

IS RENDERED EFFICIENT BY THE SINNER'S APPLICATION.

8. *The state of man by nature is, that he is dead in trespasses and sins; YET HE POSSESSES A LITTLE POWER TO DO GOOD.*

9. *Grace reigns; BUT THE DAY OF GRACE ENDS WHERE THE SINNER DOES NOT AVAIL HIMSELF OF AN OFFERING OPPORTUNITY.*

10. *Grace is special favour; BUT GRACE IS UNIVERSALLY OBTAINABLE.*

11. *God's love never had a beginning and never will have an end towards the election of grace, and only these love God because God first loved them; BUT THE REST GOD WILL LOVE IF THEY FIRST EXERCISE SOME DEGREE OF LOVE TOWARDS HIM.*

12. *Prayer cannot be spiritually put forth after God, by men who are not born of the Spirit; BUT IT IS MAN'S DUTY TO PRAY THAT HE MAY BE BORN AGAIN.**

Now let us look at each of these items in order. First, "that God gave eternal life to the elect before the world begun." This is true, as I have before proved;† but the remaining part of this item, which says, "*though God did not give eternal life to those who are not elected, yet they may have it upon application,*" is false, as I will now attempt to show. If the non-elect may have eternal life, though it was not given them in Christ before the world began, then

* Very few preachers are so daring as thus to affirm and deny with the same breath; but it is often done in the same discourse, and this yea and nay gospel is the essence of what is now fashionably termed "moderate Calvinism."

† See first page upon Election.

God must have given it them since the world began, which supposition cannot be true, because we read, "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations," Psalm xxxiii. 11. "The counsel of the Lord" was, that the elect should have eternal life in Christ, and to this end God the Father gave them into Christ's hands; and "the thoughts of his heart" were, that those whom he gave to Christ would be his everlasting delight, and that the others would, by their sins, merit everlasting wrath; therefore, God does not say, concerning the ungodly, that they "*may* awake to everlasting shame and contempt;" but many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth "*shall* awake some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," Daniel xii. 2. To this it may be said, true, God does say they *shall*; because he knew they would not believe in Christ, nor make application to him, still they might have had life if they had applied. To this I answer, if God knew they would not believe in Christ, nor make application for mercy at his hands, it must have been according to his will, or it was against his will. But it could not be against his will, for "whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, and in earth, and in the seas, and in all deep places;" therefore, had it been his will that the non-elect should believe in Christ, he would have given them the power, and the Lord not only withholds faith, but says, concerning them, "make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their

heart, and convert, and be healed," Isaiah vi. 10. And when the disciples ask Jesus why he spoke to the people in parables? He made use of this quotation from Isaiah, and explains its meaning saying unto them, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given; for whosoever hath" (an interest in Christ,) "to him shall be given" (knowledge of his worth, and faith to realize interest in his person) "and he shall have more abundance," abundant discoveries of the glory and blessedness treasured up for him; "but whosoever hath not" (an interest in Christ by eternal election,) from him shall be taken away even that he hath." That religion he possesses apart from Christ, shall not contribute in any manner to his salvation. "Therefore," continues Jesus, "I speak to them 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." And so Paul says, "the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded according as it is written, Isaiah xxix. 10. God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear."

If then "what the Lord pleased is done;" if the Lord withholds faith from some while he gives it to others; if the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations; if he gives a knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to some, when he does not to others; and if the

non-elect, called "the rest," are blinded; then the assertion that those to whom God did not give eternal life in Christ before the world began, may have it upon application, is false.

Secondly, That God is a Sovereign "doing as he will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that it is his will to specially save the elect, is a truth; *but which he could not do unless Christ became a sin-offering for all the human race*, is fallacious. Because, if Christ is the gift of the Father's love, he will surely give him to those whom he loves: that he is the gift of love is certain, because we read, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son;" but Christ and the Father are one, so that while God the Father is said to give Christ, Christ is said to give himself, and that he gives himself to those whom he loves is certain, for the apostle says, "who loved the church and gave himself for it." Besides which, "the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The devil drove man from God, induced in him a principle of enmity against God, made him a slave to sin, influenced him to break God's law, by which he fell under its awful curse, and rendered himself liable to death temporal and eternal. Christ was manifested that he might destroy these works of the devil: so that he becomes the "Prince of Peace," "the Restorer of the Breach," the "Deliverer," the "Redeemer," by being a sin-offering for his people, and "he hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." If, however, he put away sin for the whole human race, there can be no sin for any one of Adam's chil-

