

THE  
RICHES OF DIVINE GRACE  
*Unfolded & Exemplified;*  
ETERNAL LIFE, HEAVEN, & GLORY  
Opened:  
IN DISCOURSES

BETWEEN  
TWO BELIEVERS IN CHRIST JESUS;  
THE  
ONE ENQUIRING RESPECTING THE IMPORTANT TRUTHS  
OF THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL;

THE  
OTHER EXPLAINING THEM, AS THEY ARE TAUGHT BY THE HOLY  
GHOST, AND RECEIVED INTO THE REGENERATE MIND,  
FROM THE WORD OF DIVINE REVELATION.

CONTAINED  
*In Twelve Dialogues.*

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BY  
SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE.

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“ I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.” *Elihu.*  
JOB xxxii. v. 17.

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TO

MR. HORE,

Bentonville.



VERY DEAR SIR,

I LOVE you in the bowels of Christ Jesus our common Lord, and rejoice in those blessed apprehensions which the Lord the Spirit has given you of Christ and his unsearchable riches: so that you have a real, spiritual, and intuitive knowledge of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the Three in Jehovah, according to the revelation given concerning them in the inspired volume.

I would engage your attention, if you please, to those Discourses, drawn up in my mind and intention, to be published some future day, if the Lord permit, in which *the truth, as it is in Jesus*, will be found set forth as stated in the word of revelation, and as received, through the channel of regeneration, into the minds of the Lord's people, by the divine teachings and omnipotent energy of the Lord the Spirit.

All the great things of God, and which can only be revealed to our minds by the Spirit of God, are,

1st. Such as concern God himself.

2dly. Those which concern Christ as God-Man: and also such as relate to his Headship ---his universal power and influence into all things visible and invisible.

3dly. Those concerning Christ and his Church as chosen in him---as one with him---as united unto him---their election in him---his Mediatorship, and his salvation of them---their state in this present evil world---his care of them---his communications to them---his communion with them, and their communion with him---his admitting them by death into the enjoyment of eternal life in the house eternal in the heavens, and giving them a participation of eternal glory.

4thly. Christ's government of the whole world. His executing every decree and purpose of the Divine Will, in every dispensation of his unerring Providence. His judging the world of the ungodly at the last day, and passing the final sentence on all flesh: these are the subjects of revelation.

Permit me to run over some of these particulars; not each of them distinctly; some of

them only, yet very briefly, as it will lead into my design in the succeeding pages.

And, 1st. As it respects that part of revelation which concerns *God himself*. This includes the Nature, Being, Life, Persons, and Perfections of the Incomprehensible Godhead. This is set before us in the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, whose existence and co-existence in the Godhead, is by a necessity of nature. The Godhead is the fountain of their personal existence; and their existence is in the Divine Nature. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the one Incomprehensible Jehovah. *The Lord our God is one Lord.* Deut. iv. 4. The Unity of the Divine Essence, and the Trinity of Persons in it, are most clearly revealed in the written word. We are not called upon to comprehend the same: we are called upon to believe this truth, because Jehovah himself has revealed it; and, *in Christ*, it is fully realized. In him, as God-Man, we are to rest and centre, and from him to receive the true knowledge of it.

2d. As it respects Christ, as *God-Man*, this is a part of the glorious revelation of God's will made known to us in the word of grace. He is *in the Form of God---he is the Image of the invisible God---the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts---*

*the brightness of glory.* He is the *first-born* of all God's thoughts, will, purposes, ends, and designs, respecting all worlds, beings, and things. He was set up from everlasting in his personal glory, in his ancient, primordial, supralapsarian splendour and majesty, as the foundation and corner stone of the whole creation; as the head of the whole election of grace; as He who was *the beginning and end of the whole creation of God; as the Alpha and Omega, the Amen.* It may be necessary to ask here, who is *the Person styled the Alpha and Omega, the Amen; the beginning of the creation of God; the Image of the invisible God; the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts; the brightness of glory?* Who is he? I reply, it must be He who is the speaker in the 8th chapter of the Proverbs. He it is, who there says, *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face*

*of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.* v. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. He, who spake this, was the *Man-in-God*; taken up into personal union with the *Essential Word*, and *only begotten Son of God*, by the will of the *Essential Three*, who was in heaven before all time, who came down from heaven in the fullness of time, and became incarnate. It is the same person, of whom *Paul* says, holding him up to the view of saints; *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature. For by him were all things created that are 'in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* Col. i. 14, 15, 16, 17. Here is Christ, God-Man, in both these passages, quoted from the *Proverbs*, and the *Colossians*, set before us in his *Personal Glory*, with his native, inherent,

incommunicable royalties, majesty, honour, titles, and dignity: not as the Second Person in the Trinity, as essentially and personally the Son of the living God; but as the Second Person in the Trinity, living and dwelling by personal union in the Man-Christ, as *God manifest in the flesh*.

I must say to you, Sir, the Person of Christ, as God-Man, and his Personal Glories as such, are at present so lost in the preaching of the word of life, that the church of Christ seems scarcely to know her Lord and Head, as he is revealed in the word of the Gospel: yet this is a real loss to her. It is in Christ, God-Man, the Unity of the Divine Nature, and the Personalities in it, are most clearly manifested. We have the whole Trinity *in Christ*; not that they are so in him, as that their distinct subsistences in Godhead are swallowed up in him: no; but they are each of them most clearly set forth in the doctrine of Christ's Person, as God-Man. He is one Person with *the Son of the living God*. He says, *As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*. John, v. 26. *In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*, i. e. Personally. Christ, as God-Man, hath a life, glory, blessedness, and com-



munion with Godhead, which are His personally and incommunicably. Now this is that part of divine revelation which concerns Christ himself.

His Headship, with his universal power and influence into all things, visible and invisible, flows from this.

The Headship of Christ follows. He being the head of the whole creation, he hath universal power and influence into all things, and over all things, visible and invisible; He being, as God-Man, the creator of them. By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible: and by him all things consist: he is the upholder of them. The Headship of Christ, his being the One Lord, under God the Father, is a part of divine revelation. The Apostle says, *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.* 1 Cor. viii. 6. Christ is a middle one. He is both God and Man: a Person, a Mediator between God and every creature. He is the Mediator of Creation: he is the introducer of them into existence, and he continues them in existence so long as to answer all the divine will concerning them in the present state. The Apostle, setting forth Christ

to the uttermost, and also the total accomplishment of all God's purposes in him, says, *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.* Ephes. i. 10.

My dear Sir, you will kindly forgive my prolixity; but these subjects before me, naturally and necessarily require time. I will, however, now enter on,

3dly. What concerns Christ and his Church. This will,

1st. Lead me to say as follows:---A great part of the word of revelation, concerns the church of Christ, which is his body, his bride, and spouse. She, his social companion, is to enjoy and partake with him in all his communicable glory. Jehovah the Father chose her in Christ, to grace and glory, before the foundation of the world. The God-Man had a view of her before all time. The Father loved her, and presented her to him in all the glory, beauty, perfection, and majesty, he had willed to bestow on her. This drew out the heart of the God-Man towards her. She was given to him. She was his by marriage union. He bestowed himself on her. The Father blessed her in him with all spiritual blessings. Christ was her head, lord, and husband. Her super-

lapsarian state, glory, blessedness, and perfection in Christ, are a part of divine revelation. We may take in a glimpse thereof from those words spoken by the God-Man, in the before cited 8th chapter of the Proverbs. He there says, verses 30, 31, *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.*

2dly. The mediatorship and salvation of Christ, on the behalf of his church and people, constitute that part of revelation, which is most properly to be styled Gospel: in which Christ is recorded as having humbled himself; as having emptied himself; as having laid aside his personal glory for a season; as taking on him the form of a servant; as living in our nature and world, the surety of his people, a life of perfect obedience to his Father's holy law; as having been made sin for them, by the act of the divine Father, who transferred their iniquities to him, and inflicted on him the whole desert of all their crimes: so that he hath redeemed them from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for them. All this constitutes the everlasting gospel of the blessed God, and is the fruit of divine revelation.

3dly. The state of Christ's church in this present evil world, is such, that she is the subject in each and every one of her individual members, of sin and misery; hence the care of Christ for her, his visits to her, his communications to her, his communions with her, and her communions with him, make up a very particular part of the revelation of his grace, as revealed in the gospel. He is, he will be, her God and guide even unto death. He does, he will, admit all his members at the instant of their departure from their bodies, into the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy; thus they have the enjoyment of eternal life in heaven, and are admitted to a sight of Christ by vision, in which their consummation of eternal glory will be perfected. I conceive the foregoing comprehends all contained in the Scriptures, respecting what is revealed concerning Christ and his church; unless we add to this, the glorious resurrection of the bodies of the elect from the grave and power of death, and the change which will pass on living saints, who will be changed in their bodies in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; and the whole church of Christ be made in body and soul, in their measure, like unto their glorious Lord, who will present them to the divine

Father, a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: they will, having enjoyed Christ to the utmost stretch of their wishes in the New Jerusalem State, be admitted to the ultimate state, where they will behold Christ's personal glory, and enjoy Father, Son, and Spirit, *in Christ*, as *all in all*. The Scriptures do not go beyond this. I believe I have now enumerated the whole of the substance of what is contained and revealed in them, concerning Christ and his church.

4thly. There is most certainly contained an account of the righteous government of Christ to, and over, all the creatures: of his judgment of the wicked; of the whole of his present and future procedure toward all the sinners of mankind. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* John v. 22. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Eccles. xii. 14. *Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Acts, xvii. 31. These important verities, which the Lord himself will prove to be most awful realities, are parts of that

divine revelation made known in the word of the gospel; and Jesus Christ will evidence them to be so *in his times, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.* 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

My dearly beloved Sir, I doubt not of your joining me, in acknowledging that the doctrine of the Three in Jehovah, is the foundation of the Scriptures: that the Person of Christ is the mystery of the gospel; that the Man Christ Jesus, is the object and subject of the everlasting love and delight of the Holy Trinity: that the love of Christ is the miracle which shines forth in the written word: that his salvation, victories, conquests, and triumphs, over all his and his church's enemies, are the subject of perpetual admiration by all his saints, both elect angels, and his redeemed, whether in earth or heaven: that his church is one with him, united unto him; that as clothed in his robe of righteousness and washed in his blood---complete in him: as surrounded by him, and shone upon with his bright beams of light and splendor, is the wonder of heaven, the admiration of elect angels, the terror of devils, the

one in whom is all Christ's delight. You will join me, in saying, the church of Christ in her primordial glory, is very little known. She is, in the day in which you and I live, very seldom considered but as recovered out of her lapsed state by her Lord and Redeemer; and even then, very rarely it is, for the glories and perfection of that salvation to be entered on and opened, so as for her to shine forth in her redeemed state, a glorious church, without spot, all fair, in the obedience and sacrifice of her Lord, who loved her, and washed her from her sins in his own blood. As to her relation to Christ, his delight in her, the communications he is pleased to afford her, his own communion with her, and the real and actual fellowship he freely admits her to hold with him---these are subjects seldom entered on: yet it is not because they are not revealed; it is because these glorious truths are not known; it is because they are overlooked. Be it so; yet we have not so learned Christ: not that I mean to enter into these immutable truths and mysteries in the Dialogues proposed. All I intend in what is now before me, is this---to simplify divine truth; and so far to bring in these divine verities into the following twelve discourses, as to shew their power and influence on the renewed

mind, as set home on it by the grace and energy of the Holy Spirit. I am very insufficient for the subject; yet my heart is in it; and my pen having begun it, I am very unwilling to stop. May you be led to look to the Lord on my behalf. May the Lord himself bless you with an enlarged mind, an enlightened understanding, unfeigned faith, great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. May you increase in the knowledge of the Lord's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. May you have increasing, clear, full, particular communion, with Father, Son, and Spirit, in all the blessings of their love, both in grace and glory, as set before you in the everlasting gospel. May that promise of free grace be realized in you, which runs thus: *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

I remain yours,

In the bonds of the gospel,

SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE.



## Preface to the Reader.



BELOVED,

IT is my present design to lay before thee, the whole outline of all real Godliness, as it consists in the operation of the Spirit of the living God, in producing a new-birth, or new creation in the soul, in revealing Christ and his salvation, and making him and it known in a way of real communication from himself, and in real communion with him.

It may not be amiss to inform thee, how my first thoughts concerning this work, occurred.

I had been celebrating the Lord's Supper, on a Lord's Day, at Mr. Bailey's

Chapel at Bethel-House, Brixton, Surrey. Having then been favoured, as I have been, through grace, many a time, with some special apprehensions of the blessedness of *being in Christ*; of being brought to a true and saving knowledge of Christ, and of the Father's love in him; and of the realization of the truth of all this, in real communion with the Father and the Son, through the energy and influence of the Eternal Spirit; it came into my mind, that it would be useful to such of the people of the Most High God, as might read the same---to cast the important subjects of the Gospel into such a form, as would render them very simple and familiar to the mind.

I have worshipped Jehovah Father, Son, and Spirit, in the observance of the ordinance of the Supper, more than fifty years. I am, and have been for years past, very fond of observing at the table, and afterwards, what particular views and appre-

hensions of Christ, and God's everlasting love, have been impressed and imprinted on my mind, in consequence of being engaged in shewing forth the Lord's Death. I have found in the course and experience of many years past, that letters written by me soon after a Lord's Supper solemnity, have had a greater *fulness* of Christ in them, and more savour and fragrancy, than others.

As I hinted before, it was after an immediate return from the Table of the Lord, and in conversing with the Divine Majesty in prayer, I conceived the present design, of attempting the following Discourses, which are here presented to view. I apprehend, the form of discoursing by way of dialogue, between two friends in Christ, the one enquiring concerning the truths of the everlasting Gospel, with a design to get further light and benefit from them,

and the other explaining the same, may come in upon the mind very easily, especially should the Spirit of the living God influence in the construction of the plan, and in the execution of the same. I consider its clearness and plain method, may be accompanied with considerable advantages. I also think, in shewing how the truths of God are received into the mind, how they influence the heart, and produce their real fruits and effects in experience, and practice in life and conversation, it cannot but be profitable to saints, be they *babes in Christ*, or *young men in Christ*, or *fathers in Christ*.

Under these views, and in this way of method and order, I shall set forth the following subjects:---1. On Sin---2. Regeneration---3. Salvation---4. Faith in Christ---5. The Person of Christ---6. The Knowledge of Christ---7. Communion with Christ---8. The Ordinances of Baptism

and the Lord's Supper---9. Church Fellowship---10. Death---11. Entrance into the invisible State---12. Eternal Glory. These will be opened and entered into by the dialogists; the one asking, for the sake of receiving light and instruction into these important truths; and the other replying to what is proposed. I shall give these terms to the speakers, *Enquirer* and *Instructor*. The plan given, comprehends all necessary truth. The names given to the speakers, of *Enquirer* and *Instructor*, are plain and easy. They are considered both as believers in Christ; only the one is in want of an interpreter, who can go before him, and explain to him the way of God more perfectly. The other is considered as strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, full of spiritual wisdom and understanding, and apt and able to instruct into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. May the Lord the Spirit give a blessing

to the end and design of the whole. May it be read with profit, and be, in the hand of the Spirit, a mean of spiritual benefit. A Table of the Contents will be given in their fullest meaning, and will also be prefixed to each discourse; so that, Reader, it will be before thee what thou art to expect.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for evermore, bless thee, Reader, with such a scriptural knowledge of the one alone Saviour, and give thee so to believe on him, to trust in his finished work, and centre in him alone, without the least confidence in the flesh, as may enable thee always to triumph in Christ. May the life thou livest in the flesh, be a life of faith on the Son of God, in the full belief that he loved thee, and gave himself for thee: then thou wilt be living to the praise and glory of free grace. Whilst thou art reaping the benefit and

blessing of it, thou wilt be giving him glorious praise for the same; and wilt be ready to join me in these words of the Apostle, *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* Ephes. iii. 20, 21. Reader, the good Lord be with thee. Amen.

