

of God nor yet his new covenant kingdom ; for in his moral government there is no salvation to offer, and in his saving government the election hath obtained it. It is therefore one thing for men at large to be exhorted to their duty, and another thing to be called and saved by grace.

How conspicuously do these two principles, viz., the moral and the saving government of God, shine forth in the ministry of Christ. How differently he dealt with those whom he called by his almighty power, to those whom he rebuked for not believing. Those who knew he was a teacher come from God, as the chief priests and rulers did, ought to have dropped their vain traditions, to have left the ceremonial dispensation, and to have come into the gospel dispensation. This would have been acting according to the light which they had ; this would have been doing that which was their duty to do. This doing of their duty would have been bettering their present moral state, and mitigating their future punishment ; but as they refused to do that which was their duty to do, it should be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for these ; for in rejecting the gospel dispensation they violated the first commandment, which saith, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The gospel dispensation was of God. This the Saviour proved to their eyes, ears, and consciences ; for if Christ had made the claims which

he did make, without doing among them those works which showed his right to their homage, then they would have had an excuse, they would have had a cloak for their sin; but as they knew by his works that he was of God, they had no just excuse for not obeying him. Their sin, therefore, consisted in acting contrary to the light which they had. This is the condemnation of every man, that light is come into the world, and they oppose that light, loving darkness rather than light. In Matthew xxii. the gospel dispensation is likened unto a marriage, which a certain king made for his son. This king commanded certain persons to come to this marriage; it was therefore their duty to come. But instead of doing what they knew was their duty, they went their own way, "one to his farm, another to his merchandise," not forgetting to persecute and slay the servants of the king; therefore the king sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers. To feast, in the *moral* sense of the word, is to be instructed in that which is morally right. To feast *spiritually* is to be savingly led into the mysteries of the kingdom. "Many are called," even all within the reach of the written word morally, to that which, as responsible creatures, is their duty, "but *few* are chosen;" few are called, *by grace*, to enter into the privileges of salvation. Those who are called morally may, and do refuse to obey, but this shall not make void the faith of

*God's elect*; and therefore it is that the Lord sends his servants out into the highways and hedges, accompanies their message with power, makes his people willing, and thus compels them to come in, so that his house shall be filled with guests; and those who profess to be his friends, yet hate his eternal righteousness, shall be cast out.

Hence, then, it appears there is a coming to Christ morally, and a coming to him spiritually; that there are faith, love, repentance, and reverential fear which are natural, differing from the faith, love, repentance, and godly fear which are spiritual, which are the special gifts of God, and which accompany salvation. That which is spiritual cannot be turned into that which is natural, nor *vice versa*. We read of disciples who went back and walked no more with him. The end of their faith was apostacy; but the end of the faith of God's elect is salvation. We read of love that waxeth cold; but many waters cannot quench the love of God, which is in those who are born of God. We read of repentance which needeth to be repented of; but Jesus bestows repentance unto life eternal. The natural man may cease to fear the Lord; but in the heart of the spiritual man the Lord himself puts his fear. There is, then, a moral consistency to which all men, as their duty, are commanded; and there is a spiritual dignity to which partakers of special grace

are exalted; "He that believeth shall be saved." But then, it depends upon the *nature* of that believing; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his;" "Except a man be born from above, he cannot enter the kingdom;" "To as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name." But then, the faith of these was not merely natural, but was spiritual, and was wrought in them by the Lord himself. Hence, the very next verse, (John i. 12, 13,) assures us that they were born; mark, that they were born. Here is the work of God, for they were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. He that thus believeth, shall be saved. It is one thing to believe through natural light of the conscience, and another thing to believe through grace. If, then, all men, wherever the written word comes, be called upon to act according to the light afforded them, yet no one, except born from above, can enter the kingdom, it follows that the Bible does not speak to all as objects of salvation, for all the objects of salvation shall be "made willing in the day of his power;" and "every plant which the Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Thousands of these are not rooted up until death; they live and die in a profession, and like sheep they are laid in the grave. Yes, they are buried as sheep; funeral orations and funeral sermons

are produced, to assure the survivors of the excellencies of the departed; and, of course, it is concluded that a creature so pious, benevolent, and dutiful, is gone to that rest which remaineth to the people of God. The delusion of these consists in substituting that which is merely natural for that which is spiritual.