dren to answer for, consequently not one can be condemned. But some will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." Why are they punished? For their sins. Then their sins were never put away by Christ, neither could they be interested in Christ, for "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." If it had been the Lord's will to have saved Abel only, he could have done it, but not without a sacrifice for Abel's sins, and in that case, Christ would have been given to Abel only; but, blessed be God, it is written, "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." That is not the Saviour of Abel only, not the Saviour of Noah only, not the Saviour of the patriarchs, prophets, and Old Testament saints only, but sent the Son to be the Saviour of the whole of that world, loved, adopted, and delighted in by God, whom he will bring from the ruins of the Adam-fall transgression, and in whom he will be glorified for ever. If then Christ is given to those whom God loves, and he loves only the elect, Rom. ix. 11—13. if Christ did not become a sin-offering for the whole human race, and if God could have saved a less number, had it been his will, by Christ, then the thought that he could not save the elect without Christ becoming a sin-offering for the whole human race, is false.

Thirdly. "*That therefore Christ died for all the human race,*" must be equally fallacious; for the foundation of this sentiment, as implied in the word "therefore," being removed, there is nothing to uphold this assertion. But we will examine it a little more. Christ's death was a

payment for sin, and this is why his blood is called a "price." If, therefore, any one of the human race was to die eternally after Christ had suffered for him, God would be unjust in demanding two payments of one debt. But we read, "justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne," therefore such a demand could never be made by him who is "a just God;" and the only conclusion that can be drawn is, that the item now considered is unscriptural.

Fourthly. "That to believe in Christ is a supernatural thing." This is truth, because "faith is the gift of God," and apprehends supernatural realities; *but that it is the duty of natural men, not born of the Spirit, to believe in Christ to the saving of the soul, is false*: because God does not require that which he has not given. He would never have required perfection from Adam had he not created him upright; neither does he require faith in Christ 'till life from Christ has been communicated. It was when the jailor was a quickened man, that Paul and Silas said to him, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;" and true faith is said to "stand in the power of God," 1 Cor. ii. 5. And as salvation is in Christ, so faith to apprehend and receive it, is by Christ, for thus Peter speaks, "who by him do believe in God," 1 Peter i. 21. Therefore, if faith is a supernatural thing; if God does not require what he has not given; if none are commanded to believe in Christ but those who have life from Christ; and if faith stands in the power of God through Christ; then the affirmation, that it is the duty of a natural man to exercise saving faith in Christ, is unscriptural.

Fifthly. That it is the Holy Ghost's work to call a sinner out of the death and darkness of nature, into the life and light of grace is a truth, because it is written, "who hath called us with an holy calling," 2 Tim i. 9. "Ye are called in one hope of your calling," Eph. iv. 4. And that this call is consequent upon predestination is equally a truth, for "whom he did predestinate them he also called," Rom. viii. 30.; *but that the Holy Ghost will call every creature of Adam's race, if they first call upon him, is false.* We have proofs of men calling upon God, who, after all, were never called by the Holy Ghost, out of the death, and darkness of nature, into the life and light of grace. Saul called upon God, but was never called by grace. Balaam called upon God, but was never called by grace. Cain called upon God, but was never called by grace. But it may be said, they did not call upon God for to be called by grace. I would answer, the effectual call of the Holy Ghost is a spiritual blessing, and for a man to seek after it, he must have been spiritually called, "draw me, we will run after thee," is the language of the church. If, then, some men call upon God, but God never graciously calls them, and if none can seek after an interest in effectual calling 'till called, then the supposition, that if, every one of Adam's race was to call upon God, he would graciously call them, is false.