SAMUEL EYLES PIERCE.

London, May 10, 1815.





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THE  
RICHES OF DIVINE GRACE  
UNFOLDED;

**Eternal Life, Heaven, and Glory Opened**

&c. &c.

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DIALOGUE I.

*In which Sin and the Fall, with their consequences, are the Subject of Discourse between Mr. Enquirer and Mr. Instructor, whose names I am inclined to exchange for Senior and Junior.*

THESE Dialogists are to be considered as two so intimate and united in friendship, as to love each other as David and Jonathan did, of the latter of whom it is said, *he loved David as his own soul.*

The discourse begins as follows, *Mr. Enquirer* addresses *Mr. Instructor*, thus:---Sir, I have often looked at, and considered you as a monument of God's mercy; as one of long continuation in the good ways of God; as a person who must, I conceive, have attained a good degree in the faith which is in Christ. I should, therefore, be glad of some free personal conversation with you; as I expect it would redound to my own profit and

real satisfaction. I hope you will not object to this. It may be, it may redound to the advantage of others also.

*Mr. Instructor.* For my own part, I should be most truly glad to communicate any knowledge to my good friend, which might contribute to his spiritual advantage. I am very greatly advanced in age, yet I would not have you forget what one of noble extraction once said in company with many honourable persons: *great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment.* I am an old man; yet it does not follow that I am a wise man. I am an old disciple of our Lord; yet it does not from hence follow that you will find me full of spiritual knowledge and spirituality. If you would converse with me, you must take me just as I am: you must not overrate me. Take me as I am: that is, if you would prefer a conversation with me.

*Enquirer.* This, my good Sir, I most readily will. I shall use no sort of flattering words. All I aim at, is to gain some spiritual light and instruction into the truths, mysteries, and things of God. I am persuaded, in the course of conversation, you will, through the good hand of our God upon you, be useful to me.

*Instructor.* No one can be more desirous to pour out his whole soul into the bosom of his friend, than I am to communicate the whole of my spiritual knowledge to you.

*Enquirer.* Sir, I most heartily thank you. I have good reason for believing it; having by long familiarity and acquaintance with you, proved the truth of this: I therefore request you would kindly give me all the light you can, from the knowledge and experience of

them in your own mind, of the most important truths which concern salvation, faith, and experience, contained in the everlasting gospel of the blessed God.

*Instructor.* I am at your service. But pray state what you conceive those most important subjects you want light and instruction into are.

*Enquirer.* I thank you, Sir, for this act of kindness. I will. What in a very particular manner appear to me to be such subjects as I want more fully to be acquainted with, are—1. Sin—2. Regeneration—3. Salvation—4. Faith in Christ—5. The Person of Christ—6. The Knowledge of Christ—7. On Communion with Christ—8. On the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper—9. On Church Fellowship—10. On Death—11. Concerning entrance into the invisible State—12. On Eternal Glory. Now, I should conceive, were my mind more clearly apprehensive of these subjects, and were they so stated in my mind, as they are in the written word, I should thereby be brought under the mighty influence and authority of them, and thereby be influenced in mind, will, and affections, to walk before the Lord unto all well pleasing.

*Instructor.* You have most certainly expressed the most important subjects in all the Bible. It will require a long confabulation to enter into each, and every one of them distinctly.

*Enquirer.* I perceive it will; yet, as they are distinct subjects, and a clear apprehension, however short of a full one, would be of advantage to me, I would request the favour of a discussion on each of them. Will you be pleased to admit me to ask such questions

on these great subjects, as may be instructive to my mind?

*Instructor.* Most certainly I will; yet I hope you will proceed orderly in your enquiries concerning these subjects; so as to keep them distinct, and not break in one upon the other.

*Enquirer.* As you are in every sense in my view, in age, judgment, experience, and utterance, far beyond and above me, I really should like these terms, *Senior* and *Junior*, as the distinguishing titles between us. I will, therefore, address you now, and in my further discourses, as *Senior*, and will consider myself, as I am, the *Junior*; and I beg, if you have any objection, you will express the same.

*Senior.* I have not: I accept the term very cordially, as an aged person. I am just entering on the *seventieth* year of my age, you may, therefore, without adulation, look on me so according to my years; and, as we do not mean to compliment each other, we will therefore be content, in speaking by way of conversation, to address each other under these titles.

*Junior.* Sir, I must confess, you are very kind and obliging. I thank you for it. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with our spirits, so as to render the subjects designed to be descanted upon, very profitable to both our minds; for, whilst I look on you, and would with real integrity and respect, treat and acknowledge you as my superior in every sense, as it relates to years, the knowledge of Christ, and experimental communion with him; yet I conceive your own mind may be really improved, by the drawing it forth to answer such questions as I have in my own intention to propose unto you.



*Senior.* I have no objection to conceive it may be so. I remember the great Apostle of the Gentiles, writing to the saints at Rome, says, *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established. That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me.* Rom. i. 11, 12.

*Junior.* Sir, I cannot express my real sentiments of gratitude, for your very great generosity in what hath already passed between us. Now, Sir, I will propose for our present conversation, the following subjects: viz: *Sin and the Fall, with their consequences.* I am a sinner. I know and feel I am so in my very nature. I read, *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* Rom. v. 12. Yet I understand at the beginning of the creation of God, there was no such evil as sin; I want, therefore, to have an account of God's creation of man, and how he, created pure and holy, could possibly become impure and unholy. This, therefore, Sir, I request your account of.

*Senior.* It is an immutable truth, that *the Lord our God is holy.* He created all things by his almighty power. His wisdom was displayed in and throughout the whole creation. It was all an act of his sovereign will. *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.* Rev. iv. 11. God himself pronounced all things in, and throughout the whole creation, to be good. *God saw all things, he saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good.* Gen. i. 31. Then there was no sin in existence. He created man in his own image, in righteous-

ness and true holiness: consequently, man was not a sinner at his creation; neither was there any sin or sinfulness in his constitution; yet he was not immutable; so neither were the angels. Now sin is not so much a positive act, as a privation. It produces many positive acts; yet, in its first original, it was the defect of the mind of the first man. He ceased to will what was the will of God; hence he ceased to be holy. In that very instant he lost the holiness of all his faculties. He no longer continued in the image of God. He was deprived of all good, and was the subject of a positive inclination to all evil. This was the origin of sin.

*Junior.* Pray, Sir, what is sin?

*Senior.* Sin is the act of the mind. It is a transgression of God's law. Angels in heaven, man upon the earth, were created under the law, as a covenant of works. The transgression of the law, was sin, which, on its first entrance, corrupted all the faculties of the mind; so that fallen angels, and fallen man, having their minds corrupted by it, are fallen from God, and most justly deserve his curse and wrath.

*Junior.* But there is something so tremendous in the idea, of sin being the cause of damnation, that I cannot but tremble at the thought.

*Senior.* It is so. Yet, we may rest assured, God cannot perform an unrighteous act; therefore, he cannot punish sin beyond its demerit.

*Junior.* Pray speak out more freely, and say what sin hath done in us; what its greatest evil consists in; what it hath produced, doth, and will produce, in such as live and die under its guilt and dominion.

*Senior.* Sin is an internal evil, though it is manifested

in many external and outward effects. The whole seat of sin in us, is in the will. It spreads its influence throughout every faculty, affection, disposition, and frame of the whole man, both body and soul. Its greatest evil consists in its taking off the whole heart from God; so that the mind is blinded; the will is in every particular opposite to the will of God; the affections are set on wrong objects; the members of the body are members of unrighteousness. There is in every faculty of the mind, and throughout every member of the body, a total privation of all good, and a positive inclination to all evil: this is the whole of what fallen man is, and this is the consequence of the fall. And every man is equally and alike fallen. No one is more fallen than another. No: all mankind are equal here. The word of God declares, *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* Rom. iii. 23.

*Junior.* But I want to know how man could fall from God, if he was created in the image of God, and in a state of perfection at and by his creation.

*Senior.* That is very easy to be shewed. Angels and man were both perfectly holy and pure in their creation state. Whilst they remained therein, they were in a state of creature perfection; yet they were not immutable, nor impeccable by creation. They were left to the mutability of their wills; to which mutability we must ascribe the fall of angels and men. Now God alone is immutable. He cannot make a creature immutable. He can continue the will of a rational creature immutable and impeccable, but he cannot make a creature so; it being an essential perfection of the Divine Essence, which cannot exist in creatures.

*Junior.* You have really thrown considerable light upon this subject on my mind. If I have understood you right, sin is the defect of the creature. Its propensity to sink into itself; its centering in itself; its going off from God; its seeking content, rest, and satisfaction in itself, in its own acts, in the creature, in any thing but God alone.

*Senior.* It is so. You have conceived the subject very correctly.

*Junior.* But how could this originally befall man, if he was created pure and holy? Was not God's will the rule, and his glory the end, of man?

*Senior.* God's glory was the end, and his will, revealed in the moral law, man's chief and highest rule; yet the mind of man, as created by God, was vastly capacious and apprehensive. He had the whole world made for him, and he was made for it. Every creature in it was formed for his use, and to give him delight. He was himself the epitome of all creation in this our world. He was to enjoy God in the creatures, and by them to aspire in praise and admiration up to God, the fountain of the whole creation, and of all the good contained in it. Now his mind being full of activity, it was possible for him, in the multiplicity of subjects, to forget to think of God aright. Hence it was possible for him to sin; and, I conceive, sin entered in at this door. He ceased to think holily, which was his fall from God. His actual fall was the effect of this: at least I conceive thus of it.

*Junior.* Sir, then you conceive it was owing to the mutability of man's will, that he became a sinner.

*Senior.* I do. And so it was the case with the fallen angels.

*Junior.* Really, Sir, I must confess this clears up the subject of the Fall, so as no imputation can fall on God as the author of sin, to my very great satisfaction.

*Senior.* Sin is not so much a positive, as a privative evil. It is a mental one, although it manifests itself in all sorts of actual evils. It first began in the mind. It is always residentiary in the will. It is put forth into act, as various temptations call it forth into act and exercise. Sin is not without us: it is inherent in us. It is our nature corrupted by the fall. This is what sin is.

*Junior.* Then, Sir, you distinguish these subjects, do you not? That sin produced the fall: this produces all actual evils. That the circumstances of the fall, are most truly fatal to the souls and bodies of men.

*Senior.* This, Sir, is my apprehension of these subjects. All the miseries in earth and hell, are the fruits and effects of sin. Damnation is the desert of every sin. There are none damned, but for sin. There are none of the fallen race in hell, but for sin. Neither you nor I can escape the damnation of hell by any thing we can do or perform. No. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

*Junior.* Sir, I have experienced the truth of what you now say in my own mind. It hath pleased the Lord the Spirit, to convince me of sin; of my own personal and constitutional sin. I have seen it in its guilt. I have been led to conceive of the exceeding sinfulness of it; the horrible pollution of it; the damnable nature of it; the tremendous demerit of the same.

It has caused me to groan on account of it before the Lord. I have confessed it; I have most deeply lamented it; I have pleaded Christ, his doings and sufferings; have obtained relief herefrom; yet, alas! alas! I feel and experience myself the subject of the same corrupted nature I have ever been: indeed, Sir, I do. What am I to think of my case and state?

*Senior.* It always appears to me a real evidence of grace, and the true operation of the Holy Spirit on the mind, where a sense of the exceeding sinfulness is abiding on the mind. I conceive, without it, we should never wholly renounce all hope in ourselves; therefore, I say neither your case nor state is affected by any sights, feelings, and apprehensions you may have in your mind of the depth of sin, and the mystery of iniquity you experience in your fallen nature. I would not have you at any time dwell on it. Look to Christ: go to him with it: carry it all with you, and present yourself before him. Entreat him to look on you; to consider your case; to interpose on your behalf; to bestow on you the blessings of his intercession and advocacy. This is the only word of advice I can give you. May the Lord make it effectual.

*Junior.* But if I might speak out, good Sir, the whole of my heart, really the longer I live, the more I experience my own inward sinfulness. It is not outward acts of wickedness I am speaking of; neither is it a giving myself up to any acts of sin: but what I lament is, what I am, and see myself to be, in my old Adam nature. There is no change in it: there is no holiness in it: there is no purity in it. I do see, in point of sinfulness, it cannot be exceeded by any of the

damned in hell. What say you to this? What can you think of me, when I open myself thus freely to you?

*Senior.* I am rather inclined to think, this is full proof of a spiritual and supernatural birth in your soul. The Apostle says, *I know, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.* But it is time to close our present conversation; I therefore bid you, for the present—Farewell.

## DIALOGUE II.

*In which a Discourse is carried on concerning Regeneration, which subject is opened and explained.*

*Mr. Enquirer* and *Mr. Instructor*, or *Junior* and *Senior*, having afresh interview, the conversation began thus:

*Junior.* Sir, I address you with pleasure, and would inform you, I have been thinking over the subject concerning *sin, with the fall and its consequences*. I find it to be most truly an awful and solemn subject indeed! I find I am, as one in the first man, as a descendant from him, as truly in my person and fallen nature, as entirely sinful, corrupted, lost, and defiled as he was, when he broke the holy law of God. I think I never more fully apprehended and comprehended what sin is, together with what is contained in the fall, as also the consequences of it, than at present. I am a sinner. My fallen nature contains the whole essence of all contained in sin. I see myself in myself, considered wholly and only as I am *in Adam*, and my old Adam nature, a dead, a lost, a condemned man, who cannot escape the damnation of hell, by any will or power of my own. I desire to bless the Lord for this view and experience of the subject, because it leads me to renounce all hope of



deliverance from what I am in myself by any creature acts. I plainly perceive I can be acquitted only from what I am inherently and actually in myself, by the covenant of the Eternal Three. My only hope for salvation is in the will, the council, the acts, and transactions of the Essential Three. I can stand before the Holy Lord God, free from all sin, only upon the footing of their imputing unto my person, the holiness, righteousness, and redemption of Jesus Christ. Whilst this is my sole foundation for expecting eternal life, yet I wish to have some further light into many momentous truths.

*Senior.* It pleases me that our past conversation hath proved so useful to you, to bring you out of yourself, and to look off yourself, and that it has made way for your professing all your hope in God is founded on Christ alone. Whatsoever you are disposed to make the subject of conversation at this interview, it is for you to name. I am wholly at your service and command.

*Junior.* Thank you, Sir. I am fully convinced of the truth of what our Lord spoke in the days of his flesh, when he pronounced with a double asseveration to *Nicodemus*, these words, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* John, iii. 3. But I could wish to have the subject clearly opened.

*Senior.* It is a most important one, and very necessary to be known. I think, in our first conversation, you mentioned it as one of those subjects which were to be discoursed upon.

