

PART IV.

THE DOCTRINES OF OFFERED GRACE AND GENERAL INVITATIONS
CONTRASTED WITH THE ATTRIBUTES OF JEHOVAH.

I Shall not attempt a classification of the attributes of that being who blazes in all the grandeur of independent majesty, and in all the glory of incomprehensible divinity. I shall content myself by selecting some of them for reflection and comparison; just prefacing my subsequent remarks, by observing, that the perfections of increated Deity, must necessarily be eternal, harmonious, uniform, and unchanging. His perfections are himself, being so many modifications or aspects in which he represents himself to his creatures, and by which they form ideas of his nature, character, and government, &c. This might be illustrated by the principle of grace in a believer. The principle is the same, and is *but* one, though it acts in such a variety of forms. It is true, we say the grace of love, the grace of fear, the grace of faith, &c. And it is equally true that it is but one principle directing its energies to different points, under the conducting influence of the Holy Ghost. When it inflames the affections, we call it *love*; when it produces spiritual grieving, we call it *repentance*; when it brings the soul to Christ and stays it upon his blood and righteousness, promises and character, we call it *faith*; and when it teaches the mind to expect good things to come, we call it *hope*, &c. The same remarks might be made respecting the doctrines of the gospel, which is a revelation of the grace of God. Grace, or good will, is favour adapting itself to all the conditions, circumstances, and periods in which its objects can have any existence. When it fixes on its objects we call it *election*; when it looks forward through all the revolutions of time, and determines the safety and happiness of them, we term it

predestination, or a predestinating of them to everlasting life. It is then *predestinating grace*. When it makes the church one with Christ, we call it *union grace*, or grace uniting the church to the glorious God-man. This was done secretly in eternity, and openly in time. When we receive mercy, or any sort of spiritual favour as the result of everlasting stipulations, we denominate it *covenant grace*; when the good will of him who dwelt in the bush rests upon one in the condition of misery, we designate it *mercy*; when free favour adapts itself to our respective relations, feelings, and necessities, we denominate it by certain appellations which seem to bear some analogy thereto; and hence the phrases, calling-grace, pardoning-grace, justifying-grace, comforting-grace, supporting-grace, persevering-grace, &c. And let it be observed, that there is an entire agreement, connexion, and mutual dependence, both in the exercise of grace as a favour, and of grace as a principle. If you take away *one single doctrine*, you derange the connexion, deform the system, and destroy its energies. Grace must be shown in every form, and run in every vein. It must be exercised in all its shapes. The same train of thinking may be justly and advantageously encouraged respecting the action of grace as a principle, for that will be exercised in all its forms, so that wherever we discover *love*, developed by a gracious principle, we are instructed by such considerations to look for *faith, hope, joy, fear, reverence, humility, devotion*, spirituality, and diligent obedience. Grace as a blessing, is exercised without and about the christian, while grace as a principle is exercised within. You cannot separate the exercises of grace from each other, nor from the principle. If you take away godly fear from a man, you cannot identify him from the world. If you destroy his humility, you rank him among those whose hairy scalp Jehovah will smite. And if you cut off his obedience, you disgrace his character, and deform the image of Christ, and so on of all the rest. It is by viewing things in their connection and operations, that we discover their beauty, fitness, harmony and usefulness. The

same subject might receive further elucidation from the principle of animal and moral existence. But let the above train of thinking be applied to the perfections of Jehovah, and it will render sufficiently obvious my ideas upon the subject. It will be seen, that whatever affects one attribute must affect the whole, seeing they are all united; and not only so, but that they also mutually dwell in each other. Whatever therefore is opposed to one attribute is opposed to all and every of them; and whatever is opposed to his perfections must be opposed to himself; and whatever is opposed to God must be wrong, seeing that only can be right which is agreeable, consistent, and uniform with his perfections.

