

**A Further Inquiry After Truth
Introduction**

**A FURTHER ENQUIRY AFTER TRUTH
Wherein is shewn,**

**What Faith is required of unregenerate persons; and what
the Faith of God's elect is, which is a blessing of the
covenant of grace.**

**Occasion'd by
A Pamphlet, entitled, A Modern Question modestly
answered**

By LEWIS WAYMAN

**I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to
repentance, [Mt 9:13](#).**

**So long as a man thinks his own righteousness good
enough, that he shall do well enough, Christ does not call
that man to believe.**

**Dr. Owen's Collect. of Serm. p. 540,
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THE
Introduction

UPON the appearance of anything controversial, it's natural to ask the occasion; now the occasion of the present controversy is as follows,

The author of the Modest Answer, in a sermon preached at the opening of a new meeting place at Rowell, delivered himself in the following words, Page 18,19.

“The eternal God indeed, does, by his word, make it the duty of poor unconverted sinners, wherever the Gospel is preached or published, to believe on his Son Jesus Christ, repent and be converted. To suppose the contrary, is to strike at the root of the eternal moral law of God,

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“God, which obliges them to love God with all their soul, and all their strength, and be found in the proper use of all means leading to that, and to their own eternal happiness; yea, such a supposition opposes the strongest Gospel instructions, the preaching and practice of the disciples of our Lord; makes unbelief and distrust of Christ to be no sin, nor can faith itself, according to this, be looked upon as any part of obedience: But with such folly as this the churches of Christ have not been much troubled, though it has knocked at the doors of some.”

How agreeable this is to his text, or theme, I leave to the judgment of the wise. He loads the contrary supposition with dreadful consequences; and then represents it as folly that had knocked at the doors of some churches; that if he failed to stir up anger, he need not fear to expose to contempt. It is not easy for me to guess what moved him to meddle with this matter, unless an unhappy disposition to be falling out with he knew not who; seeing, as I have been credibly informed, he has since declared, in the presence of an assembly, that he never had talked with one that was otherwise minded; and I don't know that there has been anything from the press relating to this controversy since seventeen hundred and seven.

Seeing what was done reflected dishonor upon the labors of the deceased, and cast an odium upon some now living; and sounded an alarm to call out people to enquire and see where those silly churches are who have held, and do hold, that notion that is attended with such desperate consequences; I thought it no ways inconsistent with my duty, or disagreeable to the law of love, to inform those whom God has put under my care, what kind of faith it is, which is the duty of

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unconverted sinners, by the law; and what that faith is, which is the gift of God, by the covenant of grace: Which was done in an evening exercise, without so much as once mentioning either the author or work that moved me to do it; not supposing that such a liberty could have offended any of the generation of the righteous, much less have moved to wrath and bitterness one who should not be soon angry, but in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, &c. However, a great deal of uncomely warmth was produced, and brought hastily to the birth, the pamphlet I have here to do with.

It were to be wished that men, and especially those who profess the fear of God, would, before they take up arms, consider well the nature of that which they contend for; also the station and character of those they contend with, lest haply they be found overcharging matters of opinion, wherein the godly have differed, and fall foul upon the children of the kingdom, as if they were enemies to God; to the personal injury of their brethren, and discredit of a glorious cause.

It ought to be observed, that the question is neither about the attributes or perfections of God, the person or office of Christ; election, redemption, or efficacious grace; nor about adoption, justification or sanctification nor yet about any other doctrine of the glorious Gospel of the grace of God; but about the duty of unregenerate men; which this author allows they have no power to do, nor inclination to attempt. A question millions may never think of who go to heaven, where disputations shall never come.

Have not eminent lights in the church of God entertained different sentiments about many points in divinity? Some, that God chose his people out of the pure mass, and others that he chose them as considered in the fall. And has it not been disputed for a long time, whether the justification of God's elect be before, or at believing? And much contention about the place of faith therein? The order of God's house, the power of the keys, and to whom committed, and many other points, have been constantly agitated: Yea, in what have the godly of all denominations and sizes agreed in, except in this, By grace are ye saved?

Now, should all these rise up one against another with the out-cry of dangerous, pernicious errors, should every one take his fellowservant by the throat, and cast out his name as vile on the account of different opinions, what confusion should we soon be involved in! Were private sentiments among those who subscribe from the heart the articles of our protestant reformers, and cordially embrace Christ, made a test of orthodoxy, and carried to the height some men seem to be leading to, it would, I fear, soon be as perilous living in Great Britain, as in some other countries.

Cruel anger is unbecoming a Christian. Flesh is a bad weapon in the cause of God:

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The truth stands in no need of it; and charity, were it thrust into her hand, would cast it to the ground. By public writings, and letters sent up and down among the churches, (to omit what's from the pulpit, one would blush to name) which have a tendency, and I fear are done with an unkind design to beget and stir up anger and displeasure in the less discerning, and make divisions in, and among the fellowships of the faithful, is a practice no way becoming a minister of the Gospel of peace. And yet, how the case stands with respect to these things, even strangers in Jerusalem have heard.

I am persuaded, did unprejudiced, honest hearted believers consider what part we act in this controversy, they would not be offended. We are not aggressors; we are not assertors: But another asserts, That it is the duty of unconverted sinners, not only to believe the Gospel, to believe Christ and his ministers, (which we constantly affirm) but also to believe in Christ; by which he must mean to possess Christ for themselves, or believe Christ to be theirs whilst in unregeneracy, or else, I conceive, the distinction to be without difference; from this we withhold our assent till proof is made; and they that do otherwise, only see with another's eyes, and pin their faith upon the sleeve of a fellow-worm.

Let me desire the gracious soul, which is acted by a spirit of love, courteously to consider the case, and do nothing by partiality, because their Lord is no respecter of persons. Answer soberly, Is there not a cause? The author knew my judgment in this many years ago, and I his; he had his own way of thinking and speaking, without the least interruption, and might have had it without offense to me, if that would have sufficed. He might have commanded the dead to live, the dead in trespasses and sins, to stretch forth the withered stump; and have justified it by the vision of the dry bones, as a certain person has of late inadvertently done, applying ([Eze 37](#)) at the beginning, to the first quickening of dead sinners, manifestly contrary to the design of the Holy Ghost, [ver. 11, 12](#). Then said he unto me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: Behold, they say, our bones are dried, our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, thus saith the LORD, Behold, O my people, *I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. This was done to revive the hope of God's people, concerning their return from the land of their captivity, and not to beget life in dead sinners.* However, he might have used his liberty to his dying day without stumbling me. But as if God had given him dominion over the understandings of others, "to suppose the contrary (*says he*) is to strike at the root of the eternal moral law of God, &c." *

* Modest Answer. P. 29,31, Letter to Mr. Eaton of Ringstead, MS., Letter to Kimbolton, &c. MS

— He calls it a whimsical notion, stating folly, a dangerous pernicious error, a pernicious principle, a barbarous antiscryptural opinion, to the last degree dangerous; a doctrine of darkness, directly against the dominion of God — that tends to overturn the whole Bible, and root out all religion;” and they who have received it, “ whatever they may profess, they cannot cordially love the Bible---” *And a much larger chain, which, however he may glory in it, will be no ornament to his neck. How do these adorn the lips which are said to be as a thread of scarlet? What grace do they minister to the hearer? Is it not unpleasant reading of controversy, which should be managed so as to increase light and love, when every page is stained with the gall of vulgar spite? Besides, this burden falls not only on the living, whom he seems resolved to crush, but upon many of Christ’s worthies, now in glory with him; among whom is that eminent light, Doctor Goodwin, who has declared himself to be of the same opinion we profess, Vol. II of the creatures, and the condition of their estate by creation, p. 52, and handles what relates to it, and amounts to a demonstration of it, in the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th chapters of the same book; whose judgment I subscribe to, and declare, I entertain no sentiment different from the Doctor in the fore-cited places, to the best of my knowledge.*

The title this author gives his performance, is, “A modern Question modestly answer’d.” This, no doubt, was done to cast contempt on the question, and applaud the answer. The question may not be so modern as he would have his readers think it to be: But if it was, pray, what is it the worse? He would have us think his argument on the unpardonable blasphemy is new; is it therefore to be despised? I don’t think God has sealed up all revelation, and all knowledge, in this worthy author; but that he will bring to light glorious truths in his temple here below, which far wiser hearts than his have not yet conceived.

But ought we not to believe God rather than man. But if ye have bitter envying, and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work, ([Jas 3:14-16](#)). Where is this meekness and gentleness? Where is the example of the believers in charity in spirit ([1Ti 4:12](#)) which should answer to the title and adorn the work? Had it approved itself to be a modest endeavor by love to serve others, in meekness to instruct, it might have been thank-worthy as a labour of love. But the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

His title page he graces with the words of the prophet, "To the law, and to the testimony, ([Isa 8:20](#))." *We desire to bring all to that test, and hope we shall find mercy to renounce what is not agreeable thereunto.* But to pretend a regard to the law and to the testimony ([Ro 2:23](#)), whilst we walk in our own haughty angry

spirits, and neglect those things wherewith we should adorn the doctrines of God our Saviour, deserves not the regard and imitation of others, but their pity. Therefore considering my self in the body, *I shall take but little notice of what in his book has a tendency to chase and provoke things of that nature being doomed to the flames in that day (1Co 3:12)*, when wood, hay and stubble shall be burnt; and *pursue my enquiry after truth according to the ability God has given me (Eph 4:7)*.

CHAP. I

The question as stated and explained by the author, further explained and brought to its just state.

The question stated by the author stands thus:

Whether the eternal God does, by his Word, make it the Duty of poor unconverted sinners, who hear the Gospel preached or published, to believe in Christ?

In the explanation he gives, he tells us; It is not here asked, Whether it be their (viz, unconverted sinners) duty to give their assent to the report, and grant that all that is said in the Gospel is true. *But whether God does, by his Word, make it the duty of unconverted sinners, who hear the Gospel preached or published, not only to believe Christ, but to believe in Christ?"* And he adds; Any person, surely, who lays aside all affectation of singularity, and sincerely and unfeignedly makes the Bible the rule of his faith, must say, That God does, by his Word, plainly and plentifully make it the duty of unconverted sinners, who hear the Gospel, to believe in Christ. This I affirm," &c.

At the first onset, here's an heavy charge upon his antagonists; affectation of singularity; insincere, and but a feigned pretense of making the Bible the rule of their faith; which, whether he designed it or no, falls upon some stars of the first magnitude, who have shined in the hand of him that walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, as *Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Ridgley*, and others but as this is no part of his argument, nor tends to the glory of Christ, to the establishment and comfort of godly and honest minds; (which are his professed aim) it might, without breach of the Laws of love and civility, have been conveniently feared. I shall therefore pass it by.

We ought, in the first place, to see that the terms of the question are simple and clear, or that we understand them alike; otherwise we may raise a dispute where there is no difference; which is often the case, through ambiguity of words, and irregular zeal in disputants.

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This worthy author, seeing the controversy hinges on believing, goes about to explain that term and no other; and by limiting the duty to those who hear the Gospel, suggests, That a revelation of Christ is necessary before the law takes place here; and brings a demand upon the fallen sons and daughters of Adam to believe in him in which we agree: yet, *inasmuch as he has not been pleased to tell us what kind of faith he means in any of those scriptural phrases, (as, Like precious faith..... Faith of God's elect (2Pe 1:1; Tit 1:1; Col 2:12) --- Faith of the operation of God)* which denote it to be that faith which is peculiar to those whom God had appointed unto salvation ([Ac 13:48](#)); but in a term, that possibly may admit of disputation; *I shall declare, as plainly as I can, what faith it is that I mean; and discover, as far as I am capable, what faith this author means, that we may have the plain and just state of the question; and then enquire, whether the Word, and preaching of the Gospel, make such a revelation of Christ to all that hear it, as makes it the duty of all to believe with that faith which shall appear to be intended in the question.*

It is not necessary to go about to make a distribution of faith into its several kinds, wherein I might follow those who have gone before; but, as sufficient to my present purpose, shall observe, *that there is a natural, common, or historical faith; and a supernatural and special faith: both which I find in the scriptures.*

By natural and common faith, I mean such a faith as is attained in the natural and ordinary way of our knowing and believing; and I call it common, because men may have it who perish, or whilst in unregeneracy, as well as those who are saved by grace, being born again; Simon Magus as well as Peter: Then *Simon himself believed also; and devils are laid to believe also and tremble. (1Pe 1:23; Ac 8:13; Jas 2:19; Mt 11:20-21).* And this faith hath for its object that which is equally evident to all who have the same natural and external advantage and opportunity of knowing and believing.

How apt our nature was, as it came pure and un-beclouded out of its Creator's hand, to believe whatever God would hint to it, by any way or means God was pleased to make use of, to make his mind known unto his creature, and how it may be with (standing angels in that respect, I am not able being a fallen creature, to declare: *but even now, under the fall, there's an aptness and ability in a reasonable Creature, to know and believe without any supernatural and special assistance.* As you cannot set before the eye of a man a point and a line, but the mind immediately conceives a difference; it knows that the whole is more than a part; nor can any thing be related, as done in the *Indies*, but it presently judges the relation true or false, and approves or disapproves of the thing.

Thus to receive a testimony human or divine, may be called human or divine

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common faith, according to the testimony it receives, and yields assent unto: and that it is the duty of fallen man, even in unregeneracy, so to believe every testimony and declaration God makes of himself, works and ways, either by preaching or the written word, is not denied; this faith having been in our first parents in its perfection; and yet, it will not, I presume, be affirmed, that our first parents, before the fall, partook of that *eternal life* which God gave unto his elect in Christ, and which every called vessel of mercy is made partaker of. ([Tit 1:1](#); [Joh 17:2](#)) This common faith therefore, is not in question.

By supernatural and special faith I mean, That faith which none ever had, or was ever possible for any to have, but those *who were from the beginning chosen to salvation*, ([2Th 2:13](#)) *through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the Truth.* ([Joh 10:26](#)) There were some who believed not because they were not Christ's sheep: and others, of the same lump, are said to be saved by grace through faith; and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. ([Eph 2:8](#)) And this I call supernatural. (1.) Because it is not attainable by mere nature or reason. (2.) Nor in the ordinary way of our knowing and believing: Neither, (3.) Are its objects those things that are equally evident to all who have the same latitude of mind, and the same outward advantage and opportunity.

I: ([Joh 1:12-13](#)) It is not attained by mere nature. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God. ([Joh 1:12-13](#))

II: Nor in an ordinary way of knowing and believing. *For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, TO GIVE the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ* ([2Co 4:6](#))

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, nor many noble are CALLED. But God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. ([1Co 1:26-27](#)) ---Had this knowledge and faith been attainable in the ordinary way, doubtless the wise and learned had gained the kingdom, and babes and sucklings had been shut out. ([Lu 10:21](#)) But on the other hand, as one said, personating the wise of this world, "The unlearned arise and take heaven, whilst we go cunningly to hell."

III: Neither are the things it converses with, and acts upon, alike evident to all, nor even to the same person at all times; though they have the same latitude of mind, and the same opportunity. *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit*

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which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given us of God. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1Co 2:9,12,14) But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past, now preached the faith which he once destroyed. (Ga 1:23) This difference arose not from the creature which was alike in the fall, and of itself; nor from the Gospel, which, like its subject, Christ, is *The same yesterday, to day, and for ever*: but from the sovereign dispensation of God; *When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called by his grace, to reveal his son in me. (Ga 1:15-16)*

Let men assume what air of assurance they please; to deny the distinction of faith, is either, first, to deny that they who are said to believe (as Simon Magus; Then Simon himself believed also (Ac 13); and the many (whom our Lord said) believed in his name, when they saw his miracles) (Joh 2:13) had any kind of faith at all; which is not to expound, but to contradict the Word of God; or consequently they are all gone to heaven, having that faith which always accompanies salvation.

Or else to deny the distinction, is to deny the necessity of any supernatural work upon the soul, to make it meet to partake of the inheritance of the faints in light (Col 1:12), (i. e.) to deny the necessity of regeneration; or it must place regeneration in the power of nature, and make our salvation as to the application of it to be of nature, not of grace, contrary to the Apostle; *Ye are saved by grace, through faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God. (Eph 2:8)*

It is probable some may object, that the first kind of faith is but a false faith, and therefore no faith at all.

To which I answer; The assertion is false; and therefore no objection at all. Faith may be said to be true or false, as that which we believe is true or false. But to believe that *Messias is come; to believe that he died for sinners, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; to believe that he rose again from the dead; that he ascended up to heaven, and sat down upon the right hand of God, which is commonly believed through the Christian lands, is as really true as was the faith of the Apostle Paul; Who loved me, and gave himself for me (Ga 2:20); or Thomas', My Lord and my God (Joh 20:28); though not of the same kind.*

And that this worthy author means the same faith which I call special supernatural faith, appears from,

1. His distinction. Unconverted sinners (saith he) are not only to believe Christ, but to believe in Christ; not only yield assent to the report, and grant all that is said

in the Gospel is true (thereby intimating, that he knows that those he opposes allow that) but to believe in Christ." Whereby if he does not mean to believe with that faith which arises out of union to Christ, which the phrase, in Christ implies ([Eph 1:4](#)); and by which it hath knowledge of, and communion with God in Christ, above what it had, or was capable of, in unregeneracy, there is no justice in the distinction; but both the members mean one and the same thing. And the distinction is used, and so understood by *Perkins, Vol. I. Page 128*. "To believe (saith he) is one thing, to believe in is another: and it contains in it three points or actions of a believer. 1. To know a thing. 2. To acknowledge the same. 3. To put trust and confidence in it.-- As, I believe in the Father, and believe he is my Father; and therefore put my whole trust in him."

2. This author, in his discourse of faith working by love, says, Page 7, 8. *We read in the scripture, of some who believed upon Christ's preaching;— such faith Simon Magus had; and such have all his followers, who serve Christ for the loaves. — Some, indeed, under the power of mere historical faith,—arrive at a commendable degree of outward civility and useful morality among the children of men: but our concern is with that faith which always accompanies salvation and is itself a special part thereof.*" Hence it is plain that he means the same faith that I do.

Upon the whole, there is a manifest agreement about what kind of faith is intended in the question, (viz.) *not a common, natural or historical faith, but the faith of God's elect; that which is the beginning of eternal life in the soul ([Joh 4:14](#)), and unto which the everlasting enjoyment of God in Christ is inseparably connected; or in the words of this author, "That faith which always accompanies salvation, and is itself a special part thereof;" I desire it may be observed, that the question is not simply, Whether it be the duty of poor unconverted sinners, who hear the Gospel preached or published to believe but whether it be the duty of unconverted sinners to (have and) believe with, that faith which is a special part of salvation?*

The author having the affirmative, it lieth on him to prove, and order requires, at present, only that I give my answer to what he has produced to support his assertion; but to testify my aversion to litigation and strife, which, possibly, might be prolonged thereby, and the reader kept still in the dark, as to our just sentiment; I shall take the affirmative, and offer the reasons of judgment to the sober enquirer, for his approbation, or friendly reproof. ([Psalm 141:5](#)) *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head.*

CHAP. II.

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Of the Extent and Comprehension of the law. The notion opposed makes condemnation to come upon the non-elect, for not believing with that faith which is called saving. First Reason for the contrary. Objections answered.

I shall a little further explain myself concerning faith, and declare our judgment touching the extent and comprehension of the law, wherein we stand impeached.

Having before declared what faith we both intend (*viz*) *special supernatural faith*; it must here be observed, That faith, as an act, is a believing upon an inwrought persuasion ([Joh 6:69; 16:13](#)), a persuasion upon inward knowledge, being led by the Spirit into the truth. And though I do not say it is a knowing more than the word declares; yet it is such an inward knowledge which no man ever could attain by all the declarations of the Word only. And upon this knowledge follows the reliance, that recumbency which Peter's words suggest; *Lord, to whom shall we go* ([Joh 6:68](#))? and David's plainly express; *and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee* ([Ps 9:10](#)). There's an inseparable connection between knowledge and recumbency. *Wherefore, he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself* ([1Jo 5:10](#)); God giving this testimony that Christ is his. *He that hath the Son hath life.* ([1Jo 5:12](#)) And as faith, hope and love, though they have but one principle, are said to be three ([1Co 13:13](#)), diversified by the diversity of objects, or according to a respective difference of the object the principle acts upon: *as when the eyes of the understanding being enlightened* ([Eph 1:17-18](#)) *by the Father of Glory, the soul views Christ, believes the truth of God's salvation as it is in Jesus*; this view may be called faith. When the soul from begun tastes ([1Pe 2:3-4](#)), according to the nature of the thing and promise of God, desires and expects the fruition and enjoyment of what it views at a distance, that act may be called Hope: and when it delights in, and so embraces that which it sees and believes ([Heb 11:13](#)), it is love. In all which (*viz.*) Faith, Hope and Love, there is a real enjoyment, and present possessing of the object. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen* ([Heb 11:1](#)). So if we will keep up a just distinction founded on the Word of God, by faith in general, understand a believing of a report or testimony ([1Jo 5:10](#) - last words.; [Job 19:25](#)); and here by special faith, or believing in Christ, understand a possessing of Christ; and an inward appropriating of Christ.

But if it be said, This appropriating act is not the lowest act of faith, and that there is a lower act of faith, which does not appropriate Christ; I answer, It is a query with me, whether there be any act of special faith that hath not the nature of appropriation in it; and sure I am there is none, where there is not a right. And further, I must enquire; Is it faith at all to believe with appropriation, that the Lord

who hath appeared unto me ([Ge 12:7](#)), is mine? Was it faith in Thomas, that said, *My Lord, and my God* ([Joh 20:28](#))? And in Job, *I know that my Redeemer liveth* ([Job 19:25](#))? If it be granted, as I think it will hardly be denied, or yet doubted; let this author assign a reason why it is the duty of poor unconverted sinners to believe, with one degree of faith of the same kind, and not with another? And lastly; If he shall say it is not the duty of poor sinners, who hear the Gospel, to believe that Christ is theirs; Will not his own opinion labour under the weights which, in his imagination, he hath rolled on ours, viz. "There to believe (Christ is theirs) is will worship; For who hath required it at their hands?" (*)

(*) *Modest Answer, Page 28.*

First, Touching the law of God, we constantly maintain its perfection. The moral law is perfect, that is, it contains a perfect rule of duty for all God's reasonable creatures, angels and men. We do own and embrace the scriptures as the only, full, and sufficient rule and directory in all the duties God requires of us in every relation, condition and circumstance in life, and in the worship of God: the moral law, or law of nature, being that on which the morality of all positive institutions and laws is founded. Yet to assert that believers are under the law, is to contradict the Scriptures: *Ye are not under the law, but under grace* ([Rom 6:14](#)). To assert believers are without law, is likewise to contradict the scriptures; *Being not without law to God, but [in] the law to Christ* ([1Cor 9:21](#)). To remove the seeming difficulty, in reconciling these places and the minds of some men to them, is what I shall not undertake here: but conceive the law to be essential to a rational creature; if there be such a creature, there must be such a law: for the creature, as a creature, owes its being and subsistence unto God, and must be subject to his providence and disposing. God is a Father and everlasting Portion unto some; a Creator, Conserver and Benefactor to all; therefore the creatures are under an indisputable and inviolable obligation to love and obedience: nor will going to heaven make it void, but heighten it.