*Junior.* I did so: if, therefore, it suits you, I should be thankful if you would treat on it, and give

me some scriptural light and insight into it; as the more clearly I am by any means led to understand any truth rightly, the more I conceive I shall prize and esteem Christ.

*Senior.* Most undoubtedly this is the proper effect which cannot but be produced thereby. But I hope you do not look to receive any spiritual blessing from me.

*Junior.* No. I do not. Yet I expect to receive spiritual profit and advantage in conversing with you. This I am sure I have already had. This I still expect. Yet this must come from the light and influence with which the Lord himself may be pleased to accompany the same unto my mind.

*Senior.* So far as you consider me as one like yourself, who cannot receive nor impart any spiritual gift, but as it is given me from heaven, and look and depend wholly and alone upon the Holy Ghost for that unction which teacheth all things, I am truly pleased, and shall be freely willing to impart unto you any knowledge I am capable of.

*Junior.* Pray, Sir, open, if you please, what the good Lord's meaning and design in these words are, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* The more briefly you do so, it will be to me the more acceptable.

*Senior.* The doctrine of the New Birth, or Regeneration, is of vast importance: yet, as all other doctrines of the gospel, it is spiritual and simple. Our Lord, in the words you recited, speaks of the necessity of it. He declares there can be no entrance into the kingdom of God without it. He expresses himself

very solemnly concerning it. He addresses one single individual on it. He declares there cannot be any sight of the kingdom of God, except this new-birth (or being born again, or born from above) take place in the soul. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* You have here these particulars—1st. Christ's solemn asseveration.—2d. The address. It is to an individual, which shews that the truth contained in the words, concerns all: so as that no man can enter into the kingdom of God; no man see God, without it. The 3d particular is an *except*, without exception: *a man must be born again*—and, 4th. He, none without it, can enter into heaven.

*Junior.* Truly, Sir, you have made the entrance into this subject very clear. Will you unfold the subject, and inform me what regeneration is?

*Senior.* Most assuredly. So far as in my power, I will. You know, my good Sir, sin and the fall have entirely corrupted every faculty of the human mind; therefore, except there be a renewing of the mind, it cannot be disposed to receive and apprehend the things of God. Again: you know there can be no entrance into our world, but by birth. We must be born into it, or we cannot be partakers of what is in it. Adam was the head of the natural world. Christ is the head of the spiritual world. We cannot enter into his world but by a new birth. We must be born into it. As when we are born naturally, we have then all the faculties, senses, and members we ever shall have, and are thereby fitted for living in this world: so the soul born again, hath every sense, faculty, and affection of the

new man it ever will have. It is thereby fitted and qualified for living in Christ's world. Like as Adam, when created and brought into existence in our world, had every faculty and affection, temper and disposition, suited to every creature, object, and subject, which the Lord God had made in this world: so a man in Christ, created anew in Christ Jesus, is brought into Christ's world with every grace contained in his new birth, whereby he is exactly fitted to take into his mind, enjoy in his heart, and embrace in his affections, the Lord Jesus Christ, as his head—his redeemer—as his Lord—his righteousness—his sacrifice—his glory—his all. Now, without a new, or supernatural birth, he could not know Christ; he could not enjoy Christ; he could not have communion with Christ: he could not have his heart and affections set on Christ. There is every thing in the world, which, when created, and Adam was first brought into it, suited his every faculty, sense, perception, and affection: so there is every thing in Christ, to suit the man who is born again—who is born into Christ's world of grace. The new creation is suited to all in Christ, and Christ is suited to every faculty, sense, and perception of the new creature. Do you understand me?

*Junior.* Sir, I must, and cannot but acknowledge, I perceive a glory, a grandeur, and majesty, in what you have mentioned; but must confess it at present surpasses me: it goes beyond me. I know you will not be offended at my speaking the truth of my own mind.

*Senior.* No, indeed. It would be very pleasing to me, to convey truth to your mind in the most clear, convincing, and acceptable way; say, therefore, in

what way, and what you would further wish me to say on this most important subject of our present conversation, *Regeneration*.

*Junior.* Sir, I rather want to know what regeneration is—how it is wrought—what follows on it—what are the evidences, fruits, and effects of it. Will you oblige me, by going over these particulars.

*Senior.* Most undoubtedly I will. In my own view, the whole of this is included and expressed in what hath been stated. However, I am not my own; I am the servant of Christ, and your servant for his sake.

*Junior.* Sir, you put me to the blush; yet I most heartily thank you for the condescension, and hope to receive benefit therefrom.

*Senior.* I could wish you to state the particulars of this subject, of which you are so desirous of receiving further satisfaction.

*Junior.* Thank you, Sir; I will. I would request, 1st. To know what regeneration is. 2d. The necessity of it. 3d. How I may know I am the subject of this grace. 4th. What are the fruits and blessings which accompany it. If you will be so kind to admit me, as you may go on with each of the particulars, to stop, and give me an opportunity of so taking them distinctly into my mind, I shall esteem it an increasing favour and benefit bestowed.

*Senior.* You are exceedingly welcome to all this; as also to all the advantages the present discourse may afford, of starting objections, or expressing yourself either as satisfied or dissatisfied; whilst it will be my endeavour to speak to you in the clearest manner, and according to my judgment, as received from

God's written word; yet, it may be, what appears very clear to me, may not to you; therefore, be as free as you please, it will not be offensive.

*Junior.* My request is, 1st. To know what *Regeneration* is, and what it consists in. I want some scriptural light into this.

*Senior.* *Regeneration*, is a new creation. The mind is the subject of it. Our Lord styles it a new birth. It is variously denominated in the word. As it is called a *new creature—the new man—the inner man—the hidden man—the new creature*. I would observe, Adam is the root of generation, Christ is the root of regeneration. If we had not been in Adam by creation, we had never been produced by generation. Such as were not in Christ by eternal election, will never be manifested to have being in Christ by regeneration. Do you understand this?

*Junior.* I understand you say it is a supernatural change wrought in the mind of a sinner. Pray does it not then alter the sinful nature and disposition which were inherent in the sinner when this new birth took place in him?

*Senior.* No. It does not. Our Lord himself decides this point. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.* John, iii. 6. The new birth is a new nature, created in the mind, which never existed in it before. It is conveyed by the Spirit of God. He is the author of it. Hence it is called after his name, *Spirit*. *That which is born of the Spirit is spirit*. It is contrary to every desire and propensity with the old man. There is no sin in it. Hence the Apostle says, *Whosoever is born of*

*God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*  
1 John, iii. 9.

*Junior.* I still want a more simple definition of the new birth. Of what it is.

*Senior.* You shall have it. This I think will give you a very clear apprehension concerning it. Why, my good friend, it is making a man, who is *dead in trespasses and sins, alive to God by the power of the Holy Ghost.*

*Junior.* But you have brought no scripture for the proof of it.

*Senior.* I have not: yet it is not because there is not one ready at hand, to be produced to confirm this. The Apostle says, *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.* Ephes. ii. 1. There can be no motion without life. And the first act of the Spirit of God upon the mind, is to quicken it with spiritual life. The Holy Ghost is the breath of all spiritual life. He, as the Spirit of Life, enters into a dead sinner, quickens him, and communicates to him life everlasting. What say you to this? Do or can you object to it? Would you not think this sufficient to prove that *regeneration* is making a dead sinner alive to God, by the power of the Holy Ghost? That's the question now to be determined.

*Junior.* I really cannot object against what you say; yet I want the subject to be more simplified.

*Senior.* I am sure I have no objection to this: Nothing pleases me better. No one is a greater friend to have truth scripturally stated, rightly explained, properly defended, and most simply set forth; yet you will acknowledge, spiritual truth can never be brought

down, so as to be properly apprehended by any, but such as are taught of God. *Unto you* (says our Lord) *it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom.*

*Junior.* Most undoubtedly it is, and must be so. But adduce all in one collection of scripture, you would yourself wish for, to prove regeneration consists in making a dead sinner alive to God. I will then rest satisfied.

*Senior.* I will. The state of the elect before effectual calling takes place in their souls, and how it was with them to the very moment of their being quickened with life eternal, is thus set forth by the Apostle: *And you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others.* Observe very particularly what follows. *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)* Ephes. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Is not this all-sufficient proof, that regeneration is making a dead sinner alive to God by the power of the Holy Ghost?

*Junior.* Sir, I really cannot deny it. Then, according to this, regeneration consists in turning a sinner from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan to God.

*Senior.* Yes. By it we are translated into the



kingdom of God's dear Son. This is the state which every soul regenerated is brought into.

*Junior.* Shew me now the necessity for this. Our Lord says, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

*Senior.* We are all unholy by our first birth. We have not the least true knowledge and apprehension of the things of God. The Apostle says, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* 1 Cor. ii. 14. There must therefore be a necessity for us to have spiritual minds supernaturally illuminated, that we may understand spiritual and supernatural subjects. I hope this is very clear to your mind. If so, then you cannot but understand our Lord's words, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* John, iii. 3. And again, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Verse, 5.

*Junior.* But I ask, How am I to know that I am the subject of this grace? How am I to know that I am born of God? I want this question to be resolved.

*Senior.* The Apostle says, *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* By which he gives us to know, that regeneration is faith in the habit, and faith on Christ is the same in the act. It is just what Paul says, *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* Gall. iii. 26. It is to be known by this important question put by Christ himself: *What think ye of Christ?* If Christ is your object; if he be your hope; if you think, and delight inwardly and spirit-

ually to think on him—this is full proof, and all-sufficient evidence, of your being born again. Every act of faith on Christ, gives fresh and full proof of the same.

*Junior.* This is very satisfactory; yet I would fain have some scriptural proof of it.

*Senior.* You shall. Our Lord says, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, hath everlasting life. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* John, vi. 47. 54. 56. If you enter into the spiritual meaning of our Lord's words, they carry with them full evidence of the new birth being wrought where Christ thus dwells, and nourishes up the soul in communion with him, unto life eternal.

*Junior.* I am satisfied: only say, to complete my request, what are the fruits and blessings which accompany the new birth.

*Senior.* Such as are born of God, have the Spirit of God dwelling in them. He possesses their bodies and minds. They are his temples. He consecrates their hearts for communion with the Father and the Son. He reveals Christ in them and unto them. He exercises their minds on him. He sheds abroad in their hearts the love of God. He is their comforter in all times of distress; yea, even in the article of death. He will dwell in them for ever. And thus he being their leader, he makes it manifest to them and others, that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God. Are you satisfied with this scriptural and experimental account of the subject?

*Junior.* I really am, and thank you for it: only I

wish you to conclude with producing those scriptures which respect the new birth, and the state of the new born.

*Senior.* The term new birth, or being born again, is but sparingly mentioned after our Lord's discourse on it. I believe we must get into the Epistle of James before we shall find it. He says, *Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.* Chap. i. 17, 18. Peter blesseth God for regeneration, as the first act of God upon us and within us, and therefore the next blessing to election, and as the immediate fruit thereof within us. His words are, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.* 1 Peter, i. 3, 4. At the close of the chapter he addresses them thus: *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* In the next chapter he entitles them *new-born babes.* John uses the expression, *born of God.* 1 John, iii. 9. as also chap. v. 4. As to what is contained and given us in the new birth, Peter sets before us in these words: *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue.* 2 Epis. i. 3. As to the state into

which the regenerate are brought, it is thus expressed by John, *We know that we have passed from death unto life.* Paul, speaking of it, says, *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.* And Peter's account of it is this, *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* See 1 John, iii. 14—Coll. i. 13—1 Peter, ii. 9. Regeneration is an act wrought instantaneously in us. We are altogether passive. It is an immutable act. Our meetness for heaven and glory is contained in it. It is an act once for all. It is altogether perfect and divine. It admits of no degrees. It is one and the same in all who are the subjects of it. Such are in a state of life: they are passed by it, out of the state they were in, whilst they were unregenerate: they are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son: they are called out of darkness into his (i. e. God's) marvellous light: they are hereby manifested to be the Lord's. In point of safety they cannot be more secure. I hope I have expressed the subject, in these scriptural proofs, satisfactorily.

*Junior.* You have. May the Lord's blessing accompany the same to my mind.

*Senior.* I most heartily join you in the same most important request. Amen.

## DIALOGUE III.

*Which contains a Discourse on Salvation, in its Nature, Fruits, and Effects, as proceeding from the Covenant of the Eternal Three in the one Incomprehensible Jehovah.*

THE past conversations between *Mr. Enquirer* and *Mr. Instructor*, having been acceptable to both, they on a convenient season meet again; and, after some pleasing salutations, resume their discourse.

*Mr. Junior.* Sir, your last discourse on the subject of regeneration, hath been very influential on my mind. I have ruminated on it over and over. I understand by what hath been said on the subject of regeneration, and the state in which the regenerate are, that I am created anew in **Christ Jesus**, and brought into the kingdom of **God's dear Son**, and have the **Holy Ghost** dwelling in me, and bestowed on me, that I may know the things which are freely given to me of **God**, and treasured up for my use in the fulness of **Christ Jesus**. Am I right in this?

*Senior.* You most certainly are. The Apostle says to such as were translated into the kingdom of **God's dear Son**, they had *put on the new man, which is renew-*

*ed in knowledge after the image of him that created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all. The new man, the new creature, hath all its life in Christ; and Christ is the life and glory of the new creature. He is all and in all, in and throughout every part and faculty of it. The new creature is all mind and understanding to know Christ, to apprehend and receive the knowledge of him. It is all will to choose him: it is all heart to love him. All its affections are supremely fixed on him. It is all eye to behold him: all ear to hear him. It smells the savour of his name, person, blood, righteousness, and fragrant intercession. It hath a mouth to speak for him: a palate to taste the sweetness contained in his word and promises: hands to handle him: it hath feet to go to him, and to walk in him. In fact, all the spiritual actings of the new creature are on Christ. Thus Christ, is to the new man in Christ, *all in all*. But I am now preventing you. I think you proposed, were we permitted to pursue our mutual converse, to speak on salvation.*

*Junior.* I assent to what you say. I want light into the subject of salvation. But pray are not regeneration, and the Spirit's operations within me, salvation? It is generally considered in this light and point of view.

*Senior.* I believe the generality of persons conceive, if they are *born of God*, (for that is John's expression of the subject,) it is salvation: but I say, no; it is not. The new birth is all of grace: it is the fruit of eternal election. By it we are born the sons and daughters of

the Lord God Almighty. In it we are most divinely and evidentially manifested to be *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*. Yet this is not salvation. The new birth is the fruit of adoption, not of salvation. Regeneration is the medium whereby we receive the knowledge of Christ into our minds. It is the faculty wrought in the renewed mind, by which we receive Christ and his salvation into our hearts.

*Junior.* Will you be pleased to entertain me with a free discourse on this very interesting and most important subject?

*Senior.* I am at your service, and most assuredly will; yet I would premise, it is a vast subject; it will be best therefore to take it up in order.

*Junior.* In what order would you propose to treat of it, so as that my mind might have a clear conception of the same?

*Senior.* When you put this question, I am bound to return an answer. I think the subject should be considered in all its parts, fruits, and effects, so as that the Holy Cæs in the Incomprehensible Godhead, should have their just and proper tribute rendered to each of them.

*Junior.* I thought salvation was the incommunicable work of Christ, and that the sole glory was his personal due.

