

THE  
TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS:  
IN  
ESSAYS AND LETTERS,  
ON  
THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL AND CHRISTIAN  
EXPERIENCE.

BY JOB HUPTON.

"THE law was given by Moses; but GRACE and TRUTH came by Jesus Christ."

"Pilate said unto him, art thou then a king? Jesus answered, thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. EVERY ONE THAT IS OF THE TRUTH HEARETH MY WORDS."

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## P R E F A C E.

THE following Essays and Letters were written from a sincere desire to expose error, advance truth, honour the Lord, and edify the household of faith. As they were produced they were transmitted to the Gospel Magazine, in the years from 1803, to 1809, with the signatures Ebenezer, J. H — n, Eliakim. Testimonies to their usefulness were given from various quarters. Many years having elapsed since their first circulation, and the volumes which contained them having nearly disappeared, it was thought, by a most valuable friend and sincere lover of divine truth, that their reappearance might add to their former usefulness. This suggestion being accompanied with persuasion, and the generous offer of all needful assistance, both in the preparation and publication; the several pieces have been collected and are sent forth in the present little volume. May the blessing of the eternal Trinity in covenant attend it with unction and power, and make it an everlasting blessing to their chosen and redeemed.

The christian will here find doctrine, experience, and practice delineated in their rise, connexion, and result:—doctrines, emanent from the eternal throne, all in perfect accordance with the Being, the attributes, the counsels, the character, and the works of Jehovah, as he has been pleased to declare them in the revelation which he has given to mankind; experience, the effect of a distinguishing work of the Spirit in the heart; and evangelical practice, its genuine fruit.

That which is rightly called christian experience, is *not all* that a christian experiences. Many things happen to him, as *man*, which are common to *men*, and are not, therefore, peculiar to him as a christian; such things, whether painful or pleasant, are *not* christian experience. Christian experience consists of the feelings of pain and pleasure peculiar to those who are born of God, and are anointed with the Holy Ghost:—of *pain*, arising from the daily sense which they have of their imperfections and sins; from manifold temptations; from the hidings of the cheering light of the Lord's countenance; and from those internal chastisements, known only to themselves, which, with paternal love, he administers to them for their good;—of *pleasure*, arising from the knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; their conscious reception of him as the gift of God; their adherence to him as the only and all-sufficient Saviour; their reliance upon his obedience, blood, and intercession, for their whole salvation; and

from their communion with him in the life of faith which they live, through the vital efficient energy of the Holy Ghost, who fulfils in them all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, by means of the truth, which, in its various branches, he reveals in their minds, applies to their hearts, and writes in their inward parts; and by which he sanctifies them, according to our blessed Saviour's intercessory prayer, "sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

It is of high importance for us to know that we can have no degree of spiritual knowledge of the Father and the Son; nor of the plan, means, and certainty of our salvation; nor of the way of access to God, and of communion with him; nor how to honour him; but as we are enlightened and taught by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. "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. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Now *we have received*, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: they are *foolishness* unto him; neither *can* he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," I Cor. ii. 9, 10, 11, 12, 14. It is, surely, most evident upon the face of these scrip-

tures, that nothing can be known *spiritually* of God, nor the things of God, but by the inward illumination and teaching of the Holy Ghost. To ascribe intrinsic efficiency to external means is to erect, in the protestant church, a pillar of popery equivalent to the popish ascriptions of intrinsic power to effect regeneration and salvation to what they term their sacraments.

It is also important for us to know, that whatever the Holy Ghost teaches us, he teaches us by the *scriptures*. Divine truth, like a flood of light issuing from the eternal Trinity, and flowing freely in the inspired volume, and attended by the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit, enters the hearts of *elect* sinners, who, illuminated and sanctified by him through the truth, do nobly, in a bold decided profession of the faith of the operation of God, and by a practice in accordance with the laws of Messiah's kingdom and the orders of his house, shine in this world, as lights in a dark place, and reflect back to its source the glory of that light to the deserved praise of the eternal Three: to whom be glory in the highest, world without end. This divine order of things the reader will find in the following pages; the reading of which, may He, for whose glory they were written, bless. Amen.

*Claxton, Norfolk, 1st May, 1843.*

NARRATIVE  
OF THE AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCE,  
WRITTEN IN MDCCCVII.

FULL twenty years and two I wandered wide  
From paths of truth, fair virtue's verdant fields,  
And God, goodness supreme ! I madly rushed  
Along the devious way, the serpent, foe  
Of God and man, drew out, with wily art,  
And fair pretence, strewed o'er with gaudy toys,  
And filled with odours, and melodious airs,  
To charm the eye, enchant the ear and heart,  
And lure the traveller on, o'er dangerous rocks,  
Down slippery steeps, thro' dark and dismal vales,  
Dread haunts of spirits dire, where hourly prowls  
Voracious death in every frightful shape,  
And blood, and broken bones, and naked skulls,  
With ghastly grin, lie scattered all along  
The dreary road, thro' fens, and bogs, and sloughs,  
Where thousands walk above chin-deep in mire,  
With eyes scarce out, to see each other plod

And wallow—just like some well fattened sow,  
That aims to hide her over-heated sides  
From noon-tide beams beneath the muddy shade—  
Yet joyous all, and gay as May-morn larks.  
'Twas here I toiled, for days and months, and years,  
With ardour warm, and sweat of brow, nor deemed  
The time ill spent, nor thought the labour hard :  
The road I loved, and loved the labour well,  
Though oft the end I feared. At length arose  
A mighty tempest : forked lightnings flew,  
Hissing destruction, sheets of lambent flame  
O'erspread the way, dreadful to see !  
The mire in which I stood deeply immersed,  
became

