

BIBLICAL CRITICISMS

AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF
EXPERIMENTAL GODLINESS.

No. XXI.] SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1824. [Price 2d.

Τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν παντί Χριστός.—PAUL.

Christ all and in all. COL. III. 11.

QUESTION.

LIMEHOUSE, MONDAY, MAY 31, 1824.

“ Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you ”—thus the apostle exhorts—but how am I, who am WEAKNESS itself, to resist so powerful an adversary ?

SOLUTION.

WE are called upon by the question, to attend to what I may term **CHRISTIAN HEROISM**, displayed most bravely, and successfully, against the common, perpetual, and inveterate enemy of God and man. The enemy, more especially of Christ, and of his redeemed, who called by divine grace, are delivered from Satan's dominion, and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, that they may manfully fight the good fight of faith, “ and, strong in his strength, more than conquerors over sin, earth, and hell, lay hold of eternal life ! But the Christian, truly sensible of his own weakness, and his consequent inadequacy to go up against the great Goliath of Hell, like the prophet's servant, is ready to cry, upon every appearance of the frightful foe, “ *Alas, master, and what shall we do now ?* ” How shall we go up against this mighty host, whose name is legion, for they are many ? Hence the question before us,

which was first mentally suggested by the querist, in serious reflection upon his incapacity to repel the temptations of the Devil, and the unwearied efforts of that roaring lion, if possible, to devour his immortal soul!

Your attention is requested.

1. To the alarming NAMES he bears in the Sacred Word, Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils. Satan, an ADVERSARY, one who prosecutes the immortal soul at law, most maliciously determined to find the sinner guilty; accusing him, even BEFORE and to God himself; as in the case of Job, and would legally succeed, but for the Great Advocate, who pleads in the sinner's behalf before the throne of Divine Love, his blood that takes away all guilt from the conscience, and in whose righteousness the self-condemned sinner stands perfect and upright before his God, *freely justified* by grace! Abaddon, Apollyon, a Destroyer, under whose infernal dominion, devils and damned souls, suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. In the question, and in the scripture on which it is founded, he is named the Devil; the backbiter, the lying and malignant accuser of the brethren! The Father of lies, and the instigator of backbiting and defamation in the earth. *The prince of this world*, who has

2. All mankind, in their natural state, under his awful dominion. He has access to every human heart, and prior to our regeneration, we were led captive by him, in the chains of ignorance, darkness, unbelief, and high rebellion against God! Glory to Jesus that the snare is broken, and we have escaped, as a bird, from the hand of the fowler. That all by nature are under his vassalage, is undeniably plain from the universal conduct of the whole human race; and expressly so from the assertion of Paul, in Eph. ii. 2. "Wherein in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the SPIRIT that *now worketh* in the children of disobedience." The REGENERATED, then, alone, are exempt from his tyrannic sway; as saith the apostle John, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in *wickedness*: *εν τω πονηρω*, in the wicked one, in the DEVIL: that is under his malignant usurpation over the whole world!

3. He is the avowed enemy of the precious Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, ‘ God manifest in our flesh ’ And no wonder, for our lovely Immanuel was manifest in the flesh, for the grand, and to us, momentous purpose of destroying the works of the Devil, that we might be turned from the power of Satan unto God. (Acts xxvi. 18.) No other opposition is regarded by the Infernal Prince; no other power can injure his cause; no other name will make him tremble, than the name of our Great Deliverer! Jesus! before whom he cannot stand! Plead then his name, make mention of his righteousness, and the powers of hell, O ye highly favored of the Lord, will fall before you, like lightning from heaven.

4. He tried our Dear Lord, with every temptation, and as Christ was tempted in all points, as *we are*, it follows, that his people must not think of escaping the severest of his assaults. He who attempted the destruction of the church’s head, in the time of his deep humiliation, will never cease to assail regenerated souls, while they trust the Redeemer’s merits, and exalt his illustrious name!

5. All his temptations are aimed at the honor, glory, and power of Christ. Against his divinity, his everlasting and especial love to his people, his peculiar, and gloriously complete redemption of his sheep; and his eternal honor and glory in the salvation, and glorification of all whom the Father gave him in the covenant of grace and redemption. All who preach or militate against these glories of God and the Lamb, in any way whatever, though they may appear like angels of light, are, so far, but the servants of Satan, fighting against Immanuel, under the Infernal Banner!

6. Hence the Holy Spirit speaks expressly of *doctrines of devils*! Every doctrine, that goes to exalt the creature, either directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, I do not hesitate to pronounce a doctrine of the Devil; as it has the most diabolical tendency to debase Jesus, ‘ the mighty God,’ and divest him of his essential power, and mediatorial glory. It is also turning the blind out of the way; against which God has pronounced his curse. It is turning a soul from Christ, and AGAINST Christ, who is alone, the WAY. And ‘ whosoever climbeth up, *any other way,*

the same is a thief, and a robber," who robs Christ of the honor due unto his name! And deserves extraordinarily, eternal banishment from his presence!

7. The *Devil*, or *Satan*, also has his *synagogue*. "I know the *blasphemy* of them who say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan!" (Rev. ii. 9.) They say, they are Jews, that is, they are, the Israel of God, his *spiritual* worshippers—but if they teach for doctrines, the commandments of men, and despise the riches of God's grace—if they are going about, in any way, to establish their own righteousness, whatever specious name they may give it—they are Satan's synagogue itself, which he has in the name and form of religion erected against the *true* synagogue, or spiritual worship of Christ, to deceive and beguile souls, as he beguiled Eve! Alas! how many strut about in the *name* and *form*, and *pretended sanctity* of religion, that display the bitterest enmity against the truth, and thereby evince themselves but of the destructive and Antichristian synagogue of Satan.