*Senior.* It is so; yet the Father and the Spirit are as truly concerned in it, as Christ. The Father appointed him, and the Spirit anointed him. He says, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me, &c.* Isaiah, lxi. 1.

*Junior.* It has ever appeared to me, that the whole

gospel is set before us, and fully declared by the apostle, when he says, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* 1 Tim. i. 15.

*Senior.* It is the very sum and marrow of the gospel indeed. But this is a declaration of salvation. It gives no account of its originality; yet it lays a foundation for enquiring concerning it. For if Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, there must be a cause for it; and his coming into the world, must be the effect thereof. Our Lord most expressly says, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* John, iii. 16. Now God's love is there set forth as the cause; and Christ was given as the effect of God's love; then put his coming into the world to save sinners, this is the end which he accomplished by his coming into the world. Yet he must have performed some work in our world, or how could he have saved sinners?

*Junior.* Yes; it is true: for he lived and died to save them.

*Senior.* Then his life and death must be their salvation.

*Junior.* Doubtless they must be; but we must have the fruits and effects thereof to complete the same. We cannot be saved without them. You will not say we can.

*Senior.* I am by no means for robbing Christ of his crown. I would have Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have the glory given to them for salvation work. If you will admit of it, I will entertain you very briefly, and as comprehensively as I can, with an account of Salvation—of what it is—of the originality of it—of its nature



—of its fruits and effects, as proceeding from the covenant of the Eternal Three in the one Incomprehensible Jehovah.

*Junior.* I can by no means object to this very kind proposal. But, Sir, I request you to be very clear, distinct, and particular on each of these parts of the subject.

*Senior.* My friend, what do you mean? Pray explain yourself.

*Junior.* Sir, this is what I mean. If you please, I should like you to make, 1st. Your account of salvation one particular; then, 2d. What salvation is; then, 3d. The originality of it; then, 4th. Its nature; then, 5th. Of its fruits and effects; then, 6th. How it flows from the covenant of the Eternal Three: for, I clearly perceive, from what you have hinted, it is a vast and glorious subject, which I should be glad to retain in my mind, so as to be enabled to ruminate thereon.

*Senior.* Let it be even so. I will give you liberty to call for each of these subjects in the order which you please.

*Junior.* You are extremely kind and obliging. Will you then be pleased to give me a discourse on salvation, in its nature, fruits, and effects, as proceeding from the covenant of the Eternal Three, in the one Incomprehensible Jehovah, in manner and order as shall follow in my present conversation with you?

*Senior.* I will. My whole soul is in this service of love to you.

*Junior.* Then I request you, 1st. Of Salvation.

*Senior.* Salvation is a vastly comprehensive word, as it contains a vast subject. It is, as belonging to

Christ, a deliverance from all evil. It is a salvation from all sin and evil; from satan, the world, death, and damnation. It is a salvation for sinners. It is a free salvation—a full salvation—a finished salvation—a present salvation—a suited salvation to every case and circumstance a sinner can be in. It is a spiritual salvation. It is an everlasting salvation.—This is salvation.

*Junior.* Then, according to this, it is a provision made for sinners to heal their wounds—to wash them from their stains—to deliver them from sin—to raise them up out of the ruins of the fall—to crush under their feet satan—to save them from the love of this present evil world—to supply all their wants—to comfort them under all their distresses—to suit their every case and circumstance—to remove from their minds the guilt of sin—to purify their consciences from the filth and stain of it—to lift them up above the fears of death—to fill them with hopes full of a glorious immortality—to lay the sole foundation for a sinner's faith and hope in God:—this is salvation, is it not? Have I received what you have delivered, rightly? Do I express myself agreeably to the request I made concerning salvation? Is this right with the account you have just given me of it? If not, do not deceive me.

*Senior.* It is even so. You may look to the Christian's *Magna Charta*, the Bible, and be satisfied of the truth of the same. What have you further to propose concerning this great subject? I may say of it, it is vast! it is infinite!

*Junior.* As you have given me a general account of

salvation, I want next to ask, What salvation is? This I before proposed, as the 2d thing to be discussed.

*Senior.* You did so. I have spoken, 1st. Of salvation; I will now, 2d. Shew what salvation is. It is the taking away of sin; it is the bringing in everlasting righteousness; it is the removal of the curse; it is the entire conquest of satan and his principalities and powers; it is the abolition of death; it is the destruction and conquest of the grave. This is what salvation consists in; all which is the work of Christ alone. He substituted his person in our room and stead; he bore our sins, and carried our sorrows; he was made sin; he sustained the curse; he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; he hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; he hath brought in everlasting righteousness; he hath made peace by the blood of his cross; he hath trodden upon the head of the old serpent, called the devil; he hath vanquished principalities and powers; he hath destroyed death; he hath perfumed the grave; he hath led captivity captive; he is risen from the dead; he is ascended on high; he is entered into heaven; he liveth in the presence of God for us—this is salvation. It is in the person and work of Christ. Our whole complete salvation from all sin and every enemy, is in the person, work, victories, and triumphs of our Lord. Thus I have endeavoured to answer you. What think ye of it?

*Junior.* Truly, Sir, the great God our Saviour, and his great salvation, are altogether wonderful. If I understand you right, Jesus Christ acted the part of a Mediator. He, as the surety, was charged with all sorts of sin. He endured the very curse due to iniquity:

so that those he died for, are discharged on his account. Is it not so?

*Senior.* Yes, verily it is! *He was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Surely this is complete salvation: not completed in us, but completed for us, by our Lord Jesus Christ, in his own most adorable person, and by his most perfect righteousness, and precious blood shedding. What have you further to propose?

*Junior.* If you please, to discourse on the 3d particular, which is concerning the originality of salvation. I apprehend from you this is of vast importance.

*Senior.* Indeed it is, as it gives validity to the whole. Salvation, in its original, is the consequence of an eternal council and covenant, which obtained before all time, between the Three in Jehovah, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; in which it was willed to save an innumerable company of the sinners of mankind, and raise them up above and beyond all the ruins of the fall, by the suretyship engagements of Christ, the Son of God, on the behalf of his church and people. The Apostle tells us, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* 2 Cor. v. 19. This covenant was the fruit of everlasting love; yet the grand design of it, was to display everlasting love in acts of mercy and compassion towards the elect sons of men. In this covenant, all depended on the transactions in it. Every article and condition of it, was engaged for, and to be performed by the sacred Three. The grand article stipulated for, was the death of Christ. On this all depended. All blessings were to be communicated to the elect, on the

Surety fulfilling his part in the covenant, which he most readily hath done; for, saith the Apostle, *wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart.* Our Lord says, *I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* John, vi. 38. 40. I hope you see from the account given, that the covenant of the Three in Jehovah, is the original of the gospel. Is this clear to you?

*Junior.* It is so. I thus conceive of it. Christ is the book of life. All his people being chosen in him, their names were registered in him. He undertook for them, according to the council and covenant of grace. He undertook to become incarnate, to live and die for them. Hence he is styled *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* Rev. xiii. 8. And his life and death are salvation. This appears to me the result of what you have delivered. Is it not so?

*Senior.* Yes, it is. According to your own request, I have given you, 1st. An account of salvation. 2d. What salvation is. 3d. The originality of it. Now that which remains to be discoursed of concerning this great and vastly important subject, is in the following particulars, viz. 4th. The nature of this salvation. 5th. Its fruits and effects. 6th. How it all flows from the covenant of the Eternal Three. I

might say, salvation itself—what salvation is—the original of it—the nature of it—with its fruits and effects—and how it flows from the sovereign will and good pleasure of the Holy Trinity—are but so many parts which form one grand incomprehensible subject of grace, which it hath pleased the ever blessed God to reveal and make known in the word of his grace.

*Junior.* I conceive of it thus. Yet I see the propriety of taking up the subject in every distinct part and branch of it. I freely confess I had not this conception, until you first suggested it; yet I now see there is a peculiar beauty, and cannot but be a very particular satisfaction to the spiritual and enlightened mind, to obtain clear, distinct, and personal apprehensions of the same. I want you, Sir, to proceed with the subject in its further branches, and give me an account of the nature of salvation: this is the 4th part thereof.

*Senior.* It is so. With respect to the nature of it, this is God-like and divine. It is full of grace and truth. It contains in it a full revelation of all the persons and perfections in God. It opens the very heart of God, and discovers all contained in the divine mind and will concerning us. It is a full copy and exhibition of what free grace and divine favour in Christ Jesus is. It is all free. It is all full. It is all grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, testified of to us by the witness of the Eternal Spirit in the word of grace. It shews God's views of sin, his hatred of it, his wrath against

it, the immutability of his will, his essential righteousness and justice, his holiness and purity, in all its manifestative glory. Not a sin pardoned, but on the footing of an infinite satisfaction. Not one sin overlooked, connived at, or passed by, but all laid on Christ—all visited on him. His life, his soul, his blood, his death, all go for the ransom of transgressors. *God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus.* I think in giving you an account of the nature of the salvation we have been speaking of, you have another great and glorious view of the same subject expressed. What think you?

*Junior.* Verily I think so too. But now, my good Sir, do give some general account of the fruits and effects of this salvation. This is the 5th division of the subject according to my request.

*Senior.* As it respects the fruits and effects of this salvation, they are very many. They are great and glorious. Pardon of all sin is the fruit of Christ's death. Justification unto life is the fruit of Christ's obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. Deliverance out of the hands of all our enemies, is another. Its effects are as follows:—Peace with God in the conscience—deliverance from the bondage and tyranny of sin—free access to God—free walking before him in Christ, unto all well pleasing—a freedom from all condemnation; there being no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus—the spirit of grace and supplication—a free access to the throne of grace at all times, as the matter may require—an exemption from bondage to the fear of death—a joyful hope of a

glorious resurrection from the grave and power of death, on the second coming and appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ—a full assurance of our entrance into heaven, immediately on our dismissal from our bodies by death. These are the fruits of this salvation. What think ye of them?

*Junior.* I think they are altogether supernatural and divine. When you say these are the fruits and effects of salvation, I do not apprehend you to mean that each and every one born of the Spirit, has an equal and alike perception of them, and a free and full enjoyment of them; yet I understand by you, all the Lord's people have one and the same interest in them. Is it not so, Sir?

*Senior.* Yes; it is even so. You are quite right in this: but, if you please, let our present subject be finished, as I do not like to be too long engaged even on the best of subjects; the mind naturally gets tired. I don't want to drop the subject; but I want to retire, and contemplate the subjects we have been conversing upon. Say, therefore, what you would add, before the conversation is closed.

*Junior.* Sir, I only want the 6th part proposed, to be spoken to, then I also shall be willing that the present intercourse should close.

*Senior.* This is, 6th, to shew how all which hath been spoken, 1st, of salvation—2d, of what salvation consists in—3d, the originality of it—4th, its nature—5th, its fruits and benefits—flows from the covenant of the Eternal Three in the one incomprehensible Jehovah, which proves it to be altogether the effect of divine



sovereignty. It was the will of Father, Son, and Spirit, from everlasting to love the elect in Christ—to accept them in Christ—to bless them in Christ—to save them in Christ—to continue his grace to them in Christ, in every state they should pass through—to prove this unto them, by remembering them with everlasting kindness. The whole of which is grace. It is nothing more nor less than the good pleasure of God's will concerning them. The Father willed to love them with an everlasting love—the Son willed to love them, and save them in himself with an everlasting salvation—the Holy Ghost loved them, and willed to make them his living temples, to dwell in them and walk in them: all which was to be set before them in the person of Christ. In whom all of God shines forth; in whom the whole of God is revealed; in whom the will of God is declared; in whom all the council and covenant of Godhead is ratified; in whom the whole salvation of God is made known to us. Now, my friend, in a clear and scriptural statement of the acts and transactions of the Holy Trinity in the covenant of grace, we have the gospel in its original. You will profit in divine knowledge, as you understand the Father proposed all concerning salvation: the Son engaged to perform all which concerned salvation: the Holy Ghost undertook to reveal all concerning this wonderful subject. As hereby you will see you are equally and alike indebted to each of the sacred Three, for the whole of your salvation. I now want to retire. I leave the subject for your consideration, and to the Lord's blessing. Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

*Junior.* I thank you, Sir. May the Lord bless the subject you have left with me, to the enlargement of my mind, to the increase of my faith in the acts and transactions of the Three in Jehovah, that I may draw all my support and consolation from them as my covenant God. I return you my sincere thanks for your free and instructive conversation. The Lord be with you. Amen.

## DIALOGUE IV.

*A Discourse, in which an Account is given how this Salvation is received, in the Knowledge of it, into the regenerate Mind; by the operation of the Holy Ghost upon it.*

*Mr. Enquirer.* Sir, our last conversation, in which you discoursed on salvation, has been a mean of opening my mind to apprehend the importance of that subject beyond my former views of the same. I understand salvation originates from the will, council, and transactions of the Incomprehensible Three, in the Incomprehensible Jehovah, and that it is wholly and comprehensively contained in the Person, Incarnation, Life, and Death, of the Lord Jesus Christ. I used to conceive thus:—If I were born again, or, in other words, if I were regenerated by the Holy Ghost, I was then a child of God, and should most assuredly be saved. From your account of that subject, I now see salvation is distinct from that of the new birth. Pray say if I understand you right in this matter.

*Mr. Instructor.* You know, Sir, the subjects we have been engaged in were, 1st. Of Sin—2d. Regeneration—3d. Salvation. These subjects are thus con-

nected one with the other. If we were not by nature the subjects of sin, we should not need to be regenerated in our minds, and be brought out of a state of death, into a state of life. When we are born again of God, then we begin to see and feel our need of salvation, which, when we have right apprehensions of, we perceive it to be altogether out of ourselves. The new birth is an act of God within us: salvation is an act of God without us. We are the subjects of the new birth. We are partakers of salvation. We receive it by faith. Whereas, regeneration is not received, it is wrought in us once for all. It is our sole meetness for eternal glory.

*Junior.* Pray, my good Sir, give me leave to be very free with you in my enquiries; it will be of use to my mind. Am I right in what I expressed concerning my former thoughts? which run thus:—If I am regenerated by the holy Ghost, I am a child of God, and shall most assuredly be saved.

*Senior.* It is an eternal truth, without you are regenerated by the Holy Ghost, you cannot be manifested to be a child of God, nor have the least good and proper thought of salvation; yet the new birth is not salvation, it is the medium whereby we receive the knowledge of salvation into our minds.

*Junior.* Indeed, when I reflect on what you have delivered concerning salvation, I must acknowledge, I conceive salvation must influence the whole mind: I want, therefore, to know the means whereby it does so.

*Senior.* I am very ready to inform you; only let these following truths be first acknowledged, that we

may fairly understand each other, and not treat any of the subjects before us with confusion.

*Junior.* Sir, this will be to me most truly desirable.

*Senior.* You will be pleased to take up your words. You say your former thoughts have been, *were you born again, then you were a child of God, and should be saved.* Now, I do not deny, that as sure as you are born of God, you are a child of God, and shall be manifestatively saved; but regeneration does not make you a child; it is the evidence of it: nor is there salvation in the new birth; it is a spiritual faculty, which, as the Holy Spirit is pleased to open, to receive the revealed account of salvation given in the everlasting gospel, is the very mean by which you enjoy the same, with all the blessings thereof.