Sixthly. That Christ's redemption is particular, that is, applied only to the elect, is true; *but that it wears a general aspect, therefore, (though God may specially apply it, yet) every one of Adam's race is invited to partake of it, is not true.* Christ's redemption is his purchasing of a people

out of captivity to sin, by the price of his own most precious blood. Thus the apostle speaks, "Ye are not redeemed by corruptible things as silver or gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but by the precious blood of Christ." "Who is," says another apostle, "the propitiation" or atonement "for our sins." If Christ, then, atoned for the sins of the whole human race, and God the Father designs that only the elect shall partake of it, then God the Father and God the Son have not one will. And if God the Holy Ghost apply this atonement only to the elect, then God the Holy Ghost and God the Son have not one will. So that a yea and nay gospel preacher must be reduced to this dilemma, either to deny the doctrine of the "Trinity" altogether, or to say there is a plurality of Gods. But the Scriptures maintain, in every part, that "there be three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One." One in essence, one in purpose, one in counsel, one in will, one in design, and one in glory. Moreover, in the atonement we see the wisdom, the mercy, and the justice of Deity; but if wisdom, mercy, and justice, want every creature; and love, grace, omnipotence, omniscience, and sovereignty, want only the elect, then there is no harmony in the attributes of Deity; for one attribute of Deity is at variance with another.

But a Deity without certain properties, which necessarily compose his nature, is no Deity at all; and a Deity in whom these properties are at variance, cannot be the author and governor of an universe, wherein we see constantly preserved

order, harmony, and regularity. Thus Atheism, Arianism, and Confusion, are always to be found in a yea and nay gospel.

If, then, there be Three Persons in one God, one in will, one in design, and one in purpose, then God the Son's redemption is only for those to whom it is specially applied; neither does God invite every creature to partake of it. Therefore, the item concerning the general aspect, in union with the particular design of redemption, is false; and if any doubt continues to exist concerning the particularity of redemption, in its design or application, I would direct the reader to the following passages. "He sent redemption unto *his people.*" "He hath visited and redeemed *his people.*" "Remember the *rod or tribe of thine inheritance which* thou hast redeemed." "*Zion* shall be redeemed with judgment." No man could learn that song but *the hundred and forty and four thousand which* were redeemed from the earth." "Who hath redeemed us *out of* every nation and language, and people and tongue," that is to say, in distinction from the rest.

Seventhly. That the blood of Christ is of infinite efficacy, is a truth, because it was the God-man who shed it; and, if there were but one sinner in the world to be saved, and he had committed but one sin, Christ's blood would be of infinite efficacy on his behalf: because the God-man atoned for that one sin. If, therefore, the blood of Christ is of infinite efficacy on their behalf for whom it was shed, it cannot be made *efficient by a sinner's application*: and its efficiency is obvious in that the devil, the world, and the flesh, cannot

prevent a blood-bought sinner applying to the crimson fountain of a Saviour's veins, at the time fixed upon, for "there is a set time to favour Zion." Therefore the affirmation that a sinner's application will render Christ's blood efficient, is false.

Eighthly. That the state of man by nature is, that he is dead in trespasses and sins, is a truth, for the Scriptures declare it; but, that he *possesses a little power to do* that which is spiritually *good*, is false. He "is altogether become abominable," and cannot know his true state 'till the Holy Ghost convinceth him of sin; he is "guilty before God," but cannot know it 'till the Holy Ghost opens up the spirituality and extent of his holy law, and thus convinceth him of righteousness; he is hard, and knows not what it is to have holy meltings of heart before God, 'till brought to know of pardoning love. "When I was turned I repented," is Ephraim's language, "and when I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh;" as if he had said, when I was turned by God's Spirit from the world, from self, from the law, to Jesus' person, worth, and work, I repented; and when I was instructed by the same blessed teacher in my weakness, emptiness, and nothingness, I was ashamed and confounded before God. Man is a rebel, and knows nothing of obedience 'till humbled by God. But some talk of moral power? Yes, moral power is one thing and spiritual power is another. When we say man is helpless, we do not mean that, if a merchant, he cannot carry on his commercial affairs; if a farmer, that he cannot cultivate his ground; if a physician, that he knows not how

to advise his patient; and if a servant, that he cannot do his duty to his master. In a word, we do mean that man is so helpless as to be incapable of moral sobriety, honesty, cleanliness, and civility; but we mean that he cannot spiritually love, fear, and worship God; that he cannot hold communion with God until power is put forth in his soul by God. Thus, though Paul was a moral man before his conversion, he was not a spiritual man till called by the Holy Ghost. And "the young man" in the gospel, was a moral man: "all these things have I kept from youth up," says he, "what lack I yet?" But in order for him to be perfect, he must become a naked man, and receive Christ's righteousness for his justification before God; which sense of nakedness and reception of Christ's righteousness, are spiritual acts; therefore a man must be spiritual to perform them. So I conclude that moral power and spiritual power are widely different, and every man dead in trespasses and sins, is destitute of all spiritual power; therefore the sentiment that men dead in trespasses and sins, possess a little power to do spiritual good, is false.