8. He has his wiles, tricks, snares, and fiery darts; all of which, the children of God feel, and in such painful exercises, are exhorted, and directed to resist the Devil. "*Whom resist stedfast in the faith.*" Which leads me to give an immediate answer to the Question.

1. Believers are the only persons spoken to, in the exhortation, caution, and direction, given by Peter, in the scripture alluded to, and by James, in chap. iv. 7. For the world at large, have neither will nor power, to resist him, by whom they are led captive at his will. (2 Tim. ii. 26.)

Peter speaks particularly to those who are labouring under "the mighty hand of God." (verse 5) and he speaks to them most tenderly. For though the hand of God seems to be heavy upon us, in times of affliction, whether bodily or spiritual, we are not to conclude that it is the mighty hand of his wrath, to crush and destroy, but the hand of his mighty love, which has appointed the affliction in wisdom, for our real benefit: therefore, saith James, "humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God: that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." This sweetly consolatory

language is children's bread, which must not be given to dogs; and the same tried and afflicted sons of God are alone exhorted to resist the Devil: For he is not to be resisted without faith—whom *resist steadfast in faith*—and faith is the gift of God, called emphatically, the *faith of God's elect*, because “unto them it is given to believe, but unto others, (saith Christ himself) it is not given.”

2. The act of *resistance* does not imply any power in the creature: the old man of sin will never resist the devil, he would at all times, rather assist than resist; and but for the prevention of grace, would presently lead you, most treacherously to desert the captain of our salvation, and go over to the camp of the enemy, “*For in us (that is in our flesh) dwelleth no good thing.*” Indeed so far from being *sanctified*, and made better, our carnal nature, is one of the three combined powers, against which we are called to fight, denominated, the WORLD, the FLESH, and the DEVIL. And the exhortation, *resist*, or put off the old man, is of equal consequence with that under consideration, “**RESIST** the Devil.” What a folly it is then to suppose, that man can or will naturally resist that power with which he is in the most friendly combination against the Lord, and against his people! Think not, Dear Christians, that your carnal nature will show you any more quarters than Satan himself, or that it possesses any more holiness than the infernal powers! *Earthly, sensual, and devilish* are your three natural and characteristic names, not given you by your God fathers and God-mothers, since your birth, but were entailed upon you, before you were born, for you were shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin—names of disgrace, abhorrent to the hidden man of our hearts; names of the greatest antiquity, even as ancient as Adam himself, *names* which we are obliged, even now humbly to acknowledge before God with shame and confusion of face! But blessed be his glorious Majesty for ever! he has given us a *new*, even a divine nature, and with it a *new name*, which none can read, but those who receive it. He graciously says, “I have called thee by name, thou art mine; my **НЕРЗЫВАН**, my delight.” And it is the *new* nature, hostile to the *old*, or corrupt nature, that is called upon to resist the Devil.

3. Whom resist *stedfast* in FAITH. The querist asks, How can I who am WEAKNESS ITSELF resist so powerful an enemy? to whom I affectionately reply, the Holy Spirit, your Divine Teacher, has given you this feeling assurance of your extreme weakness, that you may go out of yourself to Jesus Christ the Mighty God, for strength and for all things: for in Him, the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting strength, and in the day of battle with the terrible enemy, you shall prove the sufficiency of his grace, and sing Paul's triumphant song: "He said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in *weakness*. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 Cor. xii. 9.) He will strengthen you with all mighty by his Spirit in the inner, hidden, and new-man of your heart: "when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." That standard is the precious Christ, who will prove himself, "a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall:" (Isa. xxv. 4.) Then shall you sing to his praise and his glory, "he delivered me from my STRONG ENEMY, and from them which hated me; for they were too strong for me:" and still go on with rejoicing in the *Divine strength* which he continues to impart, "he teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by my arms." (Psm. xviii. 17, 34.) Thus *stedfast* in *faith*, we resist the devil, and quench his fiery darts in the fountain of Immanuel's sin atoning blood.

4. This exhortation is intended for an encouragement to the weak and tempted in all their tribulations from the assaults of hell. Hence, Peter, who had been in Satan's sieve himself, and was delivered alone by the Omnipotent grace of Christ, goes to the greatest extreme in extolling the power of that grace. The Devil, your adversary, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour—but *the God of all grace*.—I know not that this soul-encouraging title of our gracious God occurs in any other part of the New Testament. Poor, tempted, fallen, but graciously restored Peter knows not how to extol enough the wonders and all-sufficiency of *grace*—or lest any of

God's tempted children should suppose that something, or rather in them, would exclude them from the great blessings and benefits of grace, he is not satisfied with denominating him ο Θεος χαριτος, the God of grace; but must adopt the strongest epithet, that he might encompass all the circumstances, however wretched, of all God's tried family; ο δε Θεος πασης χαριτος. But the God of ALL grace—of every favor, every blessing, every good, every pardon, every support of ALL grace—of comforting, directing, preserving, supporting, restoring, healing grace—never failing, immutable, eternal grace. “Who hath called us (not to fall finally) unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”

4. The exhortation is the language of direction. “Be sober, be vigilant.” (ver. 5.) “be steady, be on your watch tower, and carefully observe the motions of the enemy. Be not inebriated with the vanities and love of the world, of which the enemy would be sure to take the advantage; but be vigilant in the ways of the Lord; “watch and pray lest ye fall into temptation;” search the scriptures, and duly and diligently attend on the preached word and ordinances of the Lord; to a non-attendance on which, Satan tempts the children of God, that he may take the advantage of their negligence. “Wait on the Lord, be of good cheer, and he shall comfort your heart: wait, I say on the Lord.”

