

## LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR,

I shall now, by your leave, make a few remarks on the THIRD PART of Mr. F.'s book, wherein some objections to his scheme are considered; he thinks he has sufficiently answered them; I think not. He begins with observing "These objections originated with Arminius, or his followers, and have been answered long ago, by the Calvinists in their writings against them\*." By which he would insinuate to his readers, all who oppose his ideas of faith, are *Arminians*. But I make no doubt, Sir, you at once see the fallacy of this, and with me conclude it needs no refutation.

I proceed to these objections: the first is,

"Concerning THE NATURE OF THAT DIVINE PRINCIPLE WHICH ADAM POSSESSED †."

This objection has been stated, says Mr. F. in the following manner, " (the holy principle con-  
" natural to Adam, and concreated with him,  
" was not suited to live unto God, through a  
" mediator: that kind of life was above the extent  
" of his powers, though perfect; and therefore,  
" as he in a state of integrity, had not a capacity of  
" living unto God, agreeable to the nature of the  
" new covenant, it is apprehended that his poste-  
" rity, while under the first covenant are not  
" commanded to live unto God, in that sort, or in  
" other words, to live by faith on God, through  
" a mediator †." This is a quotation from Mr. Brine; Mr. F. endeavours to set aside this objec-

\* P. 109. † P. 112. † Mot. to L. and U. p. 50, 51.

tion, by attempting to prove that there is no *essen-*  
*tial* difference between the principle of Adam in  
innocence, and that in believers, which I confess I  
think is very extraordinary. Dr. Owen, whom  
Mr. F. often cites, as one on his side the question,  
differs greatly from him on this subject; he consi-  
ders there is a very material difference between the  
one and the other. His words are these, " the prin-  
" ciple of this life (meaning the life of Adam in  
" innocence) was wholly and entirely in man him-  
" self. It was not the *effect* of another cause, of  
" that which was without him, namely, the good-  
" will and power of God; but it was left to grow  
" on no other root but what was in man himself.  
" It was wholly implanted in his nature, and  
" therein did its springs lie. Actual excitations by  
" influence of power from God it should have  
" had; for no principle of operation can subsist  
" in an independency of God, nor apply itself  
" unto operation without his concurrence. But  
" in the life whereunto we are renewed by Jesus  
" Christ, the fountain and principle of it is not  
" in ourselves but in him, as one common head  
" unto all that are made partakers of him; he is  
" our life, *Col. 3. 3.* and our life (as to the spring  
" and fountain of it) is hid with him in God; for  
" he quickeneth us by his spirit, *Rom. 8. 10.* and  
" our spiritual life, as in us, consists in the vital  
" actings of this spirit of his in us, for without  
" him we can do nothing. *John 15. 3.* By virtue  
" hereof we walk in newness of life. *Rom. 6. 4.* we  
" live therefore hereby; yet not so much we as  
" Christ liveth in us. *Gal. 2. 20.*—He goes on to  
" add, there is a difference between these lives,  
" with respect unto the object of their vital acts.  
" For the life which we now lead by the faith of  
" the son of God, hath sundry objects of its act-  
" ings, which the other had not: for whereas all  
" the actings of our faith and love, that is; all our  
" obedi-

“ obedience, doth respect the revelation that God  
 “ makes of himself and his will unto us: there  
 “ are now *new revelations* of God in Christ,  
 “ and consequently new duties of obedience re-  
 “ quired of us \*.”

But how does Mr. F. proceed to establish his point? why thus, “ observe, says he, particularly,  
 “ 1. The spirit and conduct of Adam in inno-  
 “ cence were nothing more nor less than an en-  
 “ tire conformity to the moral law of God. 2.  
 “ The spirit and conduct of Jesus Christ so far  
 “ as he was the model after which we are form-  
 “ ed, were nothing more nor less than an entire  
 “ conformity to the same divine law. 3. The  
 “ spirit and conduct of Christians, so far as they  
 “ are formed after the image of Christ, must be  
 “ the same, and if so, then how does it appear  
 “ that their principles should be essentially differ-  
 “ ent †?” Let us a little examine this. In the first  
 place, he observes the spirit and conduct of Adam  
 in innocence were nothing more nor less than an  
 entire conformity to the moral law of God. This  
 I grant. The law was then unbroken. But  
 in the second place Mr. F. says, the spirit and  
 conduct of Jesus Christ, so far as he was the mo-  
 del after which we are formed, were nothing more  
 nor less than an entire conformity to the same di-  
 vine law; and goes on to observe, “ Christ went to  
 “ the end of the law for righteousness, but it does  
 “ not appear that he went any farther. The su-  
 “ periority of his obedience to that of Adam’s  
 “ while innocent, laid not in his doing more  
 “ than the law required; but in the dignity of  
 “ his person. §” But is not the obedience of