Ninthly. That grace reigns is a truth, because it is an attribute of God; but if it reigns it cannot be said to end, for flowing from the throne of God, through the medium of the person of Christ, into the hearts of God's elect, it has its consummation in glory. Thus we read, "the Lord will give grace and glory," Psalms lxxxiv. 11. He never gives grace without giving glory, and where he has once given grace "he giveth more grace," James iv. 6, and so "of his fulness have we all

received and grace for grace." And no sinner can be said to have an opportunity of being saved unless God the Father gave him life in Christ, God the Son died for him, and God the Holy Ghost communicated grace to his heart; and whoever the Holy Ghost communicated grace to, God the Son died for, and God the Father loved: for thus we read, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Not only so, but all who have grace put in them believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and "he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, John vi. 47. It does not say he *shall have* everlasting life, but "he *hath* everlasting life." Then this life being everlasting, the grace which gave it, secured it, and wrought it in the soul, must be everlasting too. If, therefore, grace cannot end because it reigns; if when grace is given glory is added; if where grace is once given more is bestowed; if no sinner can be said to have an opportunity of being saved unless the Father loves him, Jesus dies for him, and the Holy Spirit quickens him; if when the Holy Spirit gives grace a man believes in Jesus Christ; and if he that believeth hath everlasting life, then grace must be everlasting, and the sentiment, that "*the day of grace ends where the sinner does not avail himself of an offered opportunity,*" must fall to the ground, being unscriptural.

Tenthly. That grace is special favour is a truth, because it is said to save and call: "who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own

purpose and grace, 2 Tim. i. 9. But that it is *universally obtainable*, is a tenet at variance with God's word; because this grace displays itself in choosing, blessing, saving, calling, preserving, and taking to heaven; as therefore every creature is not chosen, every creature is not blessed, every creature is not saved, every creature is not called, every creature is not preserved unto God's eternal kingdom; and so every man and woman cannot adopt the words of the apostle—"Unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ," Eph. iv. 7. so grace is not universally obtainable.

Eleventhly. That God's love never had a beginning and never will have an end towards the election of grace, and only these can love God, because God first loved them, is blessed truth; because God's love is from everlasting, for he does not say to his church I will love thee to everlasting, but I have loved thee with an everlasting love: God has loved them, it is without beginning, and he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," therefore it is without end. And God never deceives, for all whom he loves he loves immutably, all whom he designs to save he appoints to salvation, and all whom he will glorify he makes willing in the day of his power; therefore all such will know, sooner or later, what it is to love God. But that *God will love the rest if they first love him*, is making man's love the foundation of God's love; and that man's love cannot be the foundation of God's love is certain, because God's love has no beginning, and man's has; God's love is infinite, man's is finite;

God's love is immutable, he says, "I am the Lord, I change not;" but man's love is constantly changing. Therefore this tenet is false.

Twelfthly. That prayer cannot be spiritually put forth after God, by men who are not born of the Spirit, is a truth; because, if it could, there would have been no need of the promise, "I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication;" but that it *is man's duty to pray that he may be made alive*, is false. Man's duty, as a creature, has nothing to do with newness of life in Christ, because newness of life in Christ Jesus, and creatureship, are infinitely different relations to God; the one is spiritual, the other natural; the one is gospel, the other legal; the one is by Eternal choice, the other is in common with all creation; the one is by the special operation of the Spirit, the other is by his common dealings among men; such as causing the sun to shine upon the evil and the good, sending rain upon the just and the unjust, feeding the cattle upon a thousand hills, and causing the earth to bring forth the herb, yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit; and true prayer never takes place till the quickening power of the Spirit is known, and then, but not before, are these words understood, "praying in the Holy Ghost." If then man's duty as a creature has nothing to do with newness of life in Christ, and none can pray for life till quickened by the Holy Ghost, it is not man's duty to pray that he may be made alive.