5. Be stedfast in faith, or you resist in vain. Meet him in your own strength, and he is sure to wound you, and plunge you in distress. For “this is the victory even our faith.” Meet him by faith in Christ, and you shall be more than conquerors through him who hath loved us.—By faith in his POWER; say with the faithful Daniel, “the God whom I serve, he is able”—and then you may add, by faith in his WILLINGNESS—“and he will deliver me.” By faith in his LOVE; “what shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Is the language of confidential faith; my Lord loves me too well to suffer Satan finally to triumph over me: though the enemy points to my sins and unworthiness, I still rejoice, for the Lord loveth me freely; this delightfully free love has been manifested to my soul. “I have loved thee,” has been the soul-liberating language of my

God, and that sweet kiss of love is a token that he loves me now; for he resteth in his love—I have loved thee, he kindly says, with EVERLASTING love! “Here I will hold” and this shall be my boast in the Lord, that

“He who hath lov’d me bears me through,
And makes me more than conq’ror too.”

By faith in his TRUTH and VERACITY. “The strength of Israel will not lie.” That which he has engaged in covenant do shall be most accurately executed to the glory of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit who bear witness in heaven to all their covenant engagements of love.—By faith in his exceedingly great and precious PROMISES. Which unincumbered of all conditions on our part, are promises of great grace in Christ, and are yea, and amen in him. By faith in his FAITHFULNESS. “faithful is he who hath promised, who also will do it.” His faithfulness is established in the heavens, and is like the great mountains, firm and immoveable. He has positively declared for our safety and certain deliverance from the power of every foe, “my covenant I will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.” Thus, stedfast in faith, dear believers, “resist the Devil, and he will flee from you, draw near to God, and he will draw near unto you.”

“Stand off Satan! God rebuke thee!
Come, my soul, cheer up and sing;
His temptations but provoke thee
To exalt thy sovereign King:
Tremble not at his reflection
On thy vile polluted heart;
Sing, in Christ thy *free election*,
Thus repel the Tempter’s dart.”

QUESTION FOR NEXT MONDAY EVENING.

Extract of a Letter.

“Permit me, Sir, to solicit your attention to the following Question, deduced solely from a sentiment you have submitted to the public.”—No. ix. p. 66.

How can the humanity of Christ be exalted to an equality with the Divinity?

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No. XXII.] SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 1824.

Τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν παντί Χριστός.—PAUL.

Christ all and in all. COL. III. 11.

QUESTION.

LIMEHOUSE, MONDAY, JUNE 7, 1824.

Extract of a Letter.

“Permit me, Sir, to solicit your attention to the following Question, deduced solely from a sentiment you have submitted to the public.”—No. ix. p. 66.

How can the humanity of Christ be exalted to an equality with the Divinity?

SOLUTION.

THE Question is founded on an assertion of my own, couched in nearly my own words, and enquiries after the truth and validity of a sentiment which in No. IX. p. 66. “I have submitted to the public.” This is indeed, the critic criticised: and to which I have no objection, when the love of truth, with a desire to be led farther into the knowledge of it, inspires the heart of the enquiring critic: and as this seems to be the case with the person I am now about to answer, I feel obliged to him for his criticism, under a firm persuasion, that the Lord will direct me to explain myself, in reply, to the perfect satisfaction of all the divinely taught children of the Most High. The question is certainly communicated in an *anonymous* letter, (which has always my disapprobation) yet

“—It comes in such a questionable shape.
That I will speak to it.”

in defence of the exaltation of HIM, who is ascended to his own glory, and yet dwells in the humble and contrite heart!

The enquiry is not immediately concerning either the humanity or divinity of Christ: but the *equality* of the former with the latter, seems to puzzle the Querist; for the insertion of which in my publication, he calls me to an account, and wishes for explanation; and I feel it incumbent upon me to explain; which I shall proceed to do, with much cheerfulness and delight of soul, from the pleasing hope, that it will have the very desirable tendency, farther to elucidate the Eternal Divinity of Jesus, while we survey with eyes of love and wonder, God *wearing our nature*, and in that very nature occupying the throne of heaven, as God and the Lamb slain; to whom all glory is, and shall be ascribed by angels, and his redeemed church, for ever and ever! It will be necessary for me, as a ground for argument, to glance at the two natures of Christ, before I immediately reply to the question. The PERSON of Christ is ever dear to the child of God. "More precious than fine gold, altogether lovely:" amiable beyond every thing that is most amiable! delightful beyond every thing that is most delightful! Desirable beyond every thing that is most desirable! And what renders him so superlatively precious? The wonderful *union* of TWO NATURES forming but ONE PERSON. Immanuel, our God, yet our brother near akin! Able to save, for he is JEHOVAH. Able to save for he took our nature, that he might take our sins, and offer, for his offending people, a sacrifice for their redemption, in the *very nature*, in which the *offences* were committed; that the atonement might be irrefrustably efficacious! How mysterious the person of Christ! and how precious! when the Holy Spirit unveils his glories to a ransomed sinner! who can experimentally sing,

" He bears our sins! behold the flood,
The sacred crimson tide!
DIVINITY sustain'd the load,
The HUMAN NATURE died!"