By the attributes of Jehovah then, shall the doctrine of offered grace be tried, and if it is not found to be opposed to them, I will readily concede the subject of enquiry. I shall select his WISDOM, as an attribute eminently active in all his plans and operations. By wisdom I do not mean simple intelligence *merely*, but that which directs to the most perfect and correct method and manner of doing things. I mean that which involves in a plan every thing necessary to its consummation, and excludes every thing that is superfluous; and which also makes a proper adjustment of all the parts of a plan, so that they all stand *proportioned, related, and adapted* to each other. This is what I mean by wisdom, what Jehovah must be allowed to possess in a superlative degree, for which Solomon prayed so ardently, (1 Kings iii. 9, 12, 28.) and which was granted to him so liberally. This then, does not exclude intelligence, but on the contrary involves it to an illimitable extent. For without infinite comprehension and unbounded information, he could not frame an indefectible scheme to direct his energies, govern his creatures, and complete his purposes. The order and adjustment of his plans, arise out of his perfect and minute knowledge of every thing in a state of possible existence. His knowledge weighs every thing, his wisdom adjusts and fixes every thing. Most beautifully illustrated and finely expressed, is the attribute

of divine knowledge in 1 Sam. ii. 3. *Talk no more exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, AND BY HIM ACTIONS ARE WEIGHED.* Nor is the attribute of divine wisdom less sublimely elucidated, or less accurately described by the apostle of the Gentiles in his epistle to the Ephesians, ch. i. ver. 3—12, where he observes, that in election, predestination, adoption, acceptance, redemption, vocation, absolution, instruction, and glorification, according to the riches of his grace, *he had abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence.*

Now the question to be decided is this: are offers of grace and general invitations consistent with the aboundings of divine wisdom and prudence? I will briefly state the subject in three several points of view. A Wesleyan, Baxterian, and Fullerian.

A *Wesleyan.* God is full of benevolence: in his benevolence he wills the salvation of all mankind. With such a will he makes a general provision for all his immortal creatures: this provision consists in the Son of God as dying, *properly* for no man, but yet *sufficiently* for all men: that all mankind have grace in their initial state, which if properly cultivated, will enable them to accept the overtures of the gospel, by exercising repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

But that the system may appear in a very simple form, I shall contrast it with the scriptures, in the following manner:—

THE PLAN OF DIVINE WISDOM.

1. *The plan of salvation has GOD for its AUTHOR.* “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to *himself*, according to the good pleasure of HIS WILL, to the praise of the glory of his grace—in whom we have redemption through his blood,

THE PLAN OF WESLEYANISM.

1. *The plan of Wesleyanism has JOHN WESLEY for its AUTHOR.* “The tenure of the Methodist chapels, held under Mr. Wesley’s deed, by one hundred trustees, and their successors, has a clause vitiating the trust, if the doctrines of Mr. Wesley’s notes on the new testament, and four volumes

the forgiveness of sins ; according to the riches of his grace, wherein HE hath abounded toward us in all *wisdom and prudence*. Eph. i. 5, 8.

2. *The plan of divine wisdom exhibits the independence of Jehovah, and binds in subordination the whole creation of God.* “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” Psalm xlvi. 10. “He is of one mind, and none can turn him; and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. He performeth the thing that is *appointed for me*: and many such things are with him.” Job xxiii. 13, 14. “The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, are from the Lord. A man’s heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps. The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.” Prov. xvi. 1, 9, 33. “Yea, there are many devices in a man’s heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord that shall stand,” 19, 21. “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will.”—xxi. 1. In short “the Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom *ruleth over all*.” Psalm ciii. 19.

3. *In consequence of his independency and plans, he is represented as knowing every thing by intuitive certainty.* “The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are *weighed*.”

of sermons are impugned by any preachers permitted in these Chapels.” *Imperial Mag.* April, 1828.

2. *The plan of Wesleyanism obscures the independence of Jehovah, and lets loose the whole creation of human beings.* “I myself know several Arminians who have declared to me in conversation, that so far as concerns the *ipsa determinatio*, or the very act of the will’s determinating itself to one thing in preference to another, the said human will is (*horrendum dictul*) independent of God himself.”—*Quot. from Topladj’s works*, vol. II. page 354. See also a threepenny tract, entitled, “*Thoughts upon Necessity*,” by John Wesley.—N. B. According to this scheme, there are hundreds of thousands of lawless and independent beings, and every one of them born like a wild ass’s colt! Manichæism have been justly reprobated, for representing two independent and conflicting beings; but what is that to Wesleyanism, which furnish us with eight hundred millions for speculation!!! In this point, the system of Manes, the Persian, is superior to that of Wesley, the Englishman, or Arminius, the Dutchman, as eight hundred million is to two.

3. *In consequence of his dependency and want of plans, he is represented as not knowing every thing by intuitive certainty.* “Various speculations, however, on the Divine Immu-

1 Sam. ii. 3. "Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is *infinite*." Psal. cxlvii. 5. He weighed, numbered, and adjusted with the utmost accuracy, all the parts that compose his all comprehending plan, before he entered upon its execution. This is a striking display of the glory of his scheme, and proves him to be the true and eternal God. Hear his own language, "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa. xlvi. 9, 10. The fulfilment of prophecy rested upon the correctness of his plans; and every circumstance is determined, measured, weighed, squared and fitted into one grand whole.