Secondly, Every, even the least transgression of the law, or defect in point of duty, in deed, word or thought, incurs the penalty of the law; *The soul that sinneth shall die.* And this righteous sentence of the law must be executed on the sinner (Which would press him as low as fallen angels) *unless delivered from going down into the pit* ([Job 33:24](#)) by that ransom which God hath found, *Without shedding of blood there is no remission* ([Heb 9:22](#)). Even God's own people, who are made partakers of eternal life, which is in his Son, have sin in them, and in all they do, whilst in this body, even in their most holy duties; the guilt whereof was bore by Christ *when wounded for our transgression, and bruised for our iniquities; and the chastisement of our peace was upon him* ([Isa 53:5](#)). He bare not only the iniquity of

all, as in the sixth verse (**Isa 53:6**), but all the iniquities of the many for whom he is said to suffer (**Isa 53:8**), and to be cut off out of the land of the living (**Isa 54:12**). And this I conceive was signified by the priest's bearing iniquities. And it (viz, the plate of gold with the inscription, **(HOLINESS TO THE LORD)** shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts (**Exo 28:38**).

The opinion of our author, by necessary and undeniable consequence, makes wrath and condemnation to come upon the children of disobedience, for not believing in Christ, not having that faith which is a special part of salvation; which, beside the absurdity of making, not being saved by grace, the cause of damnation, seems to give too much countenance to that mistake that conceives Christ to have set our score in *Adam* even; and that now justice deals with men only for their actual sins, which they may atone for by their own faith and repentance. *Whether it be not as agreeable to truth to make non-election the cause of damnation, as to make, not having the special benefits of election-grace, the cause, I refer to the judgment of them that know the truth.*

The author, in affirming, That to believe in Christ is the unconverted sinner's duty, affirms, "That their not believing in him" (which could not be without their being in him) "is their sin, and consequently a cause of condemnation (*Page 16*)": But, as what he has produced to support his assertion carries in it no shew of argument to convince, I defer taking notice of it till I have offered the reasons of my different herein. And,

1. There's no foundation in the scriptures for unconverted sinners to believe that Christ is theirs; and therefore their not believing it cannot be the cause of their condemnation by a just law. Not being saved by grace, only leaves the creature to perish in that condition he is plunged in by the fall: *He that believes not is condemned already.* Although his not believing, and doing what was in his power to believe and do, and his not abstaining from those things which the natural conscience directed by the word, must confess, are contrary to God; and will, in every instance, aggravate the guilt, and consequently the wrath; yet, it cannot be denied, but that men are born under wrath and condemnation (**Rom 7:12**), according to the inexorable sentence of the holy, just and good law of God; because born in sin, polluted from the womb (**Psa 51:5**); which is demonstrated by the Apostle in the reign and dominion of death, even over them who have not sinned after the similitude of *Adam's transgression* (**Rom 5:14**), (i. e.) * had no actual sin in their own persons. (* Leigh.) It would be uncouth and strange for one to affirm of a person, capitally convicted, that he is condemned because the king

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will not pardon him: nor would it be less odd to say, That because he will not believe, the king will not forgive him his offense; therefore he must die: whereas he was a dead man in law before he possibly could need a pardon. For whatever grace was necessary to have kept us from falling, and upheld us in our integrity; yet there could be no need of pardoning mercy, *of a justification from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39)*, but by the fall. *And by that law every mouth is stopped, and all the world become guilty before God (Rom 3:19)*. Justification of an innocent creature, stood in God's approving of it in that state wherein he had placed it, and was in the first covenant: but justification, which includes non-imputation of sin (**2Cor 5:19,21**), and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, is by the covenant of grace, and requires no act or duty of the creature to give it being, or complete it. This cannot be supposed to be altered by any change the creature hath passed through, without inferring a change in the covenant; yea, in God himself, whose immutability is said to be the cause *why the sons of Jacob are not consumed (Mal 3:6)*. We are all condemned by the law which we have broken. *God hath not saved all by the covenant of grace; nor by the Gospel propounded a remedy for all upon conditions: I do not therefore see reason to think that men are condemned for not believing in Christ according to the sense of that term in the question; nor yet, that it will be an aggravation of the guilt and punishment of those that perish, that they have not believed in Christ, any more than their not being chosen in him is.*

I humbly conceive, to put the creature upon doing any thing for life, to procure peace and pardon, agrees neither with the law nor the Gospel, the covenant of grace nor of works. *For the covenant of grace would not be a covenant of grace if it admitted the works of the creature by way of condition (Rom 11:6)*; and the law as a law, in reverence be it spoken, knows no conditions of peace and pardon. He will by no means clear the guilty (**Exo 34:7**). Whether the scheme I oppose be not entangled with these difficulties, I shall leave to the consideration of those who are disposed to deliberate the matter in the fear of God. But,

I will illustrate the argument by a similitude. Suppose twenty persons under sentence of death in Newgate, or any other of his Majesty's prisons, and the king should respite their sentence; Would this be sufficient ground for them to believe the king had, or would pardon them? And when they come to die, according to course of law, would it not be amazingly strange, to conclude they die for not believing the king would pardon them, or for not relying on his clemency for a pardon? whereas they were under condemnation, and suffered death for open rebellion committed against him, before they stood in need of pardon.

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Further; Suppose the king had conceived in his royal breast a favor for some, and had ordered his gracious pleasure to be proclaimed, that he would pardon some of them; Would it follow, that those who were not in the act of grace should die, or be held culpable for not being in the act of grace; which, whilst unblameable, they needed not; and, when faulty, not in their power to be in it, it being the act of the sovereign to take whom he pleased into his favor, not the act of the subject? Or, would they be further guilty for not believing they were not pardoned, whereas indeed they were not?

Now thus the case stands with us fallen creatures. *By the law all are under sentence of death. Wherefore as by one man "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned (Rom 5:12): Therefore, as by one offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation.---For God hath concluded them all in unbelief; &c (Rom 11:32) without reason for any one to conclude he is not under sentence, and that he shall not fall under the stroke, though God in his sovereignty, suspends the execution.*

But God hath conceived a gracious purpose towards some (**Eph 2:4**): *Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace (Rom 11:5).* And God proceeds in calling according to it; *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (2Tim 1:9).* He hath also published and proclaimed his pleasure and purpose, and the means by which he will execute it: *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy (Exo 33:19):* and this grace and mercy flows down upon its objects through Christ; *in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his (viz. the Father's) grace (Eph 1:7).* And *this comes not as purchase, but gift; not as bought, but conveyed: it arises and flows from its first, its highest spring, according to the riches of his grace:* For the Father himself said, *Our Lord loveth you.* Oh! this is pleasant music; this is glad tidings, a joyful sound! sweeter than the honey and the honey comb to the soul that sees its need of it; being by the spirit of life secretly quickened, graciously enlightened, and its ear opened to discern the joyful sound. But this is not a sufficient ground for unconverted sinners to believe that Christ is theirs, or that this grace and mercy is bestowed upon them. *For here's no general promise, no general declaration that God will be gracious to all, and nothing short of such a promise or declaration of God's design to save all, can be a sufficient ground for all to believe their interest in God's salvation.*

Nor yet is a bare declaration a ground for any to believe more than the report,

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which is all the creature hast whilst in unregeneracy. Even God's secret choice, *who have a life hid with Christ in God (Col 3:3)*, are nor culpable for not believing upon the mere declaration. For if the declaration, alone (by which I mean the outward report of the Gospel, without an internal revelation) made it the duty of any, it would make it the duty of all, the declaration being alike to all that come under the sound of it; and so the rest (**Rom 11:7**), who have no secret covenant interest in the Lord, should be bound by the declaration, to believe that which is false; and consequently *Judas*, and the reprobate Jews, to whom our Lord said, *ye are of your father the devil (John 8:44)*, suffer the wrath of almighty God for not believing that which was not.

Admit what this worthy author says in his answer to the objection of particular redemption (*P. 22.*): There's no body that hears the Gospel preached, can justly say, Christ did not die for him; it would be a great sin in any one to say so." (i.e.) it would be his sin to say it, because he does not know it. It follows, by the same just way of reasoning, that seeing, upon a bare declaration, no body can justly say Christ did die for him; it would be a sin in any one to say so.

Whatever God hath declared to the children of men concerning himself, or concerning the works of his hands, that they are bound to believe. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar (1John 5:10)*. To believe more than is written and declared, is to make God speak, when he is pleased to keep silence. But to believe what God hath declared is not, is to bear false witness against God. Now God hath declared, that whosoever believeth shall be saved (**John 3:16**); *but he hath not declared, that all that hear the Gospel shall be saved; yea, he hath declared, that there are of them that hear the Gospel that shall not be saved: there are, among them that hear the Gospel, some that are lost (John 10:26; 2Cor 4:3; 2Co 2:15)*, that perish. Therefore it is not the duty of all that hear the Gospel, to believe, with an appropriating faith, that Christ is theirs, or more than Christ hath said, more than the report.

That which God hath appointed to be the token and special evidence of an interest in Christ, that alone can be the sufficient ground of the souls believing its interest; but the outward declaration is not that evidence, that being made as well to them that have no special interest as to them that have.

What is faith but a well grounded persuasion (**Heb 11:13**)? and what is presumption *but a groundless faith*? You say (said our Lord to the Jews) he is your God: *yet ye have not known him but I know him: and if should say, I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you (John 8:54,55)*. And though I do not say, this

notion makes a virtue of a vice, I cannot but think it countenances the blind *presumption* that is in the world. Indeed Christ's sacrifice for sinners is precious meat to an hungry soul *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1Tim 1:15)*. Yet it ought to be observed, *that this proposition must be taken in a particular sense; that is, that Christ died for some sinners, not for all; and gave his life a ransom for many (Matt 20:28)*. But this notion makes it the duty of all to "eat the bread of life, and drink that wine; which is drink indeed (*Mod. Ans. p. 8.*):" which must suppose a right, which it cannot be proved all who hear the Gospel have; yea, the contrary is evident.

This suits the taste, or rather the want of taste, in the multitude: it tells them it is their duty to believe in Christ, though in unregeneracy, not having passed under a change (for the question refers to that state only) and suggests that they have a right. For it will not be easy to defend the notion of duty to possess a blessing and privilege but upon the foundation of right. *They think they have a right, and doubt not but they do the duty too; because they believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ, (P. 22.)* according to "those precious and extensive promises," as they are called: as if their preciousness lay in the extensiveness of the terms, viz. *"Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (1Tim 2:6)*. *That he by the grace of God should taste death for every one (Heb 2:9)*. *And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."* (1John 2:2) Thus they are commanded to believe, and thus they believe, and think all is well; and without distinguishing, they are left to think so. This is the couch on which Moab hath been at ease from his youth. (Jer 48:11).

By the way, I desire it may be observed, we are not against self-examination, with respect either to actions or state, though it is suggested we are: "no wonder persons entangled with this notion, should look so indifferent upon the duty the Lord calls them to: *Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith.*" (*Mod. Ans. p. 28.*) But what room does this notion leave for examination, which makes it the duty and privilege of all, promiscuously, to believe in Christ, and feed upon the bread of life? We maintain, That it is not the right of all to have Christ; and therefore men ought to examine and see whether they have a right, whether their title be good. *To as many as received him, to them gave he power (privilege.) to become the sons of God.* (1John 1:12) But the notion I oppose makes it the right of all; therefore none need enquire further.

Objection 1. As in hereditary kingdoms, where, upon the death of the king the next of blood succeeds, upon the proclamation of the new king the subjects are all

bound to pay allegiance: so upon the proclamation of Christ, as a Saviour, all are bound to believe in him.

Answ. It is the duty of all to believe the report, and acknowledge him as King of kings, and the only and alone Saviour; because God hath declared him to be so. But there is not the same reason for all who hear the proclamation of the Gospel, to believe Christ is their Saviour, as upon the proclamation of a king, for every subject to acknowledge the king proclaimed to be their king. For he who is proclaimed king, is over all his people; but he that is proclaimed a Saviour, is not the everlasting Saviour of all that hear the Gospel. It would have been an evil in any of the people of *Great Britain*, upon the proclamation of king George, not to have acknowledged him; there being the relation of king and subject: between them. But what virtue would it have been in *Judas*, and the reprobate *Jews*, to have believed Christ was their Redeemer, that he loved them, and gave himself for them whereas there was no such relation, as our Lord declared; *Ye are not my sheep?* **(John 10:26)** And what credit would it have been to the Gospel, seeing they were not saved?

Objection 2. But though there are no general promises to build upon, there are indefinite promises to build upon; and seeing no man can say justly he is not intended in them, he ought not to exclude himself; but is bound, under pain of damnation, to believe. *He that believes not shall be damned.* **(Mark 16:16)**

I shall take notice of three things here; (1.) There are, says the Objector, indefinite promises. (2.) No man knows that he is not in the promise, therefore ought not to exclude himself. Therefore, (3.) All are bound under pain of damnation to believe." To which I answer,

1. There are promises and declarations made to and concerning Christ, whereby God gives us some knowledge of the transactions of that covenant he hath made with his chosen, and the certainty of their salvation thereby: as, *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles: To open blind eyes, &c.* **(Isa 42:6,7)** *And thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* **(Psalm 110:3)**

2. There are also declarations and promises made to the called of Jesus Christ, which concern, and are suited to convey, that relief and succour, they, as born again, stand in need of, and have a desire and appetite for: and these are made to, and concerning them, under some peculiar characters, which are the effects of the

Spirit's work, in distinguishing them from others who are not called: as willing; *whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* (**Rev 22:17**) As hungry and thirsty; which denotes a sense of want, and is peculiar to the living. For as the dead cannot praise him; so the dead in sins cannot thirst after him; but as the Apostle Peter saith, *If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* (**1Pet 2:3**) To such the Lord spake, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink* (**John 7:37**): As weary and heavy laden, bowing down under the felt weight of Jewish services, or the felt weight of the body of death (**Rom 7:24**). And lastly, as seeing and believing; *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* (**John 3:16**) These and such like may be called indefinites, not having every or some, which denote universality or particularity, prefixed; yet are they to be taken in an universal sense, that is, for every one that is made willing (**Psalms 110:3**); for every one that hath tasted that the Lord is gracious, and hence thirsts for the sincere milk of the word: and so of the rest. Now as the promise of life and salvation, in respect of men, is particular, intending some, but in respect of the chosen of God universal: so these and the like promises, with respect to the chosen of God, are particular; but to the called, universal and definite, being to them descriptive, having, as it were, their names and characters set upon them. (**John 10:3**) And as suited to them, and none but them, are superscribed to them, and none but them. Suppose a legacy given to the poor of such a parish, or to the blind and lame of such a city, could the rich, and those that have sight and soundness of limbs, judge themselves entitled to it? *To suppose God promises life and salvation, or offers life and salvation to more than he designs to save and bring to Glory, whatever shew of kindness men may make of it, they do thereby a foul dishonour to the God of truth.*

2. "No man knows that he is not intended, and ought not to exclude himself."

This, I conceive, argues not to the purpose for which it was designed; for the question is not, Whether men ought to believe that God [will not] save them by his grace, but whether he will; whether Christ be theirs; but in this there is nothing directed that way. I will make it plain. The objector does not know that king George will not adopt him, or call him to court, and make him to stand in his presence, and cannot certainly conclude he will not; but here's no ground for him to persuade himself the king will confer these favors on him.

But if it be further urged, it was the Father's design in giving Christ, and Christ's design in giving himself to save sinners; And it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; (**1Tim 1:15**) and therefore as we do not know who in our assemblies, it may be this or that poor

profligate sinner, or it may be all, we ought to tell them it is their duty to believe.

Answ. It is a sweet truth, that it was the design of the Father, and of Christ, to save sinners by his death; but to suppose that the design of God shall not take effect, and save all that he had designed to save, infers either want of power or change of purpose; both which are highly dishonorable to God. That Christ came to save sinners, and why not this or that, or the other? Is a good way of reasoning against despair; but as it's commonly used, it's laid for a foundation of presumption. Oh! these words have been, and often are, under an inward feeling of the deep pollution of my heart, when I discover in myself, as in the sepulchres of the dead, nothing but stench and rottenness, very sweet to me, *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; (Isa 53:5)* and all the story of his suffering for sinners gives delight. Then, it is my soul feels the efficacy of the blood of Christ secretly staying of it, powerfully supporting its hope, and sweetly engaging of it to himself. And now I find I was upon the heart of Christ when he hung upon the tree, and bled and died only, as Herbert says, "to purchase my good will;" whilst I feel it on my heart, carrying and setting my heart upon that which sounds his highest glory and my sweetest praise. Yet here's nothing in all this mercy for all to conclude they were upon the heart of Christ when on the cross; nor for any, till God shall please to signify it by some token for good, and then the man will be changed, and so out of the question. "None ought therefore to exclude themselves." This is a popular expression, used by some, who when they speak, mean nothing; or by others, who mean worse than nothing; for what can it mean, *but that there was a provision made for the salvation of all, and that it is tendered upon terms, whereby men may obtain a right if they will, but if not it's their own fault.* It's true, man's condemnation is just; he that perisheth, perisheth for his own sins: For these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience **(Eph 5:6)**. *But it is not the fault of men that they have not an interest in Christ. No; Christ is God's gift; and may not God bestow him on whom he will? (John 4:10)*

3. " Therefore (saith the objector) they are bound to believe under pain of damnation." As if fallen creatures were not condemned already: though the Scripture saith, He that believeth not, is condemned already; **(John 3:18)** yea, are not the vessels of wrath already by sin fitted to destruction condemned; though God willing (for high and glorious ends) to shew his wrath, and make his power known, endures with much long suffering, **(Rom 9:22)** and does not suddenly execute the sentence? And may it not be thought of those whom God in sovereignty hath passed by, called in Scripture the rest **(Rom 11:7)**, in contradistinction to the election of his grace, may it not, I say, be conceived of them, as of angels, that kept not their first estate but left their own habitation, that

he hath reserved them in everlasting chains, under darkness unto the judgment of the great day? (**Jude 1:6; 2Pet :4,5,9**) And the rather, because the apostle compares their case and lot.

Our Lord in the Gospel of Mark does not speak one word about the cause of damnation, but of the certain estate of final unbelievers. (**Mark 16:16**)

Obj. 3. "God makes a revelation of Christ by the Gospel; men ought therefore to believe in him."

Ans. Whatever God reveals unto the children of men they ought to believe; their not believing is sin, and makes God a liar, But whether the preaching of the Gospel be properly the revelation of Christ, seeing so much stress is laid upon it, (as appears by this author's restraining the duty to those that hear the Gospel) deserves to be enquired into: For if it be not, the weight of the objection is removed. *I know it is the opinion of many, that the giving of the word is all the revelation God makes of his Son Jesus Christ in order to salvation, and that nothing more is necessary thereunto.* But this is a palpable mistake, and runneth hard against those places of Scripture which set forth the state of man by nature; *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* (**Eph 4:18**) It agrees not with the words of our Lord concerning the necessity of the new birth, *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* (**John 3:3**) *Except a man be born of water and of [the Spirit] he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;* (**John 3:5**) implying, *that we as really need an internal work of the Spirit, in order to our seeing the things which belong to our eternal peace, notwithstanding we have the Word and Gospel, as a blind man stands in need of eyes, in order to his seeing men or trees when they stand before him in a clear day.*

It directly opposes the express testimony of the apostle, *But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither indeed can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* (**1Co 2:14**)

It makes *the spirit of wisdom and revelation to be the spirit of revelation only, as to the giving of the word; and not in respect of any inward work,* which the apostle calls enlightening the eyes of the understanding; therefore no more is given unto the believing than to the unbelieving at Ephesus, or any other place where the word comes. (**Eph 1:4**)

Upon this presumption, I conceive it is that men have run to so great a length in

allowing and applauding men as able ministers of the *New Testament*; who have been furnished with skill in human sciences, to understand the scriptures as they understand any other writings, without much, *if any regard to an internal work of grace, and an unction from the holy One to enable them for it*: the consequences whereof the church of Christ groans under and on the account hereof, the words of God, *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*, (**Hosea 4:6**) may be uttered with lamentation. I will give you *Dr. Owen's sense* of this matter, in his Book of the causes, ways and means of understanding the mind of God, &c. "*But this knowledge, that may be thus attained, says he, doth only inform the mind in the way of an artificial science, but doth not really illuminate it: and to this end men have turned divinity into an art, like other common arts and sciences, and they learned it instead of a spiritual wisdom and understanding of divine mysteries.*--- And it may be attained as any other art or science may, without any supernatural aid of the Holy Spirit, and is sufficient to drive a trade with; (P. 88, 89) which, as things are stated in the world, men may use and exercise to their great advantage." This therefore justifies the laudable undertaking of a society of religious men, who, by their articles, make a satisfaction about grace, the ground they go upon, to encourage learning.

It appears, from what has been said, that the word is not all the revelation God gives of Jesus Christ unto the souls of those whom he saves; nor is it sufficient for the soul to see Christ so as to believe in him unto everlasting salvation. And whether the preaching of the Gospel can, in any good sense, be called a revelation of Jesus Christ to all that hear it, is doubted: That it is not a revelation of Christ in all that come under the sound of it, may be on good ground affirmed; but seeing words which are arbitrary, alter not the nature of things, nor the ideas we have of them, and would thereby convey to the understanding of others, I shall not here dispute it; *yet I conceive, had custom pleased to call the word, preaching, and all that is external only by the name of declaration; and the inward manifestation, the opening the heart and sealing of instruction, by the name of revelation, it might have prevented much confusion.* The scripture plainly distinguisheth the giving of an understanding from the Proposition of the things to be understood; that consists in the doctrine of the Gospel, this in an ability to comprehend and know it. *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true.* (**1John 5:20**) And our Lord saith, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and from the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* (**Luke 10:21**) In which it is more than barely implied, that those things which God, in his sovereign good pleasure, reveals unto babes, he did not, he does not reveal to the wise and prudent, from whom, saith the text, thou shall bid them; though, it's probable, they knew

more of the letter of the scripture than those babes did. And, I think, upon this text alone, one might modestly affirm, that the word, either written or preached, is not a revelation of Christ unto all that have it; unless to hide and reveal be one and the same thing.

The Word is like a cabinet, filled with precious jewels, but locked up so that the vulture's eye cannot see them, neither are they perceptible to any, *till the Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God, opens the understanding, opens the word, and discovers the precious things therein contained in his own light.* (**Acts 16:14; Luke 24:32; Psalms 36:9**) .

But that we may not strive about words to no profit, I shall assent to the distinction of external and internal revelation; and then seeing, as this author supposes justly, the revelation brings the obligation along with it; I conceive it will fairly follow, that according to the nature of the revelation the obligation binds, i.e. *They that have only the external revelation, are only bound to believe the report: But they that are blessed with the internal revelation, they have that light, that faith, which lays hold upon the hope set before them; and what God hath joined together, no man shall put asunder.*

CHAP. III.

The point argued from the different relation Christ sustains to the church, and the rest of the creation.

I Come now to a second reason of my dissent from what this author hath asserted, viz. That God makes it the duty of poor unconverted sinners to believe in Christ; which is, because there is no special relation between Christ and all unconverted sinners; as the proposition must be understood to intend, to ground their Faith upon.

The sense of the terms in the question, What kind of faith is meant, and how we take it, must be remembered through the whole. The faith we mean, is that which is called saving, as being the beginning of God's salvation in the soul, and called by the Apostle our meetness to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. (**Col 1:12**) For if this faith is not intended he hath disquieted himself in vain; and if he means this same faith which God's own people have, it must be the same for principle, matter and form; and every degree of the same faith too, which he affirms is the unconverted sinners duty to have and believe with; for if one degree

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of faith of the same kind be due, every degree must be due by the same law or else, where the higher degrees are found, according to his own way of reasoning, it must be will-worship, as hath been already observed.