\* Owen on the Spirit, p. 241, 242.

† P. 117, 118.

§ P. 117.

Christ far superior to Adam’s? Does not his being  
 declared to be the end of the law for righteous-  
 ness suppose it? Yes, it certainly does imply  
 that there is a glorious superiority in it. Did  
 not Christ do more than Adam. Was Adam the  
 end of the law, in the sense Christ was? Could  
 he possibly be so? Verily, no. Christ was the  
 end of a broken law. Adam never was, never  
 could be; Christ was the end, the fulfilling end  
 of the law, as he had a nature conformable to it;  
 so indeed was Adam.—Christ was the end of the  
 law, by the conformity of his life to all its  
 precepts; so indeed was Adam in innocence.—But  
 further, Christ was the end of the law; not only  
 in fulfilling the commandments, but also in the  
 penalty of it, by his sufferings and death; all  
 which is imputed for righteousness to every  
 one that believeth; this is what Adam did not,  
 could not be. Christ suffered (as Mr. Maclaurin  
 in his admirable sermon on the law magnified by  
 the redeemer, expresses it) “ a total execution of  
 “ the law. It is not needful to insist to shew,  
 “ that this is singular; no other punishment  
 “ of creatures can be called such. The law is  
 “ put in execution properly, when all that is  
 “ threatened is accomplished. Those who are  
 “ in hell will never have to say that which he  
 “ said on the cross, “ it is finished.” It is of  
 “ him only that can be said, *Dan. 9.* that he  
 “ made an end of sin, of the punishment of it.  
 “ He died unto sin,” as the apostle expresses it  
 once, *Rom. 6.* “ Every wicked man dies for sin.  
 “ Though we distinguish between a violent and  
 “ natural death, yet the natural death of every  
 “ wicked man that dies in unbelief as an ex-  
 “ ecution of divine wrath; he dies for sin.  
 “ But to die to sin is to put away that bur-  
 “ den of sin, which brought death upon us.”  
 Heb.

Heb. 9. 26. \* Such was the obedience of Christ. Surely then there is a material difference between Adam's conformity to the law, and Christ's being the end of the law for righteousness. Certainly there is a superiority not only in the dignity of his person, but in the obedience itself.

I cannot help just observing, that I think Mr. F. has mistook the principal meaning of Psal. 40. 8. "I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart." which he brings as a proof that the spirit and conduct of Jesus Christ, so far as he was the model after which we are formed, were nothing more nor less than an entire conformity to the moral law:—I do not think the moral law is that which is immediately referred to there, though that may be included. I am ready to imagine, the law there meant is the law concerning the work and office of Mediator, and the particular injunction and command he received of his father to lay down his life and offer up his soul a sacrifice for sinners, which is particularly mentioned in *John* 10. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life," &c. "This commandment have I received of my Father." It is true, the Lord Jesus Christ throughout his life yielded obedience to God, as he was made of a woman, made under the law; but the highest act of obedience to God was his laying down his life; which was the particular and especial command of the Father, and was what rendered him as Mediator so peculiarly acceptable to him. *Therefore* doth my Father love me. Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name. And therefore, says God, "I will divide him a portion with the great, and

\* Maclaurin's Sermon on Hab. 42. 21.

"he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death."

