

THE
TRUE GOSPEL;
NO YEA AND NAY GOSPEL:
WITH THE APPENDIX,
IN ANSWER TO A PAMPHLET
LATELY PUBLISHED BY AN
ANONYMOUS WRITER,
UNDER THE SIGNATURE OF VERAX.
BY ROBERT HAWKER
THE TRUE GOSPEL.

AND what is the yea and nay gospel?—Truly it is much easier to say what it is not, than to tell what it is. For a yea and nay gospel is, in fact, no gospel at all. It is everlastingly made up of may be's and if be's. It is altogether-conditional, and therefore must of necessity leave the whole in the final event to a peradventure. It doth not rest upon God's will, but upon man's pleasure. It is not founded in divine appointment, but in the result of human attainment. Not in

what God's grace is, but in what man's merit shall be. And of consequence, according to this state of things, the whole is left at the last to an uncertainty which shall prevail, God's power or man's; the Lord's counsel or man's works. A precious sample this of a yea and nay gospel.

Moreover, all the principles of a yea and nay gospel are in correspondence with those outlines of the system. A yea and nay gospel takes for granted, that all men are alike in a salvable state; neither can any man fail of salvation, but from his neglect of the opportunity at one time or other afforded him. And if a man seeks for acceptance before God, partly by faith and partly by good works, he is certain of happiness. Christ is made by the yea and nay gospel, nothing more than a procuring cause. So that if a man so far makes use of Christ as by him to seek out his own salvation in the exercises of faith, and repentance, and good works; he doth all that is required of him, and Christ will make up the deficiency. The improvement of this opportunity with such men, is the sure way of salvation; and by the neglect of it, a man according to their creed may be lost. In those ups and downs, those hopes and fears, the principles of a yea and nay gospel consist. And thus living at an uncertainty, such men die at an uncertainty; and they go out of the world as they came into it, at a peradventure, concerning the one thing needful.

And the advocates of a yea and nay gospel, all act in perfect conformity to those principles. The preachers of it are continually holding forth a motley religion which they call the gospel, made up of law and gospel, faith and good works. Were it not for the awfulness of the subject, a man might smile to hear what very wooing and winning words are made use of by them to gain upon the hearts of their hearers by human persuasion. Offers of Christ, yea pressing Christ upon the congregation, are the chief topics adopted. And sometimes, from the great earnestness with which they have worked up their natural feeling to persuade, they enforce the present opportunity as if, should it be neglected, never another

perhaps may be afforded them. And not infrequently they call into aid that blessed scripture of the Holy Ghost which the apostle Paul hath given the church in a very different sense from what those men use it. "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day, of salvation I have succoured thee. Behold now is the accepted time! Behold, now is the day of salvation,"* (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

* Every one who is acquainted with the bible ought to know that those words in the former part of the verse, are taken from the writings of the prophet Isaiah 49:8. where the prophet under the Holy Ghost, is representing God the Father speaking to God the Son, in covenant promises, to help him on and carry him through in his Mediatorial character, in the accomplishment of redemption. See also a further account of this, Psalm 89:19-37. What the Holy Ghost hath added in this scripture by Paul, is an affectionate application of the blessed doctrine of Christ's redemption being now finished; that the church may know that what was then predicted by the prophet, hath been accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore the present time-state of the church is the accepted time, and the day of salvation for gathering in the Lord's people. The now, both of the accepted time and the day of salvation, means the whole day of life, in the instance of every child of God. And that, and that only, strictly and properly speaking, becomes so when the Lord makes his people "willing in the day of his power," (Psalm 110:3.) And so far is this from being limited as the yea and nay men would have it, that if refused to-day, may not be offered to-morrow, that it never can be said to begin in effect, until grace begins as the cause in the heart. The labourers of the eleventh hour, were never sent before. The dying thief on the cross, was never called by sovereign grace until dying. And till God calls all the woings and winnings of human entreaty will leave the sinner just were it found him. It is God alone who can persuade Japheth to dwell in the tents of Shem. Gen. 10:27. And whenever the Lord manifests this sovereign act of his grace, be the day of life what it may, this is, in the truest sense of the apostle's words, the accepted time, and the day of salvation. How very awful must it be

then in man to limit the Holy One of Israel! How solemn a delusion, to make a yea and nay gospel, in leaving things at a peradventure, which the Lord hath not made so. Oh, the blessedness of all those "promises in Christ Jesus, which are all yea and amen, unto the glory of God by its," (2 Cor. 1.)

Reader ! Let you and I before we prosecute the subject further, pause for a moment and contemplate the awful features of the yea and nay gospel. Sure it hath not in it a single look that is lovely. How truly opposite to what the apostle hath elsewhere proclaimed, concerning the freeness and fullness, and the everlasting assurance of salvation in Christ—" this is a faithful saying," said Paul, (and well might he say so, being himself a living monument at the time, both of the freedom and greatness of it,) " and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," (1 Tim. 1:15.) And worthy indeed it is of all acceptance, for all need it; when it be received as it is held forth, the free and unmerited gift of God in Christ. But if it be joined with the conditions of a yea and nay; that it may be a salvation as my poor soul improves it, or a condemnation if my faith, and prayers, and tears do not come up to such and such a standard; while any thing depends upon me and my attainments, it ceaseth to be a matter of joy and glad tidings to my heart; for very sure I am, I should come short of it. And "if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain," (Gal. 2: 21.) Reader! It is our mercy, that the yea and nay gospel was not the creed of the apostles. Paul was so offended at the very mention of it, that he speaks of it with abhorrence; nay, he almost swears to it, that such was not the gospel which he and his faithful companions preached to the church. "But as God is true, (said] Paul,) our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea ; for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us," (2 Cor. 1:18-20.)

But if the yea and nay gospel be not the true gospel, it is time to inquire what is? And here again it is our mercy that we cannot be at a loss, under divine teaching, to discover "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and as the Lord Jesus himself hath said concerning all his people, " if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," (John 8:31, 32.)

The true gospel comes home endeared and recommended to the affections of the Lord's people, both in the beautiful simplicity of it, and in the fullness of it; agreeably to what the prophet was commanded by the Holy Ghost to proclaim in the mountain of the Lord's house, that it was a way so plain and self-evident, when taught by the Lord, that " the wayfaring man, though a-fool, should not err therein," (Isaiah 35:8.) In the covenant engagements of Jehovah, each glorious person of the Godhead is set forth as taking his own personal acts in the accomplishment of it; and Christ becomes revealed as the one, and the only one ordinance of heaven, for salvation to every one that believeth.

God the Father's love is very blessedly manifested in all those acts of grace which refer to his choosing the church in Christ; adopting the church in Christ; and accepting the church in Christ before all time. And God the Son's love is equally revealed, as having from eternity betrothed the church to himself in an everlasting union; and in redeeming the church from all iniquity, by the sacrifice of himself. And God the Holy Ghost's love is demonstrated with equal clearness in the scriptures of truth, in having anointed both Christ and his church from the beginning ; and by his regenerating grace during the time-state of the church, raised her up together with Christ, and made her sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And all the sovereign acts, so very fully and completely secure the present state of the church in grace, and for the future enjoyment in glory, that nothing of peradventure can arise: no yea and nay can come between to make the event doubtful. The charter of heaven runs in these words : " I will make an everlasting covenant with

them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," (Jer. 32:40.)

