

Renovation, including Repentance and Reformation.

Salvation necessitates the Divine conquest of the Will.

The Will being the central and dominant power in the mind of man; **A**, we hold that, although the reason may be informed, the conscience moved, and the affections stirred in favour of religion, no man is radically changed until his **will be brought** into subjection to and harmony with the will and ways of God.* (**B**).

(A) This is an admitted metaphysical fact, Prov. iv. 23.

(B) Rom. viii. 7. *The carnal mind* (or, as in the Revised Version, "the mind of the flesh") is enmity against God. The word here translated mind, *Φρονημα* (phronema), is in Dr. Robinson's and Rev. T. Sheldon Green's Greek Lexicons, rendered, "what one has in mind," hence *mind, thought, feeling, WILL*. It expresses what we have elsewhere styled "the bias of the mind" (page 136)—the *resultant* of all its powers. This is hostile to God, is not "subject to His law, neither indeed can be," till a new and divine influence give it a right direction.

NOTE.—The MIND is the standard of the man. The HEART is the index of the man. The WILL is the regent of the man.

NOTE.—A worldly poet, Butler, has said :—

"He that consents against his will,
Is of the same opinion still."

NOTE.—Very striking are the words in the Medea of Euripides, quoted by Ovid. Met. vii. 20.

"Si possem sanior essem
Sed trahit invitam nova vis ; aliudque Cupido
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora proboque
Deteriora sequor."

If I could I would be more reasonable ; but a new impulse draws me away against my will : and love urges me to one thing and reason to another. I see better things, and approve of them, but follow those that are worse.

* There are in the New Testament more allusions to the Will as a power of the mind, than would occur to any ordinary reader. In some instances, the word "will," which appears to be an ordinary auxiliary verb, simply indicating the future of intention, stands for the verb *Thelo* (θελω) "*I will*." Thus: John vii. 17. "If any man will do His will"—is in the original—"If any **WILLS** to practise His will" 2 Tim. iii. 12 ; "All who will to live godly" 2 Pet. iii. 5 ; "For this is hidden from them, they willing it." Sometimes the verb *Boulomai* (βουλομαι), "*I desire or will*" is substituted: as in 1 Tim. vi. 9, "They that will to be rich;" James iv. 4, "Whosoever therefore **wills** to be a friend of the world," &c. "The seat of sin as such lies in the will." Dean Alford. The operations of grace centre in the will, and through the will affect all the powers of the mind.

Though originally intended as the portrayal of the mind of a woman divided between love and prudence, they finely apply to all unrectified humanity.

- " With his dark heart estranged from God,
The sinner runs the downward road :—(Is. liii. 6.)
While mingled thoughts his mind possess, (Is. lvii. 20.)
Sin may delight, or woes distress.
But his own way he follows still.
The mind's proud regent is the Will. (Eccl. vii. 6.)
- " At times with eager fierce desire,
He will for earth-born joy aspire ;
At times he *loathes* but cannot *leave*
The trifles that his soul deceive.
But the mind's regent is the Will,
And on he madly hurries still.
- " Conscience awakens to upbraid :—
Then with a thousand fears dismayed,
He feebly *wishes* to retrace
Steps that must load him with disgrace.
But the mind's regent is the Will,
He hates* himself—but wanders still.
- " The prospects of the 'great white throne,'
May make his spirit writhe and groan ; (Prov. x. 24.)
Religion—O that he possessed
Hersacred calm within his breast. (Num. xxiii. 10.)
Tears flow—yet his rebellious Will,
Impels him to perdition still.
- " Thus, though he sighs beneath his load,
His 'mind is enmity with God;' (Rom. viii. 7.)
He cannot, WILL not turn to heaven, (Rom. iii. 11.)
Nor seek through Christ to be forgiven.
The bondage of his iron Will,
Holds him sin's weary servant still. (Rom. vi. 17.)
- " Lord, what is man? until Thy grace
Constrain his heart to seek Thy face; (Psa. xxvii. 8.)
Unable to direct his course; (Jer. x. 23.)
Till hope is lost in dread remorse
He must go on—impelled to ill—
Dragged hell-wards by his tyrant Will."