More hot than boiling pitch or burning brass !  
I roared amain, and struggled hard to flee ;  
But struggling, deeper, and still deeper plunged !  
Thunders on thunders burst just o'er my head,  
And rocked the earth, and rent my inmost soul,  
Whose heavy groans reverberated each loud peal.  
“ Undone ! undone ! ” I cried ; heaven frowned—  
Hell raged—threw ope her ponderous iron doors,  
And belched out sparks, and flames, and burning  
coals,

Just where I stood ! I saw her glowing cells,  
And burning chains, and flaming racks, and heard  
The doleful yell of traitors like myself,  
Deeply engulfed in her huge fiery maw,  
Eternally bound down with massy chains  
Of mighty vengeance, justly doomed for crimes  
Like mine, nor worse, to live the tortured prey



Of fierce damnation's thousand fanged jaws,  
World without end. "Oh! how shall I escape!"  
I loud exclaimed: "I'm lost! my crimes exceed  
The stars and sea-shore sand!—What shall I do!  
Or whither shall I flee! Unhappy wretch!  
Oh that I'd ne'er been born! or, rather, oh!  
That I had never sinned! These burnings who  
can bear!

Or who endure, what's worse, the loss of God!  
Oh! dismal state! to double torment damned!  
Refused the love, and cursed with the hate,  
Denied the smile, and blasted with the frown  
Of him whose smile is heaven, whose frown is hell!  
But why do I complain? 'tis my desert:  
Lord, thou art just. I've sinned I've damned myself:  
For my best works I know I well deserve  
The deepest cave in hell—the hottest place!  
And, were thy mighty thunders now to strike  
And dash me down her sulphurous abyss,  
There should my burning tongue aloud proclaim  
To all the damned thy justice unimpeached.  
But spare! O spare! my crimes immense forgive!  
Nor crush a worm that trembles at thy feet.  
Sovereign supreme! let grace ascend the throne  
And reign with justice; let both as one  
Freely forgive me, through atoning blood,  
And seal me blest." He heard, the heavens bowed,  
And open flung their gleaming portals wide,  
Where angels wait alert, in shining ranks,  
To guard the glorious way; and strait appear'd,  
As if emanent from the eternal throne,

A radiant chariot, rolling down the skies  
Serene, with tenfold eagle speed, and course  
Direct for me. It bore a human form,  
Of mien magnificent : his countenance,  
More luminous than twice ten thousand suns,  
Wore a pacific smile : his eyes, like flame,  
Effulgent, darted love :—a crown of gems,  
Superbly rich, adorned his beauteous head,  
And spoke him some great Prince of high degree :  
He held a sceptre, all of blazing gold,  
In his right hand, extended towards the place  
Where I stood trembling ; and a brilliant robe  
Of linen, fairer than the new-fallen snow,  
Enriched with inwrought gold, and covered o'er  
With rubies, clothed him quite from head to foot :  
With winged wheels, and flying steed august,  
He still advanced, more swift than lightning shoots  
Across the skies. The angry storm grew mild  
As he drew near ; the boldest lightnings palled  
And, like some cowardly army, fast retired  
To their far distant chambers, there to hide ;  
The thunders feared, and trembling fled away,  
And at a distance groaned ; and hell in haste  
Drew in her hissing flames, and, with a grin  
Of deep infernal hate, flung fast her gates,  
Cursing the love that brought him from above,  
To pluck from her fierce burning iron fangs  
The prey she called her own, and thought secure.  
The tempest hushed ; methought I heard a voice,  
Loud, yet melodious, as the tuneful reed,  
And languished less and less : afraid, I stood

Attent, and heard these weighty accents fall  
From th' heavenly tongue of the bright Charioteer,  
As down the skies he flew :—" O man, thou hast  
Thyself destroyed ! but mercy reigns ; fear not,  
In me thy help is found, my own right arm  
Hath brought salvation full, I'll surely cleanse  
The blood that I've not cleansed : look unto me,  
And be thou saved : Jehovah is my name ;  
Just to condemn the hardened wretch who dares  
With bold presumptuous heart and face of bronze  
Despise my name ; yet ever kind to save  
The trembling soul that in my name believes."  
I looked : aside he drew his glorious robe ;  
And lo ! in his fair side I saw a wound  
As if fresh bleeding ! Then he shewed his hands  
And feet, all torn and mangled, as if gored  
But yesterday : " These are the wounds " he said,  
" Thy cruel sins : those double-pointed nails  
And spears with thousand barbs, and shafts dipt  
deep  
In deadly poison, and full fledged with wrath  
Divine, Almighty ! made in my pure flesh.  
For thee I gave myself ; for thee I poured  
Most freely all my blood from every vein,  
To expiate thy foulest crimes, and cleanse  
Thy deepest stains :—I died, that thou should'st live.  
Believe ! and leap to liberty : believe !  
And enter into rest—believe ! and live  
For ever." Thus he spoke, and with his word  
Sent forth a power I ne'er before had felt :  
It thrilled through all my soul, and I believed !!!