SION'S HARMONY, Hymn 324.

1. It is an EQUALITY not in *nature*, for his human nature is still human, and the divine, is still *divine*, or God, the Eternal God! Yet they are ONE, and both immortally

eternally, and for ever exalted above all power, and all might! He became *very man*, and was,

1. Conceived in the virgin's womb, Luke i. 35. Acts iv. 27, 30. and is denominated "that *holy* thing born of her"—"the **HOLY child Jesus.**"

2. He was made *flesh*; made of a *woman*; made *under the law*; was *one chosen out of the people*: for "in all things it behoved *him*—he was bound—"to be made like unto his brethren." The word *οφειλε* rendered *behooved*, is the *third pers. sing. imperf. indic. mood*, of the verb *οφειλω* *debeo* to owe, to be in debt, to be bound to one. Or, *reus sum*, to be a surety; I am bound for another. He must, according to the covenant of redemption, be made **IN ALL THINGS**, like unto his brethren, because he was bound to answer for them in **ALL THINGS**. Does justice demand the sacrifice of the body, he has one to offer in the stead of that of the guilty sinner, which is perfectly human.—Does wrath indignantly pursue the soul? He has a soul, also perfectly human, in all things like unto the souls of his brethren, "made an offering unto death," to accomplish the great work of their salvation!

He answers for them *in all things*, to justice, law, wrath, the world, death and devils! Faith in Christ always pleads his blood and righteousness before the Divine throne, and in answer to every accuser defies a charge to be brought against the elect of God (Rom. viii. 34.) for our Infinitely Precious Surety, in our own nature, and in our world, place, and stead, has sufficiently, completely, and for ever answered them all—and answered them by a complete atonement, made to the eternal satisfaction of Divine Justice, by that most precious blood, that speaks peace to the conscience of the sinner, justified in him.

His real manhood was sufficiently evinced, as it respects his body, by his being *weary*—"Jesus being *wearied* with his journey, sat thus on the *well*."—He also *ate*, *drank*, and *slept* for the refreshment of his body. And respecting his soul he displayed all the mental powers and passions of a **REAL** man: *sorrow*, *joy*, *anger*, *love*, &c. "Jesus **WEPT**" at the grave of Lazarus—he said to his disciples, "I am **GLAD** for your sakes, that I was not there," &c. "Jesus **LOVED** Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus;" and we read of that disciple whom Jesus loved. As the great and won-

derful Redeemer, he loves all his true disciples with eternal love ; but he loved **THAT** disciple, and Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus, with whom he was particularly intimate, as creatures, with the love of the most amiable, endearing and sinless friendship.

And while we thus exult, in his becoming truly man, in soul and body for our sakes ; our exultation is powerfully enhanced by the assurance, that he was a perfectly pure and sinless man—*holy, harmless*, undefiled, and separate from sinners !

But of *sinless* perfection! alas ! we are scarcely competent to form an adequate idea ; as we never possessed it ; but are in our carnal nature, the awful reverse. Yet this much we do know, that it is the opposite of all that can be called sin, and the perpetual exercise of the most holy obedience to the will of God, in thought, will, wish, desire, and affections ; and that so undeviatingly, that every moment of the whole life is devoted to the service and glory of God ! Such was the lovely Lamb of God, who *obeyed* for us, and in whose **OBEDIENCE** we stand everlastingly justified !

But because he was made perfectly man, does it follow that he was nothing more than **MAN** ? Because he veiled all his Divine Glories in human flesh, and took upon him, “the form of a servant,” does it totally divest him of his royal honors, and nullify his eternal Divinity ? No : he is the Great **I AM**, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, who condescended to bow the heavens, and come down ; “who rode upon a cherub, and did fly, yea he did fly upon the wings of the wind.” (Psalm xviii. 9, 10.) He flew on wings of Divine Love to rescue us from impending ruin, and to pluck us as brands from the burning ! O immeasurable stoop of condescending love ! The condescension of the Almighty ! and, therefore, beyond our uttermost stretch of thought. He took not upon him the nature of angels, but he *took on him* the seed of **ABRAHAM**. He took on him as an act of the most astonishing love, our nature ! The heavenly Lover comes down to the objects of his Great Love, and to deliver them from the awful consequences of sin ; nay, from sin itself, he wears their flesh, that he may take the curse, the wrath, and bear the full penalty due to their innumerable offences !

And that he is the *true God*, is undeniably evident,

1. By his *miracles*. In his OWN NAME, and by HIS OWN AUTHORITY, he cast out devils, who trembled before him, and acknowledged his Divinity, "We know thee, who thou art—the Holy One of God!" Devils, then, have a more sound creed than either Socinians or Arians. The apostles performed miracles, *but, in the name of the Lord Jesus*. Without him they could do nothing. But the Lord himself employed no other name, invoked no other power, did not even say, in the name of God, but evinces his omnipotent power, by saying, "Come out of the man, thou unclean Spirit." *I, who have heaven and earth at command, I charge you to come out of him!* The mandate cannot be resisted! the command, however reluctantly, is immediately obeyed! Here conspicuously shines the OMNIPOTENCE of our Immanuel! (Read Mark v. 1—15)

2. By his sovereign power over man. When a band of men and officers from the chief Priest and Pharisees, conducted by the infamous backbiter, Judas, approached to apprehend him, "Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus said unto them, I am he—they went backward and fell to the ground."—(John xviii. 3—6.) Panic struck, their courage failed, and they had no ability to take him: which circumstance evidently displays two important matters, first, that no man taketh his life from him against his will, but he "layeth it down of himself," voluntarily and freely for his sheep; and *second*, that he has sovereign power over all flesh, which proves his Eternal Divinity.