And that we leave no room for evasion, I shall lay down the following Conclusions.

Concl. I. The law of God hath respect unto the creature according to the relation he hath been pleased to constitute. This is evident from the word; The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law unto her husband as long as he liveth; but if her husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband. **(Rom 7:3)** The moral obligation ceaseth, there being no such relation.

Concl. II. The Law of God binds no creature to believe that which is not. This is evident from its nature; for if the law binds to believe that which is not, it binds to sin; and so the law should oblige to that which it condemns the creature for doing.

And now the better to explain and give the force of this argument from relation, I shall lay down the following proposition.

That all our salvation, from the foundation to the top stone thereof, proceeds according to a special relation which God hath constituted between Christ and his church.

As among men there is a natural and necessary relation, as between parents and children; and a voluntary relation, as between husband and wife: So there is a natural, and a voluntary relation between God and the works of his hands. This first relation, as I may call it, in allusion to the Apostle. Howbeit that was not first which is natural, **(1Cor 15:46)** took its rise from the decree of creation, and exists upon the execution of that decree; and this subsists between God and all the works of his hands; angels and men stand alike to God in this relation. Hence the law of nature took its rise, and has its denomination. And it is upon this ground that man in the apostasy thinks it hard that any of Adam's fallen race are saved by mighty grace, if all are not saved; not considering, that fallen angels have the same reason for hope or complaint as they; being all alike in this way related to God, and yet their pity and concern does not turn towards them.

There is, besides this, another relation between God and some of his creatures, which took its rise from a decree to bring to glory, and the everlasting enjoyment of himself in the highest heavens, those whom he had chosen to salvation, by ways

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and means of his own finding out and providing; concerning which the Apostle expresses himself with so much wonder, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: To whom be glory for ever. Amen.* (Rom 11:33)

1st. It is grace alone that saves: It arises from the sovereignty of God, and is distinguishing: It flows in a way of voluntary relation. *By grace are ye saved,* (Eph 2:5,8; Psalm 115:1) is the standing declaration of the word, and the common faith of all that are made partakers of salvation. Grace and mercy found through both Testaments, as proclaimed by God himself to *Moses; I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy.* (Exo 33:19) And when the spirit pronounces it in the conscience of a poor sinner, the soul answers it is as an echo answers the voice of him that speaks, Grace, Grace, (Zech 4:7) unto it. Grace is written upon every thing God has done for his people; and on every step he takes with them here; Mercy and truth shall go before his face; (Psalm 89:14) and when they shall see them in a pure light, heaven itself shall be filled with the praises of it. They shall see that all the way the Lord their God hath led them was right, (Ps 107:7) and shall praise his wonders. (Ps 89:5)

2dly. This arises from the sovereignty of God, and is distinguishing grace. It is the good pleasure of God, as the highest end of all his counsels; *the counsel of his own will,* (Eph 1:11) *to shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us,* (Eph 2:7) the vessels of mercy whom he had afore prepared unto glory. (Rom 9:23) And this in its matchless manifestations and effects, as distinguishing, the Apostle sets forth, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed [us] with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen [us] in him before the foundation of the world, that [we] should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated [us] unto the adoption of children to himself by Jesus Christ [according to the good pleasure of his will]* (Eph 1:3-5) We are said to be made *accepted in the beloved,* (Eph 1:6) and to *have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward [us] in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to [us] the mystery of his will.* (Eph 1:7-9) As if he should say, such was the fullness of grace in Christ towards the vessels of mercy, that, like the swelling of Jordan, it overflowed its banks, and came down upon [us] in manifestations, in sweet discoveries, in the revelation of Christ in us. (Gal 1:16) It was like love in the breast of Joseph, which could not be

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contained there; but though his brethren had hated him, and used him despitefully, his bowels yearned towards them, and made way over all their unkindness, over all their cruelty, and brake out, and said unto his brethren, Come near me, I pray you; and they came near: And he said unto them, I am Joseph your brother, &c. (**Gen 45:4**) To what end was this? *That in the fullness of the dispensation of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ. (Eph 1.10) Not all angels, and all men, but God's all, (Ps 73.25) i.e. all his peculiar treasure; for as Christ is the believers all, so the church is said to be Christ's body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph 1:23; Prov 8:31; Psalms 16:3)* All his delight is said to be in them. And all this rich, glorious, distinguishing grace, bestowing upon the elect all spiritual blessings in Christ; predestinating unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ; making accepted in the beloved; forgiving their sins through his blood; and gathering them together in Christ their head, is built upon its own basis, upon its own foundation, by the Apostle, in the end of the ninth verse, *According to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself. (Eph 1:9)*

3dly. Let us take a short view of saving grace, as it is directed, and flows in a way of voluntary relation.

(1) God saith, I have made a covenant with my chosen, (**Ps 89:3**) and has confirmed it for ever. He will ever be mindful of his covenant. (**Psalm 111:5**) This contains all the salvation of the church from first to last. (**2Sam 23:5**) There is no salvation in another way. By chosen, in the first place, understand Christ, whom God has his elect: Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine [elect] in whom my soul delights. (**Isa 42:1**) Several passages in the Psalm admitting of a proper application to none but him; as, will make him, my first born; higher than the kings of the earth; (**Psalm 89:27**) agreeing with his New Testament style and title, First born of every creature; (**Col 1:15**) and, prince of the kings of the earth. (**Rev 1:5**)

But if it be said, these words were spoken of David as king over Israel; I answer, but with an eye to Christ, the root and offspring of David, the bright and the morning star. For as the penman of the Acts of the Apostles says, The patriarch David is both dead and buried; therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne, spake this of the resurrection of Christ. (**Acts 2:29-31**) So may I say, God having sworn, that he would raise up Christ, the righteous branch, who should reign and prosper; and David being a prophet, foreseeing of it, spake this concerning his spiritual kingdom, His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. (**Psalm 89:29**) And further, by chosen, we may understand, taking the term in its extent, all the election of God's grace, who are said to be chosen in Christ

before the foundation of the world. **(Eph 1:4)**

(2.) Christ was constituted head and husband of the church, or chosen of God. Head, in whom all the grace of the covenant is treasured up; *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell*, **(Col 1:19)** Husband, nearest kinsman, in whom the right of redemption is, as was intimated by *Boaz*; *Howbeit there is a nearer kinsman than I*; **(Ruth 3:12; 2Cor. 8:9)** that through the redemption in his blood all the blessings of the covenant might flow down upon his mystical body.

(1) Christ is called the head; *And he is the head of the body the church*. **(Col 1:18)** And in this he stands in a different relation to the church than to any other of the creatures; which is significantly expressed by the Apostle; *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all*. **(Eph 1:22,23)** Here observe, **1.** The extent of his headship and dominion over all things, over all principalities and powers; Angels, authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him. **(1Pet 3:22)** All the world, and the fullness thereof, are his: All sheep and oxen; yea, all the beasts of the field; fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea. **(Psalm 8:7,8)** All the creatures are at Christ's disposal; and all enemies are subjected to his control. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath thou wilt restrain. **(Psalm 76:10)** **2.** [To the church.] This power **(John 17:2)** and dominion, this fullness and headship over all, he has, if I may so say, in truth for the church, to be exercised and employed for the use and benefit of his church. All are yours, **(1Cor 3:22)** saith the Apostle; and all things do work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. **(Rom 8:28)** **3.** The relation the church stands in [which is his body] words which are suited to convey that nearness we have to Christ; the same nearness that Eve stood in to Adam; which is enough to assure, that he will use and dispose of all things with that love and tenderness, as will work our welfare and advantage in the end; **(Heb 12:11)** For no man ever yet hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. **(Eph 5:29,30)**

As head over all, as Lord of providence, the man that executes God's counsel, **(Isa 46:11)** he presides over the kingdoms of this world, over all the affairs of men; he places princes on their thrones, and casts down their crowns at his pleasure: **(Proverbs 8:15,16)** He upholds all things by the word of his power; **(Heb 1:3)** he is the conserver of all things; yea, there is not a raven or a sparrow but is fed by him. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry. **(Psalm 147:9)** All this respects his dominion and common providence; but as he is head of

the church, he is a fountain of life and gracious influences, so as he is not said to be the head of any other of the creatures, angels or men.

(2.) He is an husband to the church, and in consequence, as her case required, a redeemer. *Thy Maker is thy husband --- and thy redeemer.* (Isa 54:5) He is not an husband to all; nor a redeemer of all by a special covenant relation. But he is an husband to the church, and loved the church in that relation, so as to give himself for it; and has by the offering himself a sacrifice for her sins, purging them by his own blood, (Eph 5:25-32) opened a way for the blessings of the covenant to stream down upon it. (Psalm 46:4) Hence we are said not only to have *redemption through his blood*, (Eph 1:7) the forgiveness of sins; *but to have access into this grace wherein we stand*, (Rom 5:2) *and through him an access unto the Father.* (Eph 2:18) We had a right to the creatures, at the first, which we lost by the fall; and the ground, and what springs out of it, came under a curse for man's sin: (Gen 3:17) But by Christ's sufferings they are sanctified to the use of the church, and we have all things richly to enjoy in Christ's right. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* (2Cor 8:9) Hence the believer may be said to be rich in his poverty and straits, whilst the ungodly, as being under a curse, are poor in the midst of all their plenty. *A little that the righteous has is better than the riches of many wicked.* (Psalm 37:16)

3. Grace directs its course in the execution of God's counsels by the man of God's right hand, (Psalm 80:17) according to this relation by voluntary constitution, and takes no step with a further or more comprehensive view. Here God hath set its bounds, hitherto shall it come and no further. When God sent his Son into the world, to seek and save that which was lost, he had his eye upon his own chosen. (Rom 11:7) God commended his love towards [us] in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for [us]. (Rom 5:8) Had not this [us] been restrained, it would have issued in the universal salvation of all men; but the Apostle limits it, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: And who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died* (Rom 8:33-34) that is, *for all the Father gave him.* (John 17:6)

4. When Christ came out of the Father's bosom, and came into the world to die for sinners, he had his eye upon his people; *having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end;* (John 13:1) implying, that his eye was upon them as they lay scattered abroad (John 11:52) among the rest. This was the treasure that lay hid in the field, for which the rich merchant purchased the whole field. (Matt 13:44,45)

5. *Christ prays for them, not for the world; but for those whom the Father had given him. (John 17:9)* Others were not upon his heart when he came into the world; their sins were not upon him (Isa 53:6,12) when he died upon the cross; nor will he, however awful it may sound, offer their drink offerings of blood, nor take their names into his lips. (Ps 16:4)

And, in the last place, for the further clearing of this point, if any thing were further needed, let us see what the Evangelist saith, *Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, and assayed to go into Bithynia: But the Spirit suffered them not.* (Acts 16:6,7) This was not because there were not sinners, poor miserable creatures, as well as in other places, where he sent the Gospel; *but because his elect were not there.*

I will sum up our argument from this place.

There are two sorts of people in the world, the *election* and the *rest*, (Rom 11:7) to whom God stands in a different relation; to the rest a creator and benefactor, but to the election an everlasting Father in Christ. (John 20:17)

Christ is by divine constitution, a mediator and lord, for the existence, conservation and government of all; but he is an head and *husband*, to *redeem* and save with an everlasting salvation *all the Father gave him.* (Col 1:17-18; 1Tim 4:10; Eph 5:25; John 6:39)

He died for the one, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; (1Pet 3:18) but for the rest he did not die, that he might bring them to God; or they should certainly have come; he would not have miscarried in his design.

He prays for the one; but he does not pray for the other. (John 17:9)

Further, it is the Father's will, who sent Christ, *that of all he gave him he should lose nothing, but raise it up to a state of glory.* (John 6:39,40; Phillipians 3:21) But it is not the will of the Father that Christ should raise up the rest to a state of glory.

Therefore, as the law hath respect to relation; by the first conclusion, there being no special relation between Christ and all that hear the Gospel, *the law does not require all that hear the Gospel to believe with the faith of God's elect; which, as*

we have shewn before, is the faith in question. But,

Secondly, The notion of this author makes the law of God to bind men to believe that which is not true; and so countenances the lie of unbelief under the guise of faith; which our Lord reproved in the blinded Jews; Jesus answered --- it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom you say, that he is your God: *Yet you have not known him; but I have known him: And if I should say I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you.* ([John 8:54,55](#))

And seeing upon the distinction of relation laid down above, some have a right to life, pardon, communion with the Lord, yea, to the Son himself, and others have not a right; is it comely for ministers of the Gospel of Christ to stand and offer Christ, offer grace, offer life and salvation to them that have no apparent right, nor yet a secret right; as the case is with respect to the rest among the assemblies of the faithful? And would they think themselves well used, if their servants, who are appointed to feed their children, as Peter was to feed Christ's sheep and lambs, ([John 21:15,17](#)) should, instead of keeping their master's charge, take his food, take his raiment, take his belt and most valuable goods, stand at the door, and offer them, and tender them to strangers, and especially when they have not the least intimation of their master's design to bestow them? And yet the case is thus here, with regard to the vessels of wrath, ([Rom 9:22; Rom 11:7](#)) whom God has passed by. And,

Would it not be sufficient for those that have a dispensation of the Gospel committed unto them, to preach the Gospel to all that come under the sound, and wish them to wait at wisdom's gates, till they shall have further intimations of their master's will and pleasure concerning them? *And when they perceive the grace of God to be bestowed upon any among them, then exhort them with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord, as Barnabas did;* ([Acts 11:23](#)) and as we find the Apostles did, in the writings of the New Testament? ([Acts 2:37,38.](#))

And last of all, only suppose the thing to be, that all who hear the Gospel should believe in Christ for life and salvation, according to what this author tells us is their duty; would there not, probably, be millions in the world believing in Christ for life and salvation, to whom God hath not given eternal life in Christ, and who shall never obtain salvation by him? ([John 10:26; Luke 10:21](#)).

CHAP. IV.

An argument taken from Adam's capacity before the fall. Objections answered.

Condemnation doth not come upon them that hear and receive the report of the Gospel for their not believing with the faith of God's elect; because it was not in the power of man, in his best estate, before the fall.

The law threatened death upon transgression. **(Gen 2:17)** But by way of duty, or active obedience, it required no more than what's contained in this one precept, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might: (Deut 6:5)* And this as creator and benefactor, according to the relation I have before called natural and necessary; that is, a relation that must be, if God created man at all; for this must be the extent of duty to them that are under the law; because God had made known no other relation before the fall, and since stands in no other, but by his sovereign choice, of which above. Nor is more required than was given; but Adam in his best obedience, and even standing angels, must say with David, *Of thine own have we rendered unto thee. (1Chron 29:14)*

It is our indispensable duty to do allegiance to the prince upon the throne, and in case of failure, we incur the pains and penalties, which the law inflicts; and notwithstanding our suffering for default, we owe the same we did before we failed; but I do not conceive we owe more: But if the king should forgive our offense, and further should adopt us, and take us into his family, this would be an additional obligation, and bring upon us a new duty, arising from a new relation, viz. sons and daughters. Thus when it pleases God to make himself known in a nearer relation in Christ, the discovery brings an obligation along with it, and sweetly influences the will to answer it in grateful returns; *What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me? (Psalm 116:12)*

1. To assert the law requires of man more than God enables him to perform, justifies the impious charge of the slothful servant; *I knew that thou wert an hard man, reaping what thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed. (Matt 25:24)*

2. It places man in a state of misery by creation. For if the law required of man what God did not enable him to do, had he acted up to the height of his ability, he must still have been a debtor, and his want of conformity to the law would have exposed him to the penalty thereof. And as the former impeaches the justice, this reflects grossly on the goodness of God; and offers an occasion to the creature to take up a complaint, as the king of Israel did when the Syrian king requested him to cure Naaman of his leprosy; *Wherefore confider, I pray you, how he seeketh a*

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quarrel against me; (2Kings 5:7) seeing the creature could no more do what this notion makes the law to require of him, than the king of Israel could heal Naaman's disease.

These are consequences of the notion I oppose, unless Adam had the faith we are speaking of, and lost it for himself and posterity; the contrary whereof I shall endeavor to demonstrate.

But as far as possible to prevent mistakes, and convince of misrepresentations, I shall further declare, That whatever power God gave to men, and whatever endowments he bestowed upon our nature in *Adam*, we being in *Adam our head*, those endowments he bestowed upon every one of us, And the law of nature respects us as in such state and condition as God placed us in by creation; and so Adam's sinning and losing of his original righteousness was our act, we being in his loins, as Levi was said to pay tithes in Abraham, being in his loins, (**Heb 7:9,10**) and is as justly chargeable upon our persons as upon our first parents. *Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Rom 5:12,14)* Hence infants, who have no actual sin by their own personal transgression, may be said to be guilty before God, not only for Adam's transgression imputed, but for his corrupt nature imparted; for we are all streams from that corrupt fountain. Wherefore the law has a double claim upon fallen Adam's posterity; **1.** Perfect and perpetual obedience to God, as a creator and benefactor, according to the law of nature. **2.** Satisfaction for transgression committed. Now I shall proceed upon the common personality of Adam.

What Adam had we all had in him; and *what Adam lost we all lost in him*; and are debtors to God on both accounts; *but Adam had not the faith of God's elect before the fall*, and did not lose it for his posterity; therefore they are not debtors to God for it while in unregeneracy.

To affirm we lost what we never had is so ridiculously weak, that no man would debase himself to take notice of it.. Therefore what we have to do here is to prove, That we had not this grace in Adam. But before I offer my reasons for the assertion, to convince my adversary that it is nor mere affectation that rules here, I will produce the testimony of two men, out of more, that may be brought, whole reputation in the church is established. *The one is Doctor Owen, speaking of the necessity of a special spiritual illumination of the understanding, in order to our discerning the mind of God in the Scriptures** His words are these:

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* Causes. ways and means, of understanding the mind of God as revealed in his word, Page 41.

"But yet if men should be allowed to suppose, that our minds were no way vitiated, depraved or darkened by the fall---*yet it is most irrational to imagine, that we can comprehend or understand the mysteries of the Gospel, with special spiritual illumination.* For the original light and abilities, of our minds were not suited or prepared for the receiving and understanding of them. For neither their being, nor revelation were consistent with the state of integrity. Wherefore although our minds should be allowed to be as wise and perspicuous with respect to that natural knowledge of God, and all that belongs unto it, which was proposed unto us, or necessary for us in the state of nature; yet would it not follow, that we are able to discern the mysteries of grace when proposed unto us."

Nothing can be plainer. Here he supposes the mind as free and quick sighted as Adam's was before the fall; and that the mysteries of grace were proposed to it in such calm and un-beclouded condition; yet he concludes, *that in such a condition it is most irrational to imagine, that we can understand or comprehend the mysteries of the gospel without a special spiritual illumination; and the reason is, because the original light and abilities of our minds were not suited or prepared for the receiving and understanding of them.* The other is, *Dr. Goodwin*, who has handled this subject, Chap. IV, V, VI, VII. Vol. II. of the creatures, and the condition of their estate by creation. Page 38. he alerts his judgment in the following position.

"*THAT ADAM'S best KNOWLEDGE and ENJOYMENT* was inferior, and of a lower rank, than that *KNOWLEDGE and FELLOWSHIP* With God, which *WE IN CHRIST*, through *FAITH* do here enjoy, in that state of grace the Gospel puts us into."

Here is another plain testimony, that Adam before the fall did not know and enjoy that fellowship with God, which believers in Christ do know and enjoy in this world. I will add two passages more. *Page 48.* "And if men will say, that the elect men in Christ (and so Adam among the rest) should in the end have been translated to heaven, although men had never fallen; I shall not gainsay it: But then it is by another's right and covenant, and would have required supernatural grace first wrought in them, for to have owned and taken Christ for their head."

Page 52. "The conclusion is, that all the faith which Adam had may well be resolved into natural light, as the first principle and foundation of it; although further revealing and confirming what else the light of nature could not, or would

not so easily have known; and though we suppose the things to be such as were out of the reach of natural light; yet still the bottom of its assent to divine authority had been but such a natural light aforesaid, and principle of nature sown in his heart, which made him capable so to converse with God, and to believe his word, as to understand God out of his works: But it is otherwise in our faith. *And so far, I conceive, it is, that wicked men are blamed now for not believing the word of the Law and the Gospel, so far, as such natural light as was in Adam would have enabled them thereunto."*

What can be plainer, than that this is the Doctor's judgment? *That Adam's knowledge is inferior to that which believers have by Christ; that he could not have gone to heaven, had he not fallen, without super, natural-grace wrought in him; and that wicked men, now under the Gospel, are blamed only (with respect to faith) for not believing so far as such natural light, as was in him, would have enabled them to believe. It is evidently his judgment, that we did not lose that faith, which is in the question, in Adam, because we had it not in him; and it is equally evident that his judgment was, that men now are not condemned for not believing in Christ, because, saith he, they are not blamed for it; which is all I am contending for.*

It would be the wisdom and honor of some men, not to make, as they do, Doctor Goodwin and Doctor Owen an, argument against us; for thereby they discover their un-acquaintance with those eminent lights, or their baseness in quoting, of them against their manifest sentiments. But it is an incurable disease in many to be so light of belief, as to receive whatever any man can say, or any thought that comes into their minds, if it be but directed against some party, or same point. But I shall not rest in the authorities cited,, but offer the reasons of my assertion, viz. That we had not this grace in Adam, And,

First, Because faith is a spiritual blessing given in Christ. *The weight of this reason lies here, that all spiritual blessings were given in Christ, to be communicated to his mystical body, and none but them.* The two Adams, as the Apostle calls them, *first and last, as heads of the two covenants,* as they are called, were common persons to the respective seeds, viz. Adam was a common person to all mankind, as being in him: Christ a common person for his seed, as chosen in him. **(Eph 1:4)** And the blessings belonging to the two companies were respectively lodged in their heads; and of a distinct nature, as is intimated by the Apostle. *As it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth earthy; the second is the Lord from heaven. (1Cor 15:45,47,48,49)* Their company's are said to be as they are, have born, and shall bear their images distinctly. Now this earthy Adam was, and enjoyed all that

his body should, or could be, and enjoy from him. For had he stood, there could have been no advancement of himself, or posterity, as a reward; because there could be no possibility of meriting by his obedience, that being by the law of nature due before; and after all, therefore we must have said, We are unprofitable servants; we have done what was our duty to do. **(Luke 17:10)** Nor is there any thing more intimated in the prohibition, — *For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,* **(Gen 2:17)** than, that if he abstained and did not transgress, he should enjoy that life and felicity he was possessed of, and contented with. On the other hand, the last Adam, who was made a quickening spirit, had all fullness of grace stored up in him, in whom all spiritual blessings are said to be bestowed upon the elect. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* These all spiritual blessings are peculiar to them that are Christ's; *According as he hath chosen us in him, &c.* And the phrase, spiritual blessings, is suited to uphold the distinction between the lot of those who are Christ's, and the lot of all mankind in Adam; which was all natural blessings. **(Genesis 1:26,27,28)**

To assign to earthy *Adam* all earthly natural blessings, suited to gratify his appetite, and yield him all contents in his *creation capacity*, and this spiritual blessing and capacity too, had been too much to have made him happy in that state; because the lowest degree of that faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, **(Heb 11:1)** would have begotten those desires, which, I conceive, could not have been gratified in that state; and would therefore, as *Dr. Goodwin* thinks, have been so far from augmenting his happiness, as it would have made it less. For his enjoyments in Eden then would not have been commensurate to His desires and there would have been an emptiness and restlessness on the account of that want, which is not consistent with perfect happiness. For the regenerated soul is not fully blessed in this life, not by reason of the body of death only; **(Rom 7:24)** but because its new desires are not fully gratified. *I shall be satisfied, saith the psalmist, when I awake with thy likeness;* **(Psalm 17:15)** intimating, that he should not be fully satisfied before. For though there can be no more blessings provided than are already in Christ; **(Eph 1:3)** yet the soul can be more blessed, as to fruition and enjoyment, when Christ's prayer shall be granted, and the believer shall attain the end of his hope. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, &c.* **(John 17:24)**

Further, had this faith of God's *elect*; which is so called on the account of its cause, election-grace, or its subjects, the chosen of God, or because it apprehends the relation, or all of them together; had this faith, I say, been in *Adam*, it would have been no more the faith of God's elect, than of the rest, according to the above rule:

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what Adam had all had in him, he being, before the fall, a common person for all mankind.