The true gospel being thus founded in the eternal counsel, purpose, will, and pleasure of God, in his trinity of persons, comes home endeared to the heart by every thing that can recommend it to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And when the Lord Jesus Christ is held up to the view as containing in himself, and in his offices and relations, every principle essential to salvation, here are no peradventures, no buts, or ifs, or doubts, or misgivings. The sinner, if taught of God, is led to see that salvation is in no other but in-Christ; "neither is there any other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Christ is declared to be the sum and substance of the whole bible. He is the object of all ordinances; the thing signified in all sacrifices; the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. And when the Lord the Holy Ghost, who lifts up Christ to the church in all the fulness and completeness of his finished salvation, brings him home to the heart also by the blessed influences of his sovereign grace, and forms him there the hope of glory; then Christ is seen, and felt, and enjoyed, in all the sweetness and suitableness of his divine character; and the believing soul enters into the apprehension, how blessedly he is made of God to all his people, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord," 1 Cor. 1:30.

When we contrast the true gospel of Christ, as preached by the apostles in the scriptures of eternal truth, to the yea and nay gospel of human inventions, it is not to be wondered at, that we find the great apostle Paul speaking with such vehemency of zeal against all departures from the unerring standard. Hence, in his epistle to the church at Galatia, he expresseth himself in these strong words. "If we, (said Paul) or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed." Not that the apostle in the least supposed the bare possibility of the

thing itself, that an angel from heaven could ever do so. For very sure Paul was, that if angels came down again to preach Christ, they would preach him as they once before did at his birth, the complete Saviour of lost sinners. But Paul merely takes up the supposable idea of angels preaching contrary to his preaching, in order to demonstrate that if it were possible for angels to do so, they would be accursed. And he repeats it a second time, in order to shew that what he said, was not the effect of haste in speaking, but under the full conviction of what he had learnt from the Holy Ghost. See Gal. 1:6-12.

Reader! What are your views of this subject? How have you learned Christ? If he who taught Paul had taught you, (and Paul declares that the gospel which he preached, he neither received it of man, neither was taught it by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ) surely you cannot look on, in the present day, but with great concern, when every where around we behold a yea and nay gospel, so very generally substituted in the place of the full, free, and finished salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Where shall we go, to what congregation of what are called evangelical churches shall we join ourselves, to hear the person, work, offices, characters, and relations, of the Lord Jesus Christ held up as the Alpha and Omega, in God's view, and his people's view, of the salvation of his people? Alas! what self-seeking, and self-pleasing ; human attainments, and creature righteousness, men are taught to be looking after, instead of seeking to ' Christ, in order to recommend themselves to God. And what may we finally expect, nationally considered, will be the consequence, but as it was by Israel of old? Ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they rejected the Lord of life and glory. The Pharisees of those times were not chargeable for immoralities; for they prided themselves in those attainments. They did not neglect the ordinances of God's house, for they were strict to an excess in all outward observances. But they slighted him by whom alone salvation could be obtained. And what national judgments followed? And very certain it is that the condemning sin of every

people is thinking light of him whom Jehovah delighteth to honour. Oh! What a tremendous judgment is contained in that one sentence: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish!" Isa. 60:12.

One word more with the reader at parting. Have you seen the wretchedness of a yea and nay gospel?

And do you discover, through divine teaching, that the true gospel can be no yea and nay gospel? Then let me just add an affectionate recommendation, to seek under the Holy Ghost's teaching, that blessed life of grace, whereby faith derives from Jesus daily strength to live upon Jesus; and to make him what God hath made him, the author and finisher; the first cause and final end of every thing that is truly blessed, in life, in death, in time, and to all eternity.

Depend upon it, that it is a blessed and most prosperous way, to maintain and keep alive in the soul the gracious influences we derive from the Lord, by living upon the Lord. Direct acts of faith upon the person of Christ, cannot fail of endearing Christ. Every child of God, when brought into an acquaintance with the plague of his own heart, is supposed to be under the teaching of God; yea, in fact, must be taught of God the Holy Ghost. And it is one of the unalterable promises of the covenant; "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children," Isa. 54:13. But how is this fulfilled if the children are living at an uncertainty of a yea and nay gospel? What peace can they have, as long as they are apprehensive that there is unpardoned guilt upon the conscience? What confidence can they enjoy towards God, while they make justification before God a variable thing; and instead of coming wholly to the Lord, in the new and living way of Christ's blood, are making part saviours of their own frames, and feelings, and experiences?

It will be a mercy if any reader of this little tract, whom the Lord

hath called by grace, with an holy calling, (and it is for the use of such, under the Lord's blessing, for whom it is written,) should be led to see the wretchedness of a yea and nay gospel, with which the present day so much abounds ; and be directed by the Holy Ghost, in his glorifying the Lord Jesus, to live upon a sure gospel, by living wholly upon Jesus. To such a one I would say, very sure I am, your soul will find no real, solid, and substantial comfort, until you are brought to live upon Christ, by living out of yourself. As you came first to Christ, or rather, more properly speaking, as you was led first to Christ, so to the last you will find nothing more to bring you to him.

Empty you first came, and empty in yourself you will always be. And it is a blessed way for maintaining real spiritual life in the soul, when we barter our sins for Christ's righteousness; our poverty for his riches; our leanness for his fullness: and in so doing we find the truth brought home to the conscience, with which Christ comforted Paul;" My grace (said Jesus) is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And what it was to Paul, so is it to all like Paul, the children of God in Christ. 2 Cor. 12:9.

And now in conclusion. If the reader be happily taught of the Lord the evil of sin, in his own fallen, degraded nature; and the infinite suitability in Christ's salvation for his recovery by grace; then will the true gospel appear to him no yea and nay gospel; but both the person of Christ, and the salvation by Christ, be in his esteem what it is in God's esteem, the one thing needful; and Christ " the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth!"

And these will be the happy and blessed effects of such divine teaching. First, the soul will be kept humble before God, in a conscious sense of indwelling, inherent sin, in the very nature and being of man. Our constitution by the fall, is virtually all sin. The essence, the very elixir of our being is rotten in the core. "I know (said Paul) that in me, (that is in my flesh) dwelled' no good thing,"

Rom. 7:18. Hence that precious effect which the Lord marked out by the prophet: " That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done saith the Lord God !" Ezek. 16:63.

Secondly. As the consciousness of this inherency of sin, tends, under the sovereignty of grace, to keep the soul humble before God ; so doth it effectually tend also to hide all pharisaical pride from the eyes of the sinner. The apostle Paul was himself a lively example to illustrate this great truth. Before his conversion, he had the highest apprehension of his own innate goodness! And thought himself within a few steps of heaven, when he lay bordering on the brink of hell. Built up on this pharisaical righteousness, he formed the highest opinion of himself. "I was alive (said he) without the law once;" that is, I was so self-confident of my own attainments, that I had not the smallest apprehension but of finding favour for myself before God. "But (said Paul) when the commandment came ;" that is, came home with all its mighty bearings in its spiritual force, and power, to my heart ; shewing me as in a glass, my own sinfulness, and deformity, then " sin revived, and I died," Rom. 7: 9. The soul, under such views of self, will never be able to cherish any thing of pharisaical righteousness before God.

And thirdly; another blessed property will be the sure consequence; namely, the keeping open, through grace, a spring of true repentance always before God. The Lord himself describes such holy mourners, by his servant the prophet. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born," Jer. 31:9.

And lastly, and above all; nothing can, or will, as fully tend to endear Christ, in all the glories of his person; and in all the

greatness, fullness, necessity, and suitableness of his salvation ; as the daily sense of our own nothingness, and hopeless and helpless state as we are in ourselves before God. Oh! The preciousness of our most glorious Christ, when the daily sense of the sinner's daily want of him is inwrought, and inlaid in the soul. Blessed for ever be God! Such is the true gospel, and no yea and nay gospel of our most glorious Lord. The Lord confirm it in the hearts, and minds, and consciences, of his people ; and that " all the promises of God in Christ Jesus, are yea and amen, unto the glory of God by us !"