The will of man We deny that salvation is contin-
averse from God. gent or dependent on the assent
and consent of sinners; and contend that the human

* A sinner may *hate* himself, but does not *abhor* himself. A saint *abhors* himself, but never *hates* himself. Self-hatred is sinful, and leads to remorse and despair. Self-abhorrence is gracious, and leads to godly Repentance. Job xlii. 6.

will is in bondage to sin, and cannot decide for God till renewed and liberated by a gracious operation of the Holy Spirit.

Ps. cx. 3, where note that the human will is naturally so averse from God, that nothing less than Christ's power must be put forth ere men can be willing to receive Him as their Saviour; Phil. ii. 13, where note "*to will*," for it is by the inward work of God that we are willing to do what is pleasing to Him; John i. 13, where the commencement of religion in the soul is traced "*not to blood*" or bloods—*i.e.*, not to natural descent. Grace is not hereditary. Nor to "*the will of the flesh*," *i.e.*, one's own will. No man can will himself into a state of grace. Nor to "*the will of man*," *i.e.*, some one's will concerning us. No man can will another into godliness. But to "*God*," whose will and power decide the case, Rom. ix. 16; James i. 18. See Addendum 10.

NOTE.—"The condition of man since the fall, is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing (*i.e.*, going before) us that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will."—*Articles of Religion of the Church of England. No. X.*

NOTE.—A sinner's "dead will must be quickened by his being born from above (John iii. 3.) Life and motion of another kind than what he had from Adam, to hear, and pray, and read, must be put into him by a supernatural power, even by the Holy Ghost Himself, given to *be* and to *dwell* in him (1 Cor. iii. 16, with 2 Tim. i. 14, and James i. 18.) So that his dead will must be quickened by the willingness of another. The quickening of the will and freeing it must be in pure grace without any motive or desert of the creature. See John i. 13; Rom. xi. 6; Eph. ii. 7, 8. This grace must be *preventing* grace (or grace that precedes any gracious act of his) Rom. v. 6 and x. 20. This preventing grace must be *omnipotent* grace. The same power that raised up Jesus from the dead must accompany the grace that raises a dead will. Eph. i. 19, 20; Rom. vi. 4. This omnipotent grace must be put forth through Jesus Christ. John viii. 36 and xii. 32. This conveyance through Jesus Christ must also be by the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5 and John iii. 5. All this must be done before a supernatural freedom of the soul, and a spiritual holy motion of the will raised from the dead and brought away to Christ. Eph. ii. 10; before vital acts, or spiritual believing and receiving Christ."—*Joseph Hussey.*

"All men *naturally* are deprived of that which is free will, *evangelically*, till the Lord by His grace severs His own from among the rest. So that, notwithstanding man differs in his essence from a brute, yet he must be made by grace to differ from himself, by One who is unfeignedly willing, before as a creature he can will what is good. Though man is no lifeless stock or stone, yet he is opposite in his nature to grace till the fruit of electing grace is given. He is no *unreasonable* creature without faculties, and yet he is a *graceless* creature till the Spirit of Life enters him from above. Though he is

not without the *use of reason*, yet he is without the *life of grace* to receive Christ, until Christ of His own antecedent will receive him. Man is not without natural wisdom—his abilities are far above those of beasts (Job xxxv), yet he is without spiritual wisdom, spiritual gifts, and the like, till he be endued with the Holy Ghost. A graceless man hath a brutishness proper to man fallen (Psa. xcii. 6; Prov. xxx. 2), though it is not a brutishness common to man and beast together.”—*Joseph Hussey*. (See also page 100 and Addendum 4.)

“Indulgent God! how kind
Are all Thy ways to me:
Whose dark benighted mind,
Was enmity with Thee.
Yet now, subdued by sovereign grace,
My spirit longs for thine embrace.

“Preserved in Jesus, when
My feet made haste to hell;
And there I should have been,
But Thou dost all things well.
Thy love was great, Thy mercy free,
Which from the pit delivered me.”