He thus appears lifted up above all his creatures, and even above all blessing and praise. *Intuitive* knowledge destroys the principle on which the methodistical scheme is founded.

4. *Provision was therefore made for all that will be saved, and no more; so that in no instance Christ might die in vain.*

"He gave his life a ransom for *many*." Matt. xx. 28. "Who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due season." 1 Tim ii. 6. That is

tability occur in the writings of divines, and others, which though often well intended, ought to be received with caution, and sometimes even rejected, as bewildering and pernicious. Such are the notions, that God knows every thing by *intuition*; and that there is *no succession of ideas in the divine mind*; that he can receive *no new ideas*," &c. "There is *fore-knowledge, present-knowledge, and after-knowledge* with God, as well as with *ourselves*." Mr. Watson's Theo. Inst. vol. 1, page 447, and onwards.

According to this theology, the Divine Being grows wiser and wiser every day!! If this is true, he must have increased in knowledge and experience to a most prodigious extent, since he first conducted his *peculiar administration*.—An administration founded on the principles of *moral expediency* as changeable and versatile as the capricious and unforeseen conduct of *self-determining creatures*. Surely this must be making the Divine Being *altogether such an one as ourselves*.

4. *Provision is therefore made for all mankind, as much for those that are lost as for those that are saved, so that in many instances Christ died in vain.*

"A world he suffer'd to redeem;
For all he hath th' atonement made:
For those that will not come to him,
The ransom of his life was paid."

to say, for all the *many* whose sins he bore, and which shall be *testified, made known*, or brought home to their consciences by the Holy Ghost. *Mark*, the all for whom he died, is to have a spiritual and saving testification of the same. Where then is general redemption?

5. *That this special atonement arose out of discriminating love.* "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Eph. v. 25.

"Herein is love, not that *we*, (his church) loved God, but that he loved *us*, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iv. 10.

7 *That his church and people should be justified wholly and entirely by free grace on the part of the Father, full merit on the part of the Son, and resistless power on the part of the Spirit.* "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii. 24.

"He (*the Spirit*) will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. —He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you." John xvi. 8, 14. "As his *divine power* hath given unto us all things." 2 Pet. i. 3.

8. *That, saving grace which was given sovereignly to them in*

"Lord, I believe, were sinners
more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for ALL a ransom paid;
For ALL a full atonement made."

"Will you let him die in vain?
Crucify your Lord again?"

"Why, ye ransomed sinners, why,
Will ye slight his grace, and die?"

Wesley's Hymns, 39, 190, 6.

5. *That this general atonement arose out of undistinguished regard to all mankind.*

"Our surety, thou alone hast paid
The debt we to thy Father owed:
For the *whole world* atonement
made,
And sealed the pardon with thy
blood."

"Thy *undistinguishing regard*
Was cast on Adam's fallen race;
For *all* thou hast in Christ prepared,
Sufficient, sovereign, saving
grace."

Wesley's Hymns, 39, 120.

7. *That mankind are not justified wholly and entirely by free grace, full merit, and almighty power.* "It cannot consist with his (God's) unerring wisdom, to think that I am innocent, to judge that I am righteous because another is so. He can no more in this manner confound me with Christ, than with David or Abraham."

"Our obedience to Christ is the cause of his giving us eternal life." — *Wesley's Ser. on Justif.*

"Men's believing is the cause of their justification."

Mr. Wesley's (Anti-)Scriptural Doctrine of Predestination.

"Jesus this mean oblation join
To thy great sacrifice."

Hymn 321.

8. *That common grace which was given alike to all mankind in*

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Christ, should work effectually in them from Christ. It is grace given SOVEREIGNLY, working EFFECTUALLY, and SAVING most MERCIFULLY. “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy.” Rom. ix. 18. “It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Phil. ii. 13. “He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Phil. i. 6. “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith.*” Eph. ii. 6, 7, 8:

9. *That this grace should preserve those in whom it resides from the pollutions of this world, and finally introduce them into eternal glory.* “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.” Eph. ii. 10. “Being born again, not of *corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.*” 1 Pet. i. 23. “The Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory.” Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

Adam, is proffered to many, procured by some, and preserved by a few. It is given GENERALLY, works EFFEMINATELY, and damns RELENTLESSLY many in whom it so unhappily inheres. “God hath given to every man a measure of light and grace; which, if it is not *resisted*, will work the salvation of all; but if it is, (O the disastrous issue) *will become their condemnation!!*” *A twopenny Tract, entitled, ‘Serious Thoughts on Absolute Predestination,’ by John Wesley.*

This is, I suppose, what is termed *initial grace*. I read in the bible of being saved by grace, but according to Mr. W. and his followers, we are damned by it as well. Need we be surprised if some of his followers, should in some of their lucid intervals, discover a *damning salvation?* There is no more absurdity in the one than in the other.