*Junior.* This is to open a new scene indeed. I confess myself satisfied with your discourse on regeneration; also with your conversation on salvation. Pray, Sir, for my further improvement in the knowledge of spiritual and important subjects, let our present interview be confined to an account how salvation is received.

*Senior.* I confess that I conceive this is a subject very interesting. I am truly willing to give you all the instruction I am capable of on the same.

*Junior.* You have, Sir, my best thanks; and pray let there be no delay, but proceed, as I desire to give the strictest attention to you; hoping the Lord will graciously bless it.

*Senior.* Salvation is the greatest blessing God himself can bestow, on you, on me, as sinners. It is entirely suited to us, as we are. It is freely given to us,

without money or any qualification in ourselves. It is received by faith. This faith is by the operation of the Spirit of God in our minds. The Apostle says, *For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.* Ephes. ii. 8. This is what the Scripture says concerning the subject before us.

*Junior.* It is so; yet I am as far from the subject as I was before. I want to know what faith is, and where to find it? I can no more doubt, from what you delivered in the second conversation which passed between us, on regeneration, that I am born again, and have divine impressions of heavenly things on my mind, and do really hunger and thirst after Christ; but I do not know what faith is. Now that is a subject I want you to clear up unto my view.

*Senior.* The new birth is faith, and faith is the new birth. The soul born of God, has the faith of the operation of God. This is discovered in the following way: he hears, reads, and converses about Christ; this draws out the mind after Christ, and his thoughts are exercised on Christ in a particular way and manner. Now this is regeneration drawn out into act and exercise.

*Junior.* Then I must look into myself to see if I have it, must I not?

*Senior.* No. I will treat you with all the simplicity I can. You look on yourself as born of God; do you not? You love to hear and read of Christ, and his great salvation; is it not so? You have some inward relish and delight herein; have you not? Why this is

the new birth drawn forth into act and exercise towards the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Junior.* If this be faith, it is quite different from the conceptions I have been entertaining concerning it in my own mind. I have considered it as some grace wrought in me, which laid the foundation of all my confidence in the Lord, and which was to be supported, as I felt myself so and so conformed to the divine will.

*Senior.* I could wish, on your behalf, it might be given you to understand, that regeneration consists in creating in you a spiritual mind; and that every act of it, is drawn out by the Holy Ghost, and exercised on the Lord Jesus Christ: so that the new birth is faith in the habit; and the exercise of it in acts of love, faith, and hope, towards and upon our Lord Jesus Christ, is this same faith of the operation of God, of which the Scriptures speak.

*Junior.* You have given me some light into the subject, if I mistake you not; but give me leave just to give you my conceptions. I understand, if I were not born again, I could not have the least spiritual life in me. This spiritual life in me is faith. This is revived by thinking on Christ, and further expressed by its exercises on the person, grace, and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is this right?

*Senior.* It is. The Holy Ghost does not quicken your dead heart, and raise it up to believe on the name of the only begotten Son of God; but he quickens and raises up the spiritual life and faculty which he wrought in you in regeneration, and draws it forth into act and exercise.

*Junior.* Really, Sir, it is of great importance to

know this, and have right and scriptural views of the same.

*Senior.* It is so; as it makes way for our so receiving the knowledge of Christ and salvation into our minds, as lifts us off ourselves, and fixes us entirely on him.

*Junior.* But how am I made a partaker of Christ?

*Senior.* By faith; which is a receiving grace, and by which we actually receive Christ into our hearts.

*Junior.* But what must I do? I must act, that I may receive Christ. Must I not?

*Senior.* There is nothing to be done by you. You are wholly passive in all the work and operation of the Spirit of the Living God within you and upon you.

*Junior.* This I cannot apprehend, How can I receive salvation, if I act nothing?

*Senior.* Just as you received natural and spiritual life, without acting any thing. Did you not receive natural life without any act of yours? What act did you perform, when a living soul was imparted to you? None. It was utterly impossible you should. You had being and life given you; all which followed was but the effect of it. You had a spiritual birth and life in regeneration bestowed on you; all the acts of the same are the fruits and effects of it. So the knowledge of Christ is bestowed on you, and Christ is received into the mind actually and passively, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and formed in you the hope of glory, without any act of yours. Many spiritual acts of the mind follow, which give proof and evidence of all this; but not one of these goes before, to give being to the cause which produces them.



*Junior.* Sir, I confess your conversation on these subjects, appears more and more to me very interesting. I want you most clearly and expressly to explain these subjects. I perceive you speak of them, as though they existed in your own mind as spiritual and divine realities.

*Senior.* Indeed they do. Not that it follows from hence, that I shall be able to give you such a clear statement of them, as will give you the fullest satisfaction.

*Junior.* I must confess, that what hath been delivered, has excited my attention; therefore, my mind being set upon thinking over, and pondering on what you may further deliver, it may be an encouragement, that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

*Senior.* The new birth contains the spiritual faculties of understanding, will, memory, and affections. The Holy Ghost enlightens the understanding with the knowledge of Christ. The Apostle says, *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.* 1 John, v. 20. The Holy Ghost enlightens the renewed mind, and opens the spiritual understanding to receive and apprehend Christ, as revealed in the everlasting gospel. By this means Christ is most truly known—spiritually received. He exists in the mind. The renewed will bows, submits, yields itself up to him, as the one alone and only Saviour. The affections are fixed on him as all-sufficient for life and salvation. The memory is sanctified to think on, and to remember his work of salvation, and the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, and which are recorded in the Sacred

Volume of Inspiration. The spiritual faculties of the renewed mind are altogether suited to Christ: to know him—to apprehend him—to receive him—to believe on him—to love him—to cleave to him—to delight in him—to glory in him—to live on him alone. You understand me, do you not?

*Junior.* Yes, I do. You say the Holy Ghost reveals Christ to the enlightened mind. This revelation is from the word of grace, and altogether agreeable with it. He takes of the things of Christ revealed in it, and gives to the mind a real spiritual apprehension of the same. He realizes them in the mind, that they have their existence there, and are found and experienced by the soul born of God to be divine realities. Is it not so?

*Senior.* It is even so. And hereby your new birth is most clearly evidenced; as you have a real knowledge of Christ formed in your mind, and of the Father's love in him, and are drawn insensibly to yourself, by the grace and energy of the Holy Spirit, to think and meditate on Christ's salvation, and the Father's love to you in him.

*Junior.* I could wish to request you, in the most simple and clearest manner, to give me an account how you received Christ; I conceive it will serve, should I have made any mistake in what hath been delivered on the subject before us, to set me right.

*Senior.* I most certainly will, and with the greatest pleasure. You are to know, that the Lord had wrought effectually on my soul, some years before I knew Christ as he is set forth in the everlasting gospel of the blessed God. When I was, through his good pleasure, to

hear the everlasting gospel, it was under the ministry of the truly excellent *Mr. Romaine*, a man whom I never conversed with. I am truly glad I never did, as I conceive it has answered a far better end, to receive what I did from him in an ordinance way, than in a way of conversation. When I first heard him, I was struck exceedingly with the subject. He was at that time constantly speaking concerning the covenant of the Eternal Three. He used to express how the Father had laid on Christ all sorts of sin—that Christ had offered himself as the sacrifice for them—that his offering had perfected for ever the putting away of sin—that the Father was infinitely and everlastingly well pleased with the life and death of his co-equal Son, and well pleased with that sinner who was well pleased with Christ—that the Holy Spirit bore his testimony to the truth of all this in the word—and that there was now nothing to be done for salvation. He used to express himself thus: *When persons begin to be concerned about salvation, they all think there must be some great work wrought, that they may be saved. Sirs, there is nothing to be done for salvation, but what hath already been. The sacrifice which takes away all sin, hath been offered. The Father hath accepted it, and Christ is entered with his own blood into the holiest of all; and nothing remains but for God to send down his Spirit, to bring you to believe in the righteousness and sacrifice of Immanuel.* I used to be all ear in hearing these important sentences: and my whole attention being most powerfully arrested with a consideration of the importance of what was contained in the subject, my mind was led secretly and imperceptibly to

believe on the righteousness, and most precious bloodshedding of the Lamb of God, and the Father's infinite and everlasting delight in him, and acceptance of his work, without any thought about faith, or interest in the subject. This is the way in which the Lord the Spirit led me to receive Christ. It was thus Christ was formed in my heart; and hereby I was led to rest and center in Christ for my whole salvation.

*Junior.* But did you not experience something very remarkable and particular when you received Christ?

*Senior.* No: I did not. My whole mind was engaged with the subject. Christ was my one object. All my thoughts were exercised on the everlasting perfection of his righteousness, and the eternal worth and virtue of his blood.

*Junior.* It seems faith is nothing, according to your account. I always conceived it a great and surprising act, to believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God. I have heard many say it is as hard a work to believe, as to make a world.

*Senior.* I have nothing to do, my good Sir, with what you have heard, or with what others say. I am very freely disposed to speak to you of the subject now before us; and I can but speak according to my own knowledge and experience thereof.

*Junior.* My good Sir, I dare say nothing against what you have said. I know not but it may all be truth. All I say is, it seems to make no difficulty of believing. I should really like the subject to be more freely and fully opened; for, it really appears to me, what you have said, amounts to this—that you found no difficulty in believing on Christ for salvation—that

you believed without any regard to what you were in yourself—that you did not examine yourself, whether you ought to believe or not—and, that you did not attend, in the act of believing, to whether you were interested in Christ or not. I gather all this from what you have before delivered unto me in this present conversation.

*Senior.* I cannot but address you very affectionately, and say, my dear friend, I have said all you suggest; and it pleases me well that you have so clearly perceived what I have delivered. I have made no difficulty of believing; and I have expressed myself clear enough for you to perceive, that I paid no regard to what I was in myself, in the act of believing on Christ for salvation. You understand me right, in suggesting, that I did not examine myself whether I ought to believe or not; nor was I in the least concerned, for it was not in all my thoughts whether I had interest in Christ or not: so that you have clearly understood my words. Now, I am very free to explain myself on all this, if you are disposed to attend.

*Junior.* Indeed, that I am; and should be quite pleased to have the whole explained: for, I must confess, your conversation hath done me good; yet the present is such, as I really want and wish much, to request you would explain it to me.

*Senior.* I am willing, and want nothing but your attention. If you will give me your ear, I will give you my whole heart on these subjects.

*Junior.* I will, Sir, most assuredly; for I never attended to the voice of information more, than when you are pleased to converse with me.

*Senior.* We will both of us avoid all compliments. I am a sinner. When I heard the gospel, I heard it as containing life and salvation; whilst, as to its great and grand subject—salvation by the blood and righteousness of Christ, I had no right knowledge of it; yet the novelty of the subject, its sublimity, the freeness and generosity of Christ as expressed in it, and set forth by it, wrought on my mind. Thus I found what the Apostle says to be true, that *faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Rom. x. 17. Through the supernatural light and teaching of the Holy Ghost, I received into my mind the knowledge of Christ. I was altogether passive in this. Having been led by the Holy Ghost, under the preaching of Christ, into some real and gospel apprehensions of him, I was led to think over, and exercise my mind on the same. Thus I was actually admitted into the knowledge of Christ and salvation, and found therein life everlasting: so that, if you understand me, I was wholly passive in all this. The Lord the Spirit opened my ear to hear Christ preached: the Lord the Spirit conveyed the true knowledge of Christ to my understanding, by means of what I heard delivered concerning him: the Lord the Spirit by this very means revealed Christ in me. It was thus that he took of the things of Christ, and made them known unto me; and thus he brought me to trust wholly on Christ for eternal life.

*Junior.* But did you not feel some very sensible comfort in your soul when you first believed?

*Senior.* No. Christ was the object of my faith. His salvation was the subject my faith was exercised on. I was therefore taken off myself entirely. I was not

led to think concerning myself. It was no subject of importance with me what I was, or what I was not; but who Christ was, and what he had done. These, in my views, were the only subjects I had any concern with.

*Junior.* It may all be very right; yet, if it be, I am confident I want a more clear view of the subject.

*Senior.* Possibly so. I can only inform you how I was brought to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul, and what I believed concerning him. It may be, were I to tell you all I believe regarding him, and what the substance of my faith is, or what it consists in, you would think still less of my faith.

*Junior.* I cannot say as to this; yet I should really like you to touch on this part of the subject. I cannot but confess, I conceive you may, and must be right in the subject; but you are so far above me, I want you to descend lower, and come down to me, that I may most plainly understand you.

*Senior.* Christ himself is the object of my faith. What I believe concerning him is this—that God made him sin, that I might be made the righteousness of God in him. My faith consists in believing the everlasting virtue of Christ's blood to make me clean from all sin; and the infinite perfection of his obedience to make me now and evermore righteous before the Lord, at this present moment, and when I stand before him at his bar; and on this I rest my everlasting all.

*Junior.* Yet I have not heard you say one word relative to your believing your interest in Christ, and knowing he died for your sins in particular, and that

you are brought to believe that you are a pardoned and saved person.

*Senior.* You have not. Yet that I am a saved man, a justified, pardoned person, is as clear to me, as that I exist. This is not, however, what I look at and believe in for salvation. No. The true knowledge of Christ, and faith in Christ, make way for the knowledge of this. Yet my faith is not exercised on any of these; but my faith in Christ makes way for my knowledge and enjoyment of all these blessings and benefits of salvation.

*Junior.* Why, don't you look on Christ dying for me, and my justification, and pardon, and knowledge of this salvation?

*Senior.* My friend, I am for Christ alone to wear the sole glory of salvation; which consists in his taking away sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness. The Apostle sets the great subject of believing before us very clearly in the following words. *The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* Rom. x. 8, 9, 10. Here is Christ in his death and resurrection set forth as what faith is exercised on and believes in. The revelation of Christ in the word, is the ground and warrant for faith. The Lord Jesus Christ in his life and death, is the immediate object of our faith. It is the record and testimony which God hath given us of his Son in the scriptures of truth, that are the support and encourage-



ment of our faith. It is in believing in Christ, we have actual fellowship with Christ, and know our interest in him. When we trust on Christ, we wholly and altogether renounce ourselves. It would be well to look at such scriptural expressions concerning faith as these: Christ styles it *faith which is in me*. Acts, xxvi. 18. *Whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins*. Acts, x. 43. *Us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ*. Acts, xi. 17. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*. Acts, xvi. 31. *We believe, that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved*. Acts, xv. 11. Also the acts of faith are represented by looking, by coming, by flying, by taking hold of Christ. *Look unto me*.—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life*.—*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life*.—*Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*.—*This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, shall have everlasting life*.—*Who hath fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us*.—*He is able to save to the uttermost, them that come unto God by him*.—*Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*. If you look at all these expressions, you may clearly perceive the object of faith, and the act of faith, distinguished; also, that faith is the act of the spiritual mind on Christ the object.

*Junior*. You have set forth Christ as the object of faith, and his salvation as the subject on which faith is very particularly exercised, in a way I have not been

accustomed to consider it. If I conceive aright of your expressions, you make the knowledge of interest in Christ, of your personal justification, pardon, and salvation, the fruits of your knowing Christ, do you not?

*Senior.* Yes. The knowledge of Christ is life everlasting. Communion with him is the fruit of it, and one of the greatest of all blessings this side heaven. In this holy communion between Christ and the believer, he is admitted into a knowledge of his personal interest in Christ, and all the blessings and benefits of his salvation.