Some are of opinion, That, in regeneration, the Spirit of God restores that image we lost in the first Adam; and if so, seeing he works this Gospel-faith, we must needs have had it in our natural head.

Answer, Suppose he did restore Adam's image, it follows not that this faith of the operation of God is that image, or any part of it, unless we have no more by Christ than we lost: for if we receive more by Christ, this faith may be a part of that we had not in Adam. But, I think it will not be difficult to demonstrate the contrary, viz. *That what is wrought upon the soul in regeneration is not the image of the earthy, but of the heavenly man; (1Cor 15:49)* which, saith the Apostle, we shall bear, in contradistinction from the image of the first man Adam, which we are said to have born, in the same verse. But as this does not immediately fall under my consideration, I shall only give you one passage out of the late reverend *Mr. Bragge's* first sermon on justification; "*Christ, as the Lord our righteousness, has brought in such a way of knowing and enjoying God, as the first Adam, and his covenant, were utter strangers to.*" *Limestone Sermons, Vol. II p.94.*

Secondly, Had Adam had this principle he had not fallen at all; and so redemption by Christ had not been necessary, therefore had not been; yea, all the designs of God which were directed to, and shall issue in the praise of his glory, **(Eph 1:6)** in the final and everlasting state of his own chosen, upon the plan and foundation of election, and the covenant of grace, had been frustrated.

That there had been no need of a Redeemer, had not man fallen, no need of a discharge from the curse of the law had not sin entered, and we thereby become guilty before God, needs no proof; both revelation and reason give in their joint and full evidence for it. We had then been, in respect to the law of God, in the condition of standing angels; *and all that purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, in order to abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel, (2Tim 1:9,10)* as the Apostle saith, would have rested there; because there would have been no death to abolish. *For by one man sin entered, and death by sin. (Rom 5:12)* There remains no room for enquiry, but, whether this principle would have been proof against temptation, had it been in Adam? To which I answer,

The Apostle speaking of his new life, saith, I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. **(Gal 2:20)** Now, though we cannot tell,

how Christ lives in the soul of a sinful man, as we cannot tell a great many of the mysteries in nature; yet it is plain from this, and other places in Scripture, that Christ is the principle and spring of life in his children, and that their continuance in life depends upon it: *Because I live, ye shall live also.* (John 14:19) Christ and a believer have but one life; and, as one said, both shall fail or neither. And though it is not proper to say, That Christ believes and repents, &c. in the regenerate soul, but these are said of the renewed man; yet I may conceive of them according to Moses, they are precious things brought forth by the sun (Deut 33:14) — who though he does not always shine, remains in union with the soul. Now, if angels, who are not united to Christ, as the elect, and called among *Adam's* race, are; and who therefore do not partake of eternal life from Christ, *as believers who are in Christ, as the branch is in the vine,* (John 15:5) do partake of it; and yet by confirming grace only are upheld. What reason can there be to suppose, that if Adam had partook of this grace in the state of his integrity, he should not, at least, have been confirmed as well as they?

The Scripture, in many places, favors this supposition, that the nature of the new principle is such, that had it been in innocent *Adam* it would have kept him so, that the evil one could not have touched him. I will mention a few:

The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened. (Matt 13:33) That is, grace in the soul preserves itself, and ceaseth not to work till the whole *spirit*, and *soul* and *body* (1Thess 5:23) be sanctified.

Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. (John 4:14)

The Apostle speaking of the regenerated soul, saith, *it is born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.* (1Pet 1:23) The distinction must, I conceive, lie between the seed of light, knowledge and love, sown in the heart of the *first man Adam, who was made a living soul*; and that which is in and from the *last Adam, a quickening spirit*. That seed was corruptible, though not corrupted, as it came out of God's hand, and so the beauty of that image was darkened, marred, corrupted, and lost; but this is unfading, incorruptible, remaining through all the variable frames, and various dispensations the soul passes under in this world.

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. (1John 3:9)

Now if this seed of God which remains, preserves itself, and keeps the soul alive in the midst of ten thousand deaths; is it not highly reasonable to suppose, that if this seed had been sown in *Adam's heart* before the fall, it would have made him proof against all the attempts of the devil?

Further, had Adam in innocency had that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for, he could not have lost the earnest, nor would that hope have been in vain; but as in us, the faith of the operation of God shall reach unto the inheritance, it must needs have done so in upright Adam, or else it had not been the same; and so, according to what hath been said, all the designs of God upon the foundation of election, would have been frustrated.

Obj. 1. But the children of God, who are called out of darkness into God's marvelous light, **(1Pet 2:9; Rom 8:11)** in whom the spirit of Christ is said to dwell, often fall; and sometimes they fall as if they had not been anointed with oil; therefore if our first father had had this principle, he might, notwithstanding, have fallen, as they do.

Answ. The people of God often fall, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows; but their falls argue not the weakness of the new principle of grace, but the badness of the old principle of corrupt nature; *I am carnal, sold under sin,* **(Rom 7:14)** saith the Apostle, and therefore — *when I would do good, evil is present with me.* **(Rom 7:21)** The case of *Adam* before, and of his recovered children since the fall, do not agree. He, in his innocent soul, had no sin; they have nothing but sin dwelling in their flesh. The Apostle, even after regeneration, speaking of indwelling corruption, or lust, which wars against the soul, expresses himself concerning it, not as though it was a visitor, or one that turns aside to tarry for a night; but as an inmate or inhabitant, that has taken up every room. *For I know that in me (that is in my dwelleth no good thing.* **(Rom 7:18)** It is in us, and remains as long as we shall continue in these infected tabernacles, like the leprosy in the house under the law, which could not be cleansed but by pulling of it down: **(Lev 14:45)** Yet this seed of God remains, and shall not cease to be, till it springs up into everlasting life. But *Adam* had this advantage above his fallen children, he had then no sin; therefore it follows not, that he might have fallen, if he had had this principle of light, the spirit of Christ dwelling in him.

Object. 2. If *Adam* had not the faith believers now have, then was he not perfect.

Answ. *Adam* had a perfection in its kind. A child is said to be perfect, when it hath

all the parts proper to a man, and well formed. Noah was said to be perfect in his generation. (**Gen 6:9**) And as there is a natural and a spiritual body, an earthy and an heavenly state, (**1Cor 15:44**) so there is a perfection of each kind. This first man, who is of the earth earthy, (**1Cor 15:47**) was perfect in that kind, both in his knowledge and enjoyment; he was endowed with natural and moral perfection; (**Ecc1 7:29**) every way capable of enjoying God, through his works, to his content, in that condition that it pleased God to place him. But the spiritual perfection, which the vessels of mercy shall be raised unto, is of another kind, in respect both of soul and body, and consists in another way of knowing and enjoying God, in and through a mediator; (**2Cor 4:6**) which is begun here, and shall be completed at the resurrection, when Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body; (**Phillipians 3:21**) not like Adam's before the the fall, but Christ's after the resurrection; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (**1Thess 4:17**)

Object. 3. But though it should be allowed that *Adam* had not, before the fall, a revelation of Christ, (**Gal 1:15**) and so did not actually believe, as those do, in whom it pleases God to reveal his Son; yet he had in his innocent soul a power and disposition to believe whatever God should reveal, and in that respect may be said to have had faith.

Answ. He had a passive capacity, as wax hath to receive the image from the seal, and in his pure nature nothing contrary to God. But if a capacity of receiving the manifestations and impressions of light be the having of those impressions and images; will it not follow, that the *Apostle Paul* was sanctified when a blasphemer and a persecutor? (**1Tim 1:13**) Because it is evident he afterwards received the impressions of divine grace renewing and reconciling him to God, of which he was capable. It's true, we fallen creatures have in us that abominable enmity against God, (**Rom 8:7**) which was not in our nature as it came out of God's hand, for which we are styled children of wrath; (**Eph 2:3; Titus 3:3**) yet this does not render us un-capable of receiving the grace of God, or the powerful impressions of light and truth, the knowing and enjoying the things which God has prepared for them that love him, (**1Cor 2:9**) any more than Adam. For he could not have known them without an internal revelation, which would have effected an inward change, as *Doctor Goodwin* thinks; and we cannot withstand it when God is pleased to work. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* (**Psalms 110:3**) *The work of God in regenerating a soul is not wrought by moral suasion, or by an offer or proposal made to the reasonable creature, and left there; which had it been made to innocent nature, would have effected nothing;* "The original light and abilities of our minds not being suited and prepared for the receiving and understanding of

them," (*Dr. Owen*) but by a powerful work called creation; (**Eph 2:10**) and we could as well have refused to be, when we had no existence, as refuse this second more powerful work. (**Eph 1:19,20**) *We could as well not have seen when God brought us into this world, as not believe, when God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* (**2Cor 4:6**) No; when God opens the understanding, Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eye to behold the sun. (**Ecc 11:7**) Shall not he, who breathed into man the breath of life, have access unto the soul which he hath created, and make what impressions and enlargements he pleases, even in an infant of days?

Object. 4. The law of God commands a reasonable creature to love the Lord with all his soul, with all his mind, and all his strength, which cannot be without faith in Christ; therefore the law must needs command faith.

Answer. It is man's duty, where the Gospel does not, as well as where it does come, to love the Lord with all his soul, mind, and strength; but they are not sinners for not loving with more than all the strength God ever gave, which the objection makes them to be. Angels of light, under the law of nature, love God with all their strength, though they have no interest in the Lord Jesus as a Redeemer, and therefore no faith in him as such to them. *Adam had love put into his heart, which was drawn out to God his Creator, for the benefits bestowed upon him, before he knew God in a Mediator, as the object of Gospel-faith, or needed such a provision or discovery of it to make him happy.* Thus his posterity are bound to love him. But further, whereas the objection urges, they cannot love God without faith in Christ, therefore they are commanded to believe in him in order to love God, It hath been observed, that man could have loved God without the knowledge of a Redeemer. *And now I would ask, are not sinners, by the same way of reasoning, commanded to regenerate themselves, and so that is made their duty as well as believing, seeing they cannot love God unless they be regenerated?* Hence if this reason proves any thing, it proves too much.

Objec. 5. But the Gospel is a blessing where it comes, and affords an opportunity for all to be saved if they will; therefore the not improving this opportunity will be their condemnation.

Answer. The force of this objection is abated, by what has been answered to an objection before; yet as here it appears in a different form, and seemingly strengthened, I must take notice of it.

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I grant the Gospel brings a blessing along with it wherever it comes; the Lord sending his disciples, whither himself would come, **(Luke 10:1)** to gather his elect from the four winds. And whereas the dark corners of the earth are filled with the habitations of cruelty, *the leaves of the tree of life were for the healing of the nations;* **(Rev 22:2)** though the fruit is only for the children to feed on, as the hidden manna **(Rev 2:17)** secretly given. *Where the word is received into an honest, or sanctified heart, bringing forth fruit to God* **(Rom 7:4)** in a conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, nations, towns and neighborhoods, are often reformed and benefited thereby. This is a providential favor, and men ought to acknowledge it, in attending upon the word, and imitating the best examples; left by sinning against this light they heat the furnace hotter, and pull down fiercer vengeance on themselves. But it ought to be observed, that though the abuse of temporal favors will aggravate the guilt, and consequently the plagues of them who are not saved by grace; *yet the improvement of temporal favors will not procure eternal salvation.* The Gospel, blessed be God for it, with the exemplary lives of those who received the truth in the love of it, hath, in, a comfortable measure, healed Christendom, and brought kings in general to govern by wholesome laws, and kingdoms to act with more humanity than the Pagan world. Kings acknowledge that they hold their crowns of Jesus Christ, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice; **(Prov 8:15)** and promise to use the power he entrusts them with in the administration of justice, according to his word, which God requires them to do. **(Psalm 2:10,11,12)**

Thus the Gospel is a benefit where it comes. The beasts of the field, saith the Lord, shall praise me; the dragons and the owls: *Because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, to my chosen.* (Isa 43:20) *But to make the Gospel all opportunity for all to be saved if they will, when we are assured by the word, and informed from the pulpit, that there is not, nor can be, such a will in the creature, till God works it by his grace,* (John 6:44) overturns the notion of opportunity; for, what is opportunity of having a thing, but bringing that thing within possible conditions to the creature? Besides, how does this low and cold word opportunity agree with the absoluteness of God's covenant, which secures the salvation of his chosen upon absolute promises? *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* (John 6:37) And again, *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* (Psa 110:3) Here is an absolute promise, which vastly transcends, and is as far above a bare opportunity as the heavens are higher than the earth. (Isa 55:9) Does the Gospel effectually bring salvation unto all? Or only offer an opportunity to all? *It is evident it does not effectually save all; and to make it an opportunity of salvation upon conditions, is to destroy the nature of the Gospel, and make it a new law,*

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offering life and salvation upon terms and conditions to be performed by the creature, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary.

But why must it be supposed, that God offers an opportunity to all to be saved? And, how can we understand it to be a privilege and blessing, to have an opportunity upon impossible conditions? And especially, seeing the duty supposed to arise from this opportunity is required under pain of damnation?

To the first some answer, " That God affords an opportunity to all, that he might vindicate himself, that is, his justice, or his mercy, or both, from the charge his creatures might probably bring against them." This supposes, I conceive, that God will be brought to the creatures bar to give account for his conduct towards the works of his hands; which indeed, through the amazing and confounding pride of our hearts, is frequently done. We quarrel at his righteous decrees; we quarrel at his gracious dispensations, our eye being evil because he is good; and we fall out with him as Jonah did, about the shadow of an herb; (**Jonah 4:9**) such is the monstrous deformity of fallen nature! But admitting this, that God was arraigned, his justice needs no vindication. *Now we know, that whatsoever things the law saith it saith to them that are under the law: That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.* (**Rom 3:19; Rom 3:4**) The saved of the Lord justify him in his sayings, and clear him when he is judged: (**Rom 3:4**) They own, that had they been sent to hell, the sentence had been just, and wonder that they are not there; and as for the rest, who are of the works of the law, (**Gal 3:10**) their guilty conscience will stop their mouths at the bar of God, and send them with Judas, sullen, to their place. (**Matt 27:3,4,5**)

If this is designed to vindicate God's mercy, it is an ill concerted scheme. For to pretend to vindicate God's mercy to all, by a way that does not manifest the same mercy to all, which would have effected their everlasting salvation, verily answers its design. Further, it furnishes no plea for the mercy of God towards the nations and people where the Gospel never came; and with respect to them, it is left as defenseless as the doctrine of absolute election is supposed to leave it with us. But suppose the Gospel had offered an opportunity of salvation, wherever it comes, and that it had been preached to every man in the world, and fallen angels had not had it too as an opportunity of salvation for them; God's mercy would have been liable to be impeached by them for the same reason; so that this answers not its design.

To the second, "How can it be conceived to be a blessing (as this worthy author must be understood to mean) to be commanded, under pain of damnation, to do what is absolutely impossible for a creature to do? Would any of us think it a

privilege and blessing to be required and commanded by the prince upon the throne, under pain of death, to build ourselves a mansion house in the stars? *Yet this would be as easy for us to do as to quicken ourselves when dead in trespasses and sins, which must be before we can believe.* It is a supernatural act which this author makes the duty of unconverted sinners; which the late *Dr. Ridgley*, of immortal memory, expressly denies, *Vol. II. page 9.* where speaking to an objection, which supposes, that we hold that God commands men to put forth supernatural acts of grace, though they have no principle of grace in them, saith, "*But let it be considered, that this God nowhere commands any to do.*"

And here I will add a passage from the mouth of that late eminent man of God, *Mr. Gouge*, which I had from the notes of one who wrote after him, whose reputation among the godly demands credit. "*To change faith into obedience is to change the Gospel for the law; and in a sense to say, you may obey a promise instead of believing.*"

Let us enquire, upon a supposition, that God had made a declaration to our first parents in Eden before the fall, of his designs by Christ, as he declares them in his word, and by them that have preached the Gospel, how they would have been affected with it, and how differently it affects us, *who are delivered from the power of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of his dear Son;* which may clear and confirm the answers to the third and fourth objections above.

First, Suppose God had been pleased to propose to *Adam* a design of raising him higher, by taking him out of his earthly paradise, and from his then satisfying enjoyments, to be with him in another room above the visible created heavens; and that his company should be the bright angels; and moreover, one in his own nature should be head of them all: Whatever expectation it might have begotten in him, who could not fail, while he stood, to yield assent to the truth and goodness of what God should say to him; *would this have made him meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light?* **(Col 1:12)** I conceive it would not; for there must be an internal meetness, and suitable appetite, before there can be an enjoyment of anything.

Now *Adam's* highest perfection, as the first man, of the earth earthy, was suited to the enjoyment of God in a lower way, and altogether according to the covenant of works. And therefore without a supernatural work of grace, which we pass under in regeneration, carrying his soul from that natural way of knowing and enjoying of God, into another way of knowing him in a *Mediator*, and enjoying of him in a nearer relation by Christ, **(Eph 1:5)** he would have remained what he was before. *He must have been born again of the Spirit,* **(John 3:5)** as our Lord said to

Nicodemus, or he could not have seen the kingdom. And this receives countenance from the condition of angels, who though they behold the face of God, **(Matt 18:10)** and have seen all that hath passed in the world since the beginning, have seen the mystery of godliness; **(1Tim 3:16)** yet are said, now to learn by the church the manifold wisdom of God; **(Eph 3:10)** which implies, *that the church, in her low estate, by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, knows that of God, which those bright intelligence's do not know.*

We know there was not, nor could there have been in any of us, a sanctified desire of going to heaven, *had there not been a letting of somewhat of heaven into the soul; which the Apostle calls, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, (Rom 5:5) as the strength and confidence of hope.* When any express a desire of going to heaven, being in unregeneracy, it can mean no more than that, whereas they feel pain and sorrow by reason of afflictions, crosses and disappointments, from their low, earthy, and sinful pursuits, and at times uneasiness arising from guilt unremoved, they would be freed from these things; which, if I may so call it, makes but a negative heaven, there being in all this no real positive enjoyment: *But that which is our meetness for heaven is an inwrought work, which gives the soul a taste. Now he that has wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, who hath also given to us the earnest of his Spirit. (2Cor 5:5)* This is what the Apostle means by knowing in yourselves; **(Heb 10:34)** as if he had said, ye do not know barely by the word, *but by an inward experience, having tasted that the Lord is gracious. (1Pet 2:3)* The joys of heaven are unknown in degree, but not in kind, to the saved of the Lord.

Secondly, Had God been pleased to deliver to Adam a copy of his will, and of his covenant transactions with Christ, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins; **(Col 1:14)** would it have been legible to him? That the things therein would not have appeared to him, as they do to us, may be supposed from their nature and end. The precious things brought forth by the sun, **(Deut 33:14)** as I may say, were not suited to his first state, but to ours: The provisions made for the election of grace *before time, (2Tim 1:9)* were not to descend and flow down upon them but as *vessels of mercy* in time. The Gospel gives account of the bread of life, the balm of *Gilead*, the robe of righteousness, to cover the naked, with every thing necessary to, and suited for the relief and succour of the poor and needy. But *Adam*, before the fall, had not guilt nor fear; had no wound; knew no want of bread to eat, or raiment to put on; had no defect in the frame of nature, but God was breathing on him prosperous gales; now had these tidings been brought to his ears, what could he have understood of them? "Neither the things, nor the revelation of them, being suited to a state of integrity." (*Dr. Owen.*) There being no

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suitableness in them to his case, he could, I conceive, have been no otherwise taken with them than standing angels are, nor yet so much; for they, some way or other, see relief handed out to the miserable, and hear the praises of recovering mercy sung by them; **(Rev 5:9,10)** but there was no such object of mercy for *Adam* to have looked upon, no such praise to have raised his attention and wonder.

Perfect health and soundness do not dispose the creature to hear and receive with gladness the tidings of a remedy: *The whole need not a physician.* **(Matt 9:12)** What is food and raiment to one that is not hungry nor needy, having no sense of want? And though men now, under the fall, have some consciousness of guilt and want; and may speak Christ fair on the account of his sufferings, his patience in his afflictions, **(Isa 53:7)** and love for all the hatred that was testified against him, as they receive his story by an historical faith; yet whilst they continue unchanged, and the vail not taken away, they see no beauty nor excellence in Christ. *But the soul that sees its misery, feels its wound, discerns its nakedness and want, is convinced by the Spirit, as an indwelling principle of light, of the suitableness of Christ to its own case; it is taken with the great designs of God by him, and at times will, and does with inward approbation and sweet affection pronounce him, The chiefest among ten thousand; (Song 5:10) yea, that he is altogether lovely. (Song 5:16)* But,

Thirdly, Suppose the sun had shined out upon innocent nature, as the sun of righteousness shines out upon us, vessels of mercy, would it have wrought equal wonder, equal love, equal reverence?

If it be allowed, that it would have advanced innocent nature, and set it wondering and praising with standing angels; yet the advance not being from so great a deep, the work would not have been so great, and the wonder not so great. And as there would have been no room for discriminating grace to have displayed itself, as it does now, there would not have been the inquiry and admiration, why me, and not another? *Lord, how is it, that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* **(John 14:22)** Men raised and advanced in a state of integrity would have contemplated and admired God in his greatness, his unsearchable goodness; but that shining attribute mercy had made no appearance, had found no place, because the creature was not become miserable. Yea, love had not appeared in its full lustre; his *all wisdom and prudence* **(Eph 1:8)** *had been yet concealed; all these glories being in Christ, they are opened and displayed by the redemption we have in him.* **(Luke 2:14)** In the case supposed, our first parents would have found themselves amazingly railed; but as they had not been wounded they had been strangers to a cure; *but their fallen posterity, on whom the sun of righteousness arises with*

healing in his wings, (Mal 4:2) they feel a cure, and are filled with wonder and joy on the account of it.