I apprehend also Mr. F. has not given the sense, or however the *whole* sense of Jer. 31, 33. which he quotes in the same page, when he says, "The spirit and conduct of Christians, so far as they are formed after the image of Christ, must be the same; that is, nothing more nor less than an entire conformity to the moral law." for, adds he, "It is not any new law, but the same divine law that is written on their hearts in regeneration, as was written on Adam's heart in his state of innocence." — That the law God promises to put into the inward parts, and write in the hearts of his people includes the moral law, I don't dispute; that he influences the mind to obedience, that he disposes the heart to pay a regard to this law at regeneration, and makes the believer willing to take it as the rule of his life, is a fact. But is this *all* which is meant here? I think not. But that it includes also what the apostle calls the law of faith, in *Rom.* 3. 27. that is, the glorious doctrines and truths of the everlasting gospel. Yea, it takes in also what the apostle calls the law of the mind, in *Rom.* 7. 23. by which I suppose, with Dr. Gill, is meant "the principle of grace wrought in his mind, called the law of it, because it was the governing principle there, which reigns, and will reign in every regenerate person through righteousness unto eternal life, though the law of sin opposes all its force and power against it §." I would take in all these in that great new covenant promise, and especially as the apostle uses the word in the plural number when he quotes the

§ Exposit. on *Rom.* 7. 23.

passage in Heb. 8. 10. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my *laws* into their mind, and write *them* in their hearts; and I will be to them a God; and they shall be to me a people."—Taking the words in this sense, (and I think it is a just one) it appears the believer possesses more than Adam in innocence, and that his spirit and conduct are more than a conformity to the moral law, notwithstanding Mr. F. ventures to assert to the contrary.

And pray why is it we read of the believer's being predestinated to be *conformed to the image of his Son*.—and, as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the *image of the heavenly*—and why does the apostle speak of *Christ* being formed in the Galatians—and of *Christ* dwelling in the heart by faith, in the Ephesians—if there is no essential difference between the principles in Adam and that in believers? Surely, when Paul speaks of being conformed to the image of *God's Son*, he means more than a being conformed to the image of *Adam*.—Surely he means to intimate that our state by grace is far superior to our state by nature. Dr. Owen tells us, "It was the old pelagian figment, that what we have by nature we have by grace \*."

In page 118. it is said "The *terms* by which our conversion to God is expressed, imply a similarity between the principles lost by sin, and those produced by grace" And Mr. F. begins first, with observing, we are then said to *return* to God: but how this could be is difficult to

\* Owen. on the Spirit, p. 452.

"conceive, if the state into which we are brought at conversion essentially differs from that which we were in previous to our departure from God." I answer, it is true, at conversion a sinner returns to God; but I apprehend it is equally true he returns with such a principle as he never had previous to his departure: let it be observed, that prior to conversion there must be *regeneration*. A distinction is here necessary, though that distinction Mr. F. has passed unnoticed. It has been said, and I think with truth, "Regeneration precedes, and may be considered as the foundation and spring of conversion and sanctification. For that is the principle from which both arise. Grace as a principle of spiritual acts is first communicated, and from that proceeds all acts of a holy spiritual nature, both internal and external. Neither of the latter can be, until the first is wrought. And when that is effected, both the latter certainly follow. In the first, we are merely passive, in conversion and sanctification we are active." And it has also been observed by another ||, "*Regeneration* is a spiritual change, *conversion* is a spiritual motion. In regeneration there is a power conferred: Conversion is the exercise of this power. In regeneration there is given us a principle to turn; conversion is our actual turning; that is, the principle whereby we are brought out of a state of nature into a state of grace \*." And this principle Adam in innocence never had, he never needed it: it is something *new*, and only given to the elect of God, and the want of it will never be the cause of the condemnation of sinners.

|| Brine on various subjects, p. 126.

\* Charn. Works, vol. 2. p. 70.