APPENDIX.

A few days since, I received through the medium of the post office, a small pamphlet, with this title, The True Gospel, by Dr. Hawker, shewn to be at variance with the gospel of Christ and his apostles; and therefore undeserving of its assumed appellation. In a letter to a friend, by Verax.'

This pamphlet was accompanied with a written letter, (whether from the same author I know not (for it was alike anonymous) expressed in terms of no small acrimony. It began thus: The morose and censorious spirit (censorious perhaps meant) which prevails in your "True Gospel,' affords me a strong and presumptive argument, that those sentiments which inspire such a spirit are not of God.' What the writer meant by sentiments inspiring a spirit,' I am at a loss to know. That the spirit of a man may beget sentiments, is easy enough to be understood, for the word of God saith, and blessedly saith, " The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity ;" and of consequence inspire all corresponding affections. But how this order of things is to be inverted, by sentiments inspiring a spirit is, I confess, above my comprehension. However, the object of the writer was to say somewhat very severe ; the manner of wording it was no fault of his, if his abilities could not keep pace with his anger. At the close of the pamphlet, were the following words, written apparently with the same pen as the letter, which I

transcribe as before, verbatim et literatim. Take heed, Sir, that you be not found in the same work with him, whom the Holy Ghost stiles the accuser of the brethren, Rev. 12:10.'

The whole contents of the pamphlet, abstracted from the many angry expressions scattered up and down in it, may be summed up in a few lines ; and indeed is summed up in the author's own words, in one of the paragraphs : he saith, that the true gospel of my tract, implies that there is some other inability than that of the will, which prevents man from being saved; but saith he, Jesus and his apostles knew of no other ; they therefore taught that in the rejection of the appointed salvation, men are inexcusable and self-condemned. Here is free will in the very quintessence of it. A doctrine, it true, which sets aside the necessity of the new birth altogether, and makes the grace of God to depend wholly upon the will of man.

Unmoved as I am with the least anger, beyond the hectic of the moment, from the contents either of the pamphlet or letter, (for indeed both are too weak and trifling, in point of argument or sound reasoning, to excite any) yet the duty which I owe the church of God, will not suffer me to remain silent under such aspersions. For if it could be shewn, according to the bold title-page of this anonymous writer, that the gospel which I have gone preaching among the people of God, for near forty years, is indeed at variance with the gospel of Christ and his apostles; it would be a mercy in the great head of the church, both to myself, and to his people, that I should preach no more. And if there were even the possibility of being found in the same work with the devil, after the long and laborious services I have sustained in the ministry, I should have cause to be tremblingly alive with the bare apprehension.

But none of these things move me. I know whom I have believed. Neither for the justification of myself, or my preaching's, or writings, should I have taken up the pen to advance a single line. That is a point which must be determined elsewhere. It is not from personal considerations that I now write. I consider myself

imperatively called forth to confirm and make good what I have written, for the church's sake, which is Christ's body. It is his blessed cause for which I feel; his people's comfort for which I contend. For myself, let me be thrown into the back ground of the subject through the whole. It matters not what becomes of me, or of any man, so God be glorified. But it is of infinite moment to the present and everlasting welfare of the church to be established in "the truth as it is in Jesus." It is of eternal consequence that no child of God should be left to the peradventure and uncertainty of a yea and nay gospel!

It is on this account I am come forward, to add this appendix to the new edition of this little tract. And if my opponent will believe me, I am truly glad of the occasion. I consider it both a privilege and a pleasure to do so, for sure I am the word of God will bear me out, in full testimony, that the doctrines delivered by me, as well from the pulpit as the press, are in perfect harmony with the gospel of Christ and his apostles. And let not Verax be offended when I add, that I find cause to bless God for this providence. I can and do see the Lord's gracious appointment in it. And who shall say what effects of blessedness may not follow, in the spirit of inquiry it may occasion among the Lord's people, from the Lord's blessing upon it? We find the great apostle Paul bursting forth in holy joy, when from certain opposition made to his ministry, he was afterwards enabled to tell the church, that "the things which had happened unto him had fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel. Christ, (said that servant of God) is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice!" And why may not every humble follower of the Lord, upon similar exercises, hope the same? Verax himself surely will not refuse his amen to the apostle's words, if I venture to adopt them for my own. "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through the prayer of the church, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." (Philip. 1:12-19.)

I must first observe, at the opening of the subject, that unhappily for my reprover's cause, he hath stumbled at the very threshold of

it. By a misnomer, peculiarly his own, he has called that my gospel which was never mine, nor his, nor any among the sons of men, being the "glorious gospel of the blessed God." (I Tim 1:11.) I should have blushed, indeed, if either in the title-page, or in the body of the work, or in any other of my writings I had joined my name to that of the gospel. No! I have simply done that, which is the uniform custom of all preachers to do; namely, I have taken a text of scripture, as the title-page of my sermon or tract; and from thence, have formed my observations upon it. Whether those observations are correct or not, is irrelevant to the subject. The gospel is still the same. My judgment or the judgment of any other man upon it, can have no operation whatever to alter the word of God. The true gospel still remains the true gospel, and never can become a yea and nay gospel. So saith God the Holy Ghost by Paul. So saith the universal voice of the church of God in all ages. And so must say every man that takes God's word for the standard of his faith, however differently he himself may construe the sense of God's truth.

After detecting this misrepresentation of my reprovor, concerning the subject, from the subject itself; the question at issue between Verax and Dr. Hawker, is reduced to a single point. He takes for the ground work of his argument, that my statement of the true gospel, as set forth in my tract, is at variance with the gospel of Christ and his apostles. I on the contrary contend, and with all the warmth and energy of one that contends for the plainest matter of fact, (though void of the least anger) that this little work of mine, as well as the general standard of all my preaching and writings, are in perfect harmony with the gospel of Christ and his apostles. And as the final termination of the dispute involves in it every thing that is momentous, both in relation to the life that now is, and that which is to come, (for the truth cannot be with both) may it be the pleasure of the Lord graciously to guide into all truth, and to confirm his word unto those that are his servants, " wherein he hath caused them to hope!"

And here in order to bring the matter to a speedy issue, by compressing as much as possible into a little compass, I shall lay down one general postulatam on the subject, which, when followed up with proof, will meet and answer all the flimsy observations of my reprovor. I am charged by him, with being at variance with Christ and his apostles, in that I have asserted the true gospel is no yea and nay gospel. In my defense I assert that I am herein in perfect harmony both with Christ and his apostles, their preaching being wholly and altogether the same. And, moreover, I add yet further, that in their example, the preachers of the gospel find no authority whatever to make ' offers or invitations in an indiscriminate manner to sinners in general neither do ' the scriptures furnish a single instance,' where Christ and his apostles have ever made offers but to the people of God.

I purposely place the subject upon this full, clear; and broad bottom, that my opponent, and all free-will men like him, into whose hands those writings of mine may come, shall be compelled to acknowledge, that my statement hath nothing of ambiguity in it; but is at once fair, candid, and open. And I purposely do this, on another account also,- namely, that when I shall have followed up my postulatam with proofs, unequivocal and decisive ; and shall have brought the subject to an issue, it may for ever silence such bold, unwarrantable, and anti-scriptural assertions of free-will men altogether. And if I am successful in substantiating what I now assert, with testimonies wholly taken from scripture, (which under God's grace is one of the easiest tasks in the world to perform) it ought to be followed with conviction in every breast before whom it comes. Even my opponent himself, if he claims the character of a man of candour, should gladly throw down his weapons of controversy, and come over to the faith which he hath laboured to destroy.