3. His *transfiguration*; when in the presence of Peter, James, and John, "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Observe, particularly, that it was not light shining *upon him*, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, "when suddenly, there shined round about him a light from heaven." (Acts ix. 3) But his *face* shone. It was his *own* intrinsic light, the glories of his Godhead, shining in and through the humanity, as the sun in his meridian, and his very raiment was so illuminated, with his countenance, as to become white as the light itself! Who can read this account with understanding, and call in question, his eternal power and Godhead!

4. He was the grand and adorable object of worship with

men and *angels*; and that at the express command of the Father; when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he saith, "*And let all the angels of God worship him.*" (Heb. i. 6.) If then, Christ is not the true and eternal God, Jehovah himself gave an express command to his angels, to commit *idolatry*, and all the angels have to the present day remained the most horrid *idolators*! But he is our God and we adore him and fall low at his feet, in worship, praise, and prayer!

5. By the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who hath said, "No man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. xii. 3.) His almighty power to save, is revealed to the sinner, who was ready to perish, and he cries with the assurance of triumphant faith in him, "My Lord and my God!"

We now attend to the interesting question, Is the *humanity* exalted to an EQUALITY with the Divinity?

Not in *nature* (as I have before observed) for the human is still human, and the divine is still divine.

But there is a perfect, glorious, and everlasting *equality*.

1. By virtue of the wonderful *UNION* between them.—Which union is misunderstood by professors who have not an *experimental* knowledge and enjoyment of the beautiful plan of salvation alone by Christ. For it is by virtue of this union that sovereign efficacy in our salvation, flows everlastingly from the *man*, Christ Jesus. Separate the human nature from the divine, and what would it be in heaven, more than a glorified creature? But when the *body* of Christ ascended, in consequence of its inseparable union with the Eternal Divinity, the triumphant shout of saints and angels, proclaimed the complex person of Immanuel, *The King of Glory*, who, as God and man—"the man *God's* fellow." (Zech. xiii. 7.) "God and the Lamb," fills his own Eternal Throne: as Toplady has judiciously expressed it,

" His conquest is crown'd with the honors he won,
Hosanna thro' all the ethereal groves!
The GOD AND THE MAN, how he fills up his throne,
Triumphantly glorious for ever he loves!"

2. It is an EQUALITY of *virtue, efficacy, and authority*.

1. The virtue of his precious blood: which must be allowed in its intrinsic nature to be human blood; the blood

of the Lamb which the Lord prepared for the offering ; a Lamb of the flock, one chosen out of the people. "The precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." (1 Pet. i. 19.) Yet this blood is denominated the blood of God—"Feed the church of God, which he has purchased with *his own blood.*" (Acts xx. 28.) And I would ask, How can it be truly and properly the blood of God, but by the exaltation of the human nature, to an equality with the divine, through that union which exists between them in the wonderful formation of ONE person, even Immanuel, *God with us!* And "what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder!"

2. The power to forgive sins. This is attributed to the man Christ Jesus. (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) "Be it known unto you, therefore men and brethren, that through THIS man, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." But we should sink into all the blasphemy of hateful popery, if we believed that a *mere man*, could forgive sins: yet the man Christ Jesus could—but how? By virtue of the UNION of his humanity with his divinity, and the consequent exaltation of the former to an equality with the latter. Thus he asserts this prerogative to pardon, Matt. ix.

6. "But that ye may know that the SON OF MAN, hath power on earth to forgive sins, then said he to the sick of the palsy, arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house." The DIVINITY dwelt in, and was interwoven with the MAN, and the MAN in the divinity, and to shew his authority, as the INCARNATE GOD, to forgive sins, he works a miracle, refulgently to display his indubitable Omnipotence!

3. Omnipotent power is ascribed to Christ, the Lord's anointed, the MAN whom Jehovah has made strong for himself, (2 Cor. xii. 9.) "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the POWER of Christ, may rest upon me." (Phil. iv. 13.) "I can do all things, thro' Christ which strengthens me." No person would surely doubt that Omnipotent power, even the power of God, is here intended by the Great Apostle, and yet the *very word* Christ, implies the *anointed man*, as well as the Divinity. Here then we have again, unquestionable evidence of the exaltation of the *man*, through the union of the two, to an *equality* with the Godhead. "For power belongeth unto God." (Psalm lxii. 11.) we are "kept by the pow-

er of God." (1 Pet. i. 5.) And this power is ascribed to Christ. Christ, then is Jehovah, in whom we are exhorted to trust. (Isaiah xxvi 4.) Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah, is everlasting strength. We know that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth," (Rom. x. 4.) and concerning this righteousness, Isaiah rapturously sings, "Surely, shall one say in the LORD, have I *righteousness* and *strength*."—(Isaiah xlv. 24.)