As to the terms used in *Tit.* 3. 5. the *washing* of regeneration, and the *renewing* of 'the Holy Ghost, mentioned in the same page, I am ready to grant, they suppose man to be in a polluted state, and that at regeneration the soul is restored to a state of purity, but quere, whether this regeneration does not mean more than a restoration of man to his original state; I think it does; why else are such phrases as these made use of to describe it?—the *new* man—a *new* heart—a *new* spirit—a *new* creature?—If the believer is a partaker of no other principle than Adam lost by sin, then he is only restored to his *old* state. It is not a *new* man—a *new* heart—a *new* spirit—a *new* creature that he is the subject of and is made,—but it is the *old* man—the *old* heart—the *old* spirit—and the *old* creature restored.—I don't imagine that a sinner at regeneration has a *new* soul, but I believe that grace makes such a change in the soul, as that there is a difference, and a *very essential* difference between his former and his present state: Yea, between what he as a believer enjoys, and what Adam possessed. I think at the resurrection the same body that dies will be raised, but I think the state in which it will rise will be more than *circumstantially*, it will be *essentially* different from that in which it was laid in the grave. “It is sown in *corruption*, it is raised in *incorruption*—it is sown in *dishonour*, it is raised in *glory*: it is sown in *weakness*, it is raised in *power*: it is sown a *natural* body; it is raised a *spiritual* body.” Now I say, here is an essential difference, except corruption and incorruption; dishonour and glory; weakness and power; natural and spiritual are *essentially* the same.

You shall hear what good old John Bunyan says on this subject. His words are these; “Adam's

“state even in innocency, seems to crave for help; wherefore it is manifest that state is short of that we attain by the resurrection from the dead; yea, for as much as his need required earthly help, 'tis apparent his condition was not heavenly: The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. *Adam in his first estate was not spiritual*: That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. Wherefore those that think it enough to attain to the state of Adam in innocency, think it sufficient to be mere *naturalists*; think themselves well, without being made spiritual: yea, let me add, they think it safe standing by a covenant of works; they think themselves happy, though not concerned in a covenant of grace; they think they know enough, though ignorant of a Mediator, and count they have no need of the intercession of Christ.

“Adam stood by a covenant of works; Adam's kingdom was an earthly paradise; Adam's excellency was, that he had no need of a Saviour; and Adam's knowledge was ignorant of Jesus Christ: Adam in his greatest glory wanted earthly comforts: Adam in his innocency was a meer natural man §.”

I conclude this part of the subject, in the words of Mr. Charnock, “As grace excels nature, and Christ surmounts Adam; so much more excellent is the state of a Christian, a real Christian above that of a man. Can there be a greater excellency than to have a divine beauty; a formation of Christ, a proportion of all graces, suited to the imitable perfections of God? Man is an *higher* creature than others, because he

" hath an higher principle ; a life of reason is more  
 " noble than of sense. To live by sense, is to  
 " play the part, and live the life of brutes ; to live  
 " by reason, is to live the life of a man : But he  
 " that lives by the spirit, lives the life of God,  
 " answers the end of his creation, useth his rea-  
 " son, understanding, will, affection for God,  
 " by whom they were first bestowed ; acts more  
 " nobly, lives more pleasantly, than the greatest  
 " angel could do without such a principle. A  
 " new creature doth exceed a rational creature,  
 " considered only as rational, more than a ra-  
 " tional doth a brute †."

Mr. F. sums up all under this head, by saying,  
 " The only question to which the whole ought  
 " to be reduced is this ; whether *supreme love to*  
 " *God*, would not necessarily lead a fallen crea-  
 " ture, who has the gospel preached to him, to  
 " embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and his way of  
 " salvation †." I answer, supreme love to God  
 will lead a man to embrace any revelation God  
 makes of himself, but it will not, it cannot  
 lead a man to embrace what God does not re-  
 veal.—Supreme love to God would not lead a  
 heathen to embrace Christ in any sense, because  
 Christ is not revealed even in an external manner.  
 —Supreme love to God would have led the Jews  
 to embrace Christ as the Son of God, and the Mes-  
 siah, because they had an external revelation of  
 him as such ; and because they did not do so, our  
 Lord said, " I know you, that you have not the  
 " love of God in you." *John* 5. 42, 43. But  
 supreme love to God would lead no fallen creature  
 to embrace Christ in a way of special faith without

† Charn. Works, vol. 2. p. 110.

‡ P. 120.

Christ

Christ being revealed, and revealed in an *internal*  
 manner by the Holy Ghost. There is no true  
 believing without revelation, without evidence.  
 Supreme love to God don't bind a man to any such  
 faith. God don't require any such faith.—Whe-  
 ther this be a sufficient reply to the question, I leave  
 with you to determine.

I remain-

Yours.