Now let us compare the two opposing principles, the one for which we have pleaded, and the one against which we have pleaded. The one against which we have pleaded is this, that all men are in a salvable state, and that all men are called upon to accept salvation; that Christ died savingly for his elect, and conditionally for all the rest. This, we are told, is the only way of accounting for the general exhortations of the Bible, and of making matters appear at all reasonable. Our object has been to show that the general exhortations of the Bible are *not* founded in the principle of men being in a salvable state, and that those exhortations have not in view their salvation, but their moral reformation, mitigation of future punishment, together with many *intermediate* circumstances connected with the gospel. We think we have found out *a more excellent way* of accounting for the general exhortations of the Bible than that which supposes men to be in a salvable state—a way more scriptural and more reasonable, for there is nothing in truth contrary to *right* reason. Faith and right reason perfectly agree. But it so happens that in the majority of cases the most

*ingenious* reasoners are the most fallacious; their reasoning powers are good, but are wrongly used. If a man reason upon the word of God, and shut out in his reasonings the absolute dominion and sovereignty of God, he is sure, in *reality*, to contend *against* God, while he is *professedly* contending *for* God. Some, indeed, speak as though we were not to reason upon anything; whereas, there is not one thing in the whole Bible upon which we are not to reason. What is meditation but reasoning? Is not the invitation, "Come, and let us reason together?" Some tell us we are not for one moment to reason upon the doctrine of the Trinity. When we ask why we are not to reason upon it, we are told that it cannot be comprehended. Well, what sound Trinitarian ever thought it could? For my part, I have reasoned upon it, and do reason upon it, and hope to reason upon it for ever. I reason upon it thus: Here are Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, and these Three are ONE. I find eternity, infinity, and all the perfections of Deity ascribed to each Person in the Godhead. Well then, how *unreasonable* would it be to suppose infinity can be comprehended. How unreasonable to reject the doctrine because we cannot comprehend it. How Three self-existent Persons can be One God, or how in One God there can be Three coequal Persons, we cannot comprehend. The word of unerring truth says it is so, therefore it is unreasonable to reject this doctrine.

Well, then, let us bring forward the two principles, and see which of the two accords with scripture and right reason. According to the principle of Christ dying conditionally for the non-elect, and their being condemned for not accepting salvation; according to this system, the matter stands thus; these being placed within reach of salvation, have no other rule by which to be justified or condemned than that of their accepting or rejecting salvation. Now the Lord foreknew that not one of these would accept salvation; for “the election hath obtained it, and *the rest* were blinded.” Well, then, it follows, that God did not place them in this salvable state, in order that he might bring them up into paradise, for he knew that not one would accept the offered salvation; and that, therefore, he placed them thus that they might be without excuse, and that he might appear *just* in sending them down to perdition. The whole object of God the Father in placing them here was, to aggravate their misery. The whole object of the Saviour in suffering for them was, to deepen their distress. The whole object of the Holy Spirit in moving prophets and apostles to call them, was, to augment their woe. This is the fair and unavoidable inference to be drawn from the doctrine of Christ dying conditionally for the non-elect, unless we admit (if possible) a still worse notion, viz., that God really placed them here for their salvation,

that he really willed and wished them well. Now, if an earthly friend were to tell me that he wished me well, and were to place me within the reach of prosperity, at the same time seeing that I should be sure to neglect the means, the intermediate link, and so lose the prosperity he intended; he seeing this, and at the same time having it within his power to secure to me, beyond contingency, the prosperity he desired me to have, and still to go on telling me that he really wished, willed, and purposed that I should prosper, I should say to myself, Why, if he had it in his power, if he wished me to have a certain amount of prosperity, why did he not *secure* it to me? Nor could all the men in the world persuade me that this professed friend was *sincere* in his purpose? What! a parent leave his property to his children in a way that he saw they would be sure to lose it! Would not the conclusion be that he never really wished them to have the property? and would not those who should go about to boast of the sincere intention of such a parent towards his children be looked upon as either knaves or fools?