4. His obedience, was the obedience of *the man* for us men, and for our righteousness: Rom. v. 19. "For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made *righteous!*" and yet his righteousness is expressly pronounced, the righteousness of God: (Jer xxiii. 6.) "And this is his name, whereby he shall be called, the Lord our *righteous!*"

3. It is an *equality* of glorious exaltation, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand; a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—(Acts v. 35.)

In the day of his humiliation, he thought it no robbery to be equal with God: and now exalted in the third heavens, the *advocate* and *representative* of his people, is worshipped by all the heavenly inhabitants, as God and the Lamb, who sitteth on his own throne. (Rev. v. 12.)

I may conclude, in defence of my assertion, "That by virtue of the *union* of the two natures, in the complex person of Christ, the humanity is exalted to an *equality with the divinity*, by publicly and positively averring, that if the blood of Christ is not divine blood, I would as soon trust my salvation to the blood of bulls or goats, as to his atonement—if the righteousness of Christ is not the righteousness of Jehovah, it has no more power to justify the ungodly, than the filthy rags of the Arminian's boasted merits! If the power of Christ is not OMNIPOTENT POWER he is no more able to save me, than I am to deliver my own soul from death! But blessed be his name, we know his power to save—we know in whom we have believed, and that he is able to keep that which we have believingly committed to his care—the Lord liveth! and blessed be my rock, and let the GOD of my salvation be EXALTED!"

BIBLICAL CRITICISMS

AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF

EXPERIMENTAL GODLINESS.

No. XXIII.] SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 1824.

Τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν παντί Χριστός.—PAUL.

Christ all and in all. COL. III. 11.

QUESTION.

LIMEHOUSE, MONDAY, JUNE 14, 1824.

Is the sanctification of the believer, by the Holy Spirit, a PROGRESSIVE work? and does he grow holier as he advances in the Divine Life! If not, what are we to understand by growing in grace, as expressed by Peter in his second epistle iii. 18.

SOLUTION.

SANCTIFICATION is that important theme, which in its very nature, must ensure me the attention of the people of God; as “without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.” Genuine and uncontaminated holiness, which comes from God, and returns to him, bearing with it all the powers of the soul in spiritual worship, ardent love, and heart felt praise! There is no subject on which real Christians, and especially young ones, are so puzzled, as on SANCTIFICATION; from that *distinguishing* knowledge, which they have of themselves, and that innate conviction, which the Lord hath given them, that in their flesh dwelleth no good thing!

For they cannot but “*examine themselves whether they are in the faith,*” through that sense, of the incalculable worth of the soul, and the necessity of salvation by Christ, with which the Holy Spirit, has most powerfully impressed their minds. And alas! when they look inwardly in pursuit of *holiness* of heart, they are discouraged indeed; and

with fear and trembling, are led to ask, "Can I be one effectually CALLED, and chosen, and faithful! With an *heart like mine*, how dare I to encourage a hope that I am *sanctified*, by the Holy Spirit!" They groan before God, in the language of NEWTON,

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is weak, and vain, and wild;
Fill'd with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

Or, with the self-abhorrence, so well expressed by MR. HART, the Christian exclaims,

"O wretched, wretched man!
What horrid scenes I view!
I find, alas! do all I can,
That I can nothing do!"

With a view to the relief, liberation, and comfort of such afflicted complainants, we will enquire,

I. What is SANCTIFICATION, as clearly revealed in the volume of inspiration, and experienced by the effectually called people, who are distinguishingly named, "*The Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord.*" (Isaiah lxii. 12.)

1. The word sanctification occurs so frequently in the Scriptures, and is so unambiguous in its various applications, that its signification cannot be well misunderstood. Spotless purity, uncontaminated holiness, immaculate perfection; flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, graciously down to the earth, upon poor unworthy sinners; whereby they are set apart for the spiritual worship, and delightful service of God: in which they have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ!—"Blessed are the PURE in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) With them an unsearchably Holy God, can hold communion, and yet be *just and righteous!* His *holiness* is exalted, while grace is *administered*, and mercy communicated in and through their Great Redeemer, in whom they are complete! The Greek verb, *αγιαζω* used by Christ himself, (John xvii. 19.) and generally employed by the Holy Spirit to express our *sanctity*, will, in its interpretation, admit of no acceptation, like *imperfect holiness*; but always powerfully conveys the idea of a *perfection* in sanctity: *αγιαζω* *sanctifico*, to *hallow*, to make *holy*; from the theme *Αγιος*, *sanctus*, *holy*, *sacred*, *inviolable*. Hence, that work of grace is not holiness in *part*, or, as it has been termed *imperfect grace!* Erroneous expression, dishonouring to the Holy Spirit! for he cannot be the author of an

imperfect work, or a work *mingled with sin*! Besides, the expression is absurd; for we might as well talk of *unholy holiness*, unrighteous *righteousness*, as of *imperfect sanctification*! Seeing sanctification stands opposite, in its very meaning to all sin, iniquity and unrighteousness. Hence the apostle, when describing the *new creature*, emphatically uses the epithet TRUE—"created in righteousness, and true holiness," (Ephes. iv. 24.) diametrically opposite to and immaculately exalted above, the *false holiness*, and pretended righteousness of those "*whited sepulchres*," the *self-justiciaries*, who *outwardly appear* righteous to men, but within are full of iniquity, and all uncleanness!