I say he should. But I am not so sanguine as to expect it. Nay, on the contrary I am taught, and by an authority that cannot be mistaken, that such a change is never to be expected, no, not in a

single instance, in any mind untaught of God. For Jesus himself hath said, and in a tone of decision which admits of no appeal, "no man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." 'Yes, saith my reprover, 'Jesus and his apostles knew of no other inability, to prevent men from being saved, than that of the will.' But the Lord as if "to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," repeats the solemn truth in the same chapter, and to those who heard these words before, and considered them as hard sayings. "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father." (See John 6:41-65.)

Now for my proofs. The first portrait of Christ on this subject, may be taken from the view of him which the evangelist hath drawn while preaching his first discourse, in the Jewish synagogue. It may be called, indeed, his ordination sermon. Luke relates it with beautiful simplicity—chap. 4:16-29. to which I refer for the sake of brevity. In this sermon Christ first preached generally before the multitude. In which he declares the authority of his mission : his qualifications to it, from the anointing of the Spirit ; the office he came to sustain—of preaching the gospel to the poor, healing the broken-hearted, and the like; the several acts of grace he came to perform ; and by the performance of which, his person and Messiahship was to be known ; he then returned the book to the minister, and sat down—and while the eyes of all that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him, " he began to say to them, this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Now let the reader observe on this preaching of Christ. Here is not a single word of invitation from Jesus to the congregation, from beginning to end: neither ' invitations nor offers.' Jesus simply states the outlines of his gospel, and no more. Surely had it been the intention of Christ, or had it corresponded to the purport of his ministry, to have held forth general promises indiscriminately to all sinners, there never could have been a finer opportunity for it. It was the Sabbath day. A large congregation, no doubt, was assembled. But not a word in a way of offer or invitation through the

whole, dropped from his sacred lips.

But it is not enough in support of my argument to shew this: this sermon of Christ's proves yet further, that it never was in the plan of Christ's preaching, to make general offers to sinners indiscriminately.' Let the reader attend to what follows in this discourse of Christ, and he will find what I say to be true. For we are told, that while Jesus thus spoke in a general way, of simply shewing what the great features of his gospel were, the whole congregation were delighted, and " all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." Thus far all was well; for there was nothing while Jesus thus preached in a general way, for the free-willers and the Pharisees of that age to take umbrage at. It fared then with this divine teacher, (" who spake as never man spake") as it fareth now with faithful preachers from among men : as long as the preaching is confined to general truths, no offence for the most part will be taken by the multitude. But with them, as with their master, if at any time from general truths they proceed to speak in a particular application of them, no free-will hearers will brook free-grace preaching. And thus it fared with Jesus himself on this very occasion. For as soon as Jesus began to make application from the general truths he had laid down, to special, personal, and discriminating cases, and instanced in those of Naaman and the widow of Zidon, but we are told that all the synagogue was full of wrath, and rose up, and thrust this divine preacher out of the city, and would have slain him.

Now let any candid man upon earth look at this striking instance, and determine the point. Yea, let my opponent himself be the umpire if he hath the candour to acknowledge it. Let him say, what was it wrought such an instant change in the minds of the congregation; but because, that instead as Verax saith, there is nothing wanting but the will to receive the word of God for salvation; they could not receive it, because as John the Baptist bore testimony to this certain truth: " a man can receive nothing

except it be given him from heaven." (John 3:27.) While the Son of God preached general truths all was well: but when he added, that there was no healing in Israel in the days of Elias but in the instance of Naaman and the widow, because the prophet was sent to no other; here was the cause of displeasure. Oh! How plainly were the words of Jesus fulfilled upon this occasion, as was before quoted; "therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father." (John 6:65.)

Let us pass on and take another portrait of our Lord while preaching. Look at him during his sermon on the mount.—Here we are told was a great multitude also assembled: upon all which occasions, Jesus spake of general truths. And through this whole discourse there is not a single instance of one offer or one invitation: and although it was a long discourse, which occupies three whole chapters in the relation; yet is it wholly confined to the office of teaching; see Matt. 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters. And what is said of this sermon, may be said, more or less, of every sermon of Christ, which he delivered in the audience of the people; all are in a general way. For if at any time upon those occasions the Lord did make a special and particular application of his subject, it was always personal, or in reference to certain dispositions of the mind, which as he, who knows the heart, knew that those to whom he addressed himself possessed; they were of- those the Father hath given to him, and as he called them " his sheep which knew his voice." Many instances of this kind we have recorded by the evangelist, such as the case of Matthew, Zaccheus, and the like. But these are so far from affording authority to say that Christ made general offers and invitations indiscriminately to all, that they prove most decidedly to the contrary, being wholly special and personal.

Advancing step by step in our pursuit of proofs to this statement of Christ's general way of preaching, we shall rise higher in the confirmation, as we go on, to behold another portrait of our blessed Lord in this department of his ministry. Let us look at him when

delivering his word in parables. Here, indeed, if my opponent, and all the free-willers of the age would accept of Christ's own decision upon the subject, they will find enough in one single verse to level to the ground at one blow, all the Babel-buildings of their hypothesis for ever. "Wherefore (said his disciples) speakest thou unto them in parables? Jesus answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given," Matt. 13:11. Can any thing be more pointed and decisive? Is it possible that any man in the face of this scripture can say, that Jesus and his apostles knew of no other inability but that of the will, which prevents a man from being saved?

But we must not stop here on the subject of parables. The Lord moreover adds, " Therefore speak I in parables, because, they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." Here Christ brings the matter to a final issue, and a very solemn one, if properly considered, to every free-Willer it is. God the Holy Ghost in those words hath not left it to the light and presumptuous reasonings of men untaught of God to determine, whether the will of the creature be, or be not, sufficient of itself to believe unto salvation; for he here asserts, that the blindness of the mind is induced, in confirmation of the words of the Holy Ghost by the prophet. And so firm and unalterable are his decisions on this point that no less than seven times those words of God by the prophet are quoted in the scripture in proof, Isa. 6:9, 10. Matt. 13:14. Mark 4:12. Luke 8:10. John 12:40. Acts 28:26. Rom. 11:7, 8.

Surely if there were a possibility for the human mind, void of divine teaching, to receive conviction of any one given truth of God, from the mere testimony of outward evidences, the doctrine of Christ's discriminating grace, taken, as it is, both from his holy word, and from his own personal example in his ministry, would

carry the accumulated witness to every heart. It would act like an overwhelming torrent, sweeping before it all the whole mass of the flimsy objections thrown up as a barrier by pharisaical pride and ignorance. But a decision which cannot err, explains the cause of unbelief, and traceth it to its source; " Therefore, (saith Jesus,) they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart that they should not," John xii. 39. While these things, however, lose their effect on all persons untaught of God; and, from the cause the Holy Ghost himself assigns, must for ever lose their effect, unless the Lord becomes the teacher; what a distinguishing mercy it is to the Lord's people, that while the Lord speaks now, as he did then in the days of his flesh to the multitude, in parables, " when alone he expoundeth all things to his disciples," Mark 4:34. Truly in effect the Lord doth as much speak to them now as he did of old, when after preaching in public he " turned himself unto his disciples, and said privately, blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear," Luke 23, Matt. 13:16.