Christ died conditionally for the non-elect, yet he knew that they could never accept his salvation. Now, then, reader, here are two alternatives; which do you choose of the two; to ascribe folly, vain pretensions, and hypocrisy to the Most High, or admit that he never intended salvation for them that are lost? The kingdom shall be given to

those for whom it is prepared. Well, then, if the kingdom were prepared for those who are lost, then it cannot be true that it *shall be* given to those for whom it is prepared. Now mind, it is *not* said it shall be *offered* to those for whom it is prepared, but it shall be *given* to those for whom it is prepared. One evil, then, of the doctrine of conditional salvation is, that it charges God with folly; that is to say, it does this if we admit the doctrine that God willed the salvation of the non-elect, and to this end put them into a salvable state, at the same time knowing that this would not contribute one iota towards their salvation. To tell us that God wished the non-elect well, yet, though possessing infinite power, did not secure to them that well-being, is really too bad; to impose upon us a sentiment which drives us to the conclusion that the Most High pretends to wish those well whom he in reality intends to condemn, from such deadly heresy, Mercy deliver us.

But let us take the other supposition, that God never intended that the non-elect should be saved, but that he placed them within the reach of salvation to the end that they may be condemned for not receiving what he never intended they should receive; so that the only use of their being in this position is that it secures to them eternal condemnation. Either God did will their salvation or he did not; if he did, how is it that their salvation is not secured to them, for with God there

is no want of wisdom, wealth, or power? and if he did not will their salvation, how monstrous and delusive the notion that he condemns them for not accepting salvation. Is there one scripture in the whole book of God that condemns a man for not being an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ? NOT ONE. What, then; are we to charge God with pretending that he wishes to save those whom he in reality intends to condemn? or are we to conclude that Christ suffered for the non-elect to the end that they might have a more dreadful hell to endure? Perhaps the reader may say that it is their own fault, they ought to have accepted salvation. But this has nothing to do with it; for God foreknew that they would not accept salvation; therefore we are led unavoidably to the conclusion that Christ suffered for them in order to augment their sufferings. It is indeed written, that with his own arm he wrought salvation; but according to the doctrine of Christ dying conditionally for the non-elect, he not only wrought salvation, but also secured damnation; so that not only were his sufferings, as far as he suffered for the non-elect, in vain, but they are unto them an absolute curse. Thus, according to the doctrine of Christ dying for the non-elect, we must either believe that God pretends that he wishes to save those whom he in reality intends to condemn, or else we must prostitute the sufferings of the Saviour to the worst of purposes,

namely, that of securing the damnation of men. I tremble as I follow this principle out, and think of the lost bitterly cursing those sufferings of the Saviour which secured to them their eternal damnation. How dreadful the thought, that the doctrine of Christ dying for the non-elect brings the atonement of Christ into this position! Here is Christ suffering for the non-elect in order that there may be a more feasible ground on which *more* deeply to condemn immortal souls! So that, according to the doctrine of Christ dying for the non-elect, those in perdition may say that Christ died for us that we might be lost, while those in heaven are saying he died for us that we might be saved. Thus the howlings of hell and the hallelujahs of heaven are, according to this doctrine, founded in the one great atonement of Christ. This doctrine of Christ dying for the non-elect, thus stripped of its feasibility, proves to be awful blasphemy, and a delusion in which God will never let one of his own children die. These matters may be trivial in the minds of men, but with God they are weighty.