9. *That this grace may be DAMPED, LEFT, and LOST—that they who once possessed it, may be like a lamp gone out! and be sentenced to OUTER DARKNESS!!*

“Ah Lord, with trembling I confess
A gracious soul may fall from grace.”

Or, as some of Mr. Wesley’s adherents more pointedly and politely express it in prose, “A child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow.” Or, as Thompson, the Arminian, would say, when reproved for his intemperate courses, “I am

10. *That as he appointed but some to eternal bliss, and they, in consequence of sin, are without strength and ungodly, he determined to call and quicken them by his own power and Spirit, in his own good time.*

“God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thes. v. 9.—“Who are the called according to his purpose.” Rom. viii. 28.—“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, who are accustomed to evil.” Jer. xiii. 23. But, “thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Psal. cx. 3.—So that “as many as were ordained to eternal life, believe.” Acts xiii. 48.

11. *That as he designed saving a limited number, he determined to give them all things freely, and to have the same published to them in the gospel, which is for their sakes.*

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (the elect) how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.” Rom. viii. 32.

“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and

a child of the devil to-day, but I have free will, and to-morrow I will make myself a child of God.”

Hickman's Animad. on Heylin,
page 91, and 227.

10. *That as he appointed all to eternal bliss, and they possess natural grace, he leaves their conversion to themselves, offering to create them anew whenever they think proper.*

“This the universal bliss,
Bliss for all mankind design'd;
God's original promise, this,
God's great gift to all mankind:
Blest in Christ, *this moment be,*
Blest to all eternity.” Again,
“Awake from nature's guilty sleep,
And Christ shall give you light;
Cast all your sins into the deep,
And wash the Æthiop white.”

Once more,
“You whom he ordain'd to be
Transcripts of the Deity:
You, whom he in life doth hold,
You, for whom himself was sold;
You, on whom he still doth wait,
Whom he would again create;
Made by him, and purchased—why,
Why will ye for ever die?”
Wesley's Hymns, xx. 4. i. 9. vii. 2.

11. *That as he designed saving all mankind, he made and published an offer of grace to all mankind.*

“Ah! no:—I still may turn and live,
For still his wrath delays:
He now vouchsafes a kind reprieve,
And offers me his grace.”

“I will accept his offers now:
From ev'ry sin depart:
Perform my oft repeated vow,
And render him my heart.”

earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast *revealed* them unto babes: (not *offered them to all mankind*) even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke x. 21.

"If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." 2 Cor. iv. 3.

"All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace," &c. 2 Cor. iv. 15.

LASTLY, *that in consequence of absolute election, limited redemption, total imbecility, and omnipotent energy to regenerate, none but the saved and quickened seed are invited to partake of the blessings which the gospel proclaims and set forth.*

We invariably find the characters invited, described, as spiritual—hungering, thirsting, fainting, hoping, longing, loving, desiring, &c.—all which are characteristics of the elect in a quickened state, and afford sufficient evidence to overthrow the incongruous system of offered grace.

"I will *improve* what I receive,
The grace through Jesus given;
Sure, if with God on earth I live,
To live with him in heaven."

"See him set forth before your eyes,
That precious bleeding sacrifice!
His *offer'd benefits embrace*,
And freely now be saved by grace."

"This is the *time*, no more delay,
This is the acceptable day;
Come in, *this moment*, at his call,
And live for him who died for ALL."

Hymn lxxx. 4, 4, 6.—ii. 8, 9.

LASTLY, *that in consequence of a design to save all, a provision made for all, initial grace, offered grace, &c. all mankind are invited to come to Christ and receive his proffered mercy.*

"Harlots, and publicans, and
thieves;
He spreads his arms to embrace you
all!"

Again,

"The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Are ready with their shining host;
All heaven is ready to resound,
The dead's alive, the lost is found."

"Come, then, ye sinners, to the
Lord,
In Christ to Paradise restor'd;
His proffer'd benefits embrace,
The plenitude of gospel grace."