The instances which I have now brought forward, as so many portraits taken of our Lord, in the exercise of his own personal ministry, are enough in point to prove the doctrine and establish the object I had in view. And if the reader be disposed to search for more, he may find them in every part of the gospel, carrying with them, as they certainly do, the same features of character in this department of Christ's office. While speaking to the multitude at large, our Lord's preaching was invariably in general terms; and if, even upon any of those occasions, the Lord spake in a special personal manner to any of his people whom he saw among the throng, his address to them was accompanied with certain marks of character, by which his invitations to them should be known. As for example: in his general discourse we hear him saying, "I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger," &c. John 6:35. " I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness," &c. John 8:12. But when to those or the like general expressions, the Lord was pleased at any time to add

special invitations to his people, the words themselves implied the persons Jesus had in view, and for whom they were intended. As for example: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," &c. Matt. 11:28. " If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," &c. John 7:37. Here we discover the corresponding affections in his people wrought by grace within answering to the call without. The invitation is to them that labour and are heavy laden under the burden of sin, and that thirst after Christ from a sense of the want of him; but how is this suited to the case of those who hold forth an unqualified invitation and promise to all? Christ himself hath drawn the line of distinction between those cases as luminous as if written with a sunbeam. Of the one he saith, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me," &c. John 6:37. " My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," &c. John 10:27. Of the other (that is, the rest, as Paul calls them, Rom. 11:7.) Jesus saith, "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word," &c. John 8:43. " Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," &c. John 10:26.

But wherefore should I spend time in selecting particular instances in proof of a truth which the bible of God, considered as one great whole, hath established and made clear from beginning to end. The Son of God himself, when towards the close of his ministry he addressed his Father, summed up the whole of his eventful design in coming upon earth in these words : " As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," John 17:2. Until a man can make it appear by a new system of logic, that by the many Christ here particularized, he meant the whole of mankind, nothing can be more decisive than that Christ's power over all flesh was to give eternal life to as many only, and no more, as the Father had given him for that express purpose. My reprover shall, if he please, (and if he be bold enough to do it, in spite of these truths) say again, as he hath said before— Jesus and his apostles knew of no inability than that of the will to prevent any man from being saved. But if he doth, humbler souls

will only find cause there from to adore God's patience, and to be astonished at man's presumption. For my part I shall take the other side of the question, and say, (though with the most profound reverence) I humbly conceive, both from the words of Christ, as well as the general analogy of scripture on this subject, the Son of God never could nor did make a single offer or invitation of eternal life to any but to such as the Father hath given to him. And the word of God shall be the umpire, whether my gospel (as my reprover is pleased to call it) or his, is most at variance with the gospel of Christ and his apostles.

But against those great and immoveable truths, my reprover hath brought forward certain quotations from scripture, and which, he conceives, will throw down the impregnable fortress. Unhappily, however, for his cause, there is not one of the portions of the word of God he hath chosen, but what becomes the very reverse of what he intended, and more or less confirms the truth he wishes to oppose.

For example. He quotes the case of Christ weeping over Jerusalem, and saith, that Jesus wept over the inhabitants of that city, saying, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." It is astonishing how men untaught of God pervert the scripture of truth. Had my opponent been divinely instructed concerning this sorrow of Christ, he would have understood that Christ was not weeping over the loss of any of his people in relation to their everlasting welfare, (for that Jesus knew, and had before said was impossible, John 6:87, and 10:27.) but his sorrow was excited in the prospect of their temporal distresses, in the destruction of their beloved city, then hastening upon them.

My reprover hath made an error in his quotation, whether by design or ignorance I know not. As he states it, Jesus wept over the inhabitants of Jerusalem. As the word of God states it, Jesus wept over the city. A small difference, perhaps, in his esteem; but a very

material one in the thing itself. And had he attended more diligently to the history of this event, as he ought to have done before he brought it forward, he might have seen (for it requires no spiritual discernment to discover natural truths) that it hath nothing to do with the point in question.

In proof I beg the reader to consult the evangelists in loco, Luke 19:41-44. and with it what Jesus had said before on the same subject. Luke 13:34,35. And if he hath at hand my ' Poor Man's Commentary' on those passages, and will condescend to read my observations on both, I shall take it kindly. But if not, let him look at the scripture statement simply as it is; and he cannot fail to discover that through the whole the Lord is speaking of Jerusalem in a national point of view. It is of temporal visitations, in the destruction of the city; and not of eternal concerns respecting the everlasting welfare of his people. Often the Lord, as he said, would have gathered them as a nation to acknowledge him for the Messiah, and as a nation they would not. Therefore their house (not the souls of Christ's people dwelling there) was left to them desolate. And because they rejected, and afterwards crucified "the Lord of life and glory," they were rejected as a nation. And Christ's prediction followed, when the army of Titus Vespasian sacked Jerusalem, and "took away both their place and nation," John 11:48.

And as a collateral proof of these things it is worthy remark, that when the affecting apostrophe of our Lord was followed with the final commission to his apostles to begin their ministry at Jerusalem, Luke 24:47. What Jesus had predicted also concerning his people in the beloved city was graciously fulfilled. Their house, indeed, was left unto them desolate; but those Jerusalem sinners, then called by sovereign grace from the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, truly said, "blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Three thousand souls were converted on the spot. And we are told that "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Mark not such as would

save themselves, according to my reprover's creed, where nothing but a man's will is wanting, but such as should be saved; that is, "whom the Lord made willing in the day of his power," Acts 2:34. 6:47. Psalm 110:3. What will my opponent say to these things? Will he have, candour enough to acknowledge, from such a scriptural statement of facts, that it was the house, and not the Lord's people dwelling in Jerusalem, that was left destitute, and over which Jesus wept?

Again. My opponent hath stumbled into another error in his quotations. He reproves me in my supposed forgetfulness of scripture, and brings forward certain passages to manifest his own forgetfulness. This is no uncommon thing in life.

' The reverend Doctor,' saith he, ' had totally forgotten that the scriptures of the old and new testament abound in language the most pathetic, alluring, and persuasive. Surely, he need to be reminded of the method which the Almighty himself took with his rebellious people, when he expostulated with and in-treated them saying, "Why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "Come, and let us reason together," &c:

This may, for aught I know, in his view, be very fine reasoning. But I should not only have totally forgotten scripture, but with it have lost common sense also, to discover where it lies. For how my reprover, or indeed any man alive, can make the Lord's expostulation with his people the ground of argument for using alluring words with any that are not his people, I am at a loss to conceive. It is indeed a curious kind of logic altogether, and happily for the world, is as yet untaught. God expostulates with the seed of Jacob, whom he hath taken into covenant with him. And my reprover would take the persuasive words of scripture to invite the seed of Esau, who are not in covenant with him, and whom the Lord himself calls "the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever." Mal. 1:4. God invites his house of Israel. And by this reasoning, his servants are to invite the house of bondage. God

allures his chosen. And his servants are to follow this example by doing the reverse, and aiming to allure all mankind. This is the first instance I have ever seen (and for the sake of common sense I hope it will be the last) where a man takes the reverse of a proposition to support his cause! Through what spectacles do such men read their bibles?

Once more. My reprover endeavours to press into his service (as all freewillers more or less have done) that blessed scripture of Christ; "God so loved the world," &c. John 3:16. But here, as before, the poor man is unhappy in his selection. This is a glorious truth, indeed, and as Paul speaking of it, saith, "and worthy of all acceptance." And all true preachers of the word should be for ever sounding such rich proclamations of mercy in all places of concourse. For most certain it is in every instance throughout the world, wheresoever, and to whomsoever the Lord gives grace to believe the record God hath given of his dear Son, salvation will assuredly follow ; " all that believe in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

But before any faithful preacher would presume from hence to invite all men, which promises everlasting life only to the believer ; he would do well to consider those two great points contained in the bosom of the scripture ; first, what Christ meant by the world ; and secondly, what is the ground work of faith or believing.