The grace of Repentance. We believe that **Repentance** (considered as an evangelical grace) is a gift of the Lord Jesus, conferred through the Holy Ghost on a chosen and redeemed sinner (A), by which the hostility of his will towards God is overcome, and the predominant purpose of his life is brought into submission to, and harmony with the holy will of God (B).*

A Ps. xlv. 5 and lxviii. 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 26; 1 Pet. ii. 25, where notice “are returned,” not *have*. The sheep found their way to the Shepherd through the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, who returned them to the Shepherd to whom they previously belonged; Acts v. 31 and xi. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 25. From the three last quoted verses, it is evident that it requires more than a view of the terrors of the Law, or the grace of the Gospel, to induce evangelical Repentance in a sinner’s mind. Mention is unquestionably made of a gift granted—i.e., a something not possessed by man naturally, but which is imparted to the elect at their entrance into spiritual existence. This holy principle or faculty is the grace of Repentance.

2 Pet. iii. 9. This important statement has before been explained (page 118.) It does not mean that God is benevolently unwilling that any sinners should be lost; but refers only to God’s enrolled and redeemed people, not one of whom it is His pleasure should perish. All must come to Repentance—all must turn in contrition to

* “Repentance” stands for the Greek word *μετανοια* (*metanoia*) which means a changed mind or purpose.

Him. Thus the Repentance of His elect is a fact which He has eternally and sovereignly willed, and for which provision is made in the Covenant of Grace.

B Ps. xxxiv. 18, where the "broken heart" denotes a spiritualised and sensitive conscience, and the "contrite spirit" indicates the Will, no longer resisting God in enmity and arrogance, but subdued and submissive to His sovereign pleasure. *Psa. cx. 3*:—the grace of the ascended Saviour brings the arrested sinner into a state of voluntary subjection to His Lord. *Acts. ix. 6*, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" This exemplifies and illustrates the action of Divine grace on a perverse and stubborn human Will. In a moment the apostle was brought to submit his Will to that of Him who had been revealed as His Lord.

"Repentance is a living power or principle in the mind, communicated by no less a person than God the Holy Spirit."—*J. Hazelton*.

It is remarkable how little is said of Repentance in popular religious treatises. *Dwight's Theology* is silent on the subject. It is not referred to in a *Hand-book of Revealed Theology*, by *Rev. John Stock, L.L.D.*, a work evidently intended to be comprehensive; nor is it mentioned in *Systematic Theology* by *Dr. C. Hodge*. Hence our extended notice.

"The Lamb is exalted repentance to give,
That sin may be hated, while sinners believe;
Contrition is granted, and God justified:
The sinner is humbled, and self is denied.

"Repentance flows freely through Calvary's blood,
Produced by the Spirit and goodness of God;
Thou living possess it, through faith, hope, and love,
And own it a blessing sent down from above.

"All born of the Spirit are brought to repent,
Free grace can make adamant hearts to relent;
Repentance is granted God's justice to prove,
Remission is given, and both from His love."

Spiritual Repentance. We believe that Repentance considered as an act of the renewed mind, is a voluntary abandonment on the part of a sinner of all that he knows to be offensive to God, and a turning to Him in submission and contrition for sovereign mercy through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

* In defining the *grace* of Repentance, as the specific action of the Holy Spirit upon the human will, and the *act* of Repentance as the turning of the renewed will of the heaven-born sinner from sin to God—we may be thought too metaphysical; but can it be shown that we are incorrect? The Will is the dominant power of the mind—the regent of the man. Men are not simply *reluctant* to be saved; but they are positively *determined* not to be.

2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, 13 ; Job xlii. 5, 6 ; Prov. xxviii. 13 ; Zech. xii. 10 ; Matt. iii. 8 ; Luke xix. 8 ; Acts xix. 19 ; 1 Thess i. 9, 10, where note that Repentance is a turning to God, not only from open sin, but also from false religion—from the love of error “to the acknowledgement of the truth.” 2 Tim. ii. 25.

NOTE.—Evangelical Repentance is threefold :—

1. It is the turning of a sinner in his early conviction to God, Acts ii. 38.

2. It is the return of a backslider after his wanderings, Psa. cxix. 176 ; Jer. xxxi. 18—20 ; Hos. xiv. 1—4 ; 2 Cor. ii. 7 ; James v. 16.

3. It is the return of a church which had lapsed into erroneous doctrines and unholy practices, to God's truth, order, and ways, Rev. ii. 5.

NOTE.—Repentance is a change of mind in man attended with godly sorrow—a change concerning all that is bad, and towards every thing that is good, holy, and divine.

1. A repentant sinner's mind has been changed towards sin. Hence he confesses it, and prays for an application of atoning blood to his guilty soul.