2. The supposed glorious shine upon pure nature would not have wrought the same, or equal love, as it does in fallen man. Love to God, in pure nature, I humbly conceive, arose from that love which was manifested by the God of nature; it was begotten by bounty and goodness let in upon the reasonable creature; whereby it was made to embrace its God as a bounteous creator and benefactor; and this seems to be its height by the law of nature. **(Psa 4:2)** All God's creatures, either standing angels, or recovered men, must with all humility say with the Apostle, *By the grace of God I am what I am. (1Cor 15:10)* What is love to God in the heart of a poor creature, but the effect of the love of God let in upon the soul? *We love him, because he first loved us. (1John 4:19)* There would not, there could not, in reverence be it spoken, have been such beaming in of the love of God in all its various glorious forms upon innocent nature, either man before the fall, or elect angels, **(1Tim 5:21)** as upon fallen sinful man. To conclude that love would have been the same, or equal in the creature, had it not fallen, and then been recovered by the love of God through Christ in a way of companion and mercy, is to argue beside the rule. There was, said our Lord to Simon, a certain creditor which had two debtors: The one owed five hundred pence, the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most. *Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.* And he said unto him, *Thou hast rightly judged. (Luke 7:41-43)* In the former case love had looked down upon man on even ground, and drawn him up to heaven; but in the latter it looks down upon man as under ground, yea, in the depths of hell, and raises him from thence: *For great is thy mercy towards me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. (Psa 86:13)*

3. This fills it with the highest joy, and bows it with the deepest reverence. *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and he set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And put a new song into my mouth: (Psa 40:2,3)* The sweetest praise for the greatest benefits. What shall I render to the Lord? **(Psa 116:12)** When the soul is led to look into the deeps, the depths of our misery by sin, the bottomless pit into which we were fallen, and discovers there the depths of mercy that founded the depths of our misery and drew us out; then prostrate at the throne of grace are our souls, our inward powers, and cry out, *O the depths of the riches, not only of the wisdom and knowledge, but of the love and mercy of God too! (Eph 2:4)*

I would appeal to all, I would ask all the saved of the Lord, When are you most filled with abhorrence of sin? Most humbled and bowed at the foot of God? Made to walk in most tenderness and forbearance of one another in love? **(Eph 4:2)** *Is it not when you are led to look into the depths of your misery, set forth by the depths of God's mercy: When the pains of hell got hold of him, (Psa 116:3) who drank of the brook in the way; therefore hath he lifted up the head. (Psa 110:7)*

CHAPTER V.

Of the principle of faith, and how it is implanted in the soul. That as to its being, it comes not under the notion of a duty at all.

Faith as a grace, and a new covenant blessing, comes in a way of divine *SOVEREIGNTY*, and stands, to the creature, upon the same foot as election, the covenant of grace, and imputation of righteousness do; and is God's application of the salvation he hath provided to the soul; and therefore called his saving of it. **(Eph. 2:8)** Its principle, and how wrought, we shall shew.

First, When grace comes down to dwell in the soul, it comes in the form of light, and as such takes up its dwelling in the understanding: *He has given us an understanding.* It is not a shadow, as the apostle saith, the law had, of good things to come, but the very image of the things; as Christ is said to be the *Image of the invisible God: Now faith is the (substance) of things hoped for (1 John 5:20; John 17:2; Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 11:1)* (as well as) *the evidence of things not seen.* The Apostle John speaking of it, calls it *the truth that dwelleth in you, and shall be with you for ever. (2 John ver. 2).*

As light was the first beauty in the first creation; *And God said, let there be light and there was light, and God saw the light that it was good; (Genesis 1:3)* so in the second creation this light is first; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened. **(Ephesians 1:18)** The Apostle speaking of this new creation's likeness to the first, saith, *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the * face of Jesus Christ. (2Corinthians 4:6)*

* *God hath written one book for reason to read in, another for faith; the creature discover to reason, now eclipsed, the eternal power and godhead; but God's glories are written in the face of Jesus Christ as mediator and saviour, and there*

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it is that the saved of the Lord read his glories, and shall be reading of them to all eternity. That in the ages to come he might shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ. (Ephesians 2:7).

Hath God made man before he commanded the light, and placed him upon the unformed earth, the shapeless chaos had not appeared, nor had man appeared to himself; so our souls, devoid of moral rectitude, that image en-stamped upon us at first, and now defiled, and full of ugly deformity, see what they are, whilst they remain unenlightened: For the light does not give being to things, it discovers them as they are; *for whatever doth make manifest is light. (Ephesians 5:13)* And therefore though the condition of man by the fall, and the rich provision God hath made in Christ, and proclaimed by the gospel, are the same before as they are after this work of God upon, or in the soul; *yet till the day-spring from on high, through the tender mercy of our God, visit us, (Luke 1:78)* we discern neither our selves as we are, nor what God hath prepared for us; but when the sun of righteousness arises. with healing in his wings, the soul makes in that light its secret removed from the covenant of works to that of grace. *(Phil. 3: 7-8)* ⁷ *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*⁸ *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: And though there is, and will be a gendring to bondage still, yet will there be a ceasing from confidence in the flesh. (Phil. 3:3).*

This being the principle or seed sown in the soul, from hence arises what makes up a fuller definition, or account we have of faith in the scriptures.

I: It discovers the inward pollution of the nature. The natural conscience, by comparing the actions of life with the word, yes, the natural conscience, where the word does not come, accuses and charges the guilt of some things upon itself; *(Romans 2:13-15)* yet does it not discover the spring from whence they flow, and it doubts not but it can make some atonement, and bears itself up in the pride of its own doings: But this light discovers the loathsome pollution that is within, humbles and brings down the soul at God's foot. *Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.(Isaiah 6:5; comp. John 12:42; Job. 42:6; Romans 7:12-24).*

II: It brings over the will. It does not make the soul bow by a kind of force or violence put forth upon it; but that becomes its choice which before it had no value nor esteem for. This answers the promise, *Thy people shall be willing in the day of*

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thy power. (Psalm 110:3) Lofty thoughts, and haughty imaginations about its own works and doings, as the *Pharisee* had, are now brought down; (Luke 18:11-12) not because the soul would uphold them though it cannot; but it would let them go, would be found in Christ, not having on its own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ. (Phil.3:9) *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.* (Psalm 9:10) And tho' there may and do remain in the soul many fainting's, and many fears, by reason of sin, indwelling sin; and thoughts now arise, that Christ will have nothing to do with one so vile, with so unworthy; this does not alter its will; no, but here it waits, and another thought of God's design to pardon and save, keeps us from sinking quite, and stays us at his foot. (Psalm 130:3-4) *3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4 But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. This light does not make the soul to fly from the Lord as guilty; but to bow and rely upon him as Peter; To whom shall we go? (John 6:68).*

III: This engageth the soul to the Lord in love and desire. It does not only make the soul willing to be saved in this way, but begets in it a liking of it, and kindles love and desire to it. The soul feels the bands of love, and moves toward it: (1 John 4:19) *We love him, because he first loved us.* The Soul would not be as it was before, at ease upon the first covenant; no, though it might be supposed to think it should not perish; yet it has found that which is better to it than its former ease and carnal security. *It has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and follows him.* (John 10:27; John 4:14) The discoveries the Lord has made of himself affects the soul as the sun does the body; delights the eye in the beholding, and gratifies it with a sense of feeling. (Luke 24:32) Indeed when the Lord withdraws, the soul grows cold, and desire languishes; and though for a while, it may be, looks after him with languishing, as the eye waits upon a departing friend till out of sight; and through fumes of corruption from within, the perplexing cares of this life, together with the many baits the adversary prepares to draw off our eye, to draw off our thoughts from Christ: in these circumstances the soul falls asleep, and we have no more sense of the things of God than we have of the things of nature when we slumber on our beds; yet then it is the Lord makes his appearance, but as through the lattice in an ordinance; or when we hear others speaking of him, or any other way he is pleased to appear: (Song 3:9) The soul knows him from a stranger; desire awakes and moves after him: (Job 29:2) *2 Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!*

Thus a child of light, as born of the light, it owns its birth, (1 Thess.5:5) breaths after the light; nor can it be satisfied without it. (Psalm 17:15) *15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy*

likeness.

Secondly, As this principle is light, so it is immediately, and in a moment from the Father of lights. it cannot be conceived to be wrought in the soul but either in a way of persuasion or reasoning, or by the the direct shining of God. But if we consider its nature as spiritual light; and that it is in all that are, or ever were, and shall be saved, among whom there are many that could not receive to in the former way; and the manner of the Holy Ghost speaking of it in the Scripture, *it will fully appear to be immediately and instantaneously from God.*

It is a spiritual light, which no man hath or can have without the Spirit. When the soul is thus favored with the anointing from the Holy One, it hath some discerning of spiritual things, and till then it cannot discern them at all. This incapacity did not come upon us by the fall; we lost our moral rectitude, but not any of the special blessing of the covenant, which were given only in Christ. The prophet saith, **(Isaiah 64:4)** *4 For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.* By these words, since the beginning of the world, the prophets carries our thoughts back, beyond man's fall, even to his estate before sin entered and in saying, none *besides thee*, excludes all creatures from having had this knowledge. The secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear him, through all this space of time since the foundation of the world, is said not to have been perceived by the ear or the eye; however God may be pleased, after he hath shewn the soul light, **(Psalm 118:27)** to make use of both in carrying on the work, See what the Apostle saith, how he declares the things of the Spirit unattainable, and that for a reason that held as good before as since the fall; *because they are spiritually discerned.* **(1 Cor. 2:14)**

Many things are discoverable by reason, and a rational knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel is attainable by the use of the Word; and men are highly to blame that they do not use their opportunity more, which would certainly answer their pains whilst here. It is an unhappy mistake that we are fallen into, to tell our auditories, that unless they get some spiritual benefit by that opportunity they had better have been any where than there; and at the same time, if we preach the doctrines of the Gospel, we tell them, its not in their power to get any; and thus whilst we press them to do what we tell them they cannot do, *we discourage them from doing what is their reasonable service; and which, if done, would render them pleasant to themselves and profitable unto others.* How much better would it be for youth to attend a sermon, than to give their ears to hear the lewdness and profaneness that is acting upon the common stage of the world; to employ their

eyes in looking into the Scriptures, the best body of morals in the world; the most surprising history, where all the wonderful facts related are well attested, rather than to read wanton plays and idle romances? Virtue is its own reward here, though it does not merit heaven. *But to the point in hand; reason is a serviceable light, but not a saving light. We can see many things by the light of a fire, by the light of a candle, but we can see the sun only in his own light: So by the spirit of a man, which is the candle of the Lord, (Prov. 20:27) we see many profitable things for the present state; but Christ, the Sun of righteousness, (Psalm. 36:9) is only seen in his own light; and till he comes, there is not one ray of spiritual light in the soul. (1 John 5:20).*

Reason is further useful, as it is sub-ordinated unto faith in the children of light. This ought to be attended to. The Apostle uses persuasion to stir up the children of God to outward obedience. (Romans 12:1) 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. See (Rom. 6:13-22. Phil. 2:2. Tit. 3:1-3) and in all the epistles.

Yea, and the children of God reason with themselves, and in themselves, in this light. (Romans 6:2) 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? (Psalm 116:12) 2 What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? (Romans 6:9-11) Yea, and we know, that by comparing one thing with another, by the assistance of the Spirit, in the use of our faculties, we arrive at a more particular and useful knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, and an understanding of what Israel ought to do. (1 Chron. 12:32) But as *the principle of faith is a light above reason, so it is not reasonable to suppose, that it was wrought or begotten by reasoning, but by the revelation of the Holy Ghost. (Job 32:8) 8 But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.*

And seeing the principle of faith is one in all: *There is one faith.* For let the opinions of God's people be ever so diverse, and ever so many, and the difference ever so great as to degrees of knowledge, the principle is one; *and all are alike passive in the reception, or implantation of that principle.* We were as passive in it, as in our mother's conception of us. How different so ever the method of providence may have been with us before calling, or after calling, as to trying, afflicting and comforting; I am not able to conceive a different way in the first *

* *Some have been at loss to make a judgment about their state, because they know not when the change was wrought. Says such an one, I indeed find in my self a*

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need of Christ, conceive him to be a suitable saviour, and sometimes feel him precious to my soul; but I do not know when this began, what can I make of it? To which I would answer; as we don't know when we were quickened, nor how the bones grow in the womb of her that is with child: So we may not know when God infused life into the soul. But as there must be life before motion; so these cannot be a new motion but there must be first a new life. To the principle of life in the soul that is born again Christ and the Gospel are as music to the ear, and as precious meat to the palate, or as milk to babes; this carries its evidence in it, Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. (Psalm 89:15)

quickening, but *that it is immediately from the Lord*. So concluding his way to be one in all, I would ask, **(Job 33:15-16)** Can it be supposed, that by reasoning from, or upon the word, God gave life to those who were saved by grace before there was any part of the written word in being? Surely, no. Or, can it be thought, that infants are so wrought upon who are not capable of understanding one word; yet these must be born again **(John 3:5)** that die in infancy and go to heaven? And, besides, there have been Idiots who have given testimony for the grace of God; and some have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son, **(Col. 1:13)** who could not read one word; and this one done before they ever heard the Gospel preached. Reasoning could not take effect here, but *it must be an immediate work*.

I will add a few places of Scripture, that persuade me, that the first effectual work upon the soul is instantaneous and immediate.

(Eph.2:4-5) *4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

(Col.2:12) *12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. Here the work is set forth by the resurrection of Christ, which was by the glory of his father, by his immediate power. The scattered dust of the saints, which is kept by the Spirit of Christ that dwelleth in them, **(Romans 8:11)** shall not be brought together by persuasion, but by the Almighty power; and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. **(1 Cor. 15:52)** And further, it is called a creation. **(Eph. 2:10)** 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Let us only consider, whether there were the least space of time between the out-going of the divine command and the existence of the creature. *What arguments were used to persuade**

the light to shine out of darkness, or What persuasive's were made use of to Adam's dust to receive the figure of a man? yet when God had made his creatures, and master-piece of all his works here below, he succored, and upheld by the means of the other creatures: So when God hath put new life into the soul, he sanctifies and blesses his word and ordinances, as means he hath appointed, (Eph. 4:11-12) for the feeding, nourishing, and building up his saints in their most holy faith. (Jude 1:20).

Now seeing this work is at first wrought immediately by God, and comes upon the soul as light from the sun; it follows, That the poor soul that is dark, yea, darkness itself, may, in a moment, be made light in the Lord; (Eph. 5:8) and be made to say, as the man in the Gospel; *one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. (John 9:25).*

An infant may be made a partaker of light as well as men of full age (Mat. 21:16) *16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? Here the weak, the foolish, yes, idiots, stand upon even ground with the great, the noble, the wise men of this world; and God casts the lot as it seems in his sight. (1 Cor. 1:26-28) 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:* Further, as Joseph's cup was secretly put onto Benjamin's sack; so this blessing may be secretly conveyed into the bosom of a poor sinner of any way, of any denomination; whereby the soul is made to see its misery, and feel its want, and is guided to look to the Lord for mercy and forgiveness; (1 John 1:2) tho' it may not be able to say, *whence it cometh, not whither it goeth, (John 3:8) neither is able to give much account of it. And on the other hand, there may be those who can say many things from the word about regeneration, who are yet strangers to the thing.*

Object. But those who are called by grace are said to be (1 Petr 1:23) begotten by the word, *and born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Therefore it is done in a way of reasoning from the word.*

Answer. The children of the second Adam are begotten into his image by himself, who was made a quickening spirit, (1 Cor.15:45) as the children of the first Adam

received their image from him: They are not said to be begotten by that word which was not so soon as time began, and when time shall be no more shall cease to be, *but by that WORD which liveth and abideth for every; which was with the Father; was made flesh and dwelt with us, and now is in every one that believeth. The written word was designed, rather to be the means of the souls feeding, and to satisfy it, that is passed from death to life, than to work the first change; as writings may satisfy a person of his title to an estate, through they do not give him eyes to see it, nor to read his title.* And as reason was not set in a Gospel-way of knowing and enjoying God, and still takes a different course; **(Romans 7:23)** I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, &c. *We have need of the written word to reprove our, carnal reasonings, and keep our judgements right in the doctrine of the Gospel; and to direct our steps in the outward worship of God, and discipline of his house, (Isaiah 8:20) which we should not know without the word.* Also God hath been pleased to give us the more sure word of prophecy, **(1 Peter 1:19)** as a weapon against the adversary, to repel the subtlety and rage of men and devils. **(Eph. 6:17)** *17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:* There are many uses of the word to the quicken'd soul, and to others; but it *does not appear from hence, that it works the first life in the soul.*

But if it be allow'd, that the preaching of the word is a means of God's conveying life at first to the soul; can it be supposed, that a command, which is of the law, (and will always suggest, that it is the creature's duty to do something in order to its own salvation, and generally is understood to suppose a power too) is so well adapted to answer the design, as the preaching of the Gospel, which is a pure doctrine of grace and mercy? **(Gal. 3:2)** *2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

From what hath been said above, viz. that the principle of faith is a supernatural light, distinct from reason; and, that it is from the *Father of glory*, **(Eph. 1:17)** by an immediate shine through Christ upon the soul; *and so as to the principle, it is God's act or work, not the creature's:* How can we conceive that faith, as to the being of the principle, comes under the nature or notion of a duty at all, without bringing the author of it under a law, which is unsuitable to his being? And seeing it is allow'd to be a special part of God's salvation by grace, and so a peculiar privilege; how came this alone to be under the law and not election, and other blessings of the *New Covenant*? And does it not stand upon an equal foot, to make creation, regeneration, and resurrection unto a state of glory, the creature's moral duty too; seeing this never was in the creature's power, any more than those? And as it cannot be conceived the duty of us creatures to be, *it being the pure*

Sovereignty of God that gave us being; yet when it pleased God to make us, and to bless and adorn us with all the dues of nature, as Dr. Goodwin calls the moral recited, God created us in; it was our duty to live to his glory: So when it pleased God to create us in Christ, (Eph. 2:10) we are under all the glorious ties of love and grace to praise him, and magnify him through time, and eternity.

This principle of light will abide where-ever it is, as a token of God's favor, (Prov. 14:10) *and be in the heart that knows its own bitterness, that joy which a stranger inter meddles not with, (Isa. 60:20) till the Lord, who will be the everlasting light of his people, will put an end to the days of darkness and mourning. (1 John 3:2).*

CHAPTER. VI.

A brief view of several texts produced by this author, with his reasonings on them, as opposed to our sentiments.

AS we have reason to suppose, it was one design of this author to expose to contempt the labors of that eminent servant of Christ, *Mr. Hussey*; it may not be improper to refer the reader to the book and page where he hath given his sense of many of the Scriptures made use of in the modest answer; that upon the comparing them, the unprejudiced enquirer may judge, whether of the two have given the more consistent interpretations. Here it must be observed, that this author hath two things to do; *To shew, that the texts, he brings, speak to unconverted sinners. 2. That they command them, as such, to believe in Christ with that faith which is called saving. If he fails in either of these his assertion falls to the ground. The foundation he lays in (Ps 2:10-11).* From the exhortation here, *To kiss the Son*, this author argues the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ. But it follows not hence, unless the phrase be used in no other sense elsewhere; and if it were not, unless the analogy of faith, and the light of the context, oblige us to understand it so, it is possible it may have another meaning here. I conceive he hath neither of these to support his inference. (Pr 24:26) *For, to kiss, may intend to receive instruction, as when a scholar receives doctrine from the lips of his master. And it is used for a testimony of homage to and acknowledgment of a king; as when Samuel is said to kiss Saul; (1 Sam, 10:1) Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon Saul's head, and [kissed him.] And to this kiss of homage some refer these words. Both these are the duty of kings and judges to do, and they themselves profess to do them, where the Bible is received. (Godwin's Jew. Ant. Lib. 3. P.108).*

That this place does not intend a general call to faith in Christ, appears from its being directed to kings and judges, and not to all men. And that it does not intend a call to believe in Christ, according to the sense of the question, is evident from

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what the author calls motives to their mentioned duty, viz. "dread of Christ's anger and kindled wrath." For though dread of anger and wrath may, and often does restrain a creature from doing what its vicious appetite lusts after; *yet is it none of the sweet cords that draw the soul to Christ, (Ho 11:4) or, that constrains it to love and obedience when it hath received him. (2Co 5:14)* Besides, this makes them motives to dead sinners to quicken themselves; which being God's act, not the creatures, man is not put upon doing of. It was man's sin to destroy a moral life; but it is not man's sin that he hath not a spiritual one. *(Ho 13:9) It is God's eternal grace that gives life. (Tit 1:1)* When we creatures use motives, we suppose life, and an habit or capacity of being moved. Who of us will offer to delight a blind man by holding colors before him? Or draw a deaf one after us by melodious sounds? *Men may and ought to be stirred up to rational and moral acts by proper motives; and those that sleep may be awaked and routed up; but the dead cannot be made alive thereby.* No, the soul must first be quickened e'er it moves, or before external motives can possibly take effect. What motives can be laid before the dead (as all in unregeneracy are said to be) to excite them to vital acts? *(Eph 2:1-3)* And what better success could we expect, than if we should go into the church-yard, and use motives to the dead to raise themselves?

Nor is there the same ground to exhort all to believe in Christ as their Saviour, as there is for all kings and judges to be subject unto him. *(Mt 20:28)* For he did not give himself a ransom for all the individuals of mankind; but he is the prince of the kings of the earth; and *the Father will give him the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. (Ps 2:8).*

Be wise, now, therefore, *(Ecc. ver. 9).* may possibly have respect unto those kings and judges whom God will call by grace, and make willing in the day of his power; or more extensively to kings and judges, to sway the scepters he hath given them, and use the power he hath entrusted them with, for the outward good and welfare of his church in the kingdoms where he hath set them to rule. *(Inst. Lib, 4. Cap. 20. No.5)* This seems plainly to be Calvin's sense of the text. "David exhorts all kings and rulers to kiss the Son of God, he does not bid them, giving over their authority, bind themselves down to "a private life, but submit the power they bear to Christ, that he alone may have pre-eminence above all."*(Ps 4:2-5)* This Psalm, as some think, was penned on the revolt of the tribes under Sheba; *(2Sa 20:1-2)* and if so, it contains an exhortation to them to return to their lawful king, **Ver.4** whom God had let apart for himself; and to offer sacrifice, **Ver.5** which none were commanded or permitted to do, but the church; and that only upon his own altar in Jerusalem. *(De 12:5).*

But it is Said, they were unconverted, because they turned David's glory into shame, **Ver. 2**, loved vanity, and followed lies.

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Answ. It follows not, that they were unregenerated, any more, than that Ephraim was, of whom God saith, He went on frowardly in the way of his own heart; ([Isa 57:17-18](#)) or those whose story God gives in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel; or those whom God calls his own people, who are bent to backsliding, and yet the Lord cannot give them up. ([Ho 11:7-8](#)) Indeed they did very wickedly: But, If thou, Lord, *shouldst mark iniquities; O Lord, who shall stand?* ([Ps 130:3](#)) Besides, he treats them in the following verses, not as he is wont to treat the Lord's enemies, but with brotherly kindness.

To the triumphant demand, " And who, in the fear of God, can say, that though God did command them, yet it was not their duty? " (*Page 6*).

I answer, no body. But how does this prove they were unconverted sinners Rather, that they knew him as the object of their trust.

([Pr 1:20-23](#)) This, says the author, is a special command to turn, which must include submission, conversion, and therefore faith."

Answ. The text ([Jer, 3:12](#)) Go, and proclaim thee words towards the north, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, includes conversion and faith, but does not prove, that the backsliding children were unregenerate; nor do the words of the twenty second verse. But if they did, they prove no more that they are commanded to believe with a special Saving faith, than that they are commanded to regenerate themselves; for they can no more believe without regeneration, than turn without faith*

* See Mr. Gill's cause of God and Truth, Part I. Page 62, upon this text.

([Pr 8:1,4-5,10,32-33](#)). Here this author concludes, as on ([Pr 1](#)), that the persons spoken to were unconverted, because simple ones and fools. But it follows not from thence that they were unconverted: Our Lord said to his disciples, ([Lu 24:25](#)) *O fools, and slow of heart to believe, all that the prophets have spoken!* And then our author infers, they were called to believe in Christ, for reasons and motives, to which I need say nothing more than has been said above.

([Pr 19:1-6](#)). Christ is here supposed to have finished his work, and upon that, the call to be to unconverted sinners to come in, &c.