As when he said to empty nothing— “ Rise ! ”  
And nothing rose to stars, and suns, and worlds ;  
Or when he said to breathless Lazarus, “ Live ! ”  
And Lazarus lived, and vaulted from the tomb.  
The moment I believed his chariot stood  
Close to my side ; he stretched his sceptered hand,  
I seized it in a moment, and sprang forth  
From that sad state, in which I’d languished long.  
“ Behold again,” he said, “ these gory wounds ! ”  
I raised my wondering eyes, at his command,  
And looked ; and, as I looked astoned, I felt  
A sovereign efficacious virtue flow  
From each red orifice, to heal and cleanse  
My deeply wounded and polluted soul !  
My filth all vanished, every wound was cured,  
Conscience became serene, the mind grew calm,  
And all my soul was joy. I saw, and lo !  
A most vehement flame burst from his heart,  
Through every nail print, and like lightning seized  
And quite enwrapt me, shot through all my veins,  
And filled me with delight and love sublime !  
“ Lord, what is this,” I cried, “ that meets my eyes,  
This flame, which darts, like lightning, through my  
And fills me with an extasy till now [soul,  
I never felt ? “ My love to thee,” he said,  
“ Which glowed concealed from all eternity  
In my own heart ; but now is broken forth  
With mighty blaze and shed abroad in thine,  
In thee to flame, in spite of sin and hell,  
And thence to rise and mount the lofty sky,  
Bearing thee in its folding volume high

In peaceful thought, above this mortal stage  
Of wild confusion, disappointment, grief,  
And endless ills, to breathe celestial air,  
Drink sweets immortal from eternal founts,  
And bask in salutiferous beams of grace,  
Rich, free, and boundless as eternity.  
Nor death itself shall quench the immortal fire !  
The same through time's successive days, the same  
Through all eternity's revolving years.  
I loved and undertook thy cause to plead  
'Gainst justice, law, sin, death, and hell combined ;  
I loved and flew from yonder world of light,  
And my great Father's bosom, to assume,  
Thy flesh, and with thy flesh thy mighty guilt,  
And give for thee my life a sacrifice ;  
I loved and died, and dying, thee redeemed  
From sin, and death, and hell, and every woe ;  
Thy sins I bore in death, and for them bled,  
And through my blood acquittance full is thine :  
From charge of guilt in heaven's high court  
supreme,  
From curse and condemnation thou art free,  
For ever justified, for ever saved,  
For ever blessed, ever, ever, mine !  
Arise and shine ! Arise ! thy light is come !  
The glory of the Lord is on thee risen,  
And on thee shall be seen. Come unto me,  
I'll surely give thee rest, and thee exalt  
To crowns, and thrones, and joys that ne'er decay ! ”  
This said, he to his chariot caught me up,  
And placed me by his side, then drove away !

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# ESSAYS AND LETTERS.

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## THE LOVE OF GOD.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

BELOVED IN THE LORD,

STANDING upon the verge of eternity, and feeling a desire, which I wish not to suppress, to address you, before I leave this world of boisterous wickedness, and take the joyful flight for which I have been longing and hoping nearly fifty-six years, I have taken up my pen to gratify that wish. The subject of my epistle, is the love of God. "God is love." What then is the love of God to us, but God himself loving us? May we not therefore, believe and say, that his love to us is eternal? What he is, he ever was, and ever will be: with him there is, there can be no variation. He eternally decreed our existence. We, with all the creatures, stood before him in the mirror of his decree: he beheld and loved us. His son, whom he ordained to take our nature into personal union with himself, and to be God-man, was the prime object of his love. It was in him he loved us, and chose us to be his people,

his sons, his heirs; heirs of himself, and joint heirs with his son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and ordained to be for ever the head of the body, the church elect in him; and the head over all things to the church, world without end.

Eternal love was the high impulsive cause of the glorious economy of our salvation; and is the grand source whence all the sublime and endless blessings of grace and glory flow. It was the sovereign cause, and is the everlasting bond of our union with Christ; that union is, therefore, indissoluble: who or what shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Shall life, or death, or angels, or principalities, or powers, things present, or things to come, or height, or depth, or any other creature? No; never, never. While God is God, and Christ is Christ, we must dwell in him and dwell in love.

Divine love was the cause of that everlasting covenant of the adorable eternal trinity, which is ordered in all things; and of the oath by which both it and all things in it, all things pertaining to eternal life and godliness were irrevocably confirmed unto us in Christ Jesus. It is a radiant circle: Christ, with us in himself, stands in the centre, where all its effulgent rays terminate and unite as in a focus, transfusing into us all eternal blessedness from the fulness of God. What are termed the grace, the mercy, the pity, and the kindness of the Lord, seem to be only so many modifications of the manifestation of his love, by those sovereign acts

of his infinite wisdom and power, by which he effects that stupendous design of his love, which will fill all eternity with admiration and delight,—the raising of many sons unto glory. This was apparently the view of the apostle Paul, when he wrote that almost unparalleled prayer in his admirable epistle to the church at Ephesus, chap. iii. 16, 17, 18, 19. “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God.” Here, beloved, we have the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Love divine, issuing from the eternal bosom, flies to our guilty world of woe, enfolds in her compassionate and omnipotent arms all the elect of mankind, of every age and rank; and returns, bearing them away to the bosom whence she emanates; there to fix them in their endless, blissful abode. In this divine, unequalled affair of love, the whole glorious eternal godhead shews itself before angels and men in the most delightfully imposing manner. Each illustrious person is seen in his distinct character, acting his peculiar part, and all conjointly, with eyes determinately fixed upon the object of their joint design and co-operation,—the glorification of themselves in

the raising to immortal glory a countless number of the poor, the wretched, the helpless, the blind, and the naked of mankind. All the attributes of deity appear on this grand occasion, shining in their magnificent splendour, and all, in the most beauteous order and delightful harmony, conspiring to facilitate and complete the transcendent design of sovereign love.