2. *Sanctification* signifies a setting apart for an *holy use* and intention. So the *Sabbath* was originally *sanctified*.—"And God blessed the seventh day, and *sanctified it*."—(Gen. ii. 3.) So Christ was set apart by our covenant Father, as the head of the church, and her complete Redeemer: "Say ye of him whom the Father hath *sanctified*, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest?" (John x. 36.) So Christ *sanctified*, set apart, or devoted himself to the interest of his people, "And for their sakes, I *sanctify* myself." (John xvii. 19.)

3. The sanctification of the church of Christ consists, First, *in their being set apart* by an act of free grace *election*, and by their *adoption*, whereby they became the sons and daughters of God Almighty, in an everlasting covenant.—How gloriously the engagements of the Eternal Three, and their distinct acts of grace and wonderful love, are exhibited and unfurled by Jude. (verse 1.) "To them that are *sanctified* by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." Here *sanctification* is ascribed to the Father, in choosing *them* in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, that they should be HOLY, and without blame, before him in love, (Eph. i. 4.) and but for this affectionate act of gracious election, the world would have possessed no *holy people*; its numerous inhabitants would have all perished in their sins and their blood." "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrha." (Isaiah l. 9.) They were chosen unto holiness, and as the sovereign design of Jehovah, can never be frustrated, they must and shall be a holy people unto the Lord their God." Thus Jeremiah was *sanctified*, or set apart, for a great and holy purpose—"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee:

and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I SANCTIFIED thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. i. 5.) And so the apostle Paul was sanctified, set apart, or separated as a chosen vessel unto the Lord:—"When it pleased God who SEPARATED me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me." (Gal. i. 15.)

Second, they are *sanctified* in Christ: to them, saith the apostle, who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." (1 Cor. i. 2.) By virtue of an inseparable union between Christ and his church, all his holiness, purity, righteousness, and spotless obedience, become hers, as much as if she had perfectly obeyed the whole of the law herself: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is *made unto us*, wisdom and righteousness, and *sanctification*, and redemption." (1 Cor. i. 30.) Thus are we accepted by, and perfectly acceptable to the infinitely holy God! For both HE that *sanctifieth* and they that are *sanctified* are *all of one*! O wonderful union! O unspeakably precious Christ! My beloved is mine, and I am his! And what shall break the bond of our union, sever me from my Lord, or separate me from from his love!

Third. We are sanctified by his *blood*. For although *everlastingly holy* in him, as viewed in his righteousness by the Father, the fall polluted every power and passion of the soul; and born in sin, we were under the curse of the law, and rendered obnoxious and amenable to offended justice! (Eph. ii. 3.) "Wherefore Jesus, that he might *sanctify* the people with his *own blood*, suffered without the gate." (Heb. xiii. 12) And so completely are his people washed in that *blood* which cleanses from all sin, (1 John i. 7.) that they are for ever free from all charge, curse, and condemnation. (Rom. viii. 1, 34) "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it (1r, remark that, though consisting of a number which no man can number, so complete in number, and so united in Christ, are the people of God, that they are considered but *one*, Christ's bride, for whom he gave himself) that he *might sanctify* and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v. 25.) So complete was the atonement, and so truly finished the work of redemption, that "by one offering he hath *perfected for ever*, them that are *sanctified*." (Heb. x. 14.)

Fourth. By the holy and ever-blessed Spirit, our teacher, guide, and comforter, the children of God are internally *sanctified*. "That the offering up of the Gentiles, might be acceptable, saith Paul, being *sanctified* by the Holy Ghost." (Rom xv. 16.) "But ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) "Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through *sanctification* of the Spirit, unto the obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 1.) "God hath from the beginning, chosen you, unto salvation, through *sanctification* of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.) These quotations sufficiently establish the doctrine of *internal sanctification* by the Holy Spirit; which I have now to treat of, in answer to the question.

Various are the opinions of professed Christians concerning the *sanctifying* influence, or work of the Holy Spirit: among the diversity, the following are the most prevailing and take the lead.

1. The *Arminian*, or *free-willer*, strenuously maintains the doctrine of *perfection* in the flesh. That grace eradicates the very corruptions of nature, and that such a total exemption from the *in-being* of sin is essential to salvation. The principle scriptures on which they found this opinion among a variety of others, are (1 John iii. 9.) "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (Matt. v. 48.) "Be ye, therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." (Heb. xii. 14.) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which, no man shall see the Lord."

2. The *modern Calvinists*, or *semi-Arminians*, on the opposite, believe that the Holy Spirit rectifies the powers of the soul, and put it in the way to perfection, in which it makes, or should make daily *progress* in holiness; however without any hope of obtaining in this world, the object of its pursuit, perfect purity of heart! sinless perfection.

That the work of grace is an *imperfect work*, and yet that carnal nature is, in some instances, made better: for they talk of driving out the Canaanites, one by one, and making *advances in sanctification*, or *internal holiness*, so that this *progression of sanctity*, renders them less sinful, or more holy every day. In defence of which they quote sometimes, Phil. i. 6. "He which hath *begun* the good

work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Prov. iv. 18.) "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day:" and the scripture referred to in the *question*, 2 pet. iii. 18. with many other scriptures, which seemingly countenance their sentiments.

3. But if we search into the meaning of those scriptures, by taking them in connection with their contexts, we shall find that they really have no such implications, and that the one party, is as far from the truth as the other, on the doctrine of spiritual sanctification.

Let us then first glance at the scriptures, quoted by the Arminians, as stated above—1 John iii. 9. most beautifully describes, not the flesh, but the Spirit, the new and hidden man of the heart, opposite to the flesh, and maintaining a perpetual war, under the command of the captain of our salvation, against the corruptions of nature, that remain as hostile as ever to God.