*Junior.* So, then, according to what you have delivered to me, Christ and salvation are received, in the knowledge of him and it, into the regenerate mind, by a spiritual perception and apprehension thereof?

*Senior.* Most assuredly it is even so. I would recommend the following scripture to your consideration, that you may see for yourself it is so. The apostle says, *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.* Rom. iv. 16. I conceive these words are very expressive how Christ, salvation, and every spiritual blessing, are received into the renewed mind. It is by faith. It is through faith. All which proves it to be wholly through grace. I look on it a real blessing rightly to know salvation in its clear and proper distinction from all other subjects, and also how it is received. When this is clearly understood, it saves from many perplexities, and makes way for living Christ, which we cannot

do, until we have a true, clear, and gospel knowledge of him. The whole of Christ is set before us in the word. We receive the same distinctly into our minds. Hereby Christ dwells in our hearts. Our faith is the exercise of our minds on him. Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. He takes of the things of Christ; he shews the same to us; he leads us to hold fellowship with Christ by these discoveries which he gives us of him. Thus the Lord Jesus becomes increasingly precious to our hearts. We have increasing knowledge of him, and hereby are brought under the mighty influence and authority of his grace. Thus we are made partakers of Christ, and have the true knowledge of him in our renewed minds, by the divine energy and operation of the Holy Ghost, and his sealing home the truths and doctrines of the everlasting gospel on our hearts. The Lord Jesus Christ, in his life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, glorification, and advocacy, is received, in the knowledge of the same, into our minds. Our thoughts are spiritually engaged hereon. In the subject the life of our souls consist. In the enjoyment of it, we have communion with the Father, and the Son, through the Spirit. What will follow on it, are the fruits and effects of believing on the Son of God. I hope I have made the subject clear and plain, so as for you to understand me.

*Junior.* Indeed, Sir, I am bound to thank you for the same. I understand faith in Christ springs from the word of God: that he is spiritually apprehended by it: that he is looked at, trusted in, enjoyed, lived on, so far as we receive the knowledge of him into our

minds from the word and by the Spirit. I confess it conveys such views of him to my understanding, as exceed all my former conceptions. I was prone to look for Christ, and expected the enjoyment of him, in some wonderful extasies and raptures of spirit. I had no idea of looking for him in the revelation given concerning him in the Holy Scriptures. I should be glad of further conversation on subjects like unto these; but as time will not at present admit of this, I most heartily thank you for the present interview, hoping for another. Farewell.

## DIALOGUE V.

*A Discourse on the Holy Trinity, as made known by the Doctrine of Christ's Person, to such as are born again of God.*

AFTER an interruption of conversation, owing to want of convenient season for the continuation of it, these two friends, *Junior* and *Senior*, met again, to entertain each other, by renewing their mutual intercourse; and having saluted, expressing their pleasure in being once more together, the conversation began.

*Mr. Senior.* My good friend, I hope you have been reflecting seriously and judiciously on the subjects of our past conversation. It would be vastly pleasing to me, to be of the least advantage in assisting your mind in thinking rightly on such important subjects as we have been discoursing on. Not that I would by any means insinuate you are beholden to me for any light I can communicate. I am willing, if you please, to enter on some spiritual conversation. If you are so disposed, speak your mind, and fix your subject.

*Junior.* Sir, I most certainly have attended closely to what you have delivered in the former conferences I have had with you. I must confess my being profitted

by them; yet I would not wish to have the same subjects resumed. Not that they are not momentous. No: They most certainly are. None more so; yet I want to proceed, and get on to such as may still increase my mind with light and grace. It was the Apostle's prayer for some real saints, that they might be filled with the knowledge of the Lord's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

*Senior.* You say right. I also will shew you my opinion. I conceive there can be no spiritual growth, but as the soul increases in spiritual knowledge. The subjects we have treated of, were—*Sin*: a most awful and tremendous evil; you and I are the subjects of it. We then discoursed on *Regeneration*: you and I are the subjects of it. *We are born of God: we are in the kingdom of God's dear Son.* We need not, therefore, go over this ground again. We then proceeded to that most blessed and comfortable subject, *Salvation*. This is a finished work. It is wholly and altogether without us. There can be no change in it. Christ is our salvation. We are saved in him with an everlasting salvation. From this we proceeded to speak concerning the *Knowledge of this Salvation*: how it is received into the regenerate mind; that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, we are made the partakers of it in a way of believing. I should wish to know what effect our last conversation had on you.

*Junior.* Why, truly, Sir, I cannot but acknowledge it has produced very singular and blessed effects in my mind. Heretofore all my thoughts were swallowed up about inherent grace. I expected to be saved on account of it. What I called faith, was built altogether

on myself, and what I found and experienced in myself. I really had no distinct, clear, and scriptural perceptions of the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. In pondering over what you delivered concerning it, and the way in which it is received, I see myself to have been hitherto very very dark, in my knowledge and view of these important subjects. From your last discourse, I have, by close attention to the same, learned that Christ is the immediate object of my faith: not my graces, frames, feelings, or experiences. That his salvation is the proper subject for my mind to be exercised on: not what I am in myself. That his word is the foundation of my faith: not any thing wrought in me. I perceive, impressions of any sort, are not believing. I clearly see that it is what God the Father hath revealed of Christ, and what the Holy Spirit bears witness of him in the scriptures of truth, are of more importance, and of greater consequence to me, than what I am in myself, or feel of myself. I must confess I never thought concerning the record which God had given of his Son in the everlasting gospel; yet, now my eyes are opened, I read, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life: and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* 1 John, v. 10, 11, 12. It seems to cast light on the whole of your last conversation with me. I am, in my own views, as though I had never heard of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of faith in him. You speak of taking in the

knowledge of Christ, under the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the renewed mind, and of a discovery of this, by the acts and outgoings of the mind, under the influences of the same Holy Spirit: now, of this, I had not the least idea.

*Senior.* If you have received any spiritual advantage, I very sincerely do rejoice at the same. I most assuredly am willing to impart any spiritual gift in my power. The Apostle, writing to the saints at Rome, says, *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me.* Rom. i. 11, 12. You and myself being present, we cannot long to see each other; but we may, even whilst present, long to edify each other. Do you of yourself speak out, and say what the subject of our present discourse shall be.

*Junior.* If you please, I would request a discourse concerning the Trinity.

*Senior.* What, my good Sir, do you mean? You cannot expect me to speak on that sublime subject, most surely, as in itself considered. You do not expect me to speak of the nature of God, the persons in God, the essential perfections of the infinite and self-existing Essence; as in its absolute nature and necessity, infinity and blessedness. Give me leave to say, the Godhead, with its personalities, blessedness, and glory, is incomprehensible. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit, exist and co-exist in an incomprehensible manner. The Unity of the Divine Essence, and the Trinity of Persons, are subjects which cannot be comprehended. We must go to the Bible for any proper



ideas of the same. We have there the doctrine of it, not explained, but positively set forth, stated, and declared. If you enquire concerning this, I am at your service, to declare and set it before you.

*Junior.* I thought, to know the doctrine of the Three in Jehovah, was the same with knowing the Three in Godhead; but I observe you make a difference, otherwise you would not have expressed yourself as you have done. I plainly perceive you want me to consider, that Jehovah is essentially and incomprehensibly, and by necessity of nature, what he is; that the Three in Jehovah are essentially Jehovah; that their existence in Jehovah is as essential as Godhead is; that they are incomprehensible as to their existence, and mode of existence: so that the Three in Jehovah are as incomprehensible, as the nature in which they exist. Is not this what you mean to suggest to me?

*Senior.* Yes; and also, that all thoughts of Godhead, and the Three in Godhead, out of Christ, and without the consideration of him as God-man, lead but to the contemplation of absolute Deity, and leave us without viewing this glorious subject, as revealed in the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

*Junior.* My good Sir, from what you have said, I seem to think you make a distinction between the sacred Trinity in Unity, and the doctrine concerning them.

*Senior.* I do; and will give you clearly my conceptions of the same. I cannot, I dare not, say what Jehovah in his Persons, Life, Blessedness, Glory, and Immortality is. *He was, and is, and is to come.* Abstracted from all worlds, beings, and things, he is of

himself, and from himself alone. *He dwelleth in that light which no mortal eye can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting, Amen.* Now the doctrine of the Trinity is a revelation which God hath given us concerning his Nature, Persons, and Perfections in Christ. Whilst it is universal with all christians to say, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a mystery, yet I do not think this to be true and right. No. The doctrine is not a mystery; but what is contained in it, is absolutely so: yet we are called only to believe the doctrine, not to comprehend the same. The truth of the doctrine is realized in every article of faith, in every doctrine, and truth throughout the gospel of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Nay, the very system of Nature has evident proofs, and bears testimony, that the Three in Jehovah were concerned in their formation. Yet it is to us of the greatest importance, to know them in their covenant transactions, and how they stand related to us in Christ Jesus. The Scriptures are very clear and copious on these subjects; and, I conceive, this is what you are so desirous to be instructed in.

*Junior.* I would state the subject I wish to receive your instructions in, thus—How the Holy Trinity are made known by the doctrine of Christ's Person, to such as are born again of God?

*Senior.* Such as are born again of God, have the following indubitable evidence of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in their own souls. When they were first convinced of sin, it was very evident to them, that they had sinned against an infinite Majesty—that there was an infinity of evil in Sin—that it required an

infinite satisfaction—that He who had made satisfaction for the same, must be an infinite Person—and, that he also, who was pleased to make known this satisfaction, must be equal in power and Majesty with him who finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Thus the ground work is laid in the renewed mind, concerning the knowledge of the Holy Trinity; which is afterwards improved by the divine teachings of the Holy Ghost from the scriptures of truth.

*Junior.* I have sometimes conceived it must be so; and that every truth is, as it were, implanted in the mind in regeneration, and that it is afterwards variously drawn out, opened, and discovered. For in conversing with you, I have frequently perceived, whilst the truths you have delivered and opened to me, have far exceeded any knowledge or conception I ever before had of them; yet I have found an inward delight in them, and perceived a glory, sublimity, excellency, and majesty in them. It has, therefore, been sometimes in my thoughts, whether I wanted any thing more than the opening the mysteries of the gospel more clearly and freely to my mind.

*Senior.* You have, in what you have said, expressed very proper conceptions on the subject. *Peter* says of believers in the righteousness of God our Saviour Jesus Christ, that on such is bestowed all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us unto glory and virtue. This was all bestowed in our new-birth. In it our spiritual faculty consists. This is capacitated to receive all revealed

truths concerning Christ, and the Father's love in Him, through the divine light and operation of the Holy Ghost on it. I have really found it to be so in my own experience.

*Junior.* How is it then, if it be so of a truth, many of such as we look upon as born from above, so often say, this truth is not fit for such and such to hear. It ought not to be by any means proposed to them—it is too far beyond them—they cannot apprehend it. If the spiritual mind is a capacity suited to all revealed truth, and all truth suited to it, how is there any propriety in speaking so and so as I have related?

*Senior.* It is a truth, that some glorious mysteries of grace, may be more suited to the spiritual mind at one time than at another. You have discovered this to be your own case, as you have requested leaving past subjects, and proceeding to speak of such as are more deep and out of sight. Yet it should not be said at any time, there any truths in the gospel we have no concern with, neither that they are beyond us, because hereby the mind is taken off from considering the importance of eternal verities. The Apostle tells us, we have received the spirit of God, that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God. It is as he opens them to our minds, that we are spiritually quickened by them. It is as he seals them in our hearts, that we experience the divine good and reality of them. Therefore, as they are the bread of life, and the daily bread of it, and we cannot be nourished up into everlasting life, but by the wholesome words, or life-giving, and life-maintaining words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness; it should never be, that

any of God's beloved ones should speak slightly of the truths of any of them, of the least or greatest of them, in any way of diminution, they being all worthy of God.

*Junior.* I confess I have been often grieved, at what seems to be so, in many of the godly. But our Lord said to Peter, when he asked an impertinent question concerning John, *what is that to thee? follow thou me:* so I would drop all other subjects, and intreat you to set before me that which I have requested you to converse with me upon.

*Senior.* You desire to be informed, how the Three in Jehovah are made known, by the doctrine of Christ's Person, to such as are regenerated. I will endeavour to answer you to the best of my power, and give you all the scriptural evidence of this I may be assisted with. I would have you to observe, it is a great subject, a spiritual subject, an important one, an experimental one. It is not a mere speculative point. No. Indeed, indeed it is not. You must, therefore, carefully attend to every part and branch of conversation on the same: without it, even should the Lord enlarge my mind, and open my mouth to speak ever so clearly and freely, it will be lost on you.

*Junior.* You may depend on it, I have some inward sense of the greatness of the subject, and an inward relish and spiritual appetite to feed on it, or I had not proposed this to be the point now to be opened.

*Senior.* Sir, we must here be confined and circumscribed on all sides by the written word. No abstract views and thoughts of Deity must be admitted. We

must be contented here to be guided by the infallible word and Spirit. What think you of this?

*Junior.* I am willing, most readily, to submit to these two guides, God's word, and Spirit. My good Sir, you have prepared me for all this, by what you before spoke on this subject, and which, I hope, never to forget. That it is not what the *Father, the Word, and the Spirit are in the Essence, as the Incomprehensible Three in the Incomprehensible Jehovah*; but what they are to us in Christ, and what they have revealed of their mutual love to us in Christ. My enquiry is simply this, How they are made known, by the doctrine of Christ's Person, to such of us as are born of God?

*Senior.* This is a very interesting subject indeed. May the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, be with me of a truth, whilst I aim to give you satisfaction in this great point.

*Junior.* The Lord hath blessed your past discourses to me. I have received into my mind what you have delivered; I cannot, therefore, doubt of receiving further instruction from you. I conceive it is your delight to dwell deeply and intensely on the deep things of God; and, I doubt not, but the Lord will be with you, and give us both his blessing and his Spirit.

*Senior.* May it be so, for his name and for his truth's sake, Amen. Whilst I by no means question it, yet I would neither be presumptuous nor careless. I should look on it as bold and awfully wrong, to enter on this subject, as if I conceived myself inherently sufficient for it. I should consider it very shocking carelessness, to engage on such sublime points as these, without confessing that all my sufficiency is of God.

May the Lord the Holy Ghost bestow on me afresh his divine unction, so as to enable me to speak rightly and acceptably on what you have proposed. From your words in the proposal, *How the Three in Jehovah are made known by the doctrine to such as are regenerated?* you are not asking what the Three in Jehovah are, as considered in their infinite Essence, and personal distinction in the Self-existing Essence; but what they are as revealed in Christ, and according to the doctrine concerning them in the written word; and how the Three in Jehovah, in connexion and agreement with this, are made known by the doctrine of Christ's Person, to the minds of such as are born of God: this is the full substance of your enquiry, is it not?

*Junior.* It is the whole of it. May the Lord himself direct you in what you are about to express on the same. May he open my ear and heart to receive it; whilst it pleases him to make your tongue like choice silver, to convey the same to me.