“We were resolved to be damned and determined to go to hell,” *John Hazelton*. The Divine operation which terminates this state of things, and makes sinners willing in the day when Christ's power is put forth, must be referred to in God's word, and if the grace of Repentance does not designate it, what term does ?

A defective view of Repentance has of late years been promulgated by some of the Plymouth Brethren (who are practically Sandemanians,) who assert that it simply means an “after mind,” or a change of view or opinion concerning religion. That the literal meaning of the word *metanoia* (μετάνοια), translated repentance is an “after mind,” is not denied ; but it is utterly misleading to explain the word “mind” as here employed, as expressing the transient thoughts of the day, as we say that “we change our mind” when we make some slight alteration in our plans. *Metanoia* indicates an entire change in the bias of the mind in relation to a given object. Spiritual Repentance therefore, indicates a real, radical, and permanent change of purpose in relation to God.

There are two distinct words in the Greek of the New Testament, which our translators have uniformly rendered “repent.” It is common to say that the first of these (μετάνοσιω *metanoesio*) denotes that change of mind and disposition to which the term Repentance is generally applied in English ; and that the second signifies merely such a change of purpose or opinion as does not necessarily imply the renewal of the heart. The second (μεταμελομαι *metamelomai*) is only found in the following passages. Matt. xxi. 29, 32 ; and xxvii. 3 ; 2 Cor. vii. 8, 10 ; Heb. vii. 21. The former is of frequent occurrence. The learned Witsius, however, says that “it may be doubted whether there is solid ground for this distinction. The etymology of the words imports no such thing, and both are promiscuously used by approved writers.” On the Covenants, Book iii. 12.

2. **Changed toward himself.** He was once on good terms with, and exalted himself. Now—the new-birth having taken place, and his mind having thereby been changed—he abhors himself and repents in dust and ashes.

3. **Repentance relates to the world.** Having been plucked out of the fire, the world is behind him, and a better world before him. He is *in* the world indeed, but no longer *of* it.

4. **It involves a change of mind in relation to the Law.** [Of this he was once wholly unmindful. Now his mind is full of its just claims and awful penalty. Dreadful as is the thought of the law, he dares not dismiss the subject.] It reveals him to himself, and he is consciously lost and undone.

5. **It is a change toward the gospel.** He is now vitally interested in the doctrines it contains, “O,” he exclaims, “would that its sweet promises were mine!”

6. **It is a change of mind towards God.** “The repenting sinner has thrown away the sword with which he fought, and cast off the armour of the devil. The holy name which he used to blaspheme is most solemn to him now. Two of God’s attributes are most important to him—His justice and His mercy. He kneels and weeps with one (so to speak) on either side—and alternately he turns to each. “Have mercy on me,” he cries—yet having equal regard for Divine Justice, he tremblingly admits that, sinner as he is, he might with equity be eternally damned. He then turns his eyes towards the dear Redeemer, and remembers with ardent hope that He was punished for sin and sinners. His heart bruised and broken, he says: ‘Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.’”—*John Hazelton.*

“There’s joy beyond the star-lit sky,
When contrite hearts their sin deplore;
And grace-sought sinners turn to God,
To wander from His ways no more.

“Once they were hostile to His throne:
But now—constrained by love divine—
The Saviour’s rights they meekly own,
And to His will *their* wills resign.

“How great the change—to Thee alone
Bless’d Spirit we the praise accord;
Thou only canst the Will subdue,
And bring the sinner to his Lord.”

Repentance distinguished Impressed with the importance of correct thoughts upon every branch of salvation, we distinguish between **Repentance** and other **actions and conditions** of the mind, which (though presenting features of similarity) are radically different from this essential grace of the Holy Spirit.