Jehovah, the father, is seen in his sovereignty, choosing and ordaining his beloved son to be the saviour of his chosen, putting them into his hands, anointing and sending him into the world, with solemn charge to lose nothing of all that he had given him, but raise it up at the last day. The son appears, and in joyful acquiescence approaches the Father, gives him his hand with his heart, and is heard to say, "Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will O my God: yea, thy law is in my heart." The Father is heard to respond, "He shall approach and draw near unto me, for who is this that engaged his heart to draw near unto me." Ps. xl. 7, 8. Jer. xxx. 21. The heavens open. The son descends. He stands upon our earth in our nature, his name is Immanuel, the brightness of his glory is veiled, it is covered with a cloud, he bears the form of a servant—he is a servant, the servant of God, the servant of man. He is our surety, our bondsman, our sponsor. He stands in our stead, under the broken law of our Maker, and is, through his Father's appointment and his own voluntary engagement, responsible for us. The keen scruti-

nizing eye of the law, and the stern vengeful eye of justice are fixed upon him. Love intense, and deep commiseration for men guilty and accursed, fill his bosom. He recedes not; love has determined him, and he sets his face as flint and his brow as brass. His work is before him; he loves it, his eye, his heart, his whole soul are fixed upon it. Now he proceeds. Behold the man! In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead substantially: the fulness of perfection, the fulness of love is in him. Let your eyes, let your hearts, be fixed. Look till your eyes sparkle with delight, and your hearts glow with love and teem with gratitude. The immaculate purity of the divine law in his heart is fully exemplified in his life. Every thought, every affection, every emotion of his soul, every accent of his lips, and every action of his body is the counterpart of the purity of its God-like sanctity. Our Jesus loves the Lord our God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, and his neighbour as himself. This, this, beloved, is our everlasting righteousness, before the eyes of infinite holiness and justice. It was eternally designed for us, and it is freely and for ever imputed unto us by love divine. This is our present, our past, our future, our eternal justification. This we may boldly plead at all times against an upbraiding conscience, against an accusing devil, at the throne of grace, and at the throne of justice. The God to whom we are indebted for this invaluable boon, will never disown it.

Now, behold the spotless man ! He goes as a lamb to the slaughter ; and is there not a cause ? Love still burns in his heart, it predominates, it reigns over every other feeling. He has undertaken our cause. He has assumed our black, our hellish crimes, and stands legally charged with our enormous guilt. Vindictive justice frowns, and determinately vows to revenge the many, the countless insults offered unto it by our daring crimes ; unsheathes its flaming sword, and waving it, sternly advances ; fierce lightning flashing from its eyes, and burning coals roll down before it, increasing at every step. The self-devoted victim, impelled by the quenchless ardour of his love, advances speechless to meet the dire avenger, meekly receives the deadly stroke, and falls the victim of his own love and of our crimes. There he lies, breathless and extended, covered with his own pure blood. What shall we now say ? We will sing over his blood-stained corpse, the death of death. He has abolished death and brought to light, life and immortality. O death where is thy sting ! Who shall lay any thing to our charge ? It is God that justifieth. Who shall condemn ? It is Christ that died. But see ! He lives again, he rises, he ascends, he takes his throne, and lives and reigns for ever.

From his throne he transmits his almighty spirit. Not to hover over us, with his offers, and proffers his tenders and overtures,—webs finely woven and artfully exposed, by the device of man, to allure and

catch the unwary,—but to open the heart, enter it, and make it his permanent abode ; to introduce into the soul a new supernatural divine life ; to produce, nourish, cherish, strengthen, and perpetuate in us, what is termed by the pen of inspiration, the new man, the inner man, and the hidden man of the heart ; to illuminate the mind, and endue it with a real spiritual discernment of spiritual objects revealed in the Scriptures ; especially the person, the mediation, the fulness and glory of Christ Jesus our Lord ; to create that faith, by which he is received and confided in, and by which he dwells in the heart ; to shed abroad in the heart the love of God, and to root and ground the soul in the knowledge, belief, and enjoyment of that love ; and, finally, to lead us, with all saints, to comprehend, the utmost that can be comprehended by created intelligences of the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of eternal love, and thus fill us with all the fulness of God ; raise us to the summit of our appointed perfection ; and place us upon the highest pinnacle of our destined glory and felicity. Thus are the designs of eternal love fulfilled by its own miraculous operations, according to the good pleasure of the eternal Three, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in covenant to save. To whom be glory in the church, world without end. Amen.

Yours, in love,

ADALAH.

## ILLUSIVE PIETY AND PRECIOUS FAITH.

FROM A BROTHER SOJOURNING IN MESHECH,  
TO HIS BRETHREN DWELLING IN THE  
TENTS OF KEDAR.

BRETHREN, BELOVED IN THE LORD,—

THE Lord Jesus, the common Saviour of all, both in Meshech and Kedar, who are disposed and enabled by the gracious and efficient energy of the Holy Ghost, to receive him, as the gift of God, and to repose upon him for their entire salvation. I assure myself of your cheerful responsive amen, when I say, that it is my heart's desire and prayer, that, through the good hand of our God upon us, we may stand fast in one spirit, rejoicing in one hope of our calling,—the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord. In the midst of the many and various changes which are almost daily occurring around us, in both the political and ecclesiastical worlds, may our sentiments upon the grand momentous subject of religion be unmoved. Brethren, stand fast in the Lord. Divine truth, which involves all that is justly entitled to the name of