*Senior.* In the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, as revealed in the Bible, we have the whole which concerns us respecting them set forth, and fully and openly declared. In the Person of Christ, God-Man, who is the glory of scripture, we have it realized. In every ordinance and act of divine worship, we have an acknowledgment made of it. All saints, in earth and heaven, give blessing, honor, glory, and power, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Spirit, *to him that liveth for ever and ever*; saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* The Divine Persons have manifested themselves in the distinct acts of their wills towards us; in their eternal pur-

poses, and vast designs in Christ respecting us; in the salvation planned by them in Christ before all time—wrought out for us in the fulness of time, and set before us in the everlasting gospel: the truths of which are immutable and everlasting: the glory of which reflects the knowledge of the Divine Coequal, Coessential, and Coeternal Three on us: so as that we thereby know them, believe on them, rest in them for everlasting life, and center in them for eternal glory. The Apostle says, *God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* The term Person, made use of by Divines, when treating on the doctrine of the Trinity, is not to be understood in any gross sense; it is found in scripture, as you may see from the passage just quoted: and Christ is a Person in the Godhead distinct from the Father and the Spirit. It is used to express the real distinct subsistences in the Essence, who are relatively, not essentially distinct. That which gives them personal and distinct subsistence in the Incomprehensible Godhead, is as eternal, and as truly by necessity of nature, as the Godhead in which this personal distinction is. Now this is most fully opened to us, it is reflected on us, and shines forth to our view, so as for us to have a scriptural and intuitive view, and spiritual apprehension of it, in the Person of God-Man.

*Junior.* There is a glory, majesty, and sublimity in the subject. It fills the mind with solemnity indeed, to contemplate the same. I understand what you have suggested: it is the everlasting love of the Father, the salvation of the Son, and the revelation of the same to



our minds, by the grace and power of the Holy Ghost, which give divine proof and evidence to us, that *there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* I John, v. 7. Not one in person, but three in personal distinction; yet one in nature, life, blessedness, and glory.

*Senior.* You rightly conceive, and most clearly express yourself. It is the distinct acts of the Three in Jehovah, manifested in grace, in creation, in salvation, in providence, in glory, that give full proof of their existence. The everlasting love of the Father to his own elect in Christ; the love of Christ to them, with what he hath done for them, as their Head and Saviour; the work and office of the Holy Ghost within them and upon them, in conforming them unto Christ, and making them his epistles, seen and known of all men to be so: we are led to see our obligations to the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity for. Now it would be pleasing for you to say, very freely and fully, what your own apprehension of these important truths is, as thereby I may be assisted to encourage and strengthen you.

*Junior.* I do not presume to cast light on the subject, yet, what I conceive of the same, from the light I have received in reading the scriptures, is this:—that the knowledge of the covenant acts and transactions of the Three in Jehovah, as stated and recorded in the inspired volume, is the most clear and easiest way of receiving the doctrine of the blessed Trinity into the mind; so as to be led to worship, love, adore, and praise Jehovah in all his persons, for what they are

to us as the Lord our God, and for their covenant settlements on our behalf, and for their distinct offices in the whole economy of their grace unto us.

*Senior.* I most sincerely approve of what you declare on the subject before us. It is hereby we are actually led to a real knowledge of, a real acquaintance with, and a real love to, each of the persons in the Godhead. As we know the Father in his love to us in Christ, we love him for the same; as we know the person and salvation of Christ, we love him who loved us, and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour; as we know the Holy Ghost, and his love to us, his office on our behalf, how he dwells in us, how he makes Christ precious to us, how he sheds abroad the Father's love in our hearts, and carries on communion between the Father and the Son in our minds, hearts, understandings, will, and affections. I consider all the Lord's people have communion with the Three in Jehovah in this way, beyond what they commonly conceive; and that their inward conceptions of the Trinity in Unity, are beyond what they can possibly express; yet notwithstanding all this, they are frequently perplexed in giving any clear statement of the same.

*Junior.* My dear Sir, do you think the gospel can be properly preached, without giving a clear and scriptural account of the engagements of the eternal Trinity in the everlasting covenant?

*Senior.* I do not; because the proper statement of the will of each of the Divine Persons in this compact, is the very gospel itself. In the true and scriptural

account hereof, each and all of the Divine Persons, have their proper glory for the expressions of their mutual love to the elect, who are saved herein and hereby, with an everlasting salvation. The Father's love, the Son's salvation, and the Spirit's testimony concerning the same, are the subject, and the whole substance, of the gospel of the grace of God.

*Junior.* Does not a proper understanding of this lead, under divine influence, into real, distinct, and particular communion with each of the Three in Jehovah in their covenant acts? and, if so, is not the want of a clear statement of this, and a neglect of it in the public ministry, very detrimental to spirituality, to spiritual growth and fruitfulness, in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

*Senior.* This cannot be denied. The Apostle says to the saints at Colosse, *I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Chap. ii. 1, 2, 3.

*Junior.* Pray, Sir, is not the whole Trinity in the Person of Christ?

*Senior.* I am not fond of saying or speaking thus. The doctrine of the Trinity is in the doctrine of Christ; nor can the doctrine of Christ be maintained without it, because it is founded on it; I rather conceive, the other is not a safe way of speak-

ing, as it seems to swallow up the Persons of the Father and the Spirit, in the Person of Christ, which cannot be right: yet Christ, God-Man, is the image of the Invisible God. He is God manifest in the flesh. In him all the Three in Jehovah are made known, and manifested to their uttermost discovery. The whole of Godhead, with all the persons and perfections in Godhead, is made known in Christ. He is one with a Person in the Essence: he is the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts. In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead. He was set up from everlasting, by the will, council, and covenant, of each of the Divine Persons. In him the self-existence of the self-existing Nature is manifested to the uttermost display of it, so far as is consistent with the glory of God, and so far as will suit the intellectual minds of elect saints and angels. In the Person of Christ, all the Divine Three are manifested: so that when Christ was openly declared at his baptism, heaven was opened, a voice from the excellent glory was heard, pronouncing with an audible voice, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* The Holy Ghost descended in a visible symbol on Christ; and the baptist saw it, and knew thereby that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. Here the whole Three Persons were most clearly manifested. The Father spake; the Son in our nature was he to whom, and of whom, he spake; and the Holy Ghost descended on him, and anointed him, and sealed him up as the Christ of God; and it is *in Christ* God shines upon his elect angels and saints in heaven, and reflects on them the full blaze of his deity, personalities, and perfections. It is in God-Man, the brightness of

glory, they enjoy God in all his persons and love, and live for ever. Christ is the medium, the mirror, in which they see God, worship him in the acknowledgment of his persons, as Father, Son, and Spirit, and live for ever; and it is in the true intuitive knowledge of the person of Christ, God-Man, that the true knowledge of the Father and the Spirit is reflected on the church of the living God in this our world. Hereby we receive the true knowledge of the incomprehensible Three in the glorious Jehovah, into our minds. Our Lord, in his incarnate state, said, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Which, when, and to whom he does, it is by the Spirit; and it is in the person and salvation of Christ, and by the revelation of him in the hearts of his regenerate and believing people, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is made known, and most clearly manifested to such as are born again of God. I hope you are satisfied with what hath been delivered on this very deep and sublime subject.

*Junior.* I have attended closely to what you have delivered. I cannot conceive it can be in any other way, than according to your statement, that this most truly great and important verity can be received in the mind, believed in the heart, and so enjoyed, as to draw out all the faculties of the soul to worship the Trinity in

Unity, as the Lord God of saints; as the God of all grace; as our God, Father, Saviour, Comforter, and Sanctifier. I wish you would give me a few scriptures, in which the worship of the Trinity is set forth.

*Senior.* I will. The blessing pronounced by the Lord's command, under the Old Testament, was as follows: *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* Num. vi. 24, 25, 26. This was pronounced in the name of all the Three Persons. It is equal with the Apostle's benediction, which runs thus: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The same Apostle says to the saints at Ephesus, *For through him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.* Ephes. ii. 18. Here are Christ, the Father, and the Spirit, worshipped by prayer. In his third chapter, we have in his apostolic prayer, all the three persons mentioned, with their particular interest in the saints, and the whole concluded with this doxology—*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* In the following words, which is a prayer, you have each of the Divine Persons mentioned: *And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.* 2 Thess. iii. 5. In the ordinance of baptism, faith in each of the sacred Three, is ex-

pressed and exercised, according to the words of institution. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Matt. xxviii. 19. The following words, with which I will end, contain a prayer to the Holy Trinity. *Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Rev. i. 4, 5, 6. I hope these are sufficient to answer the end.

*Junior.* Indeed, Sir, they are; yet, I recollect the seraphim, in Isaiah, worship the sacred Trinity, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.* Daniel styles the Three in Jehovah, *the Holy Ones*; and the prophet John speaks of the worship of them thus: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* But I know it is your time to retire, I most sincerely thank you for your conversation, and hope to be admitted to enjoy another spiritual interview with you when it may be convenient. Mercy and peace be with you. Amen.

*Senior.* May your Lord and mine say amen to it also. Adieu.

## DIALOGUE VI.

*On what is contained in the Knowledge of Christ, and how the Saints are brought know to him, are the subject of this discourse.*

A CONVENIENT season being come for Junior and Senior to converse with each other, their discourse thus began.

*Senior.* I am glad, my friend, on the return of a suitable opportunity, of renewing our further improvement on the most important of all subjects. I have lived many years in this world, in the course of which I have enjoyed many mercies, both temporal and spiritual, and experienced many miseries, both of body and mind. I ever found but one grand catholicon and complete cure for what I have been, and still am, the subject of; and that is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. I remember one, who said, a son being born to him, whose name he called Noah, *This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.* He found none but Christ could comfort him, and bear up his body and mind, under the views and experience which he had in himself, of the evils contained in his fallen nature.



*Junior.* Your last discourse has so wrought on me, as most sincerely to desire this present season to obtain an interview with you. I have been lately soaring high in heavenly contemplations on the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. I see all flows from their free, sovereign, and immutable love. I long to have more free and full communion with them in all the blessings thereof. I really long to be leaving past views and attainments even in spiritual things, and to be *pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* What say you of this?

*Senior.* It is very pleasing to hear this from you. I know spiritual views of Christ, beget fervent hungerings and thirstings after Christ; and discover the state of the mind, and the spirituality thereof.

*Junior.* I want to be swallowed up in Christ, to be personally, and practically, and experimentally, and intuitively, acquainted with him.

*Senior.* This is most truly blessed; but you are in a measure acquainted with him. You don't mean to deny this surely? Let us *speak the truth in Christ, and lie not.*

*Junior.* Your discourses with me have, in the hands of the Lord the Spirit, done me much good; yet, when I hear and attend to what you say, I perceive so much in Christ, which lies as yet undiscovered unto me, as makes me most truly desirous of hearing you declare more and more of him.

*Senior.* Whilst I find a real heaven in conversing with Christ, and in conversing with you of him and his great salvation, yet I cannot go further than to speak words to you; it is the Holy Ghost who alone

can glorify Christ in your understanding, and give you soul-satisfying and heart-warming apprehensions of his love. You must not look, my good Sir, to me for this; you must look wholly to him.

*Junior.* I do, I do; yet, to the honour of his name, I must say, he has made your conversation an ordinance to my mind; I must, therefore, request you will at this time entertain me with a conversation altogether concerning Christ. I have been reading these words of the Apostle, *That I may know him.* I perceive a depth in them, which I cannot fathom. I want to know more of the Person of Christ. I request you to inform me what is contained in the knowledge of Christ, and how saints are brought to the knowledge of him. Let this be our present subject.

*Senior.* The knowledge of Christ is a vastly comprehensive subject. It contains in it eternal life; and a variety of particulars. I am myself a very babe in this. It is the utmost perfection of christianity. I may truly here adopt the words of Jeremiah, who, when the Lord called him to speak in his great name, cried out, *Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.*

*Junior.* I only want and request you to speak in a very plain way and manner, of what you know of Jesus, of what you have seen of him, and all this from and agreeable with the word: it will do your soul good, as it will also mine.

*Senior.* Well, I will do my best; but who either in earth or heaven, can speak his worth? One says of him, *His name is exalted above all blessing and praise:* another says, *His glory is above the earth and heaven.*

a third, *His name is as ointment poured forth*; a fourth, *His name is from everlasting*. Indeed, the whole scriptures are full of his praise. His glory is beyond conception, His love exceeds all which can be expressed of it either on earth or in heaven. His work of salvation is most truly divine. His offices are worthy of himself: such as none but himself can fill. His titles are most glorious; yet they add no honour to his person: it is his person adds honour, dignity, majesty, and glory, to them. His power is Almighty. His fulness inexhaustible. His wisdom is infinite. He is the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. He is the head of nature. He is the head of grace. He is the head of glory. He is the Father's beloved: the beloved of his church: the praise of all his saints. He is their salvation on earth. He will be their glory within the veil. He will be their heaven of heaven of heavens, in the ages of eternity. What can I say more? Will not this satisfy you?

*Junior.* I deny not, but what you have said, is heart-warming and soul-cheering; yet it does not satisfy me. I make no objection to what you have delivered. Christ is all this; yea, he is infinitely more, above, beyond, and transcendently excellent: so as that the minds of saints can never have any tolerable conception of what he is; yet I want you to say who and what he is.

*Senior.* Should I take upon me to declare his glories, it would then be necessary to set bounds to our conversation. His person is God-Man. His glory is *as the glory of the only begotten of the Father*. He

hath an essential glory: he hath a personal glory. He is the head of his church. He hath the glory of it. He is the saviour of his church. As such, he hath a glory given him, which he wears and shines forth in. He hath a mediatorial glory. He hath a relative glory. He is the head of his body the church; she is his glory: so that he is the Lord of Glory. He is the glorious living Lord, who is the glory of heaven. The fountain of living waters. Their all in all.

*Junior.* My soul is all on fire, and nothing will content me, except you will kindly go over very briefly some of these subjects. I want a sight of my beloved. I think I should gain, by your conversation on these most sublime verities, some conceptions of him whom my soul loveth, so as to be more completely enamoured with him.

*Senior.* Surely, he is altogether lovely; and such as have seen him in the glass of the gospel, must confess he outshines all description. He exceeds all on earth and all in heaven. All the perfection of the whole creation, and all the excellency which is, or can be enjoyed in glory, are but as a drop, compared with Christ. If you would have me to go over, and give you an account of his glories, how would you have me proceed? We must have some order. It is so necessary on a subject of this importance, that without it, we ourselves shall be losers. Think, therefore, and say, shall I give his glory in some general expressions? or shall I enumerate the same? that is, shall I say he is God, and he is Man, God and Man in one Christ, and there leave it? or, would you have me give an

account of what is contained in the knowledge of Christ, and how saints are brought to know him, and then close?

*Junior.* If you would oblige me, by acting according to my wish, I should request you to give a short statement of each of these subjects. 1. Of the Essential and Personal Glories of Christ. 2. The Glory of his Headship, including therein his relative glory. 3. His Mediatorial Glory. 4. His Glory in which he shines forth now in Heaven. I could wish to obtain some scriptural view of these. You could after this cast in some thoughts on the subject of what is contained in the knowledge of Christ, and how saints are brought to know him.