In relation to the former, what Christ meant by the world; I take for granted, that no man, who is at all acquainted with the word of God, can for a moment imagine that by the world Jesus meant all mankind. As well might it be supposed, that when Caesar Augustus (as we read Luke 2:1.) issued a decree that all the world should be taxed, the whole earth was included ? When we know that he possessed no such power, his empire being limited to Rome and her provinces. Or when Paul told the Colossians, that the gospel which was come to them was come also into all the world, Col. 1:6. the apostle meant the globe ; whereas it is notorious, that the vast

continent of America, with numberless other parts of the earth, are of modern discovery.

By comparing scripture with scripture, there can be no question, but that Christ when speaking, as in those words, of God's love to the world, meant the gentile church ; which, in contradiction to Jewish nations, (who considered all nations but themselves void of divine favour) is included in the covenant. So God had declared by Isaiah, 49:6. " And he said, it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the end of the earth." Hence Jesus himself, when speaking of the same subject said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring," John 2:2. And hence, John also, when writing to the church, and speaking of Christ as their propitiation for sin, added, " and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John 2:2. As if he had said, not for our's only who are of the Jewish church, but for the gentile church also throughout the world. But that this grace extended only to the church throughout the world wheresoever scattered, and not to all mankind, to whom Christ was not given as a covenant, is evident, from our Lord's own words ; where he draws the line of everlasting distinction between his church and the world. Of the former he saith, "I pray for them." Of the latter, in the same verse, he saith, " I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine; and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them," John 17:9, 10, 16. See also John 15:18, 19.

In relation to the latter, which is the ground work of faith or believing, the scriptures with one voice declare faith to be the gift of God, Eph. 2:3. A man can no more create faith than breathe a world. And after all the invitations and wooings of freewillers to the world, certain it is that the one cannot give, neither the other receive faith to believe, unless it be given from above. "Unto you, (saith the apostle, speaking to the church) it is given in the behalf of

Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake," Phil. 1:29. and hence, Christ is declared to be both the " author and finisher of faith," Heb. 12:2. With how little reason therefore, must it appear, that my reprover hath called this scripture into the support of his argument to make it speak what it was never intended. As if all men in the world were alike in a salvable state, and Jesus and his apostles (as my reprover saith) in direct contradiction to the whole tenor of scripture, know nothing to prevent it but a man's own will.

But here, no doubt, the whole body of freewillers will arise to a man, in order to bring forth their objections against a truth, which, if at once admitted and confirmed, must overthrow their whole system; as the Lord overthrew the tables of the money changers in The temple, when he drove out the whole party before him. Perhaps it will be demanded, (for such demands have been made before by men of this complexion, and not infrequently in terms of reproach against God awfully daring) that upon the presumption my statement is correct, to what purpose did Christ preach himself, or send his servants to do so, in the hearing of those which cannot, from the causes before assigned, receive the truth?

Though this question is not my province to answer, (and very sure I am the Lord himself will fully answer it in due season, and justify his sovereignty before the congregated world) yet, in the mean time, it may not be improper upon the present occasion to observe, that there is a most satisfactory reason always at hand, wherefore " the gospel must first be published (as our Lord himself hath said) before the end be, among all nations," Mark 13:10.

The Lord's people are a scattered people. They are mingled with and live among all the varieties of the earth. They must, therefore, be gathered as the Lord hath said: see Jeremiah 31:10, and 32:37, &c. Gal. 3:29.—And agreeably to this, the Lord Jesus hath described their bringing home and bringing in as among the blessed tokens of the latter day dispensation. "They shall come from the

east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God," (Luke 13:29 ; Mark 13: 27.) Hence, therefore, if need be, the gospel shall be sent into all places where they are, and be preached in the audience of the people after the example of Christ and his apostles. And if there be but a single soul belonging to Christ, (as he calls his people, Mark 9: 41,) in any place, thither for that soul's sake, the gospel shall come. Corinth was a populous city, full of sin and uncleanness, even to a proverb. But God had a people there dwelling. Thither, therefore, Paul came to preach. And in a vision of the night the Lord bid his servant not to fear, but to speak and hold not his peace: adding, by way of encouragement, "for I have much people in this city," (Acts 18:6 — 10. If all the Corinthians had been the Lord's people ; or if, (as my reprover saith,) Jesus and his apostles knew of nothing to prevent their being saved but a man's own will ; wherefore did the Lord so particularly mark his much people ; or not tell Paul to make the like invitations to all the city ?

But while this explains the cause wherefore the Lord will have his gospel preached in the audience of all ; while the gathering from among them his chosen, is the sole object for which the gospel is sent ; it must be observed, (how offensive soever it be to the pride of human freewill,) that in all preaching's since Christ returned to glory, as well as before, the same events invariably take place : " While for them, for whom it is designed, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven ; to them to whom it is not, it is not given," (Matt. 13:11.) Daniel shewed the same by prophecy, when looking into gospel days he said, "Many shall be purified, and made white and tried. But the wicked shall do wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand: but the wise shall understand," (Dan. 12:10.) And our apostle, in one of his epistles to this very church of Corinth, not only confirms the same, but added to it a solemn assurance, which, coming as it doth from an inspired writer, might have been thought sufficient to have silenced every freewiller. "Now thanks be unto God, (saith Paul,) which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of

his knowledge by us in every place." And mark what follows: "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. And who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:14-16.)

Now let the reader pause. Let him gather into one view the several testimonies of Christ's personal ministry which have been brought before him. Let him observe with due attention, the striking feature of character that marks the whole, between his general preaching before the multitude: and his special and personal invitations to his people. Let him as faithfully notice what Jesus himself declared to have been the cause, for which he spake to the multitude in parables ; while in secret expounding all things in order to his disciples, Mark 4:34. Let him not lose sight both of what God the Holy Ghost commanded, and what the Lord Jesus confirmed, when he said, " therefore they could not believe, because he had blinded their eyes and hardened their heart : " (Isa. 6:9 ; John 12:39, 40.) Let the reader, I say, keep these things in remembrance; let him look with an eagle-eye of the severest criticism over my tract, prefixed for this very purpose to this Appendix; and then let him say, (for to his conscience in the sight of God I appeal,) is there a line in it, but what is formed on the same model as Christ's preaching? Is there a vestige of an argument to be discovered through the whole of it, in which it can be shewn that it is ' at variance with the gospel of Christ and his apostles?'

And let my reader at the same time, while judging for me, no less judge for himself. Let him say what credit is due to the daring assertion that ' Jesus and his apostles knew of no other inability which prevents man from being saved but the will;' while such palpable facts in direct opposition to it, as he hath here beheld of Christ's personal ministry are before him? Did the Son of God indeed rejoice in spirit, (as we are told he did,) and thank the Father that he had hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes? Luke 10:21; and doth my reprover in the

face of so decided a testimony, declare that nothing is wanting but the will to prevent their being saved? Is man's ability to be complimented at the expense of God's truth? Will he bolster up the self-righteous Pharisees of the present day against the doctrine of the new birth, with telling them of the strength of their own attainments in their will; while that thundering sentence Jesus pronounced on the self-righteous Pharisees of his days, is still in our ears; when he said, " ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:29, 30.)