religion, is *one*, ever the same, in essence and in substance the same, through all ages and all dispensations, for this plain reason : He whose truth it is, and concerning whom and whose counsels it is, declares himself unchangeable. And there is one divine faith, and but one. I call it divine, because, though possessed and exercised by human creatures, it is not the effect of human device, nor the result of human energy ; but the pure gift of God, and the effect of the absolute operation of the Holy Ghost, in his highly important work of regeneration, by which God's peculiar people are distinguished from the world, out of which they were chosen, and out of which they are called ; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. This faith, the true token of justification, pardon, and salvation, and the certain sign of the eternal distinction between the heirs of heaven and the heirs of hell, is the heart's firm decided belief of the truth of God, and its placid affiance in the God of truth, in Jesus, the true God and eternal life,—Jesus, the only and the all-sufficient, gracious and faithful Saviour, who has vowed, most peremptorily vowed, that he will cast out none who come to him. This faith, beloved, this distinguished and distinguishing faith, inspired by the free, positive, effective energy of God the Holy Ghost, is, by that energy preserved, actuated, and invigorated, amidst all the poisonous corruptions which abound in the world, in the church, and in ourselves ; and borne up

under all the weighty pressures which it is destined to bear, and in all the severity of its trials, until it reaches the climax of its agonizing conflicts, and is crowned more than conqueror through him that hath loved us. Brethren, although we live in a day of religious laxity, in which those notoriously overweening officious characters universal Charity and her sister Candour, have almost chased all precision in religion out of the world, we must not think lightly of religious sentiment; if we duly regard either the healthful peace of our own minds, or the honour of our Lord, we must hold fast the form of sound words given us by the Holy Ghost, in the pure oracles of heaven, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Not unfrequently the great fundamental truths of the gospel, upon which the whole glorious fabric of christianity stands, are thrown back into the shade, while those relating to its outworks, intermixed with various fabulous inventions, grateful to human vanity, and graced with the hallowed title of gospel, are advanced in the fascinating light of specious sophistical reasoning, to the beguiling of unstable souls. Some there are who gravely tell us that creed is of little, if any consequence. If, they say, we are truly pious, and our hearts and lives are good, we cannot be materially wrong: if we are the happy subjects of genuine, experimental, practical piety, though our sentiments and creeds are ever so various, we must, in the main, be right. This, at the first glance, the Bible apart, seems rather

plausible ; but a little inspection, with the Bible in hand, will discover it to be egregious nonsense, and that we might as well talk of effects without causes, of rain without clouds, of wind without air, of life without vitality, or vitality without life, as to talk of genuine, experimental, practical piety, without genuine, experimental, practical faith : in fact, the faith of God's elect, described above. There is but one faith ; which he who possesses the supreme dominion and authority has connected with eternal life : it is emphatically called *the faith*, the faith of *God's elect*, and the faith of the *operation of God* : II Cor. xiii. 5. Tit. i. 1. Col. ii. 12.

This distinguishes it from every other faith. All the various faiths which the deluded fancies of men have invented, and associated with that life, will, most assuredly, meet with the eternal frown of him who says, my glory will I not give to another. To all the faiths, but his own, which he eternally ordained for his chosen, and which he freely imparts to them, *unsought*, through sanctification of his own eternal spirit, he will say as to their devisers and possessors, "depart from me, I never knew you." And, as there is but one faith, which he has in his transcendent sovereignty connected with life everlasting, so there is but one piety, which he has associated with that life. Every faith, and all that is found among men bearing the hallowed name of piety, which is not the pure fruit of his unmerited sovereign grace, and the free vital effective operation of his eternal spirit, will, most assuredly, meet

with a fearful eternal overthrow from the frown of him who says, "I am a jealous God." Believe me, brethren, genuine faith and its inseparable associate, genuine piety, are of heavenly origin, and are the pure fruits of that free sovereign love, which choose its objects, at once, in Christ Jesus, to holiness and life eternal, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, and are nowhere to be found on earth, but in souls that are made the distinguished subjects of the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

I have used the term piety, not because I approve it in its general vague use; it is commonly employed to designate apparent personal religion; as when a person is represented as being the subject of religion, natural, moral, or what is called evangelical, it is generally said, that he, or she, is truly or eminently pious. The term piety occurs once, only, in the Holy Scriptures, I Tim. v. 4, and there it evidently means no more than pity shown in affording relief to indigent widows, and especially parents. I shall now for the present take my leave of these popular terms piety and its derivative pious, both, by misappropriation, rendered quite ambiguous, and shall substitute the definite apostolic term *godliness*, which is decisively expressive of all that is justly called true personal, experimental, and practical religion. The *substitution of faithless piety*, for that which the Holy Ghost calls godliness, must inevitably issue in most tre-

mendous ruin. Let us therefore, flee from the tents of those men, who have recourse to the fatal experiment. Godliness is a comprehensive and important term. It comprises in its meaning all the great mysterious and glorious effects of the new creation, in the soul of man : that which the wise unerring oracles of heaven call the new man, the inward man, and the hidden man of the heart, Eph. iv. 24. Rom. vii. 22. I Peter iii. 4, whose constituent parts, or members are the distinct but closely combined fruits, or what are commonly called graces of the Holy Ghost ; faith, hope, love, godly fear, zeal, peace, joy, meekness, gentleness, long suffering, patience, with all the good arising from their existence and exercise in the heart, and made apparent in the conversation and deportment. Just as the heart, the seat of life in the animal system, sends, by divine appointment and impulse, the vital stream, with effective energy, through every part of that system, animating and invigorating every sinew, every muscle, and every nerve, for the performance of its peculiar functions ; so, faith, as the heart of the new man, transmits, under the sovereign effective energy of the Holy Ghost, to all his members, a vital power and influence, causing them to act distinctly, or in concert, their respective parts, to the glory of God. It was faith in the heart of Abraham, which glorified God ; and it is faith in the hearts of all his sons, which gives glory to the same all adorable Being. It was by faith, when called by God to leave his house, and

go he knew not whither, that Abraham obeyed ; and by faith, when God commanded, he offered up his son. The faith which is the gift of God, and of the operation of the Holy Spirit, has ever been, and ever will be the same : in its nature, in its actions, its effects, and end, the same : it will never fail, when excited or impelled by the divine power, to give all glory to Jehovah, the Aleim of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, by the production of every demanded act of obedience. Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth, is the voice of faith in every regenerated heart. It will, with exultation, ascribe to the free sovereign grace of the eternal Three, in covenant, all salvation ; and even its own existence most emphatically declaring, “By grace are ye saved, through faith ; and *that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*”