Hymn xxxi. 5.—ix. 5, 6.

Where lives the man that can bring these two poles together!! Where is the genius that can reconcile Wesleyanism with the bible, with the perfections of God, with christian experience, or with general good sense? And where is the lynx that can discover divine wisdom and prudence in such a scheme? In the plan of divine wisdom, we discover harmony and proportion in all its parts, strict conformity to the attributes of God, exact accordance with christian experience and sound reason: but quite the reverse is the scheme of *method-*

ism. Surely Mr. Wesley's *method* is much unlike that of him, "who is great in counsel, and mighty in work." Jer. xxxii. 19.

I have read in the Scientific Gazette, of a pair of scales, constructed by a Mr. Robinson, with such extreme accuracy, as to be sensibly affected by 1-400th of a grain. It is remarked, 'this balance may be esteemed of very great accuracy, and very fit for the purpose to which it was applied, namely, the analysis of organic substances by fire.' Query, if Mr. Wesley's creed be subjected to a fiery ordeal, so that all its parts may be separately weighed and examined, would not a balance *less* delicate in its action be sufficient for the purpose? The faith of many, and the practice of more, must not be submitted to such sensible scales.

With regard to the parallel, let it be observed,

1. That I do not suppose there is no scripture that will not countenance some parts of the Wesleyan scheme.

2. That Methodists are not capable of quoting scripture: nor

3. That they cannot represent their creed as well supported by scripture:—but

4. I do affirm, that though this is the case, yet, 1. there is no scripture that if *fairly* examined, will agree in *sense* therewith—2. that to make any passage of scripture fit such a system, it must be *unmercifully tortured*—3. that methodism is without any scriptural basis, and must sooner or later be carried to the land of Shinar, have a house built for it, and be established there, and set upon its *own* base. Zech. v. 10, 11. An extract from a Poem wrote some years back by Mr. Thomas Gurney, shall conclude this article.

“ Shall Wesley sow his hurtful tares,
 “ And scatter round a thousand snares?
 “ Telling how God from wrath may turn,
 “ And love the souls he thought to burn;
 “ And how again his mind may move,
 “ To hate where he has vowed to love;
 “ How all mankind he fain would save,
 “ But longs for what he cannot have.”

"Industrious thus to sound abroad
 "A disappointed changing God!
 "Blush, Wesley, blush at thy disgrace;
 "Haste thee to Rome, thy proper place."

Permit me to add, that Mr. W. had not such an antipathy to popish tenets and worship as some other people have. In a printed letter to a Roman Catholic, he writes thus—"I say not a word to you about your opinions, or form of worship; let the points wherein we differ stand aside; here are enough wherein we agree; *O brethren*, let us not *still fall out by the way!*"

With regard to what is called *Fullerism*, it may be proper to state that it agrees with the bible in maintaining absolute and eternal election, eternal rejection, preterition or reprobation, and *total* depravity. Redemption is viewed by it as *essentially* general, but *intentionally* special; this rests upon a gratuitous assumption, (*viz.*) that justice must be considered as a *moral* and not a *commercial* attribute, and that consequently redemption is to be contemplated as bearing a moral and not a commercial aspect. Mr. F. always studiously avoided coming to pounds, shillings and pence, upon the subject; his sagacity discovered the consequences that must follow, and he therefore chose to avoid the debate by denying the fact altogether. I shall examine this point in the article devoted to the subject of redemption. Further, it agrees with the Wesleyan in the following points; that an offer of grace is made to all mankind in the gospel, that all are to be invited, that all may receive the offers, &c. that it is their duty so to do, and that they will be damned for not receiving them. It is thought that this plan is suited to keep sinners from despair, allure them from sin, and bring them to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope to show the fallacy of this scheme in some future number. For the present it is sufficient to observe, that it makes but an ill display of the wisdom of God.