This yea and nay gospel is admired by the world, because it gives every man a chance, and

it is the more easily received, because there is so much truth in it; but it is vastly different from that grace which is unfolded in the gospel of the ever blessed God. A yea and nay gospel will be received by Arminians with all the pleasure imaginable, because though it differs in some measure from their sentiments generally, yet there is so much that favours their own views, that any man who pretends to be a Calvinist, and will preach according to a yea and nay system, will be very cordially allowed to preach for them. A yea and nay gospel is so full of universal charity, that all its advocates are distinguished for a greater love to mankind in general than to God's church in particular, so that Infidels, Papists, Arians, and Socinians, are generally found among those whom they highly esteem; but to every faithful servant of God the words of the Lord, by Jehu the son of Hanani to Jehoshaphat, may be applied, "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" 2 Chron. xix. 2. Therefore I rejoice, in the moment of writing, that, contrary to these yea and nay men, I believe in that grace of God which fixed upon its objects before time, and will never let them go; that reigns without man's help; that provides without man's asking; that delivers without man's strength; that preserves amidst corruptions within, and foes without; that offers itself to none, but gives life to whom it will; that grace the day of which will never close; that grace, which will acknowledge no gospel as the right gospel, but that which consists in yea and amen; that grace which will make an Arminian gnash his teeth; that grace which half and half

professors are afraid to say too much of, lest it should lead to sin; that grace which is the stumbling stone of thousands who bear the Christian name; that grace which removes every stumbling block for them in whom it works; that grace which devils cannot take from me; that grace which the world cannot force me from, because they cannot force it from me; that grace which many so much hate, as to compass sea and land to persuade men not to hear preached; that grace, the preaching of which will subject the preacher to reproaches, persecutions, and, in some instances, death itself; that grace which times and seasons never can alter; that grace which makes a believer shout victory in the midst of tribulation, gives him strength to trample upon the devil, and overcome the world; that grace which never changes when its objects do; that grace which embitters sin and endears the Redeemer; that grace by which we love God and hold communion with him; that grace which melts the heart, spiritualizes the thoughts, revives a believer's drooping spirits, leads from the world, brings near God, makes self despicable, and heavenly realities desirable; that grace which sometimes brings heaven into my soul, and will at last take me to heaven; that grace which will make me smile at death, and shine in robes of light for ever; that grace which gives me an inheritance to which, by nature, I have no right; that grace which makes me higher than angels; and that grace which throughout eternity will make me sing and shout of his superior worth, who bowed the heavens,

and came down to set his people free from sin, from sorrow, and from death.

Reader, what think you of this grace? If you are carnal, it is that which you will hate. For it savours too much of heaven to please your earthly affections, too much of spirituality to please your carnal desires, and too much of God's work to please your self-righteous nature: but if you are born from above, this grace nourishes your soul, and the more it reigns and shines within your heart the more highly will the grace of God be prized by you, and the more will the rotten system of a yea and nay gospel be rejected. A yea and nay system is so completely at variance with the harmony, certainty, and glory of the gospel of Christ; so repugnant to the feelings of a spiritual mind; so full of confusion, emptiness, and vanity; so opposed to Scripture history, Scripture promises, and Scripture precepts, that it carries within its bosom its own confutation. So that all who love purity in principle, certainty in design, and harmony in sound, must at once reject a system like this, where nothing but impurity, contingency, and confusion abound. Its essence originates with the father of lies, and must lead to him again, which all who rest upon it will find to their unspeakable woe. But, reader, it will be your mercy to be building all your hopes upon that gospel which consists in yea and amen. Then though sins and infirmities encompass you, under which you daily groan, yet you have this sweet truth to rejoice in, that the Lord "will rest in his love." Though ad-

versity may often be your lot below, yet it is working out for you a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And though darkness often beclouds your soul, and fears often oppress your mind; yet you will, sooner or later, rejoice in the delivering power of Christ, for "the vision is for an appointed time, in the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it."