Answ. After Christ had finished his work, there were some who were born again, that had not turned into the dispensation, ([Ac 10](#)).

He concludes the call is to the unconverted, because they are said to be [simple].

Answ. If so, we may conclude David unconverted, when he said, The Lord preserveth the [simple] I was brought low and he helped me. ([Ps 116:6](#)) One would think a person very necessitous to catch at this place, to prove a general call; for if

all were intended by it, pray, who must they forsake, as they are commanded to do?
(ver 6)

"They are, saith he, to come and eat the bread of life, and drink of that wine which is drink indeed; and this cannot be done but in faith. The motive, they shall live." (Page 2.)

Answ. Here's the plain truth of the case. They are to come and eat the bread of life; but this they cannot do without faith, without life; yet they are to be moved to it by a promise of giving life. That is, they are to come, being dead, and if they come they shall live. But this, like the rest, proves nothing to his purpose *

**See Mr. Hussey's God's Operations, &c. Page 264, 265.*

(Ec 12:1,13). The whole duty of man is here mentioned; and every duty is a privilege, **(Ps 19:11)** yet there are privileges which are not the duty of a creature. It's the duty of man to keep the whole law; it is mere and pure privilege to be saved by grace; and faith is a part of that salvation. **(Eph 2:8)** To be made upright was the creatures privilege; and it was his duty to walk so; though, as a certain reverend minister said, *God did not command him to make himself wings and fly.*

From this text the author concludes it to be the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ, which is but a begging of the question; and what he asserts, viz. that it is impossible to fear God without it proves it not. See **(Jon 1:16; Ac 5:5).**

I desire him to inform us, whether it be the duty of the Heathen to fear God, who never heard of Christ; and therefore, as he allows, not under any obligation to believe in Christ.

(Isa 1:18). The persons spoken to here, are said by this author, to be vile unconverted people, because their sins are said to be like scarlet and crimson. But this proves it not; for the sins of God's people are not less heinous than the sins of the rest; neither are their aggravations after calling less than they were before. We (saith the prophet) are all as an unclean thing, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. **(Isa 64:6)** Whatever some men may think of their sins, and of themselves, the Apostle thought no better of himself **(Ro 7:14)** than the Holy Ghost speaks of the house of Israel here. But suppose they were allowed to be un-regenerated, what is there here to prove that it is their duty to believe in Christ? It is an absolute promise, *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.* *

** See the Glory of Christ unveiled, &c. Page 448, 449* The Cause of God and Truth, Page 78.*

(Isa 27:5) First, If the unconverted be intended here, then is it the sinner that makes his own peace; for it is said in the text, And he shall make peace with me. Yea,

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Secondly, Then is our peace made twice, or else Christ hath not made it at all. But the words are to be referred to Christ, who hath made peace by the blood of his cross.*

* *See Operations of Grace, Page 270, to 275.*

(Isa 55:1-2). To make this serve his purpose he tells us, "That this thirst is nor of an evangelical spiritual kind, which increases in proportion to our communion with the Lord, but a thirst to be removed by faith; why? Because they are supposed to be restless."

Ans. This proves it not: For in those that are born again there is still an appetite to the things of nature, and the flesh lusteth against the spirit; **(Ga 5:17)** and so restless were God's people, that they forsook him **(Jer 3:13)** who is the fountain of living waters; she, the church, went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the Lord. **(Ho 2:13)** They might, notwithstanding, be regenerated, and restless on the account of a natural appetite, or for want of pure ordinances, in which God hath promised to satisfy his people with the fatness of his house. *

* *See Operations of Grace, Page 263-267. Cause of God and Truth, Part I. Page 91.*

(Isa 35:3). The foregoing answer shall serve here; only as this author, to confirm his opinion, that the persons spoken to were unregenerated, observes, they were such who labored for that which satisfieth not. I answer, so did Ephraim, **(Ho 12:1)** yet a dear son, **(Jer 31:20; Ho 11:8)** and a pleasant child. See **(Ac 13:34).**

(Isa 55:7). To make these words to intend the first turn, as this author does, makes repentance, or turning to God, antecedent to pardon; which is contrary to the doctrine of the Scriptures. **(Ps 130:3)** 2. It makes the encouragement to be to an impossible condition, i.e. to what the creature cannot do; and what is not provided for the non-elect; and so in respect to them an encouragement in the air. Is it accounted serious among men, to invite to an entertainment, when we know the persons invited cannot possibly come? Or to promise when there is no design to bestow? But if we understand the words here to be a call to God's backsliding people to return, then the words, And he will abundantly pardon, are suited to take off that fear, that its probable they might be under by reason of their offense. Thus it agrees with God's method in other places; as **(Jer 3:12-14; Ho 14:1-4).***

* *See Glory of Christ unveiled, Page 368, 369.*

(Isa 45:22). The author understanding this to be a general call, argues the general duty of all to believe from it. But,

First, There words seem to be directed to God's own remnant, by what goes before,

ver. 20 ([Isa 45:20](#)). Assemble yourselves and come: Draw near [ye that are escaped] of the nations. The Lord observes to them the vanity of trusting in idols, as the Heathen did, and declares himself to be the only Saviour; and then in this 22nd verse ([Isa 45:22](#)) says, *Look unto me all [ye] ends of the earth, &c.* He does not say, all lands, or all nations; but all [ye] whom he is said to have gathered out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south. ([Ps 107:3](#)) Or,

Secondly, If we take them as a prophesy to be fulfilled in succeeding ages, then may they intend God's efficacious call (which is to be distinguished from his moral commands) to his election among all nations; and his providential call to the rest to receive his word, and acknowledge the Lord's dominion. And this, I conceive, may be the sense, by the following words. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

([Eze 33:11-16](#)). The author of the *Mod. Answ. p. 1.* observation 2. remarks on these words, "The mercies and compassions of the Lord to poor wicked sinners, and the pleasure he takes in their conversion." By which we must understand all poor sinners, and that they should convert themselves, as *Mr. F. Goodwin*, and others understand them, or else they are nothing to the purpose. But,

First, To refer this text to condemnation before God, and its contrary, viz. Justification of life, ([Ro 5:18](#)) is to place our justification in our own righteousness, our freedom from condemnation and death in our own works, and thereby make the death of Christ to be in vain: For if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain. ([Ga 2:21](#))

Secondly, It makes our justification alterable, (i. e.) that a man may be in a justified state one day, and out of it another; (contrary to [Ro 8:1](#)) for the *11th and 12th* verses speak of the righteous man's dying, as well as of the wicked man's living; yea, that the same person may live and die, and die and live again; and cannot therefore refer to our state before God, which is invariable in Christ.

Further, to take this text in a sense that opposes the doctrine of the perseverance of the called of Jesus Christ, ([Ro 1:6](#)) as this author does, is to take it in an unsound sense: For, he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. ([Php 1:6](#)) This place therefore cannot intend that life which is opposed to death in trespasses and sins, ([Eph 2:1](#)) because it supposes they may die again, ver. 13.

Dr. Owen saith of a parallel place, ([Eze 18:24-25](#)). "That this should be a standard and rule of God's proceeding with his people in the covenant of mercy, no man that

seems to have either understanding, judgment or conscience can reasonably imagine." *

* *Doctrine of Saints Perseverance, Page 403, 404.*

Lastly, The message was sent to the house of Israel, which was the peculiar people of God, (*Ver 10*) and cannot be supposed to be an un-regenerated body. *

* *See the Cause of God and Truth, Part 1. Page 141, &c or [\(Eze 18:30-32\)](#).*

But I suppose the words to concern the Jews, and to be suited to their state and condition in the land of Canaan, and to have a typical meaning, as many other places in the Old Testament have. [\(Eze 18:2\)](#) Or if they may be referred to anything in the New Testament church, it must be to our being in Christ [\(Joh 15:5-7\)](#) by visible profession, wherein a man may be said to live and die, be justified and condemned in the church, but not so before God.

[\(Mic 6:8\)](#). His argument for the state of the man, is the enquiry which he calls "considering, whether he should give his firstborn for his transgression," (*Page 12*) proves not the man in unregeneracy, &c.

We have here God's controversy with his own people, [\(Mic 6:2.\)](#) wherein he lays before them his kindness and gentleness, in melting expressions of love and fatherly affection; *0, my people! what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee?* [\(Mic 6:3-4\)](#) He puts them in mind of an eminent appearance for them; Remember now what Balak the king of Moab consulted, and what Baalam the son of Beor answered him, &c. [\(Mic 6:5\)](#) *0, my people! consider there things, and how I was their refuge and defense; how I blasted the rage, and baffled the designs of the king of Moab, and the kingdom of darkness; and made a wizard say, Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel.* [\(Nu 23:23\)](#) Hell stood confounded at God's appearance for his people. Now remember this, saith God, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord; that is, how I have kept covenant and mercy with a provoking people, a people bent to backsliding from me; and yet, How shall I give thee up Ephraim; [\(Ho 11:8\)](#) they are my people still.

This wrought upon the soul of the man, and filled him with an abhorrence of self and sin, [\(Job 42:6\)](#) as God's appearance did Job; it melted him, and awaked in him a sense of the desirableness of God's presence, favor, and communion; which made him say in effect, I had rather part with the dearest things to nature, than be cast out of the presence [\(Ps 51:11\)](#) of so dear, so gracious a God and Father; yet all these things were I to give would not do. For I conceive, such enquiries do not necessarily infer, that he thought, they would atone for sin; but rather express the depth of his contrition, and a sense of their insufficiency; as when *Job said, I have*

sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? ([Job 7:20](#))

But if it be urged, that the man was perplexed about access to, and communion with the Lord, therefore an unbeliever.

Ans. I would ask, is confusion of mind, about communion with God, and access to God, a proof that the soul is in total unbelief? Surely a concern about access to, and fellowship with the Lord, carries in it a sweet intimation of a better principle, and *things that accompany salvation*. ([Heb 6:9](#)) Have not many of God's children, after calling out of darkness into his marvelous light, ([1Pe 2:9](#)) by reason of indwelling sin, ([Job 23:2-3](#)) though not in total unbelief, sometimes felt an horror of darkness, and inexpressible confusion about matters of this nature?

Nor, is the language here, such, as of those in total unbelief, mentioned in the word of God; here's a wherewith shall I come before the Lord? importing desire; but the kings, and captains, the great men of the earth; yea, the bond and free, all being in unbelief, and apprehensive of impending wrath, are represented as flying from him, and saying to the mountains, and to the rocks, *Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb;* ([Re 6:15-16](#)) implying the utmost dread, without the least mixture of hope.

To conclude, 1. The man was one of God's own people. 2. It may be justly supposed he knew the way; for it is not said, as this author says, " he should have known better," but he hath shewed thee, O man. 3. God is here said to be his, *walk humbly with [thy God,] which signifies covenant right. Yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord.* ([Ps 144:15](#))

([Mt 3:2-3,8](#)). "As true repentance (says this author) is always a concomitant of faith, and in a sense may be said to flow from it, so he commands them to believe in Christ, prepare his way, and make his paths strait."

John was the messenger sent to prepare the way before him, &c. ([Mt 3:1; Lu 1:76](#)) and was as one that is sent before a king who visits his dominions, to proclaim the king's purpose to come, and that he is at hand; that they may get ready to give attendance when he comes, and hear his pleasure and design more particularly. *

* See *Operations of Grace*, Page 240, 241

This author concludes that saving faith is here commanded, because John said, Repent, &c. *But it ought to be observed, that this proves it not, unless there be no kind of repentance due from the creature but what is a fruit of new covenant grace, as the faith in controversy is allowed to be.* To force the text to speak contrary to the analogy of faith is a desperate strain to serve a turn. *Now does the Gospel teach, that it is man's duty to prepare himself for Christ to save him? Or, that Christ is God's salvation by absolute gift? Certainly Christ is God's salvation? from*

first to last in every step of it. ([Isa 42:6-8](#); [Joh 14:6](#)) He is a complete and perfect way. Take this author in the plain sense of his words, and it is this: Poor unconverted sinners, says he are commanded to believe, prepare Christ's way, &c. i.e. they are to make themselves alive, as a preparation for Christ to make them alive; for faith is a fruit of life. Alas! is the Gospel come to this? Unconverted sinners must prepare a way for Christ to come to save them, as a woman prepares room to receive a guest: *No; where Christ comes, and when Christ comes, he brings that along with him that prepares himself a room, and obtains the souls welcome.*

([Mt 11:29](#)). Here the weary and heavy laden are called; and they are bid to take upon them Christ's yoke, &c. It has been already observed, that dead men are not spiritually weary; the body of death is no complaint to them. Christ's yoke seems to be opposed to the yoke of Moses, which, saith the Apostle, Neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. ([Ac 15:10](#)) That contained circumcision, and all the heavy and painful service and discipline of the law; this the sweet and easy service under the Gospel. The call, probably, may be to them to come under the new dispensation, as Mr. Hussey understands it. * Or, it may be understood as an expression of Christ's heart, ([Joh 6:37](#)) particularly designed for the encouragement and relief of those, who, being quickened by grace, feel the body of death, ([Ro 7:24](#)) and groan under the burden. Thus it is often used by the Spirit.

* *See Operations of Grace, Page 348-367.*

"Nothing (saith this author) but the most blinded, resolute prejudice, dare say our Lord did not here command them to believe in him."

Here's a positive sourness. Was poor Mr. Hussey a blind unregenerate sinner when he wrote? For these words of the author will agree with none but such an one; and no doubt he knew whose sense of the text he opposed. This is an heavy censure! It's to be hoped, he may not always find a pleasure in spurning at the precious dust of the venerable dead. But in all his anger he had the thought to stay, whilst that faithful servant was entered into the joy of his Lord, and had gotten quite out of hearing.

([Mt 22:2-4](#)). It might be sufficient here to say, as the text doth, it is a parable. And I think we are hard driven, when we have recourse to parables to prove doctrines. But how does it appear to be the duty, &c. from hence? (*Page 15*) "Why, saith this author, what he meant and intended by their coming, was, in the first place, their putting on the wedding garment, their putting on the Lord Jesus Christ by faith---" It's true, all that have not the righteousness of Christ will perish; but it's strange to say, they perish because they have it not, seeing it is a gift; and we must say of it, as our Lord said to the mother of Zebedee's children, concerning the right and the

left hand places in the kingdom, it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. [\(Ro 5:17; Mt 20:23\)](#) The righteousness of Christ is a glorious garment upon the church; but not left to the creature to put it on, any more than it was left to the creature to prepare it. No; he who made our first parents coats of skins clothed them. [\(Ge 3:21\)](#) Provision and application are both of grace. God, who hath made Christ unto us --- righteousness [\(1Co 1:30\)](#) imputeth that righteousness; and gives faith to the soul, as an eye to see how fine grace hath made it, [\(Song 4:1\)](#) and as a tongue to sing its praises in sweeter notes, and in an humbler strain. He hath clothed me. He hath covered me. He hath done all for me, and all in me, while I with joy am made to behold it. No, no; to talk of the creatures putting on the righteousness of Christ will not sound harmoniously with what the church says, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, &c.* [\(Isa 61:10\)](#)

But if it be said, it is Scripture-language, But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ: [\(Ro 13:14\)](#) I answer, the words mean no such thing, as putting on Christ and his righteousness in this author's sense of the phrase. For, 1. The Apostle is not speaking to unconverted sinners, but to the called of the Lord, [\(Ro 1:6\)](#) with whom he joins himself in the foregoing verse, Let us walk, &c. [\(Php 3:15\)](#) Neither, 2. Is the exhortation to believers to do the special act of God. *For imputation of sin to Christ, [\(Isa 53:6\)](#) and Christ's righteousness to us, are both ascribed to God. Yea, and it is the Spirit that leads the soul into the possession of all. [\(Joh 16:13\)](#)* But the exhortation is to outward acts, opposed to the vices mentioned in the foregoing verse, as rioting, drunken. chambering, wantonness, strife and envying; that by treading in the steps of the Lord, and imitating his example, they might shew forth the praises [\(1Pe 2:9\)](#) and virtues of him that had called them.

[\(Matt 23:37\)](#). O Jerusalem, &c. That our Lord does mean by gathering, to save with an everlasting salvation, ought not to be supposed; for had that been the design he could not have missed it. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, &c. [\(Joh 6:37\)](#) How does such a sense agree with personal election, particular redemption, and the doctrine of efficacious grace? Had Christ died for them, they would have been sent forth out of the pit, wherein is no water, through the blood of his covenant; and have been saved eternally.

But if here, we understand our Lord, that he had done those things, and shewed those miracles, which were sufficient to have convinced the reason of, and prevailed upon, the children of Jerusalem to have attended his ministry, had they not been restrained by their guides; and even the rulers themselves, had they not through prejudice, and love to the world, turned away their ears, and shut their

eyes; the sense is agreeable to the analogy of faith, and no way inconsistent with the text. *

* *See the Cause of God and Truth, Part 1. Page 134.*

[\(Joh 6:27-29\)](#). Here it is said by this author, "They were unconverted who followed him (viz. Christ) for the sake of the loaves." To which I answer, if low and carnal ends prove men to be un-regenerated, I know not where he will find a convert. But admitting that the words were spoken to the unconverted, to reprove their vanity in following him for a piece of bread rather than to see his mighty works. What is there in this place [\(Joh 6:16\)](#) to prove that they were commanded to believe in him? This author tells us they were bid to labor, &c. and says, "by it he means faith in himself." But this proves it no more, than our bidding our children go to the ordinances of worship, not to shew themselves, or to look about them, but to hear the word preached, proves our command to them to believe. To say "but by it he means faith in himself," is to take for granted what ought to be proved; by which method, transubstantiation, or anything else, may be proved. The word he brings to explain it, viz. "This is the work of God, &c." [\(Col 2:12\)](#) helps him not: For it is, says our Lord, *God's work that ye believe, not your own*; but here he would make it the creature's, which is not agreeable to the word.

[\(Joh 7:37\)](#). If any man thirst, &c. This, I conceive, no more proves a general call, than, whosoever seeth the son, and believeth, &c. proves a general salvation. He that believeth on me are words not adapted to prove that Christ calls unconverted sinners to believe in him.

[\(Joh 12:36\)](#). The Jews had the light of Christ's doctrine and miracles, and ought to have believed in them. But what is there here to prove, that it is the duty of dead sinners to make themselves alive.

[\(Joh 16:8-9\)](#). Here indeed it is justly observed by this author, That if faith was not a duty, unbelief would be no sin. I grant this place fairly concludes his assertion in terms. So also does [\(Joh 3:18\)](#). --- But he that believes not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is a strong proof that faith is a duty. But I must desire that it may be observed, *(1.)* That we do not deny it to be a sinner's duty to believe. Yet, *(2.)* This proves not enough, unless there be no other kind of faith but that one, which we call saving faith. For if there be another kind of faith, which we have demonstrated there is, Chap. I. and that it is the duty of those that hear the Gospel, or that saw the miracles of Christ, to believe with that sort of faith; then what hath been yet said, *proves not that the faith, which is opposed to the unbelief in this text, means saving faith; because there are two kinds.* We both labour (saith the Apostle) and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God [who is the Saviour of all men] especially of

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those that believe. [\(1Ti 4:10\)](#) Now how does this text in John prove, that saving faith is meant, any more than this in Timothy, proves for the Arminian, that eternal salvation is meant? I desire that those who are enquiring after truth would compare these things, [\(1Co 2:13\)](#) and weigh them together. If we have no way of reasoning from the Scriptures, but drawing conclusions from the letter; it will not be so easy a thing to maintain our ground against the common adversary, or even to confute the doctrine of transubstantiation.

It is not, whether it is the duty of sinners to believe, but what they are to believe, which is in question; or what kind of faith, is required of un-regenerated sinners "That therefore (as this author reasons) the commendments of God made it their duty to believe, or their not doing so would not have been their sin," does indeed prove what is not denied; but that does nothing at all towards proving what it is deigned to prove.

Neither does it appear to me, that our Lord in this place of John, intends that special work upon the world which he effects in his own children; whereunto that unbelief is opposed, which is supposed by this author to be the cause of condemnation. Because to reprove, or convince the world of sin, &c. is none of those sanctified forms of speech made use of in the Old Testament, where God speaks concerning his calling of his own people: As, *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* [\(Ps 110:3\)](#) --- *They shall see the glory of the Lord,* &c. [\(Isa 35:2\)](#) But the words are such as were fore-spoken concerning the enemies of Christ, who should perish — Every tongue that riseth in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn. [\(Isa 54:17\)](#) Now if the work here be not a saving work, I don't conceive any reason to conclude, the unbelief here is such as is opposed to the faith of the operation of God.

In the context we have plainly a distinction between the disciples and the world; which our Lord in this Gospel makes use of to signify the election and the rest. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.* [\(Joh 17:9,20\)](#) We have also an account of what the Spirit should do to the one, and what to the other: *He will guide you (the disciples) into all truth.* [\(Joh 16:13\)](#) *He shall glorify me: For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* [\(Joh 16:14\)](#) *But the world he shall reprove of sin,* [\(Joh 9:16,30-31\)](#) *and of righteousness, and of judgment, &c.* This shall be their lot. Which was done when the Spirit came upon the disciples at the day of Pentecost, and they spake with tongues, and did many wonderful works in the name of their exalted Lord. Here was a further reproof of their sin of unbelief, in that they had not believed Christ to be the great power of God, who had opened the eyes of the blind, and now by the Apostles restored a cripple to the use of his limbs. See [\(Ac 3:6\)](#) and [\(Ac 4:9-10,13-14\)](#). *The world of the Jews were then reprov'd of righteousness, that*

is, that Christ, whom they had counted an impostor, was risen from the dead, and gone to the Father, which he could not have done, had he not been a righteous person. They were reprov'd of judgment, because the prince of this world was judged, in a manifestation of the victory Christ had gotten over him; who was now ascended up on high, having led captivity captive, ([Ps 68:18](#)) and made it manifest by the devils becoming subject to the Apostles through his name. ([Lu 10:17](#)) Satan falls, and his kingdom gives way to the kingdom of Christ.

That the aggravated sin and guilt of the Jews was their not believing Christ to be the Messiah, and acknowledging him as such, with a rational assent, upon the evidence of the mighty works which he did, is very plain to me from his own words, ([Joh 10:37-38](#)). If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the [works] &c.

([Joh 15:24](#)). If I had not done among them the [works] which none other man did, they had not had sin: But now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father.