For which, we have the words of Christ himself; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." (John iii. 6.) "For the flesh, lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the *one* to the *other*." (Gal. v. 17.) And when these *two* can be reconciled, united, and made one, we shall have some ground to believe something of nature being made better: but not till that is evidently accomplished. For the new man, created in true holiness, can never sin, for he is *born of God*: and the flesh can never be made better; because, "in the flesh dwelleth no good thing; (Rom. vii. 18.) as every true believer finds by painful experience, The new man is perfectly holy, and completely sanctified—"perfect, as his heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) Possessing all the holiness, that God himself can confer upon him, and does see God; the goodness of God in the land of the living in Jerusalem: animated with a glorious hope of dwelling with him in the world of untold felicities.

We will now just notice the Scriptures quoted by the *semi-Arminians*, or moderate Calvinists; Phil. i. 6. speaks of a "*begun work*"—which is the *workmanship* of the Holy Spirit—the new man in his infancy; the "new born babe who desires the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby." But though he is a *babe*, he is as holy in his nature, as an adult in Christ. He cannot be tainted with

sin ; for he is God's own workmanship, erected in the soul of the sinner, in direct opposition to the old man, who is all over and altogether corrupt, according to the *deceitful lusts* ; too bad, to be mended, too abominable, ever to be reformed ! Sanctification then, is not the *old* creature patched up, and made a little better ; but entirely a *new creature* ; the creation of God. The work is *begun*, and *carried on*, by the power of the Holy Spirit ; and regarding its nature, as *pure* at its commencement, as God is *pure*—but the babe will *grow* as the work is carried on, in wisdom and spiritual understanding ; in strength of faith and confidence in God. A natural child would sink in its infancy, under *half a hundred weight* ; but when arrived to years of maturity, and become a strong young man, he will be able to carry with facility, many hundred weights. Yet the **BABE**, notwithstanding its weakness, is a perfectly human creature, with all the members of a complete body. Thus the child of God in his infancy, is pure, perfect, and sinless, in his *new nature*—but is too weak to bear the strong things, which the old established believer feeds upon with delight : Hence the language of the apostle, “ I have fed you with milk, and not with meat : for hitherto, ye were not able to bear it.” (1 Cor. iii. 2.)

His shoulders cannot bear the weight of afflictions, trials, darkness, and the hidings of God's face, with that confidence in Jehovah's unchangeable love, and everlasting covenant, as the **ADULT** in Christ, who is strong in faith, giving glory to God. Thus the new man, is first a child with weakness, doubts, and fears ; with little knowledge, little faith, little hope, and little confidence in God ; but blessed be the Holy Spirit ! that little is *genuine* and *pure* as the source whence it issued : and is sufficient for his day ; and the strongest believer has only a sufficiency for his daily exigencies. As it is written of the manna, “ He that gathered much, had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack : they gathered every man, according to his eating.” (Exod. xvi. 18.)

Second, a *young man*—the work is carried on “ to the day of Christ”—when Christ is revealed in all his bleeding charms ; in all the fulness and abundance of his grace, as his Lord and his God. The **DAY**, when perfect love casteth out all fear, and a blessed assurance of interest in Christ, fills him with unspeakable joy !—The **DAY** of liberty, and enlargement of soul, when he rejoiceth as a giant to run the heavenly race ; when he fights manfully and vic-

toriously against the world, the flesh, and the devil. John denominates those *young men*, who thus fight and conquer. "I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one."

Third, *a father*, established in the truth, by a tried experience, and is able to teach *others*, building them up in the most holy faith. Thus "the path of the just, is as the shining light, &c." that shines beautifully before him, with the truth of his election, adoption, redemption, calling, and promised perseverance and glorification. His interest in these, testified by the Holy Comforter, makes him steadfast, and unmovable on the rock Christ. And he grows in faith and confidence of salvation, *all of grace* in the Lord Jesus. He sinks in himself, and rises in Christ. In possession of the truth, as it is in Jesus, he is "SANCTIFIED through the truth" (John xvii. 17.) and under its delightful influence, is entirely devoted to God! casting off all fleshly confidence, while perfect love casteth out all fear!

He groweth **IN** grace—in an experimental knowledge of the favor, and loving-kindness of his covenant God.—He is **IN** grace, and he knows it. Grace does not grow in him: For grace is in Christ Jesus, and is **ETERNAL**: consequently is incapable of growth, or of increase. That which grace is now; it ever was, and ever will remain: like its fountain; the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.—Free, sovereign, distinguishing, and everlasting. Hence, the noble exhortation of Paul to Timothy, "Be strong in the grace, which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. ii. 1.)

TO GROW IN GRACE, then, is to grow in a knowledge of self, as a poor sinner, and of Christ as a gracious Savior.

1. That the poor sinner has a body of sin and death; and the sentence of death in himself: but that the blood of Christ cleanses **HIM** from all sin, and frees him from death and condemnation. Blessed be God for Christ, I need him more than ever.

2. He grows in a sense of his own weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon him.

3. He grows in a knowledge of his own wretchedness by nature, and is assured, more abundantly as he pursues his pilgrimage, that he is increasing a debt of love, to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for all the real comfort and consolation he enjoys here, and will be everlastingly indebted to his covenant God, for that eternal weight of glory, which the Lord hath prepared for those who love him.