was none the less, nor the calf less an idol, nor the God of Israel less denied thereby.

### **Concluding statement**

We will now bring our remarks to a close, by observing, that I have not thus written to elicit any reply from you, nor to be considered as laying you under any personal obligation to reply; but to anew, as I said on the first page of these remarks, 'Why I spurn duty faith as the spawn of at least half the errors there are in the professing world.' But I have either written truth or falsehood, and if the latter, that will be easy to be proved, by the spirit of truth in the sacred text; and be it so done by some hand, until it be brought quite down to the ground, as flat as Dagon fell on his face, 1 Sam v 3.

If any sort of an earnest attempt be really made to prove me wrong, by the unjarring testimony of the word of God, the same shall have my most earnest attention; and if I am proved in error, in the main principles of these remarks, my most ready submission. But if no such attempt be made to prove me wrong, in the proof that duty faith, &c, herein opposed, is bible truth, by the mind of the Spirit, we shall conclude it is because by the word of God, these remarks on duty faith, cannot be refuted; and that silence is deemed most expedient, while duty faith, and universal invitations to eternal salvation, though totally unknown in the word and spirit of scripture truth, do take too well, and have too many admirers, and too many popular advantages among men, to be surrendered up for God's unpopular truth's sake; till the soul is necessitated thereto, by the power of the Holy Ghost. May the Lord himself attest, what these remarks really are in his sight, in the conscience of those, who with prayerful enquiry after truth, may read them, for his great name's sake. Amen.