Baxter's plan, was by an odd sort of amalgamation, to unite the two systems together. He wrought hard to gain his point, but failed in the attempt. He professed

with the Calvinists to believe in election, human depravity, irresistible grace, and final perseverance. All this was on the part of the elect. With the Arminians he contended for general redemption, initial grace, offers of grace, improvements of grace, falling from grace, &c. but this related *only* to the unchosen part of mankind. Mr. Baxter was extremely unsound in the doctrines of redemption and justification, his favourite pagasus was the acquirement of a right to eternal life by yielding obedience to the gospel as a mild and remedial law. See his aphorisms, &c. This is also the opinion of Socinians and Arminians. The principle on which the system rests is a mischievous one, for it saps the atonement, and *destroys the authority of the divine law*, and seem something like antinomianism in the gross. The reader may see this subject most ably discussed by John Brine, in a tract, entitled, "*An Antidote against a Spreading Antinomian Principle.*" And had the good man lived to have seen Mr. Fuller's gospel worthy of all acceptation, he would no doubt have laid a rod in *pickle* for that gentleman's back, and deservedly chastised him for his erratical excursions. They are systems, however, that want no argumentative refutation in the article of death. Nothing but absolute, sovereign, and efficacious grace, together with the spotless, seamless, and faultless righteousness of the adorable Redeemer, can be relished and depended upon by a sensible and regenerated sinner. This fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Conformable to this idea was the confession of Richard Baxter, who, when lying on his death-bed, was visited by a friend, who reminded him of the glory to which he was going, and that his many good works would attend him into a better state. The old gentleman lifting up his dying hand, and waving it, replied, 'do not talk to me about works; alas! I have dealt too much in them already.' *Toplady's Anecdotes*. And it is positively asserted by some, that Mr. Fuller's system would by no means fit his mind when his body was upon the eve of dissolution. Of course his biographers and followers have given to this circumstance a

studied concealment. But death is pursuing his followers as well as other people, and we must all lie in prostrate humility at his feet; I feel persuaded that it will afford us no consolation to retract in death what we believed in healthful life.

Celestial Spirit, teach my soul
 The whole of truth to know;
 Let me thy blest instruction find,
 While pilgrim here below.

And let thy truths my spirit cheer,
 That I with transport warm,
 May *all* thy heavenly will declare,
 Nor dread the pelting storm.

Nor let my interest, ease, or pride,
 Allure my mind to ill:
 Nor let me dare thy truths to hide,
 Nor thy rich grace conceal.

And when I die, let all my creed
 In pleasing posture come,
 And lend its influence to my heart,
 And help the pilgrim home.

With regard to the conformity these systems bear to the attribute of divine wisdom, I have a few queries to propose.

1. Where is the wisdom of God, in making provision by the sufferings of his Son, for those whom he never designed to benefit by that provision? Wesleyanism obviates this difficulty by asserting, that he designed it for one as much as another. But this involves a greater difficulty, for it represents a disappointed God immediately. And where is the wisdom of a plan that disappoints its author of his purposes and expectations?

2. Where is the propriety of purchasing all the materials in the world, to erect a fabric where one third of them will not be required? Christ purchased or bought his church, which is his temple and building. Now as no more will be or can be united to the building, where was his prudence in paying a price for them sufficient to buy the whole world? Methodists meet this difficulty by saying that *all* may be saved, or added to the church of Christ. But this raises another question, did he or did he not foreknow who would and who would not be saved? If he did not, where is

the immensity of his knowledge? If he did, where was his wisdom and goodness in causing his Son to die in vain? There is likewise another difficulty attending such an escape; it is this, if all may be saved, then the dimensions cannot be regulated by a divine plan, but by the precarious determinations of the human will; and things which are uncertain do but ill agree with the nature of a building where every thing is known, planned, fixed, and determined.

3. Where is the consistency of offering terms of favour upon impossible conditions? Mr. Fuller allowed men to be totally depraved, and entirely unable to perform any spiritual acts. Now if faith and repentance are spiritual acts, and these acts the conditions on which the things offered are to be obtained, must not the conditions be impossible? In vain we look for the wisdom of a man who should engage to use effective measures to bring and unite to his building all the materials that he designed the building should require, and which must be completed when these are united to one another; and yet should offer to unite the rest upon condition that they would arise and move to the building, or pray and beseech him to move them. 'O but it would show his liberality and good will.' But then where would be his prudence and sincerity? If he wished to have them all, why not make the limits extensive enough to receive and contain them all? And why not use energetic and effective measures so as to see that they all are brought and built up as lively stones? If God really do wish to save all mankind, can any reason be shown why he did not determine to save them from all eternity, and why they are not brought to the footstool of mercy by the efficacious work of the Holy Ghost? This query meets alike the Arminian, Baxterian, and Fullerian. Let them assign some satisfactory reason, before they presume to hurl their bolts at those persons who consistently and conscientiously abstain from offering the sure mercies of David.

4. Where is the wisdom of a plan that designs embracing some, purchasing all, inviting some, and yet effecting the welfare of none but those included in the