([Mt 28:19-20](#)). From the commission given to the disciples, the duty of unconverted sinners to believe is argued thus; "They are to teach poor unconverted sinners to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded them; and it's well known Christ commanded them to believe: Ye believe in God, believe also in me." ([Joh 14:1](#))

But, 1. It's not said, they should command them to believe, but teach them to observe. *Now teaching to observe, and commanding to believe, are two things; the one is to be done to them that received the word gladly; they were to be baptized, to be taken into visible fellowship, ([Ac 2:41](#)) to be formed and builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit; ([Eph 2:22](#)) not as unconverted sinners, but as converted to Christ. The other not being in the text I shall say nothing to it. 2.* If, as the author supposes, poor unconverted sinners were to be commanded to do all things that Christ commanded his Apostles to do; then were they to command them to go into all nations, to preach the Gospel, to heal the sick, to call out devils as well as believe; for Christ commanded his Apostles to do all these. Further, ([Joh 14:1](#)) is not apt to the case; for the disciples were believers, when Christ spake these words to them, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me. Christ commanded the living to move, therefore we must command the dead to live; this is not a good way of reasoning.* Nor, lastly, are Christ and his Apostles to be imitated in all they did by the ordinary ministers of the Gospel; these may not go to the grave of Lazarus, and say, Come forth; ([Joh 11:43](#)) nor to the upper chamber, where the dead lay, and with Peter say, Tabitha, arise. ([Ac 9:40](#))

([Ac 2:38](#)). and ([Ac 3:9](#)) and ([Ac 16:31](#)). In the two former places repentance is

commanded, and in the latter it is said, believe, &c. which are supposed therefore to be plain proofs, that it is the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ. But,

1. It must be observed, that neither Peter in the former, nor Paul and Silas in the latter, commanded to repent and believe at the first coming together of the multitude, or at their entrance into the prison; which had they done, it would have carried more conviction with it; *but they stayed while the persons manifested a deep concern, which discovered a gracious work upon their hearts.* For they did not say as persons under a covenant of works do, What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? ([Mt 19:16](#)) But as made to see their wretchedness, and helplessness in themselves; ([Job 14:6](#)) which I take to be an effect of the Spirit's work, discovering the deadly pollution of nature, as well as the guilt of sin; as Job said, I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, &c. ([Job 7:20](#))

That repentance which may be called gospel repentance, ([Ac 5:31](#)) being opposed to legal repentance, such as Judas' was, ([Mt 27:3](#)) is not the first work of grace upon the soul; but as it stands in a turning to God under a Gospel sense of, and sorrow for sin, it follows upon a gracious work; After that I was turned, I repented. ([Jer 31:19](#)) *Now this inward change seems to have been already wrought; which the Apostle perceiving, and no doubt understood it to be a verifying of the promise, I will pour upon the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn; (Zec 12:10)* and therefore exhorts them to turn to the Lord by all the outward testimonies of an inward change. Nor,

2. Does it appear to me, that these words, *repent, believe*, were spoken to all the assembly, or to all that were in the prison; but to those *who testified a deep concern about their salvation*, or such as the Apostles owned by the stile of brethren. ([Ac 3:17](#))

([Ac 17:30](#)). "Wherever, saith the author, this doctrine came, *God in it commanded all men everywhere to repent.*"

This carries its answer in it. God, saith he, in it, viz. in this doctrine, commands men to repent, that is, as far as doctrine carries a command in it; which, I conceive, cannot well mean any more, than that wherever the doctrine comes, men ought to believe it; and that we always allow and maintain, *He that believes not God hath made him a liar.* ([1Jo 5:10](#))

It is evident here the Apostle is endeavoring to bring those wretched pagan idolaters to the acknowledgment of God, as the object of worship, ([Ac 17:16-28](#)). where he quotes a passage out of one of their own writers, to convince them, viz. In him we live, and move, and have our being --- and concludes, for that reason,

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that we ought not to think the godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone graven by man's device. Then tells them, [\(Ac 17:30\)](#). and the times of this ignorance God winked at; he let them go on, took no outward notice of them; or in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways; [\(Ac 14:16\)](#) but now, in this dispensation, commands all men, that is, where the word comes, to repent: As Barnabas and Paul said to those who would have done sacrifice to them, We preach unto you, that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things which are therein. [\(Ac 14:15\)](#) And though such a repentance as is here hinted, is but matter of drollery and jest with some; yet, I am persuaded, it will one day appear to be a truth, that God will have the outward report of the Gospel received, and the Bible received and kept by those, who have no special interest in the promise, and grace contained in it; that it may be in a readiness for his hidden ones, where, and *when it than please him to give them grace, and call them out of darkness into his marvelous light in their appointed months.* *

* See the Cause of God and Truth, Part I. Page 164,168. on [\(Ac 3:19\)](#) and [\(Ac 17:30\)](#).

[\(Mt 22:37\)](#). This hath been spoken to before, Chap. IV. and I shall only add here, That it is the duty of man to love God with all his soul, &c. But this author is contending for more, than all that Adam in his innocency ever had.

[\(Re 14:6-7\)](#). The author here, as heretofore, without regard to the scriptural distinctions, between the election, and the rest; [\(Ro 11:7\)](#) between the called of Jesus Christ, [\(Ro 1:6\)](#) and them that are not called; between a special faith, the faith of the operation of God, [\(Col 2:12\)](#) and a common faith; between natural worship, [\(Col 3:3\)](#) the duty of all the creatures, and worshiping God in the Spirit, the blessing and privilege of the saved of the Lord, concludes, that neither of the duties commanded can be done without faith; therefore in commanding of each of them God commands faith in his Son. *To which I shall answer as before, if they cannot be done without faith of the operation of God, they cannot be done without the Spirit working that faith; therefore in commanding them he commands them to regenerate themselves, and to have the Spirit; which, I think, does not sound agreeable to the Gospel.* I shall only add one word, which, I think, will offend no godly mind, But unto the wicked, God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? [\(Ps 50:16\)](#)

I have taken sufficient notice of the places of Scripture made use of by this author to prove his assertion, to which we have the promise of many more; but if as many more should be brought, and not applied to prove, either, *1.* That Adam had the faith of God's elect before the fall. Or, *2.* That his fallen posterity may have it, i.e.

that it is put in their power to have it. Or, 3. That the holy, just, and good law of God, commands man, under pain of damnation, to do what never was in his power to do; I shall not think it concerns me, with regard to this controversy, to take any notice of them.

C H A P. VII.

A reply to this author's answers to several objections.

Obj. 1. "BUT we are sure there is an election of grace; and this doctrine seems inconsistent therewith."

Ans. "Our Lord Jesus Christ did not think so. *Many are called but few are chosen, (Mt 22:14).*"

Reply. Our Lord does not say all are called, but many; and it were as just to infer a general redemption from (Mt 20:28). The Son of man came-- to give his life a ransom for many, as to infer a general calling from this. *Again, there is an outward call, and an inward call; the outward call is to the acknowledgment of the Messiah's being come, (Joh 1:46; 4:29) and to come into the new dispensation, and to walk accordingly; the inward call is into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; (1Co 1:9) and as it always proceeds according to election, and shall be commensurate thereunto, had that been intended in this place, it would have been effectual. For when the Holy Ghost speaks of that calling which is a new covenant blessing, he limits it to the election, (Ro 8:30) and makes it peculiar to those who have a right to the blessing, (Ro 8:29; 9:23).* Even us whom he hath called; denoting that they were called, others not.

"Let others (saith he, viz. unbelievers) give diligence to make their calling, or their answering the call of God, and then their election sure, (2Pe 1:10)."

These words were, by the Apostle, *spoken to those who were born again, and are an exhortation to them to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; and not an exhortation to dead sinners to live, as he would make them.* The doctrine he pleads for does not only seem inconsistent with election, but upon due trial will be found so; for, I humbly conceive, personal election of some to salvation, and a general call to all to be saved by grace, will not stand together to the glory of God.

Obj. 2. "Redemption is particular; Christ did not die for all that hear the Gospel preached; therefore why should it be their duty to believe in Christ?"

Ans. "There is nobody who hears the Gospel preached can justly say, Christ did not die for him; it would be a great sin in any one to say so."

Rep. The force of this objection lies here; Christ did not die for all, therefore it is

not the duty of all to believe he did. For if one degree of faith be the duty of the unregenerated sinner, every degree of faith of the same kind is his duty, and consequently that which appropriates Christ. And as nobody knows Christ did not die for him, so nobody knows that he did, till God reveals it by his Spirit, and then the man cannot be an unbeliever. To his calling, ([2Ti 2:6](#); [Heb 2:9](#); [1Jo 2:2](#)), precious, extensive promises, I need only say, that unless we understand them according to a scriptural restriction, the doctrine of particular redemption cannot be defended. And further, if those general texts are a foundation for every one to believe, they are a foundation for us to believe all shall be saved, as well where the Gospel doth not, as where it doth come.

Obj 3. "But seeing all are not saved, *why are all commanded to believe in Christ?*"

Ans. "It is not said, all are commanded to believe in Christ; but all who hear the Gospel preached are so commanded; and how it may be with them in the event, God only knows, ([De 29:29](#))."

The objection might have been stated thus, seeing all are not appointed to salvation, why are all commanded to believe Christ will save them? "For the faith we are concerned about always accompanies salvation, and is itself a special part thereof." And his answer should have shewn why God will have all men believe with a saving faith, though he never designed nor appointed them to salvation. But, saith he, "how it may be with them (viz. all that hear the Gospel) in the event, God only knows." Here he plainly declares, that neither he nor anybody else knows, but that all who hear the Gospel are eternally saved; though I hope he knows better. Judas heard the Gospel by the greatest preacher, yet is fallen, that he might go to his place, ([Ac 1:25](#)) that is to hell; and *our Lord said to the Pharisees, Ye are of your father the devil, ([Joh 8:44](#))* and does nobody know what becomes of the devil's children? ([De 29:29](#)). serves not his purpose; *for God hath revealed, that all that hear the Gospel are not saved; therefore it belongs to us to know it.*

Obj. 4 "Man is weak, and hath no power to obey, therefore why should he be commanded?"

Ans. "Though man has lost his power, God has not lost his authority; nor is the law of God disannulled: Besides, though man has lost his power, he has not quite lost his reason; therefore to deal with him by precepts, prohibitions, and promises, is the most agreeable way."

It's true, God has not lost his authority by man's fall, nor is man's obligation lessened by his loss of original righteousness; but whatever Adam, by the law of nature owed to God, that his fallen posterity to a man oweth, and for his non-payment must suffer wrath to the uttermost, unless saved by the grace of God through a glorious Redeemer; nor is the law of God disannulled: For if the law had

been disannulled, sinners might have been saved without the death of Christ: But what is this to the purpose, *seeing Adam had not this grace before he fell?* The law commanded man to walk upright on earth, and so it does still; but it did not require Adam to make himself wings and fly to heaven; nor does it command any of his fallen posterity so to do.

"Besides (saith the author) though man has lost his power, he has not quite lost his reason; therefore to deal with him by precepts, &c. is the most agreeable way."

Here I conceive him somewhat inconsistent with himself: For *Page 8.* he tells us, "That reasoning with God must intend faith in the Messiah, for there can be no reasoning with God out of him; but here, God deals with man according to the remains of reason, as the most agreeable way." How these agree I am not wise enough to discern. But there it was to serve one turn, here another; however, it seems "the MOST agreeable way" now. But I must ask, what it may be thought to agree with?

1. With the covenant of grace it does not agree; for that is a pure covenant of promise, and sure to all the seed ([Ro 4:16](#)) upon no other ground. ([Ga 3:18](#)) In applying the grace of the covenant, the first thing God does is to make the soul alive; But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. ([Eph 2:4-5](#)) However agreeable it may be thought to be to the state of man, who "though he has lost his power, hath not quite lost his reason." I am persuaded, since the world began, not one dead sinner has been made alive by it; *but by the mighty power of God put forth on the soul.* Yea, had all lain in the promise made, and not been applied by the mighty arm of the Lord, we had all perished to a man. ([Ho 11:9](#))

2. But it agrees with a pure covenant of works; ([Ga 3:12](#)) wherein is contained first, precepts, prohibitions, and then promises. This is said to be the most agreeable way, as though there might be others, yet none like this. But, lo! the Gospel shews us a more excellent way.

Obj. 5. " If he was commanded to perform moral, natural acts, it might seem more agreeable; but you say he is commanded to perform acts which are not in his power."

Ans. " Pray, what power hath he to perform moral natural acts? The Scripture says, he is without strength, ([Ro 5:6](#)) and Paul says, that he, *after conversion, was not sufficient to think any thing, and therefore not a moral good thing.*"

To command moral acts might seem more agreeable, that is, to the law, saith the objector. So indeed they do, for all moral acts are the duty of the creature

notwithstanding his impotence. But supernatural acts Adam could not put forth before the fall; and as *Dr. Ridgley* saith, "Let it be observed, that this God nowhere commands any to do." (*Vol. I. p. 9.*) But the design of the author's answer, or at best, its tendency, is, to set natural, moral, and spiritual acts upon a level, i. e. to make the same power and degree of strength necessary for us, to eat, drink, walk, to think and reason about the affairs of this life, and to do the duties we owe to God and one another, as, to raise the dead, to quicken sinners who are dead in trespasses and sins. ([Eph 2:1-2](#)) But this is to confound what God hath distinguished, and may serve to amuse; but,

I. God, who created all things, hath given to them a nature as it pleased him; and hath put in them, by his eternal power, ([Ro 1:20](#)) a motion which they retain as long as he is pleased to uphold their being: The sun will shine, the waters flow, the pulse beat, and every thing produce its kind, ([Ge 1:22](#)) without a supernatural aid. Divine concurrence continuing with the creatures they continue as they are; but this concurrence, without a supernatural work, raiseth not one dead sinner to a new life.

2. There are also moral acts done with regard to the law; and that too among the Heathen, who had not the written word: For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts. ([Ro 2:14-15](#)) Kind thoughts of God, as a succourer of the works of his hands; loving and honoring of parents, and rendering the lives of the creatures; doing to others as we would they should do unto us; observing the laws of chastity; keeping the boundaries of property, not going beyond, nor defrauding any man; not injuring our neighbor by false charges, nor withholding a faithful testimony when it tends to his good; and being content with the lot which God gives, with all those acts of kindness and beneficence which are done by the children of men; these I call moral acts, and so far good as they are done, i.e. Good and profitable unto men. ([Tit 3:8](#)) These are not sins in themselves, but as they are short of what they ought to be. And though they are not the matter of our justification before God in whole or in part; Christ's righteousness being the whole of that; yet do they not anywhere stand charged or reprov'd in the word: Nor can I yet believe, that it is the same in the eye of God's law to kill, as to preserve men's lives. Notwithstanding, these moral virtues cannot be supposed to be the special work of grace; because, they have been found among the Heathen worshippers of dumb idols; and it is not to be doubted, were more or less conspicuous in those whose zeal and devotion the Apostle mentions; who being ignorant of God's righteousness had not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. ([Ro 10:3](#)) Now if a man may have these things and yet fail, they cannot be the fruits of that faith, and acts of that principle, which the Apostle Peter says is incorruptible; ([1Pe 1:23](#)) and our Lord said, shall

not fail. ([Lu 22:32](#))

I readily grant, that the image of God en-stamped upon man by creation is utterly defaced; and that the most rude, barbarous, and cruel things, that have been acted by the most abandoned poor wretches, as rapine, filthiness and murder, might and would have been a part of our story, had not God in mercy laid his hand upon us: For we are all streams from one polluted fountain; ([Ro 5:12](#)) but restraining grace is bestowed upon the election and the rest, according to the wisdom, and goodness of divine providence, to keep the world in order.

The places quoted, viz. ([Ro 5:6](#), [2Co 3:5](#)). do not, I conceive, answer his intention.; and I desire the reader to consider, whether the Apostle, in either of the places, be speaking of natural or mere moral strength?

I must confess I am at a loss to know, what he means by, "If God in the one or the other publishes and pleads his authority as a lawgiver, &c." If by the one or the other be intended natural or spiritual acts, how can God be said to publish and plead his authority in the creature's acts? If by the one or the other be meant the Law or the Gospel, I am still at a loss to know, how publishing and pleading authority as a lawgiver, agrees with the definition of the Gospel, and its distinction from the Law.

Obj. 7. " But unto all moral obedience the children of men are called, especially those who have the written law."

Ans. And wherever the Gospel is preached and heard, faith in Christ is a moral duty, and repentance towards God is a moral duty; there the moral law requires that faith. The eternal moral law of God is every way perfect. Christ has not given a new law to his church distinct from that."

There are in this answer some positive assertions; I don't see how they fit the objection. I have already declared myself touching the extent and comprehension of the law, and can say no more to that. *It has been always confessed and maintained, that there is a faith which is the duty of unregenerate sinners where the Gospel comes, and a repentance consequent upon it.* But there is also a faith, by some called a divine grace, which, as to its principle, or first implantation ([Eph 2:10](#)) in the soul, comes no more under the notion of a moral duty than creation or the resurrection of the dead do. And further, I desire it may be considered, whether there be the same reason to conclude, that saving faith is a moral duty, as that repentance is a moral duty; seeing man's fall was from God, as he had made himself known as a creator and benefactor, but not as a Father in Christ?

" Christ, says he, has not given a new law to his church distinct from that."

True, he has not given a new law distinct from the old, nor needs there any, that

being, as above, perfect. *But if we must be accounted Antinomians, because we do not believe the law of God obligeth sinners to save themselves by the covenant of grace; which is all that can be charged upon us, we must be Antinomians still.*

The answers to the eight and ninth objections, containing assertions without any pretense of proof, deserve no regard.

Obj. 10. "But how is it possible to think, that Christ makes it the duty of persons to believe in him; and yet it seems to many of them he does not give faith?"

Ans. "As possible as to think he makes it the duty of all to speak without cursing and swearing, and live without lying and cheating their neighbors, and continue in chastity, and the observation of all other moral commands; and yet it is plain he does not bestow such grace upon the tenth part of mankind."

Reply. God made man upright, and put into him a disposition to do all those virtues, whole contrary vices stand charged by the law; which therefore the law requires, and threateneth wrath against all disobedience: ([Ga 3:10](#)) But that faith, which is a new covenant blessing, was not put into man as any part of his creation endowment; therefore, I conceive, there is not the same reason to suppose the law commands faith, as that it commands to abstain from immoralities. It is no fair way of reasoning, that because the law requires of man what God put into his hand, therefore it requires what he never put into his hand. If a man entrusts another with an hundred pounds, and when it is lost he should bring an action against him for millions, would it be thought just? Suppose a law in being, which condemned men to imprisonment and loss of goods for putting out their eyes; would this law condemn a man which never had sight. *Man was endowed with all moral perfections before the fall; but was not made a partaker of new covenant blessings, of which faith is one.*

CHAP. VIII.

Consequences charged upon our sentiments removed.

THAT it is the duty (says this author) of unconverted sinners, who hear the Gospel preached, to believe in Christ, is a proved established truth; and seeing it is so, it's to be hoped that all the faithful ministers of Christ will in their labors for their Lord tell the people so." (*Modest Answer, Page 25*)

That it is the duty of all that have the word, whether they hear men preach or no, to believe all that is declared therein, hath been constantly maintained: But upon the distinction between common and special faith, it hath not been proved, that it is the

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duty of unconverted sinners to believe Christ is theirs; or that they have a special propriety in him: Therefore it's to be hoped, the ministers of Christ will observe their commission, and preach the Gospel, of which commands are no part: *And if they do this, they must preach personal election, particular redemption, and efficacious grace; and let the people know, that Except a man, be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* (John 3:3)

And I think Christ's ministers may tell the people, that there are some who believe not, because they are not Christ's sheep. (John 10:26) That the election obtained it, and shall obtain it, while the rest are blinded; (Rom 11:7) and, not handle the word deceitfully, (2Cor 4:2) and speak as if there were a likelihood of all being saved where the Gospel comes.

And seeing, as this author allows, it is not in the creatures power so to believe; what fruit can be expected from pressing of it, more than the praise of the multitude, who always look to doing in order to having?

"Yea, I am far from thinking it their glory, or their duty (says the author) to stand a long while together, as they have been represented, offering grace, and offering Christ, offering life, calling and inviting, &c. --- oh! that I could prevail upon you to take him, &c. I never heard such preaching in my life, nor do I think it becomes any servant of Christ to deliver himself in such a manner.---"(Modest Answer, Page 26)

But why should the author think it unbecoming a minister of Christ to call, invite, &c? If it be the duty of unconverted sinners to receive and possess Christ for themselves (John 1:12,13) which are the acts of that faith he makes to be their duty; surely it becomes his ministers to exhort them to it; and then "Oh! that I could prevail upon you to "take him," is but the expression of a good wish, and agreeable to the sense he gives of (Matt 23:37). and I conceive agreeable enough to his opinion. Only it's not to be insisted upon, they are not to stand a "long while together ---" But I desire to be informed, why it may not be insisted on, if of so great consequence as it is said to be.

"Nevertheless (says he) when a minister has labored in the word and doctrine of Christ's person, covenant, love, grace, and salvation, it becomes him to say with all freedom according to the Scriptures, that God, in his word, makes it the duty of poor ruined, lost and undone sinners, who hear such tidings, to believe in so great a Redeemer; and to encourage them, should further observe, that him that cometh Christ will in no wise cast out."

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Here he is pleased to give us the order, how and when it is to be done, that is, when unconverted sinners are to be told this their duty, with a motive to encourage them to do it. But the unconverted sinner generally thinks himself a believer, because he believes Christ hath died for all sinners; and that's his encouragement already. A poor soul can never have a right notion of faith, till it hath faith to know it by; any more than a blind man can form a right notion of what it is to see. The unconverted sinner generally thinks that he hath faith enough, and that what he hears others speak of more is but fancy, conceit and pride; and hates the believer for it. Nor can men be persuaded that they want faith till they are convinced that they want Christ. When they see that nothing will do for a saviour but Christ; when they see a need of his blood to cleanse, them from all sin; **(1John 1:7)** of his righteousness to clothe them, **(Phil 3:9)** and cover their nakedness; when they see a need of his intercession, by which he saves to the uttermost all that come to God by him; **(Heb 7:25)** and that they are forever undone without Christ; then they are sensible of their want of faith, and encouragement: But then though the poor soul, it may be, cannot tell how it came into this way of thinking, what has done this, yet as it sees its need of Christ, it conceives a preciousness in Christ; this soul cannot be concluded to be dead in sin, (though it thinks itself so by reason of the body of death it now feels) but it has that faith which works by love secretly implanted in it: *To you therefore which believe he is precious.* **(2Pet 2:7)**

The encouragement, here mentioned, is not suited to, nor was it designed to be an encouragement for unconverted sinners; our Lord saith, *And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.* **(John 6:37)** *Now the comer is not a dead sinner, but quickened and drawn by a secret hand;* **(Hos 11:3)** though it may have many objections and fears arising from within, which these words, when brought in by the Spirit, are suited to relieve it under, and give it encouragement in the face of them all. There is nothing suited to encourage the dead sinner to move spiritually. No, he is as unapt to spiritual motion, as a corpse in the church-yard is to natural motion; and we may as well expect the slain in the field of battle to arise and return to the charge, as for dead sinners to arise and come whilst they are so. If God has given an ear to hear the joyful found, and know it as such, he hath given the blessing too. *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.* **(Psa 89:15)** *The truth is, we first live, then move;* but, I conceive, *this form supposes the soul must first move, then live.*

Page 27. he calls for a lamentation over some places, "where whimsical notions have been started," hereby suggesting, that there are many such notions, though he does not think it worth his pains to take notice of any but this; "To mention them

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(says he) is not part of my present business, only you may imagine, that I think that to be one, which denies it to be the duty of a poor unconverted sinner -- to believe in Christ --- I mourn under this; I mourn under the fruits and consequences of it where it was first started ---"

It is not to be greatly wondered at, that there are many notions in the churches called whimsical, when everything that has not the *probatum est* of one man must needs be a whim. But, by the way, I would entreat him to consider in the fear of God, whether Christ hath appointed that his children should be excommunicated from his church for whims, for weakness and mistakes in lesser matters, &c. I desire **(Rom. 14:1 and Rom 15:1,2,3)** may be considered.