Now let us clearly understand the sentiment against which we are bearing testimony. The sentiment against which we are pleading says, that Christ died conditionally for the non-elect, that they have power to accept this salvation, that God foreknew that not one of them would receive salvation, that being placed in this salvable state

they are left without excuse, that it is their own fault if they are not saved. This is the sentiment against which we plead. It is written, that "Christ laid down his life for the sheep;" and as to man having power to accept salvation, it is written, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither *can* he know them;" and as to its being their own fault that they are not saved, as well might we say that it is the vessel of dishonour's own fault that it was not appointed unto honour; nor do the Scriptures once blame men for being lost.

The *evil* of the *doctrine* of Christ dying for the non-elect is twofold. 1st, It awfully, as before shown, misrepresents the ever-blessed God; 2nd, It deludes immortal souls; and among the abounding evils of the world these cannot be reckoned among the least. Having clearly understood, and, it is hoped, pretty clearly shown the fallaciousness of the sentiment against which we plead, we shall now again bring the sentiment *for* which we plead, which sentiment is, that it is the duty of all men to act according to the light which they have. This duty is founded on the moral government of God, and the natural relation in which all men stand to him as his creatures. Now mind, no man can do anything towards altering his state by nature. All are under sentence of death. Viewed thus in their union to Adam, they have lost their all, and can no more do anything to-

wards helping themselves out of this state than the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots. Nothing spiritual can precede the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. He *begins* the good work, which beginning consists in his bringing the life of God into the soul, and Christ is that life. He is the incorruptible seed; not one particle of gospel fruit can be without him. The Father quickeneth whom he will; the Son quickeneth whom he will. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh in this vital matter profiteth *nothing*. The work lies entirely with God; and to blame the creature for not doing anything towards salvation is as absurd as it would be to blame a dead body for not rising from the dead; for man, by nature, is as destitute of spiritual life as is the dead body of natural life; therefore the Word of God no where blames men for not being saved. Yet they are blamed, but not because they are not saved; they are blamed for the wrong use they make of their natural powers. They are not dead physically, or bodily; they are not dead rationally, nor yet morally. Now look close here after the meaning. My meaning then is, that they have bodily powers, reasoning powers; and a consciousness of right and wrong, as far as natural right and wrong go; but the things of God knoweth no man, only by the Spirit of God. Now, then, they are accountable to God for the use they make of these natural powers with which they are endued. Thus it is their

duty to act according to the light afforded them. The voice of Divine supremacy calleth upon men through creation and through the written word to hearken to the voice of God and conscience. It is their duty to do so ; they feel that they ought to do so ; and as far as any of them do so, their works are acceptable to God, *not* as the service of sons, but as the duty of servants. Now, as it is in Christ Jesus that the supremacy and sovereignty of God shine forth, and as he is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit—God over all, blessed for evermore ! and as by him kings reign and princes decree justice, it follows that it is the duty of all, wherever the written word comes, to revere his name. Hence kings and rulers are commanded to do homage unto him. (Ps. ii.) That which Christ, as God over all, demands of men as their duty is, (as far as mere natural right goes,) the right use of their natural powers. This is their duty ; and thus, if their quietly submitting to him be not their duty, then their opposing him can be no sin. Their sin consists in a violation of this their rule of duty. Their sin does not consist in *not* making him their salvation ; for no man can take this honour unto himself but he that is called by grace. The hearts, affections, and service of his own people he has secured. All the service which God required of the Jews, (mind I speak here purely in the natural and mere moral sense of the word, leaving out the idea of that spiritual worship into which those entered

who were born of God,) all the service he required of them was the right use merely of their natural powers, to fear the Lord, to love him, to serve him, and to walk in his ways.