From the portraits of Christ's personal ministry, taken under different views, let us now proceed to examine what were the leading features in the same department of conduct in his apostles. And sure I am that we shall still find one and the same trait of character distinguishing the servants, as was observable in the master.

To begin at their ordination. When Jesus sent forth his twelve disciples to the ministry, their general commission was to teach, and to preach, and to heal the sick, and the like. And the Lord then limited their Office to the house of Israel. "Go not into the way of the gentiles, and into any of the city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But in all those directions, which occupy the whole chapter, not a single word of invitation or offer is in it from beginning to end. See Matt. 10. throughout.

And when the Lord sent other seventy also, as we read Luke x. besides those general invitations nearly as before, the Lord added a very blessed direction for their observance, in the event of which they should discover his people from the rest. "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again," (Luke 10:5, 6.) What will my reprover make of this? Was this discriminating grace, or was it not? Did Jesus when he gave this command, or the apostles when they received it, know,

(as Verax in direct defiance of these solemn truths asserts,) there was nothing wanting but a man's will to the being saved? On the contrary, did not the Lord mean, and his disciples clearly understand, by the expression of their peace resting where the son of peace was found, similar to what followed Paul's preaching afterwards at Antioch ; " that as many as were ordained to eternal life believed?" (Acts 13: 48.)

From the ordination of the apostles, let the reader follow their footsteps in the exercise of their ministry during the whole time the Lord continueth among them, and went in and out before them: and let him examine closely if he can discover a single offer or invitation given by those faithful followers of the Lord indiscriminately to all. I have looked with carefulness on this ground, and cannot find an iota leading to the conclusion. Indeed the thing itself is impossible. The charter of grace runs in a different strain. And those servants of Christ would have gone beyond their commission had they done so. Where the son of peace was found, there their peace was to rest. Where not, it was to return to them again. And it is worthy the reader's most serious observation, that when the seventy returned to the Lord with an account of the success of their ministry, Jesus called off their attention even from their triumph over devils, to an object of infinitely higher moment, in that " their names were written in heaven," (Luke 10:17-20.) Will my reprobator say in this instance, also, this predilection of grace had nothing to do with the success of their embassy, for Jesus and his apostles knew of no prevention to the being saved but a man's will.

Following the memoirs of those servants of Jesus after his return to glory : if we trace the history of their ministry through the Acts of the Apostles, we find the same line of conduct, running like a golden thread, through the whole. The Lord had now extended their commission to go out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; but their ministry was still confined to preach to all; not to invite all; to hold up Christ; not to offer Christ. My opponent, perhaps, as in a case or two before, may perceive no

difference, but the difference is as great as between one man's talking of treasure and another possessing it; between the sight of food through a window and the partaking of it for sustenance.

To preach the gospel; and to proclaim salvation in the audience of all sinners wheresoever they came, this was the apostles province. And the same will all faithful servants of the word do now, who are ordained by the Holy Ghost. " For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," (John 3:14, 15.) But here are the limits to human powers. No man can go further. Moses himself went no further. He lifted up the serpent as commanded, as a type of Christ, that the bitten Israelite might look upon it and live. But we read of no offers nor persuasions, (Num. 21:8, 9.) Neither did the apostles in their general preaching. If, indeed, from general to special cases, (as we shall observe hereafter,) they found their minds directed to the Lord to act in a more personal manner, their history fully explains the cause. But otherwise they were too well taught of God. They dared not to invade the office of God the Holy Ghost. To preach Christ they knew to be their province. To persuade to the acceptation of Christ they knew to be his. And Paul perfectly understood this when he said to the church, "for do I now persuade men or God; or do I seek to please men ? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ," (Gal. 1: 9, 13.)

If I stop my reader for a moment, from the pursuit of the apostle's history, (it shall only be the moment, and in a way of parenthesis, for indeed it merits no more,) I will beg to observe the conduct my reprover hath manifested towards me on this occasion. He saith that my tract forbids all invitations to sinners to come to Christ.' And had he stopped here, and at the same time done me the justice to have said that my tract forbids all invitations given by men unauthorized of God, he would have been right, and I should not have complained. But when he adds, that it discourages even the declaration to them of what Christ has done and suffered for sin,' I

stand amazed at the bold untruth. How any man in the face of that tract could deliberately write down what in the moment of writing he knew to be a falsehood, (and a falsehood impossible to escape detection,) is to me astonishing. I beg the reader to convince himself by examining the tract. I have twice read it over since I read the charge; and sure I am nothing of the kind can be found there. And the church of Christ before whom my numerous writings are, can find nothing among them to ground the accusation. And that part of the church where my personal labours are exercised too well know, without my saying so, with what sweat of the face I am unremittingly employed in holding forth Christ and his finished salvation before poor sinners. What shall I answer my reprover on this ground? Truly I will recompense his calumny with my prayers.—Sincerely do I hope the Lord will pardon it, as I most cordially do.

Prosecuting yet further the apostles history, in the department of their ministry, we may observe, that when at any time from general preaching before the multitude, they proceeded in their apostolic power, to speak personally to the cases of any among their audience, here we discern the Lord's special ordination. It is too well known to need more than the observation, that the apostles, among other miraculous gifts, possessed the faculty of "discerning spirits," (1 Cor. 12:9, 10.) Hence, when at any time amidst the multitude, the apostles discovered any of the Lord's chosen ones present, not unfrequently we find that authority called into exercise. Thus Paul, preaching at Lystra, perceived in a cripple present, that "he had faith to be healed," (Acts 14:8, 10.) Hence Peter going down to the saints, which dwelt at Lydda, did the same by Eneas, Acts 11:32-34. Hence Paul, at a meeting appointed for preaching the word, persuaded as well as expounded. And the reason follows: there were "some which believed the things which were spoken." And on the contrary, to shew that no persuasion of man can avail, where grace is not given, it is added, "and some believed not." And the contemplation of the both, brought to the apostle's mind the words of the Holy Ghost, and which he immediately applied. See Acts 28:

23 to the end. And in like manner, when the same preacher was at Antioch, and delivered that memorable sermon recorded Acts 13: 16, &c. the event corresponded to the same. To you, said Paul, (speaking to the people of God which were in the throng,) is the word of this salvation sent, verse 26. To the rest he said, " behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days; a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you," (verse 41.) And that the church might not be at a loss to trace the whole to its proper source, in the close of the sermon we are told, that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," (verse 48.) Had my reprover been present to have directed Paul on this occasion, instead of God the Holy Ghost, what woosings and soothings would he have urged him to use, in order to bring over those despisers to a better way of thinking; convinced, (as it should seem he is,) that ' Jesus and his apostles knew of no prevention to a man being saved but the will.'

From the personal labours of those servants of Christ, if we follow the history of their ministry in their writings, we shall find the same features of character uniformly marking all. Indeed here we more plainly discover this leading truth; because the whole of those writings are addressed "only to the church." My reprover hath gathered many passages from Paul's epistles, by way of shewing how the apostles warned and taught, and affectionately entreated the people. And he might have filled as many pages as he hath lines, had he pleased; and when done, he would but have tended the more to have strengthened my argument and thrown down his own.

Poor man! he is very unsuccessful in appealing to scripture. And he serves to prove how much to be lamented it is, that so many read their bibles to so little purpose. Had he only read the title to all the Epistles, he would have seen that the whole is sent to the church, and not to the world. Like letters directed to certain persons or communities, the contents of which belong only to them unto whom they are sent, and to no other. So that neither Paul nor Peter, James, John, nor Jude, have a line of invitation in all their epistles

to the rest, (as they are emphatically called, Acts 5:13; Rom. 11: 7.) but as one of them expresseth it, and all intended it, they sent their epistles unto them, (saith Peter,) " that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," (2 Pet. 1:1.) I beg the reader, in confirmation of what I say, to look at the title of each of the epistles; and he will find all of them are addressed to the church of God, and not to the world. And of consequence, the whole of my opponent's arguments from this quarter, turns out not unsimilar to those witnesses which are sometimes subpoenaed in our courts of law, where their testimony is rendered nugatory by an alibi.