It is by faith that the christian, under the auspicious smile of heaven, makes his tedious voyage over dangerous seas, amid the war of elements, gains his port, and anchors in the long sought harbour of endless peace and rest. Behold, brethren, yonder heavy laden vessel upon the highly agitated bosom of the ocean ; she has neither sail nor mast, nor any external visible means of progression ; both wind and tide are against her, combined, not merely to impede her progress, but to beat her back to land, or force her against some fatal rock ; yet in defiance of that powerful combination, she advances with considerable velocity, and cutting her way through winds and waves,

turns them all behind her. The cause of this constant, steady, and triumphant progression is concealed from the view of distant spectators, in her interior. There fire acting upon water contained in a vessel placed conveniently over it, produces a powerful agent, called steam, which pressing upon a particular part of a complicated machine, so moves every part as to produce the propelling force, which causes her successful progressive movement against the utmost violence of winds and waves. Here, brethren you see in a figure, not the faithless pietist moving lightly along his devious way, in his airy vehicle, the supposed intrinsic efficiency of external means; but the true christian, the godly man; not only destitute of all visible means, sufficient to facilitate his progress and ensure his safety; but, also surrounded by a thousand frightful impediments, each in the view of carnal reason insurmountable, yet, notwithstanding, moving forward; and although his velocity is various, his progress is direct and sure. This is a phænomenon which the sublime philosophy of the proudest schools, could never explain, but which the Lord of heaven explains to the meanest christian. There is within him a secret, vital, efficacious impetus, which urges him forward through all impediments. In his heart, once the habitation of the prince of the power of the air, but now the sacred dwelling of the Most High, faith, that mighty efficient agent, in the hand of the Almighty, is, by the coaction of the word

and spirit, compared in the Scriptures to fire and water, produced, and caused to act upon all the divine graces in the soul, and move them so as by means of their joint operation, under the effectual influence of divine power, he is gradually moved forward through all adversities, to the end of his toilsome voyage. The sovereign Eternal having called him to his eternal glory, by Jesus Christ our Lord, effectually works in him to will and to do of his good pleasure, and fulfils in him all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power; finally blessing him with full realization of all for which, in all the pains and perils of his voyage, he hoped and longed.

Though my letter is already too long, I cannot refrain from making some observations upon the doctrines relating to the above principles, faithless piety and vital godliness. The doctrine of the former, however advocated by men of the highest celebrity, is, at least, in my humble view, both antisciptural and antichristian, a system of egregious pharisaism arising out of the darkness of the human mind pretending to superior illumination, and is founded in the crude fallacious notion of man's natural and moral ability, and the internal sufficiency of external means, and its only tendency is to impugn and obscure divine truth, and like an ignis-fatuus hold out false light to deceive, betray, and ruin souls. I do now in the eighty-first year of my age, and the fifty-sixth of my ministry, and standing upon the threshold of eternity, enter my



solemn protest against it, as a thing most mischievous. And I do most sincerely and affectionately beseech you, my brethren, as you regard your own souls, the souls of others, and especially the honour of your glorious Lord, to join with me in my protestation. That famous, though in my view, and in itself, infamous doctrine, may be very grateful to them that are at ease in themselves, whose minds were never led by the Holy Spirit of light, wisdom, and revelation, into those appalling chambers of imagery; their own apostate hearts; who have never had the fine robes of their own righteousness burnt about them by the flames of Sinai; who can make a bed of down for their repose, of their own inherent natural virtues, and who can regale themselves with the devout contemplation of their own pious deeds. But to them that feel their sickness and see their sore; and that know themselves to be all which the God of faithfulness and truth has, in his word, declared fallen man to be, of guilt, pollution, and destitution, it can afford no relief. It is to them a mere unmeaning sound, a smoky cloud without rain; a bed too short and uneven for them to repose upon; a feast, alas! of meatless bones, served up with dry and empty husks, and though it is sometimes very ingeniously garnished with both neat and gaudy flowers of rhetoric, it mocks their craving appetites; it is a tree with death at the root, with deadly sap and deleterious fruit, from whose withering branches, disease and death

drop upon the souls that sit under its baleful shade. Death ! Brethren, death ! all, all is death from which Jehovah the Spirit of life is excluded.

Exactly the reverse of this picture, is the doctrine according to godliness, the pure gospel of the blessed God : that glorious system of divine truth, which contains and exhibits the whole scheme of salvation, without reserve, un mutilated by the hands of men, and unspoiled by the vain philosophy of ancient or modern schools. This is indeed the cloud of his brightness, Job xxxvii 11, by which he watereth the hill of Zion, and drops down fatness upon the plants of his grace, the plants which his right hand has planted for the glory of his gracious sovereign name ; it is a bed on which we can repose, not only without inconvenience, but with real pleasurable satisfaction ; a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined, Isa. xxv. 6 : a tree of life, whose vital root is Jehovah, in his trinity of persons in covenant, to glorify themselves in the free and full salvation of guilty helpless man ; whose body is the eternal immutable sovereign counsel of the eternal mind ; and whose branches are the glorious doctrines of eternal, unconditional, personal election and adoption ; the mediation of Christ ; union with him ; justification by his righteousness ; redemption, pardon, purification and peace by his blood ; salvation in his name ; and the glorious work of the holy eternal Spirit in the souls of all the chosen and redeemed, by which they are