Let us ever draw a line of distinction between that mere natural service of which the natural man is capable, and which it is his duty to render, and that spiritual worship which none can render but such as are partakers of the Spirit of God. There is indeed a mighty difference between the voice of divine supremacy calling upon men to follow that which they *know* to be right, and the voice of quickening grace entering the soul, opening up its lost and ruined state, and then leading it into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

It was the duty of the Jews to hearken to the Saviour, and come into the gospel dispensation ; but this was one thing, and it was another thing to come in by regeneration. When grace comes to a man, it finds him utterly destitute of any one thing that can in the least contribute towards salvation ; for though, like the young man in the gospel, he had acted conscientiously all his days, yet this is nothing more than was his duty to do ; and is he to be thanked for doing that which was his duty to do ? I trow not ; and, if he is not to be thanked for it, it is not very likely he can obtain eternal life by it ; for if there could have been a law given that could bring life, verily, justifying righteousness should have been by the law ; but

all are fallen in Adam, and all have sinned personally. Therefore, when we come to salvation matters, man has in this matter nothing but sin that he can call his own; consequently, those who are saved are *sinner*s saved *by grace*.

Thus we see that man's natural powers, and that duty of which man is capable, in no wise interfere with the truth that men, in matters pertaining to eternal salvation, are utterly helpless, and can be saved only according to the purpose of eternal election; neither does the helplessness of man interfere with the moral government of God, so as either to neutralize the voice of Divine supremacy, or to paralyse the natural powers of men. Neither does the moral government of God in any way clash with his natural dominion. In his natural dominion, just notice these two things; foreknowledge, and decree. He foresaw the fall, and the consequences which would follow. He saw to what end everything tended; but at the same time, while he permitted evil to abound, yet he determined that it should not go beyond certain bounds. In this way room is left for the working of his moral government; at the same time, "his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure."

Admit, then, that the general commands, exhortations, and denunciations of the Bible, I mean as they relate to men in general; admit that these are founded, not on the principle that men

are in a salvable state, but on the ground of the moral government of God, then we have scripture and *right* reason on our side. We shall then find plenty wherewith to reprove the sinner, enter our protest against ungodliness, and encourage men to walk in the path of moral right, without uttering error against the Lord, making empty the soul of the hungry, or deluding poor benighted men.

We have seen that the doctrine of men being in a salvable state charges God with *pretending* that he wishes to save those whom, in *reality*, he intends to condemn. This charges the Lord Jesus with suffering for them that they might be the more deeply damned. And then, to cover and gild the blasphemy, is brought in the *bare-faced lie* that man has it in his power to accept salvation, and that it is his own fault if he be not saved. And whereas the kingdom can be given to none but those for whom it is prepared. Not one instance occurs throughout the bible in which men are blamed for being lost; nor is it their own fault that they are lost. Their fault consists in acting contrary to the light they have.

One main object at which in this work I have aimed, has been to show that exhortations to men in general are better accounted for without the doctrine of men being in a salvable state than with it, and to my satisfaction I have gained my point. I feel conscious of the firmness of the ground on

which I stand. I know, on the one hand, that man is a responsible being, that he is endowed with certain powers, and that he is accountable to God for the use he makes of these powers; and, on the other hand, I know that the Lord will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, that no man can keep alive his own soul, much less do anything while dead towards bringing life into it, and that as many (and no more) as are ordained to eternal life will believe with that faith which purifies the heart, endears the Saviour, and is the faith of God's elect; and I also know, that to preach the gospel to every creature, consists in preaching the truth to every creature. Falsehood may be, and is, called gospel, but it is not the gospel of God.

As these two principles, viz., Divine supremacy and saving grace, shine forth in the ministry of Christ, we find the same in the preaching and writings of the apostles. The epistles were sent to the churches, and they unfold to the people of God the mercies and mysteries of salvation. Yet the epistles do not speak exclusively of and to those who are born of God. Children are exhorted, not as a condition of salvation, or as having anything vitally to do with salvation, but as a matter of natural duty; they are exhorted to obey their parents; that is, as far as the demands of the parents accord with the word of God and the dictates of conscience. The apostle James,