NOTE.—Evangelical repentance, or the repentance which is conjoined with salvation, is to be distinguished from remorse, which is the anguish arising in the mind of a natural man when impressed with horror at the impending consequences of the sins he has committed. It is unaccompanied with brokenness of heart, or any real desire and determination to abandon wrong doings. It arises from an alarmed conscience without a renewed will. "Cain, Esau, Saul, Ahab, and Judas, all, in a way, repented; but their repentance was natural remorse, not the godly sorrow of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. They neither hated their sins nor forsook them; loved holiness nor sought it. Cain went out from the presence of the Lord; Esau plotted Jacob's death; Saul consulted a witch; Ahab put Micaiah into prison; Judas hanged himself. How different all this from the godly aversion to sin, and intense longing for righteousness, which the Spirit imparts to chosen and blood bought sinners."—*J. C. Philpot.*

Moral reformation is also often mistaken for spiritual Repentance; but the former is external, and has to do with outward conduct only. The latter is internal, and affects the secret springs of character. The flight of years, the manifold changes of this mortal life, or the pressure of moral influence so affect men, that what was pleasant becomes painful, and is voluntarily abandoned. Thus spendthrifts become economical; the unclean, chaste; drunkards, sober; the violent, gentle and considerate—without the mind being a whit less carnal than heretofore.

Evangelical is, again, to be distinguished from legal* or moral repentance. It is the duty of men individually or collectively to repent of and abandon any known transgression. Thus it was incumbent on Simon the Sorcerer, to repent of his sin (Acts viii. 22); on the inhabitants of Nineveh to repent of their malpractices (Jonah ii. 10); on the Jewish nation to repent of their departure from the will and ways of God (Matt. iii. 2, &c.); on the heathen to repent of idolatry when commanded by God (Acts xvii. 30); but all these forms of repentance merely required the exercise of natural reason and conscience, and involved nothing that was spiritual and sanctifying. See also Matt. iv. 17; v. 20; xii. 41; xxi. 29, 32 and xxvii. 3. Mark i. 15 and vi. 12. Luke xiii. 3, 5. 1 Kings viii. 47—49. 2 Chron. xii. 5—12; and Acts xiv. 15, 16. "However such Scriptures may be accommodated to illustrate spiritual things—their direct sense is to require a natural and legal repentance, answerable to the kind of relation (see chapter 17, page 204) in which the persons addressed were standing to God and one another."—*John Stevens.*

NOTE.—Repentance (as in 2 Cor. vii. 10,) is to be distinguished

* The term *Legal Repentance* (for which the author is not responsible), must not be misunderstood. The Law has nothing to do with Repentance. It does not even command it. All it has to do with the transgressor, is to condemn him. The term legal is here used to indicate the motive by which the repentance was induced, and the end for which it was pursued—namely, a servile apprehension of disaster to be avoided, and not as in Evangelical Repentance, a filial sorrow for sin as an outrage against Divine love.

from contrition, or the sorrow with which it is conjoined. Repentance as an act, is turning from all known sin unto God, and is the same in all persons. The emotion with which this act is accompanied, varies in degree in different Christians; nor need any be distressed because their sorrow is not so deep and poignant as in others, if only by grace their purpose is to abandon sin and seek the Lord.

"Repentance means change. Though of course contrition is associated with it, it is different from contrition. In its essence it is practical rather than emotional. It belongs to the will, rather than to the feelings. Bunyan's 'Mr. Wet-eyes' is scarcely therefore a complete type of Repentance."—*Rev. S. G. Green, D.D.*

It is to be distinguished from Penance, which is a mere putting of the *body* to inconvenience or pain, while the soul may continue in a state of bitter hostility to God.

Repentance and Conversion are also to be distinguished as in Acts ii. 37. Repentance is a spiritual and secret act known only to God. Conversion is an outward and manifest change of conduct and conversation, and takes in both the inner and outward life. The grace of Repentance in the heart leads to Conversion (Acts xxvi. 20.) Here "the fruits meet for," or appropriately following, Repentance are distinguished from the act itself. Repentance respects our conduct towards God (Acts xx. 21.) In Conversion we bring forth the natural and necessary fruits—a holy and consistent walk before God and man.

The distinction between Repentance and Penitence should also be noted. Repentance is an *act* of the mind. Penitence is a *state* of mind. We can only *repent* when some transgression is present to the memory, which demands confession and redress. We may and should be *penitent* all our lives. The Pascal Lamb was eaten with "bitter herbs." Faith sorrows as she feeds on Christ. We should then welcome not sin, but a consciousness of sin. He who has least occasion for Repentance, knows most of the sweet grace of Penitence which so endears Christ as the Saviour of sinners. Penitence deplores what we are (Job xl. 4.) Repentance sorrows over what we have done. (Psa. li. 4.)