brought to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; to believe with the heart unto righteousness; to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and live the life of faith upon him, and by which they are sanctified unto God in body, soul, and spirit. These, brethren, with their various ramifications, or effects, are the doctrines which constitute the glorious gospel. Free and sovereign grace, rising from the root, runs, like sap, into every part, and circulating through the whole, breaks out at the top, in the full-blown flower of eternal glory. Under this beautiful evergreen we sit with delight. Here we enjoy both shade and shelter, while the refreshing and salubrious dews of divine love and mercy incessantly descending upon it, distil upon our souls; and the rich delicious fruits of peace, consolation, and joy hang upon its branches for our daily use. Here may we dwell in unity, peace and love, hoping, ere long, to ascend to the top of this celestial tree, to be charmed for ever with the transcendent beauty and fragrance of the perennial flower, which crowns and adorns its lofty head.

## HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

THAT which divines very properly call the moral law, is the immutable and eternal standard of righteousness. In exact conformity to this law, existing in the divine mind, the first man was created as the head and representative of his numerous posterity; holy, just, and good. Upon his perfect performance of all that it required, depended his life and happiness, and the life and happiness of all his sons; and with his disobedience were inseparably connected his own and their condemnation, misery, and death.

Of all the trees in Eden he might freely eat, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil excepted: the fruit of that tree he was forbidden, on pain of death to touch. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat," was the grant of his munificent Creator; "but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it," was the prohibition of his rightful sovereign; "in the day that

thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," was the tremendous threatening of his awful judge. Thus the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was, by a sovereign act of the divine legislator, made the test of his obedience; and had he performed the easy duty, so justly and kindly imposed upon him, he would, by that means, have preserved entire all that innocence, dignity and happiness with which he was invested in the day of his creation, both for himself and all his posterity.

But alas! he fell! He took, he ate, and in one fatal moment threw off his allegiance to his beneficent sovereign, fell, with all his unborn seed in his loins, from the most elevated state of purity, honor, and felicity that could possibly be filled and enjoyed upon earth; and sunk into the deepest guilt, disgrace, and misery that could possibly be felt out of hell.

Behold now the forlorn apostate! Once the glory of this lower creation and the intimate associate of Deity; now, to the last degree execrable, only fit for the society and fellowship of devils. Stripped of the divine image, deprived of his Maker's presence, forbidden to approach his offended Lord, justly condemned by the law which he has broken, exposed to the flaming sword of incensed justice brandished in the hand of Omnipotence, stung with conscious guilt, and smitten with keen despair, he flees, flees with confusion and precipitance, from that God in whom he once delighted, as the centre and source of all his joy, and essays, but in vain, to conceal,

at once, himself and his guilt from the scrutinizing eye of divine omniscience. Look now on which side soever he will, nothing presents itself, for him or his posterity, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.

The holy law, in its nature immutable and in its demands inflexible, still requires of all who are under its authority, unsullied innocence in thought, in word, in deed. But alas ! Innocence is fled, is gone ! Fled from all the human race, gone for ever, past recovery from the power of a created arm. Not even a shadow of it is to be seen in any part of our apostate nature ; all is depravity, defilement, and guilt. The understanding is darkened ; the judgment is perverted ; the mind is carnal and replete with enmity against God ; the will is filled with rebellion and enslaved by Satan ; reason has lost her empire and is degraded from her excellency ; the affections are vitiated and in alliance with forbidden objects ; the conscience is polluted and torpid ; the heart which was chaste is become a harlot ; in its pristine state righteousness lodged in it, but now thieves and murderers ; in fine, the inward parts are very wickedness ; every faculty and every member is most awfully contaminated, and our whole nature teems with moral evil.

That no injustice is done to human nature in this delineation of its condition is evident from the language of infallibility. “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was

only evil continually ;—their inward part is very wickedness ;—the wicked through the pride of their countenance will not seek after God : God is not in all his thoughts ;—the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked ;—for from within, out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.” Nor is this humiliating detail of the sins of the human heart referrible to a part only of the sons of men, it has respect to the whole species. For by natural generation every father communicates to his offspring his own nature, with every innate principle he possesses. Adam begat Seth in his own likeness, after his own image ; not merely in regard to his external natural form, but chiefly with respect to internal moral principle. And thus, age after age from the beginning, the corruption of human nature has passed entire from father to son, and will continue to do so to the end of the world. All, therefore, who lineally descend from Adam inherit his whole nature with its nefarious infernal principles. Were ten thousand stems to arise out of the same root, each would really possess the very essence of that root ; or if streams innumerable were to issue from the same fountain, they would all alike partake of its qualities, whether salutary or pernicious. David knew and confessed that he was shapen in iniquity, and that in sin his mother conceived him. The same is true of all men, and the above humble and

pathetic acknowledgement would well become the mouths of all human creatures, in every age, and in every nation of the world ; there is no inequality, no distinction here : the prince and the boor ; the civilized and polite European, and the rude and savage Indian ; the inhabitant of Britain, and the inhabitant of Africa ; Jews, Pagans, Mahometans, and nominal christians ; men of every clime, of every colour, and of every distinction and rank stand upon the exactest level in regard of natural depravity and distance from God.