*Senior.* Truly, Sir, you have found a sufficiency of employment for my mind and tongue. However, I will speak of the glorious honour of my Lord's majesty, as he may be pleased to give me utterance. 1st. Of his Essential and Personal Glories. His Essential Glory is this: he is one in Essence with the Father and the Spirit, true and very God. He is Jehovah---God over all, blessed for ever. He is God and Man. His glory, as such, is set forth in the 8th chapter of the Proverbs, and in the 1st chapter of the Colossians. In the former, he says, *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he*

*set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. Then it was Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. See verses, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. Here is the first place in all the written word, in which we have Christ speaking as the first-born of all Jehovah's thoughts, views, purposes, and designs: as the man in God, who was with God, and was God, the Fellow of the Lord of Hosts; for Christ, as God-Man, is not one in the Essence, but he is taken up into personal union with one in the Essence.*

*Junior.* Sure, Sir, could I convey to you the glories which break in upon my mind concerning Christ, from this scriptural account, you would think yourself well rewarded for your trouble; but, pray let me hear more of this most sublime subject.

*Senior.* You shall, for I have not finished it. In the first chapter of the Colossians, verses 15, 16, 17, you have the personal glories of Christ thus expressed and set forth: *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* Here an account is given of the ancient, personal, primordial glories of

Christ, God-Man. All the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him. He is God manifest in the flesh. The Son of the living God dwelleth by personal union and inhabitation, in the Man Christ. He is heir of all things—the Image of the Invisible God—the Brightness of Glory. In him, Jehovah in all his persons and perfections, shines forth to the very uttermost manifestation thereof. Hence he is styled *the Image of the Invisible God*. This is Christ's *personal glory*. He it is *in whom my soul delighteth*, says Jehovah the Father. Isaiah, xlii. 1. If Christ were not in his divine nature and person as one in the Essence, God essentially, he had not been in our nature God and Man truly. The one is the foundation of the other: so that you may look on him in his essential and personal glory, and behold him who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Thus I have given you a glimpse of our Lord's personal glory: that is, I have spoken a few words concerning it.

*Junior.* Thank you, Sir. I cannot but conceive, from the faint apprehensions I have received concerning the subject, that it must be the uttermost perfection of heaven, to see Christ in his personal glory.

*Senior.* It is so. Our Lord expresses himself on this subject, thus: *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* John, xvii. 24. This is the very ultimatum of eternal glory and blessedness.

*Junior.* So it must indeed be. But glorious as it is, how came it to pass, that our Lord revealed none of

his personal glory to his disciples? It really seems next to the doctrine of the Trinity, the greatest of all subjects.

*Senior.* Our Lord shone forth in his personal glory once, and but once, in his incarnate state—on the mount of transfiguration. John and Peter, who saw him in his glory, thus speak of it. *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* John, i. 14. *We were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* 2 Peter, i. 16, 17. But let us proceed to the other subjects you proposed, or our time will be up ere we are aware of it.

*Junior.* Truly I could dwell on what you have related from the scriptures concerning the essential and personal glories of Christ, with real delight for a long season; but proceed, if you please, to enter on the subjects in connexion with this, as proposed.

*Senior.* The next glory that belongs to our Lord, which we are to speak of is, 2dly. The Glory of his Headship, including therein his relative glory. He is God-Man, the Lord, the head, the proprietor of every creature, visible and invisible. *All things were created by him and for him:* he is, therefore, Lord of all. He is the beginning of the creation of God: the first-born of every creature. All were made by him: all were made for him. He is the centre of all; he is the glory of all; and a glory ariseth out of all, to shew forth the majesty and greaten him in a manifestative way, who is Lord of all—the glory of all—the foundation of all—



who upholds all—and filleth all in all. He, as the head of his elect bride, hath a relative glory, arising from his being to her the head of grace and glory. He is her Lord and husband: she is his bride and social companion; as such, she is his glory.

*Junior.* Well, this is glory upon glory, sure. Could you in one short scripture, give me a sight of Christ's view of the church from everlasting?

*Senior.* Yes. I conclude the following words contain this: *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.* Prov. viii. 30, 31. May the Lord the Spirit open these words to your mind, and your mind to apprehend what is here expressed and contained, you will then be admitted into the view and delights of Christ in his church, who is to be with him in heaven for ever, and be made perfectly like him, by seeing him as he is.

*Junior.* I more and more enjoy the benefit of conversing with you, as I see the propriety of what you say concerning our being entirely passive in all God's work within us and upon us. Whilst I have been attending to what you relate concerning the glories of Christ's Person and Headship, with his relative glory, he being the head and husband of his church, I have found such ideas and thoughts created concerning the Lord of Life and Glory, as I cannot express; neither can I relate the spiritual unction and perfume which have followed, and still accompany the subject; yet I am, and have been, under all this, entirely passive. I

really conceive I shall be so in the immediate sight of Christ in the state of glory.

*Senior.* You will be, in receiving all from him; and all your worship and bliss in heaven, will be the effect thereof. In the state of grace, the Holy Ghost operates on your spiritual faculties undiscernable by you. He lets in thoughts, and creates apprehensions of Christ in your mind, as fill it with holy wonder and admiration at the revelation of Christ, and the Father's love in him, so as there is nothing but this uppermost in your soul. This is the work of God. When you are most under it, you act nothing; but it so influences you, and leaves such divine effects on your mind, as draw out afterwards your whole soul into spiritual acts and exercise. You cannot be more blessed, than to be entirely under the teachings of the Lord the Spirit; and at such times you are entirely passive.

*Junior.* Do, Sir, proceed with declaring further the glories of Christ you have not yet spoken of; for I long to have a further account of him, and his dignity and honour.

*Senior.* It was proposed to give, 3dly. An Account of Christ's Mediatorial Glories. He is the Mediator of union, of communion, of reconciliation. He wears the glory of putting away sin; of bringing in everlasting righteousness; of making peace by the blood of his cross; of reconciling all things to himself, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven; of subduing satan; of spoiling principalities and powers; of abolishing death; of rising from the dead; of saving his people in himself, with an everlasting salvation: for all

which he is crowned with glory everlasting. His mediatorial glories are—his coronation in heaven; his session at the right hand of the Majesty on High—his offices of prophet, priest, and king, which he is fully invested in, and he exercises them as now exalted to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins. There is a wonderful variety in all these glories. They all differ from each other. They all are his. He is worthy of them. He will wear these glories for ever. Yea, his saints will greatly rejoice in all which results unto him from it; as they will in casting their crowns at his feet, and saying, *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*

*Junior.* Pray, Sir, I have read these words of the Apostle, *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.* Ephes. iii. 8. I always conceive he refers to the riches of Christ, which he displays in saving sinners, in healing their wounds, in supplying their wants, in bestowing himself and his riches, which are unsearchable, upon them, to make them rich to the ages of eternity; but I think you have been really opening the unsearchable riches of Christ's glory.

*Senior.* If Christ is glorified in your mind, all is well. If the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to shew you the glories of Christ, and made the conversation the medium of it, all the glory is his. My desire is, that he should receive all the praise and glory.

*Junior.* Pray, Sir, finish the discourse concerning

what further remains on this subject, as proposed; then, if you can add to-it, do.

*Senior.* Christ's personal glory, and the glory of his headship, in which was included his relative glory, have been touched on. We have glanced at his mediatorial glory. It was proposed, 4thly. To speak of the Glory in which he shines forth now in Heaven. This, I conceive, must comprehend all his glories. The glory he shone forth in at his Transfiguration, is the same glory he will shine forth in at his second coming. He shines forth in his personal glory now, at the right hand of the Majesty on High. He must of necessity shine forth as the head of his body the church. He cannot but shine forth in all the honours and glories of his mediatorial person and office—in all the glories of his victories and triumphs; and he will one day so shine forth, as we shall have a most blessed sight of him by sense and vision. The beloved John says, in his first epistle, *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* Chap. iii. 1, 2.

*Junior.* My dear Sir, will you kindly enumerate our Lord's glories, and just mention his appearances in his kingdom and glory which have taken, and are yet to take place; after which I shall only request you to say very briefly, what is contained in the Knowledge of Christ, and how the Saints are brought to the knowledge of

Him; as I do view and consider the subject to be of the greatest importance to saints as saints.

*Senior.* According to the order in which Christ's glory is set before us in the word of the gospel, we have, 1st. His Essential Personal Glory, which he had with the Father before the world was; 2d. He had the glory as God-Man, to be the Head of the whole creation of God. He was before all: he created all: he was the universal head of all: he was the end of all; 3d. He was the Head of the Elect, and of all Principality and Power, which, as I understand it, comprehends elect angels. The church is Christ's body; he therefore stands as head to it, in a different relation to what he does to the whole creation. He is the creator of the one; he is the husband of the other. This is, therefore, 4th, a distinct glory which belongs to him, and which I style his Relative or Relation Glory. He is so one with his church, *That we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.* See Ephes. v. 30. 5th. He hath a Mediatorial Glory, which consists in the glory due to his person and office. This he is fully invested with, of which the Apostle speaks in these words, *When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.* Heb. i. 3. It might, 6th, be said, Christ hath the glory and honour of being the Judge of quick and dead. As to his appearances in his personal and mediatorial glories, he shone forth in his personal glory on the holy mount. He shines forth in it now in heaven; so he does in his mediatorial glory. He will shine forth in his glory at his second coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. He will shine forth in the New Jeru-

salem State so gloriously, that it shall be said, *Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them. And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.* He will shine forth in the full meridian of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, before all his saints, in the ultimate state of glory. Now, my good friend, I have done as you requested me. What have you more to say?

*Junior.* I only wish you to say what is contained in the knowledge of Christ, and how saints are brought to apprehend it. You have given an account of his person, of his glory. I am now where you never left me before. I see you can do nothing for me. I want to take in every particular you have notified on this subject. I need, therefore, the Lord the Spirit, to give me such clear and distinct apprehensions of this subject, as that I might go over in my thoughts every part of it. I do indeed now apprehend you, concerning the doctrine of the Eternal Three in the One Incomprehensible Jehovah: that you would have me learn it, and all connected with it, in the Person of Christ. Is it not so?

*Senior.* Yes, it is. I would not have you plunge your thoughts into the contemplations of absolute deity, nor into abstracted thoughts of the persons in Godhead. No. The Lord himself keep you from this. But I would have all your knowledge of Godhead, and of the Persons in the Trinity, confined to Christ God-Man, in whom alone you can approach God, worship him, have communion with him, and live for ever.

*Junior.* I am very highly indebted to you; but give

me an account of what is contained in the knowledge of Christ.

*Senior.* Life and salvation are contained in it. Our Lord says in his great prayer to the Divine Father, which is recorded in the 17th chapter of John's gospel, *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* We have not eternal life in our souls, if we have not the true spiritual and supernatural knowledge of his person in our minds. The apostle John, speaking after his divine Lord, says, *God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* 1 John, v. 11, 12. I prefer the knowledge of Christ, beyond all the enjoyments of him: yea, I absolutely do prize the knowledge of the God-Man, the object and subject of the love and delight of all the Persons in the Essence, beyond heaven and eternal glory. I conceive of nothing in heaven, beyond seeing him as he is; and I am sure this will so perfect my knowledge of him, as will fix my mind immutably on him for ever and ever: and in this all true blessedness consists. There is also salvation, and all the blessings of life everlasting, contained in the knowledge of the Person of Christ. There is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. One said of old, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Psalm, lxxiii. 25. The Apostle says, *Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered all things, and do count them but dung, that I*

*may win Christ, and be found in him. That I may know him.* All this gives full evidence of what is contained in the knowledge of Christ, and also how highly he is prized by such as know him. I know not what to add to this, as I conceive it must be satisfactory.

*Junior.* It really is so. Every thing is contained in the knowledge of Christ which can enrich it, and give it complete satisfaction. In it is contained eternal life, which is the greatest blessing we can enjoy. In him we have every grace and blessing. In him we have eternal redemption. In the knowledge of him, we know our personal interest in him; and in the same knowledge of him, we have fellowship with the Father and the Spirit. Now, my good Sir, just to close the conversation, only say how saints are brought to the knowledge of Christ.

*Senior.* By the word, and by the Spirit. The word contains the revelation of Christ; the Holy Spirit from the word reveals Christ. In a spiritual apprehension of him, everlasting life is begun in the soul, which issues in all the acts of it up into life everlasting. We cannot know Christ but by the word, which, whilst it is full of Christ, yet we do not see, know, and believe on him to life everlasting, until the Lord the Spirit become our teacher and instructor.

*Junior.* Then you conceive Christ is as fully revealed in the word before we have eyes to see him, as when we are blessed with that faculty.

*Senior.* Yes; most undoubtedly I do. There will never be any other or clearer revelation of Christ, than is made already concerning him in the everlasting gospel. I look on it, the proper title thereof is, *The*



*revelation of Jesus Christ.* In it he is expressed to the very uttermost of his heart and bowels of mercy, and above and far exceeding all our sin and misery. When the Lord the Spirit is pleased from the word of grace, to give us to conceive rightly of Christ, we receive the true knowledge of him into our minds, and this is life eternal.

*Junior.* I conceive from what you say, that the least true knowledge of Christ, is as great an evidence of being in him, as the most enlarged and comprehensive acquaintance with him.

*Senior.* Yes; it is even so. Indeed, the first view received into the renewed mind, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, is that of a Saviour. He is generally at first looked on and at, as able and mighty to save. Hence it is a real truth, if our Lord in the preaching of the gospel, was to be set forth in the glories of his person and majesty, the poor awakened and enlightened sinner would find no real delight in him.

*Junior.* How so? I thought faith was one and the same, whether in its infancy or in its maturity: that it had no other object but the Lord Jesus Christ; that it centered alone in him.

*Senior.* All this is the truth of the case; yet the eye of faith is opened to take in Christ in a gradual way and manner. When it is first opened, it sees Christ as having been crucified: as having died for sin and sinners. It finds all its peace and happiness in the blood and righteousness of Christ, who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. It closes with Christ in the full belief of his own word, *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*; and it looks

wholly at, and trusts simply in, the wounds and blood of Jesus Christ. This is agreeable to the preaching the gospel of salvation—to what is first experienced in the mind at our first believing on Christ; He saith, *Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else.* It is also agreeable to what the apostle John says, *I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.* 1 John, ii. 12.

*Junior.* I must certainly subscribe to this. It was so in my own personal case; but then I really cannot trace the progress of this. I now find myself most blessedly enlightened and enlarged. I was therefore ready to conclude I never believed in Christ before. Will you kindly explain this to me? It will most certainly be advantageous to my mind, and it may be to others also.

*Senior.* I will. As the eye of faith is afresh illuminated, and we are favoured with more glorious discoveries of Christ, we naturally forget our former apprehensions of him, because the present are more enlarged, and in this sense more glorious. Yet you were as truly a believer when you first trusted in Christ, as you are now; but you had not the same conceptions of him then, as you have now. When you were a babe in Christ, you were chiefly attentive to his love and salvation: as you advanced and came to be a young man in Christ, you were then chiefly concerned to look to him for strength against sin, that you might not fall to the dishonour of his most holy name. To be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, was then the most principal thing with you: as now, the most sub-

lime mysteries in the book of God, are become your one grand study; and this is but one and the same faith, only more distinctly and immediately exercised. I hope this clearly opens the case. It is the highest stage in christianity, to be taken with the spirituality of the gospel; and the study of Christ's Person promotes this beyond all other meditations whatsoever. But we must now part.

*Junior.* As you have explained the matter, I see it all to be just as you have stated it. A right statement of every gospel truth, is of very great consequence to the enquiring mind. I sincerely thank you. The Lord bless you. Farewell.