And yet, upon such mistaken principles, my reprovor, as if he had gained his cause, leaps at once to a conclusion; and, with an air of triumph, sits down in what David terms " the seat of the scornful," and exulting in much self-applause, exclaims: But all these, according to the phraseology of what is called the true gospel, is nothing else than winning and wooing.' And not content, nor resting here, but flushed with supposed victory, and following up the manners of modern times, in his able conduct in the chair, that the usual compliments in the end he may not lose, he adds : What think you ? Addressing, I suppose, his colleagues,) if the apostle was presented with this tract, would he approve of its title? I am mistaken if his holy indignation would not rise again, and impel him to say, let it be anathema maranatha.

Surely, as I before remarked, in that little tract, (which this learned man so unmercifully falls upon,) if the subject was not so truly awful, one might be tempted to smile. The anathema of popery, however near, is not yet to be feared. And for the anathema maranatha of my reprovor, though pronounced by him ex cathedra, I really feel no apprehension. In this award he hath made a little mistake. (But little mistakes with him are no great things, however destructive to common sense and reason.) The anathema among the Jews, (for from them Paul borrowed the thought,) was confined only to persons. Indeed, from its very nature, it could have

reference to no other but persons. My reprover however transfers it to a tract. But the capability of a tract sustaining such a punishment as belonged only to God to inflict, and exceeds man's power to impose, (for in this sense the Jews meant the anathema,) remains to be shewn. However, whether person or tract, or both, let the man have his way, his anathemas are harmless. It is my mercy, the sentence comes but from my unknown reprover; and not from the well known apostle.

Had I, indeed, contradicted the apostle, and while he so solemnly tells the church, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," (Rom. 9:16.) I had said, and called Paul to witness it too, that Jesus and his apostles knew of no inability but the will to any man's being saved ; had I taken Paul's words, to make Paul contradict himself in offers and invitations to the world,' which he sent only to the church, and pleaded his authority and example for so doing ; had I gathered from his writings the many loving expressions there addressed to the saints of God, and used them to the reverse of what he intended, to win over all men to the faith, in direct defiance of the apostle's own words, in which he saith, " the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded ;" Rom. 11:7. in either of those cases, then indeed, I might have deprecated the just anger of this "chosen vessel," Acts 9:15. in holding forth under his name, but contrary to all his ministry, indiscriminate offers to the un-chosen world But enough on this ground. It is time to forget every thing of a personal nature, both as it concerns myself, and my opponent, to attend to the one only point which is important in this controversy, namely, the truth itself.

I have now gone over the principal ground of inquiry concerning the ministry of the apostles in this department of their office; as was before trodden in quest of the same exercises of their master. And as men ascending an hill, after some labour, may stop, and look around the country they have passed; so let the reader take a leisurely survey of what he hath seen, both as it relates to the Lord

and his apostles; and under the grace of God, make a fair and faithful conclusion in his own mind from the whole.

If there be a point in the word of God ascertained with more than usual clearness, the very one asserted by the apostle is this. Neither was it confined to the ministry of Christ and his apostles; for the Holy Ghost, by Paul, expressly declares that it was preached to Abraham. "The scripture (saith he) foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, (not a man's will) preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:8.) And to shew the firmness and everlasting security of it, God confirmed it with all its promises in Christ, both by word and oath. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord," &c. (Gen. 22:16.) Is it possible any man can believe God thus pledged himself, by word and oath, to fulfil all his promises in Christ ; and yet there still remained a peradventure, a yea and nay gospel, subject to doubt ?-- And could a blessing, which by the oath of God became irreversible, be left for security, in any part of it, on the free-will of man ? Pause! What! did God thus swear by himself to make the thing certain ; as if he had said, I will cease to be God, if I do not bless Abraham and his seed in Christ : and did the Lord after this, subject the possibility of failure upon the patriarch's faith or obedience, and that of his seed, for the event ? Let the point rest here, for the reader will remember it was with this postulatum I entered on my defence. Let the reader judge whether I have fulfilled my engagements by proofs. And according to the event, whether the title-page be not correct, founded, as it is, on God's word. The true gospel is no yea and nay gospel; "for all the promises of God in Christ Jesus, are yea and amen unto the glory of God by us." (2 Cor. 1:18-20.)

And when the reader hath viewed and reviewed, the many proofs lain before him in this appendix of the ministry pursued by Christ and his apostles, in this department of their preaching; when he hath duly examined the several features of character by which that preaching was marked ; both in their general plan of holding forth

the gospel to the multitude, and making special and personal invitations to the Lord's people from among them ; let it be shewn whether the gospel I have set forth in all my ministry and writings be not formed upon the same model ; instead, as my opponent hath said, that it is ' at variance with the gospel of Christ and his apostles.'—Yea, without going beyond the proof in the tract, and prefixed as it is to this appendix, for the express purpose of examination. Let the sample here given be strictly scrutinized. Let my jurors be enlightened men, taught of God the Holy Ghost. Let them be such on whom a saving work by regeneration hath passed upon them ; and such as are brought into an acquaintance with the plague of their own heart, and know what Christ is to the soul : let such sit in judgment upon me, and by their verdict let my character, as a minister of Christ, stand or fall.

I pass over all that my opponent hath said of my virulence. We are poor judges in our own cause. For my part, I rather fear that that little work is more reprehensible for lightness, than anger; for gentleness, than severity. However, be this as it may, there is nothing in it of a personal nature. I wage war not with men but their errors. And here I dare not but contend, and that earnestly, "for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

My opponent hath said, that the tendency of my tract is, ' to relax ministerial exertions.' If he means persons holding out of promises where God hath not given them, I plead guilty. And while I read God's everlasting war which he hath sworn to have with Amalek; (Exod 17:16.) and his indignation for ever against the seed of Esau : (Mal. 1: 4.) while I hear Jesus declaring the good seed to represent the children of the kingdom ; and the tares the children of the wicked one ; (Matt. 13:38.) while I hear God the Holy Ghost forbidding the apostles even to preach the word in Asia; and when they would have gone to do the same in Bithynia, the Spirit suffered them not: while these scriptures are in view, is it not enough to make a man tremble to hear men wooing and winning all that come in their way, and saying, ' that Jesus and his apostles

knew of no cause to prevent a man being saved but his own will ?'

Neither shall I less offend, when I add, that in my view, it is among the most awful signs of the present times, and a sure presage of divine judgment, that so many rush into the ministry unsent, unauthorized, unanointed of God the Holy Ghost! I would put my hand under the feet of the poorest of God's servants, who comes in the Lord's name, and by the Lord's authority, bringing "good tidings of good, publishing salvation:" but I would no less beg the Lord in mercy to stop the mouth of all who speak " a vision out of their own heart," and of whom the Lord saith, " they shall not profit this people." (Jer. 23. passim.)

Were I disposed to retort upon my reprover, I might find large room for so doing. But I wave all this. Should God the Holy Ghost give him a clearer view of divine truths, (which if it be his holy will I earnestly pray for) he will stand amazed at his present presumption, and in silence bend to the sovereignty of God's free grace, cheerfully submitting to his own free will.