"I mourn (says he) under this; I mourn, &c." If mourning, and fierce anger, be one and the same thing, we want no proof of this assertion. But suppose he does indeed mourn "under the fruits and effects of it, where it was first started," by which, no doubt, he means Cambridge; he may possibly be mistaken about the matter. For if the children of God at Cambridge have fallen under decays, and unhappy divisions have fallen among them there; how does he know that those uncomely divisions are the consequences of what he calls whimsical notions? Where was there a more flourishing and harmonious church than that at Cambridge, where those despised notions were embraced, while they there enjoyed the blessed ministry of the late *Mr. Hussey*? Would this worthy author think it kind, if his brethren should charge the sins that have been committed at Rowel upon his notion? Or would it be fair? No; As saith the proverb of the ancient's, wickedness proceedeth from the wicked. **(1Sam 24:13)**

And still it may appear one day, that there is, even now, a church of Christ at Cambridge, acceptable to the Lord in that relation; wherein the faith and order of the Gospel are observed and kept, as well and as truly as in other places. Had he been pleased to have left this out, I cannot think the Modest Answer would have less answered its character. There are many alive who knew Rowel, Cambridge, Kimbolton, &c. in the days of Davis, Hussey, Bailey, &c. and know them now, who are, I hope, ready to join with this author in a solemn mourning for them all. **(Job 29:2)**

I cannot think this author happy in the method of a cure. Love edifies the body. **(Gal 5:15)**

But as an angry spirit can do nothing that is generous and kind; so it never can fully express itself; but when it hath said all it can, there's yet more: " *No BODY*

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(says this author) can tell the chain of bad consequences which must follow, wherever it enters, unless wonderful grace prevents." (*Modest Answer, Page 27*) So that when he has named several very dismal ones, his reader ought to believe, that there are many more which neither he nor anybody can tell, nor find out. This is a ready way to incense the greater part of men. This weapon seldom fails of doing execution. What (say they) must we not believe a people to be bad indeed, when we have it from the pen of a good man, and a minister? If it had been from an enemy we should have taken no notice of it; but the author of the account is a neighbor, one of the same sect, who was in communion with them, and would not speak what he did not know, nor the worst of what he did know. For it is enough with many that it was but said or written. But what are those consequences?

"There the servants of Christ, through the many hundreds of years from Christ's time, till now, must be despised, and their labors, so far as they are known, derided; yea, there the Bible itself, whatever they may profess, cannot be cordially loved and delighted in, because, throughout, it is against that beloved notion; there the unconverted cannot be reprov'd, because they believe not in Christ; for they are told it is none of their duty; nor is their unbelief and distrusting Christ a sin; and their faith in Christ must be will-worship; for who hath required it at their hands; there the poor, weak, doubting believer, can have no relief."

I desire the reader will weigh the matter, and consider, whether their consequences follow the opinion he opposes; that is, *That God does not require sinners in unregeneracy to believe with a saving faith.* To the *First*, Suppose some ministers, through the many hundreds of years since Christ's time, have been of a different opinion about this question; or it may be it hath not been much thought of by many; for it is not the only question in divinity; does it necessarily follow, that those ministers must be despised, and their labors derided? This author hath entertained a different opinion about the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, than had been generally received; does he therefore despise and deride the godly and their labors? Would he be judged as he judges others? Again, this is but one thing which we don't see alike, there are many that we do agree in; therefore it don't hinder, the acknowledging every good thing which is in you, in Christ Jesus. **(Phm 1:6)**

The second consequence charged on our opinion is, "There the Bible itself, whatever they may profess, cannot be cordially loved and delighted in; because throughout it is against that beloved notion."

Charity, which thinks no evil, **(1cor 13:5)** would not have said, "they cannot love

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the Bible." The consequence follows not; and the reason he gives is not true: When he will shew us one text out of the whole Bible against what he calls "that beloved notion," I hope we shall obtain mercy to renounce it. We have as much reason to suppose him out of humor with the glorious doctrines of distinguishing grace, because they will not countenance his opinion. We see all the sweet doctrines of the Gospel favoring and agreeing with this truth: *Eternal personal election gives it life and being; particular redemption takes it by the hand and the doctrine of efficacious grace carries it in its bosom; therefore, through grace, we do love the Bible, and truly delight in it.*

The third is, "There the unconverted cannot be reprov'd for their not believing in Christ --- nor is their distrusting Christ a sin."

It hath been already declared, upon the distinction on which we proceed, viz. between a common and natural, and a special and supernatural faith, that unbelief in the unregenerate is a sin; and that their not believing every word that God hath spoken, is punishable as a breach of the first commandment: *But that it is sin in the unregenerate not to believe with an appropriating faith, to believe that Christ is their own, does not, I conceive, stand anywhere censured by the word. If this author, or any other, will shew that it does, I will freely yield the cause, and desire to lay my hand on my mouth and bow.* Judas heard the Gospel and did not believe with the faith of God's elect; (John 10:16) was it his sin? Yea, had he believed that Christ was his, as Thomas did, would it not have been false? Or, was his not believing the cause, why he had no special interest in him? This has been spoken to before.

Souls in unregeneracy are blamable for not believing the Gospel according to the plain sense of the Holy Ghost; that is, for not believing the record. The text runs thus, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.* (1John 5:10) Here is first the believer, (1John 5:10) who hath the faith of the operation of God; being born of God, and having an understanding given. (1John 5:20) This soul is said to have the witness in himself; the principle giving testimony of its author. For God only can open the eyes of the blind. *This comes in a new covenant way, and is the accomplishment of a promise; They shall see the glory of the Lord, &c.* (Isa 35:2) Truth in the understanding answers to the truth in the promise; and he that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal, that God is true.

Then we have the unbeliever: He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar.

(1John 5:10) The Apostle doth not say, he that believeth not in Christ; (though it's true, he that believeth not in this respect is not a believer in Christ) yet God hath been pleased so to express the case, I conceive, to signify the difference between believing in Christ, and believing the word concerning Christ. For the very expression shews wherein the guilt lieth; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. **(1John 5:10)** And in the eleventh verse the Apostle tells us what that testimony is; That God hath given us eternal life and this life is in his Son. **(1John 5:11)** [To us] who? All mankind? No: But to his chosen in Christ. **(2Tim 1:9)**. The one believeth in, as being in him: The other believeth not the record concerning him. This unbelief stands always reprov'd.

The fourth consequence is, "There faith must be will-worship."

It follows not from our sentiments. We profess, that whatever God makes known to a creature, is the creatures duty to believe. In unregeneracy to believe all the record that God hath given; and when God is pleased to make himself known in Christ as a Father, and seal up the promise of life to the soul, (Titus 1:1) then is it its duty to believe the relation, and glorify God on that account. *We hold, that it is not the moral duty of dead men to live; and we are charged, by way of consequence, for holding, that it is not the duty of living men to ask.*

Lastly," There (says this author) poor, weak, doubting believers, can have no relief."

It ought to be observed, that the believer, weak or strong, is not in the question: But as the ministry is said to be deficient, with regard to the weak believer, where this notion is held; it may be necessary, for the sake of some, to shew, that it is not thereby made deficient.

I don't yet see how the command, which is moral, is suited to relieve the doubter, and give him satisfaction of his state at all; and yet this is thought to be the way to relieve the poor, doubting believer; and the want of this is said to make the ministry useless, with regard to the weak and doubting. *The better way, as this worthy author counts it, tells the soul, that it is not in his power to believe, any more than it is in the power of a dead man to walk; but it is his duty because God commands him.* Suppose a man fallen into a deep well, crying out in distress; and some should come to the well's mouth, and say, O man, it is thy duty to get out; the man answers, I cannot; true, say they at the top, you cannot get out, yet, to comfort you, we must tell you, it is your duty to get out; God commands you to preserve your own life, and if you don't get out, you are a self murderer for not doing it;

would not the poor perishing mortal reply, *Miserable comforters are ye all.* (**Job 16:2**)

But if instead of commanding the poor man to do what he cannot do, they should tell him in this distress, that that well had been open for thousands of years; and that a vast number of people who passed that way had fallen in, yet there were few if any that had perished there; This might stay his heart a little, and keep him from deep despair, which the other way hath no tendency to do. And if they should tell him further, that they have read of many, and some they have known, who were relieved in the same case, by one who had sound means (**2Sam 14:14**) to deliver poor creatures (**Job 33:24**) out of those circumstances; and had not only all things for it, to accomplish it with ease and safety, but also gave constant attendance (**Isa 30:18**) to that work; his heart was wholly in it, though he did not always shew himself, nor instantly appear; would not this story yield him some relief, and keep him from fainting (**Psalms 27:13**) and dying away? Now somewhat of this may be done where this new notion is received. Yea, they go further, and tell the man, that they have been in that well themselves, and in very deep distress; (**Psalms 116:6**) that the waters almost passed over their heads: (**Psalms 42:7**) They could hardly look out, or cry, by reason thereof; and when they were ready to yield up the ghost, lo! to their great surprise, one, with an unseen hand, let down a line and drew them out. (**Psalms 18:16**) The hearing of this would give some relief, and satisfy him that his cause is not singular nor desperate; seeing others who have been in his case, are now walking upon dry and firm ground. (**Psalms 40:2**) Hope and desire would both find some life from hence. *God's way of comforting distressed souls is not by the Law, but by the Gospel.* Not legal commands, but gospel promises and declarations, are the pipes through which the God of all grace conveys his comforting influences to his children. They are children of the promise; (**Gal 4:28**) and the promises are the breasts that give them suck. (**1Pet 2:2,3**) *The Comforter, when he comes, glorifies Christ, by receiving the things of Christ, and shewing them to the soul.* (**John 16:14**) The Lord sets before the soul what Christ is, what Christ hath done and suffered; what Christ is now doing, and how his bowels move towards his children; all as suited to its case, complaint and cry, to entertain and delight it. The Lord himself, by the word of grace speaks to and in the soul, so as never man spake; and sounds in it for comfort what Christ hath done to save. (**Isa 49:14,15; Isa 42:21; Heb 12:24; Rev 8:3,4**) And while the soul hears the joyful sound, (**Psalms 89:15**) it hears the blessing too; it feels the dew of the Lord (**Hosea 14:5**) to fall upon it, yielding inward peace, joy, and sweetness, and leaves an inward glow upon the heart. *Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us, and opened to us the Scriptures?* (**Luke 24:32**)

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This is not enthusiasm, whatever men are pleased to think and say of it. The soul is not warmed and stirred, with it knows not what; but with the voice of its beloved, **(Song 5:2,4)** and the communication of his grace. It views a surpassing beauty, **(Psalm 45:2)** glory, and excellency, in him; is taken with him, and is drawn after him. Which we see happily expressed through the fifth chapter of Solomon's Song. **(Song 5)**

Now, whilst the soul is thus entertained, it does not feel its doubts and fears: But when those blessed discoveries are a little withdrawn, and influences withheld, the mind is called off by other things; clouds interpose, and a gloom overspreads the soul; just as you see a cloud obscure the face of the sun, and cast cold and darkness upon us; then the soul, remembering what is past, finds a doubt about its interest in it; because now it does not feel and enjoy the beloved as before. It conceives a suitableness and real worth in Christ, and feels therefore a desire for him. Oh! *That I knew where I might find him.* (Job 23:3) And yet, at the same time, if possible, there are a thousand confused and wandering desires, crying after other things; which occasion such noise and confusion, that the poor soul knows not what judgment to make of itself, and what it has met with. It doubts because it desires; for where there appears nothing desirable in a thing, we don't doubt, nor fear that we have no interest or share in it; we are perfectly indifferent about that. Thus it is with souls, that do not see their need of Christ. There's no real desire for, nor concern about him. But it is the soul that has drank of the water which Christ gives, **(John 4:14)** that is troubled for his absence, and finds inward disputing, jealousies and fears. Now, says this author, to relieve such an one, we must tell him, that it is his duty to believe; and where we do not tell him that, he can have no relief at all. But, alas ! the command yields him no relief. He wants to know his right and privilege. Besides, *says the poor soul, I can't believe; and you tell me it is not in my power; and so I find. What relief does this afford? I once, says the soul, thought that it was not only my duty, but in my power too: I thought that I believed as well, and as much, as was necessary for any man; but now I see my mistake. I am convinced that such a common faith is of no avail in this great concern. I am now a doubting soul.* I don't doubt of the sufficiency of Christ to save; nor of the suitableness there is in him to my case. I stand convinced of this, mine eye is fixed, I know not whither else to look; **(John 6:68)** yet I doubt of my interest in him. The Scripture speaks of like precious faith, **(2Pet 1:1)** and I want to know whether God has bestowed this heavenly endowment on me. For herein lieth the doubt. Now, blessed be the Lord, we can say something from the word suited to the relief of such a soul.

We can tell the soul, as it appears to be the case of this doubting believer, that

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whereas it hath an eye to see, though but with a weak and glimmering sight, (as we may suppose the stung *Israelites*, at the farthest end of the camp, had but an imperfect sight of the brazen serpent **(Numbers 21)** yet, we hope, this is of God; and that as the path of the just is as the shining light so the Lord, whose going forth is prepared as the morning, **(Hosea 6:3)** will shine more and more, and come upon it as the latter and as the former rain upon the earth. *And thus we can encourage the soul, as we have had encouragement ourselves, with respect to a begun work, and have found the Lord to answer our hope. (2Cor 1:4)*

We may, and do say to such a doubting soul, that whereas it is now made to see that filth and pollution in itself, that wretchedness and misery, which it did not always see; and as it discerns a remedy that God has provided, which it thought not of in time past, at least as it thinks of it now; I say, we can tell that soul, that Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. **(Matt 9:13)** Those whom God hath been pleased to pass by, leave under the law, and deal with according to the covenant of works, he does not convince of the insufficiency and shortness of their own doings, so as to make them renounce them as filthy rags. **(Isa 64:6)** They who are left, are, in their own esteem, righteous persons, whole, that need not the physician: **(Luke 18:11,12)** Such, saith the Lord, I came not to call; and such have not ground, from the word, to believe he did. For as *Dr. Owen says* *, "As long as a man trusteth in himself that he is righteous, Christ doth not call that man to believe." But the doubting believer, whose case we are speaking to, though he does not know that he is a believer, comes under the encouragement of the word. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (1Tim 1:15)*

* *Collection of Sermons, &c. Page 540.*

But if it be yet said; though I am convinced of my state by nature, and see my need of Christ, and that nothing else will do before God, I am still in fear that this is but a common work.

Answ. This is not a common fear: Nor is the work common. Our Lord said to Peter, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonah: *For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Matt 16:17)* God was graciously pleased to relieve my soul **(Psalm 66:16)** when pressed with such fears, by the same word. Soul, look out into the world, and see if you cannot discern in the multitude a different cry. Have they seen the deep pollution of nature, and been convinced of their utter impotency? Have they seen their need of Christ, not as a partial, but as a perfect and complete Saviour? You shall hear them say, that they are sinners, and that they believe Christ to be a Saviour; that they must do what they can, and then

trust to the mercy of God through the merits of Christ for the rest. Thus they betray the secret of their heart, and the covenant on which they stand. They plainly declare; that Christ is not all and in all to them; that he comes in but at second hand; and that their regard is more unto themselves, and their dependence more upon their own doings, **(Luke 18:11,12)** than upon the mighty one, on whom God hath laid our help. **(Psalm 89:19)**

On the other hand, enquire of those whom God has redeemed among men; let them out of every nation, kindred, and tongue, be attended to, and you will hear them all with one voice declare, that they are poor, vile, wretched creatures in themselves, and that their help is only in another. Yea, look into the Scripture, and hear the confessions and experiences of those whose story God hath been pleased to give us, and you will find an agreement. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? **(Job 7:20)** *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags* **(Isa 64:6)** --- Then, said I, I am cast out of thy sight: Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. **(Jonah 2:4)** This will be found to be the one, the common language of those who are now gone to heaven, and all the followers of the lamb here on earth; *Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*

From what has been said it will appear, that the consequences charged upon our opinion follow not from it. Whether preaching the Lord Jesus, **(Acts 11:20)** where the command, this author pleads for, and where the offer is not used, be not blessed to the succouring and relieving of poor, weak, doubting believers, and the comforting of those that are cast down, I must refer to the experience and testimony of those whose lot is cast where the Gospel only is preached.

To the rest of the consequences, which this worthy author says NOBODY can tell, I cannot tell what answer to give, only,

1. This cannot hinder the salvation of one vessel of mercy, notwithstanding what he hath unwarily. said, *Modest Answer; p. 29.* For all that the Father had given to Christ should have been, as they were, reconciled, and made willing in the day of Christ's power; and shall be to the end of time. See **(John 10:16)** and **(John 6:37,38,39)** As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. **(Acts 13:48)**

2. It cannot hinder those that are born again, in their love and gratitude to God, for all his benefits bestowed upon them; nor in their shewing it forth in their walk with God, and one another; neither doth it restrain their pity or prayers for those that are un-regenerated.

It cannot discourage the unregenerate, the dead in trespasses and sins, from doing anything. For as this author allows, they have not the least strength to do this, nor inclination to attempt it. Where then must the consequences fall? For election and the rest, called and uncalled, make a perfect division of all mankind, and neither of these can be injured by it. There are none in a middle state, between the election and the rest, between the called and the uncalled; therefore we know not one whom the supposed blow can fall.

And now we come to the commodities and advantages that attend the author's way of of thinking; "On the other hand, says he, the favor of the good knowledge of God is made known by those, who declare the whole of his counsel in every place."

We may suppose that every good man thinks his own way right, or he would not choose it. But the favor of the good knowledge of God is not made known by the Law, but by the Gospel. For we are (saith the Apostle) unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved and in them that perish. **(2Cor 2:15)** Commands all belong to the Law. Who are those that "declare the whole of his counsel in every place?" The Apostle said, I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, **(Acts 20:20,1,17)** viz, the disciples, and the elders of the church at Ephesus. And, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. **(Acts 20:27)** That is, he had preached to them the Gospel. He had delivered to them the ordinances and institutions of Christ. Now, I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you. For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, **(1Cor 11:2)** &c. all that the Lord had given him to deliver to the churches, **(1Cor 11:23)** he had kept back nothing.

Counsel must here be taken in a limited sense; for men have not known the whole of God's counsel: Who then merits the praise of this author? Or, who stands charged? We hope we have not kept back anything that might be profitable to the church or our assemblies; nor shunned to declare, according to our ability, the measure of the gift of Christ, **(Eph 4:7)** what God has made known to us, with respect either to doctrine or worship.

But we stand charged with unfaithfulness if we don't tell our assemblies, that it is not the duty of unconverted sinners to believe, &c. We declare that it is the duty of unconverted sinners to believe more than they do; but if we do not think it to be their duty to believe with a saving faith, why must we be urged with unfaithfulness if we do not tell them so? Was this author to undertake to tell his auditory every

thing that they ought not to do, would not he find work enough for an age, and his life run out very unfruitfully?

We have no negatives in the commission: I will here read it.

(Matt 28:19,20). Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. The first teaching is explained by, Go ye into all the world, and [preach the Gospel] to every creature. **(Mark 16:15)**

Here's the commission, and all the commission we have, and that is, to preach the Gospel. Accordingly the Apostles did, Who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. **(Acts 11:20)** And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. **(Acts 8:5)** Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. **(Acts 8:35)** And thus Christ himself did, And beginning at Moses, and [all] the prophets, he expounded unto them in [all] the Scriptures the things concerning himself. **(Luke 24:27)**

Baptizing them, &c. That is, when the Lord opened their hearts, as he opened the heart of Lydia, so that they attended unto the things which were spoken; they were taken with the grace that had provided such a Saviour, and wrought such a salvation; then were they baptized. **(Acts 2:41)**

Teaching them to observe, &c. God having begun a good work in them, would not have them lie like loose stones; but will have them laid upon the foundation by visible profession, and be built up a temple for himself. **(Eph 2:20,21,22)** And would have it formed, ordered, and governed, according to the commandments which he gave unto the Apostles whom he had chosen. *The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given**

*Not the law of Moses. which they had in writing, but the institutions of Christ, according to which his churches were to be formed, officers chosen and ordained, ordinances administered, and discipline and government exercised for the edification of the body. **(Acts 1:3; Tit 1:5; Acts 6; Eph 4:11-14; John 14:21,22,23)**

commandments unto the Apostles whom he had chosen. *Therefore when Barnabas was come to Antioch, and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and exhorted*

them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. (Acts 11:23)

(1 Thess 4:1) Furthermore, then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you, by the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of [us] how you ought to walk and please God, so you would abound more and more.

However, some may glory in telling the people, that the commission of a minister is to preach the law as well as the Gospel; till I have light into that matter, I would say with the Apostle, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. **(Rom 1:16)** ---

At the bottom of *Page 29*. this author gives a flight to his fancy, and breaks a jest upon the notion he opposes, as he had done above in the same page; but as though he feared it would be overlooked by his reader, we must have it again with enlargement. His words are these: "*What must this new notion say to them? We don't know what you are; you don't know what you are yourselves; as you may belong to those who are to be pitied, we pity you; but we cannot tell you that. We can tell you Christ is a Saviour to some, but we cannot, tell you that you have any concern with him, only you are bound to believe that what we say is true; but we cannot tell you that it is your duty to believe in Christ. Seeing you walk in darkness and have no light, we dare not tell you it is your duty to trust in the name of the Lord , you don't know that you are converted, and we don't know that you are; therefore only wait in the way, and just believe all we say is true, though we don't say it is your duty to believe you have any other concern with it.*"

What doctrines have not been drolled by profane wits? If men would give way to a ludicrous fancy they might make themselves and others merry with anything; the doctrine of election hath been so used; but it is a mean thing, though too common for men to ridicule what they cannot by fair reasoning confute. This is not the weapon of a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

Page 31. "Though some have thoughtlessly and too suddenly took up that notion, yet let them now, in the presence of God, impartially compare it with the Scriptures, some texts whereof I briefly produced, as persons willing to submit their souls to the revealed will of God, and they will see that it is a pernicious dangerous error."

I have now, with this last advantage, considered the texts produced, and this authors observations and reasonings upon them, and can see nothing either to uphold his own assertion, or evince that what he calls a dangerous, pernicious

error, is so.

Indeed, another's weakness and inadvertency do not make our folly less; nor is it an excuse that we have been misguided by men, seeing we should have made the word our rule; yet it is some relief, when the wind blows hard, to think that we must sustain the shock in such good company, as *Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Owen, Dr. Ridgley, Mr. Gouge*, and many others, who held the same dangerous, pernicious error. And I hope, for the future, this worthy author will suffer fools gladly, bearing the infirmities of the weak, and not please himself; **(Rom 15:1; Phil 3:15,16)** and in his wisdom and goodness spare the dead, and be more gentle and kind towards the living.

If this author, or any other, shall please to take any notice of this in a spirit of brotherly kindness, I am willing to sit at his feet, and shall thankfully acknowledge him to be the means of a benefit, when I shall receive conviction: But if the contention shall appear to be for the last word; and neglecting the weapons of our warfare, he shall betake himself to bitter words, an outcry of dangerous, pernicious errors, dismal consequences, that NOBODY can tell, &c. to expose us to contempt, and enrage the less discerning; *I am content to yield the prize, and quit the field to such a combatant.*

For ye have not so learned Christ. **(Eph 4:20)**

PAGE 11, line 11. read, my judgment. p. 16. l. 16. dele p.16. and """" p. 20. l. 15 dele not. p.39,l. 18. f. natural r. spiritual. p.52, l. 33. f. enables r. enabled. p.55. l. 28 f. perspicuous r. perspicacious. p.59.l. 21 r. companies. p. 75 dele " ". p.80, l. 12. f. is r. are. p.86, l. 8 f. visit. r. visiteth. p. 89. l. 2. f. it is r if. p. 108. l. 4. f. xxxv r. lv. p.143. l. 16 dele yea. p. 146. l. 26. f. not r. no. p. 155. l. 22. f. cause

Finish