It is, indeed, confessed, that, in external appearance and conduct, there is a very material dissimilitude between, not only the inhabitants of different countries, but those of the same nation ; nay, in thousands of instances, between the branches of the same family. Some spend their days, and months, and years, in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness, and in multiplying iniquities of the most heinous nature and the greatest magnitude, till they ruin their characters, their constitutions, and their estates ; and in the end, conclude an awful series of complicated crimes, by an ignominious exit on a gibbet or block. Others observing the laws of decency and sobriety, of modesty and chastity, of justice and kindness, refrain from all atrocity, extend the hand of beneficence to bless the indigent, pay strict regard to all the exteriors of religion, study to make themselves agreeable and useful in every department, pass through life with so much decorum as scarcely to merit human



censure, and, at last, leave the world, beloved and applauded, leaving behind them an external moral character worthy to be imitated by all ranks in every succeeding age.

But then, this difference of conduct is not the effect of any intrinsic difference in nature in these opposite characters, but is owing, in some, to what is called good breeding, or the art of politeness, and pride in practising that art; in others, to religious education received in early life; in others, to legal fears of hell and hopes of heaven; and in all, what means soever are employed, to an all wise, all powerful, all pervading Providence which bounds the raging lusts, restrains the tumultuous passions, and checks or disposes the minds of ungodly men according to the sovereign pleasure of him, whose infinite wisdom and might, perform all his will in every part of his vast empire, making even enmity itself, with all its infernal productions in the natures of men and of devils, entirely subservient to his eternal and immutable, deep and mysterious, vast and wonderful designs: "Surely the wrath of man," yes, and of devils too, "shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." If the unconverted refrain from the commission of flagitious crimes, it is in consequence of divine restraint; if they perform works truly beneficial to themselves or others, they act under the sovereign influence of the divine government; yet, in both these cases, being totally ignorant of the power which moves them, and insensible of the influence under which

they act, and conceiving that they are self-moved, they attribute to themselves great merit, sacrifice to their own free will, and burn incense to their own self-sufficiency. *Psa.* lxxvi. 10. See also *Gen.* xx. 6. xxxi. 24, 29, and *Gen.* xxvii. 41, compared with xxxiii. 4: *Exodus* vii. 2, 3, 4, 5, and xii. 31, 32, 33, compared with ix. 17: also *Sam.* ii. 25. The Almighty says to the wild impetuous lusts and passions of men, as to the proud waves of the restless ocean, "Thus far shall ye go but no further, here shall ye be still." But for this, nothing would be heard but obscenity, falsehood, and blasphemy; nothing would be seen but uncleanness, ferocity, cruelty, rapine, devastation, and murder, till the whole world became a perfect *Aceldama*, or field of blood.

The doctrine of equal and total depravity among the sons and daughters of Adam, however incompatible with the proud and lofty notions of carnal minds respecting human purity, power and dignity, must be maintained as truth, as truth divine most expressively attested in the sacred page, from which there can be no appeal. There we learn that the scrutinizing eye of divine omniscience takes a general survey of the human race; infinite wisdom forms a just and impartial estimate of every latent quality in each individual of human kind; and infinite justice and faithfulness publish to all the world, the equal degeneracy and apostacy of all men. *Psa.* liii. 2, 3. "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God; every one of

them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." And what is asserted on the melancholy subject of human depravity by the divinely inspired Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, refers to the whole race of mankind. For having mentioned some particular characters who manifested the most pernicious principles by the most ungodly practices, he asks; "What then, are we better than they?" And replies, "no, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin."

In the above appellations all the posterity of Adam is included. And the faithful apostle, without making any distinction or exception whatever, declares; "There is none righteous, no, not one, there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God, they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one; their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, the way of peace have they not known, there is no fear of God before their eyes." What an affecting picture of human nature!

O, ye wise men after the flesh! ye proud disputers of this world, who strenuously contend for the fabled purity and dignity of man, speak no more proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your lips.

God hath spoken ! The Infinite Eternal, at whose presence the universe is moved, and at whose look even hell trembles and is afraid, hath uttered his voice, and proclaimed to all the nations under heaven, the total depravity, the awful apostacy, and the tremendous guilt of every human tribe and individual on earth. Say not that he errs in judgment, nor think that his testimony is untrue. Remember that he is wise in heart and of infinite knowledge ; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right in all his thoughts and all his words. He can neither deceive nor be deceived. His judgment is always according to truth, and his testimonies are very sure. Deny the truth of his testimony and you are deists ; question the infinity of his knowledge and you are atheists ; and in either case you proclaim both your ignorance and impiety ; are evidently taken by the Lord in your own craftiness, and while you profess to be supremely wise, you are truly guilty of the most consummate folly ; for, in direct opposition to your intentions, you stand forth as indubitable evidence of the truth of those very things which you deny. God, long since, in the sacred Scriptures, foretold your impious denial of his word and your infernal blasphemy conceived and uttered against his wisdom and truth ; and with an accuracy which, at once, bespeaks his understanding infinite, and his testimony true, has delineated your principles and depicted your characters ; as long, therefore, as we are blessed with the use of our mental powers and are capable

of comparing your principles and conduct with his word, we cannot but read in you the clearest proof of his infinite knowledge and unimpeachable truth written in the Scriptures. And while either you or others, in direct contradiction to the positive language of God in the Scriptures, deny the fall of Adam and its awful consequence, the total depravity of his offspring, we shall never be in want of proof, the most incontestable, of the solemn truth you deny. Denial of the truth of God avouched in the Scriptures is the effect and evidence of enmity against the nature and will of God, and such enmity is the very quintessence of depravity; while, therefore, we have before our eyes the baneful effect, how can we doubt the existence of the pernicious cause, or avoid considering the opposers of the doctrine of man's fall and depravity, as it stands revealed in the oracles of God, as undeniable witnesses of its truth, and the denial of it as among the best means of its confirmation.