Repentance is to be distinguished from Reconciliation. It is noticeable, that while in the Gospels and in the Acts, much is said about Repentance, in the Epistles it is seldom referred to, save where God's people are mentioned as having departed from His ways. But the saints are therein spoken of as reconciled to God (Rom. v. 10; 2 Cor. v. 18; Col. i. 21.) Reconciliation is the blessed condition to which Repentance leads. The Repentance of a sinner may therefore be called the *transition of the soul* from a state of enmity towards God, to one of cordial acquiescence in and approval of His character and claims. In a natural man the Will is seen proudly resisting God. In a repentant sinner, the Will appears as turning to God. In a reconciled saint, the Will appears as sweetly in harmony with God (Psa. xxxvii. 4,) and meekly inditing the prayer, "Thy will be done."

"Preachers have ungardedly said that Repentance is turning quite round. But he that has turned quite round, is as he was at first. It is a turning *half* round, so that the whole direction of the man,

morally considered, is different from what it was before.”—*Samuel Milner*.

“ Thus, when the Holy Ghost imparts
A knowledge of the Saviour’s love ;
Our wandering, weary, restless hearts
Are fixed at once, no more to move.

“ Then a new principle within
Re-animates and guides the Will,
Which turned to God, and turned from sin,
Inclines the feet to Zion’s hill.

“ By love’s pure light we then perceive
Our noblest bliss, our proper end—
And gladly every idol leave,
To seek and serve our Lord and Friend.”

Repentance and Contrition con-joined. We hold that spiritual Repentance is invariably conjoined with a **broken heart**, or, in other words, a conscience that has been made to view sin as an evil and bitter thing, (A): and that all who truly repent, deplore and forsake it with solemn and deep feeling, as abominable and hateful in the sight of God (B).*

A Psa. li. 1—6 (on which see note on Psa. xxxiv. 18 on page 174); Jer. xxxi. 9; Acts ii. 37, where note the distinction between being pricked in (not “to” as often quoted) their heart, and “cut to the heart.” (Acts vii. 54.) The former is an evidence of grace; the latter results from the enmity of carnal men against the sovereign grace of God. If the *pericardium* or the *sac* which surrounds the heart were literally punctured, life would immediately cease. The figure founded on this fact must therefore mean experimental death, as in Rom. vii. 9. (B) Psa. xcvi. 10; cxix. 104, 113, 163; Prov. viii. 13; Jer. xlv. 4; Rom. vii. 15; Heb. i. 9; Rev. ii. 6.

“ He who repents returns to God,
Sprinkled with Jesus’ cleansing blood;
From God by sin he went astray,
But now returns another way.

“ He who repents is then ashamed.
And freely owns he’s justly blamed;
His heart relents with holy grief,
His tongue exclaims ‘of sinners chief.’

* “ Repentance is a compound of two opposite sentiments, hatred and love. Sin is loathed for its own vile sake; but there is a fire of love to God in the heart, a *spiritual* love which is one of the fruits of the New Birth, which strives to break forth.”—*John Hazelton*.

" He who repents is born to feel,
His heart by nature hard as steel;
But while contrition fills his eye,
Before the cross, behold him lie."

Repentance wrought by Law and Love. We believe that while **Repentance** is induced by a realization of our true condition as transgressors justly condemned by the holy Law of God (A)* it is mainly promoted by a persuasion of the **amazing love** which is manifested to us as sinners in the incarnation, life, death, and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ (B.)

A See articles on the Law, on page 21, 22, 23. Rom. vii. 7—11; where note that the Spirit employed the Law to work a change of purpose in the heart of S. Paul. "Once he was alive without the Law;" but when it "came" in its condemning power to his heart, "he died"—i.e., he was stricken down and humbled, led to take the place of a condemned, or *legally* dead sinner, and renounce his pharisaical religion as dead works in God's sight.

B Jer. xxxi. 18—20; Ezek. xvi. 63; Hos. xiv. 1—7; Joel ii. 12—14; Zech. xii. 10; Acts ix. 5, where note "It is hard for thee." There was infinite consideration and compassion in the words—and they melted Saul's heart. He "*trembled*" as a sinner, while he "*was astonished*" at the grace displayed. Rom. ii. 4: "*Leadeth thee to Repentance.*" Evangelical and Spiritual Repentance is not here intended; but moral reformation and cessation from wrong-doing. To this God's goodness to the Jews as a nation should have led; while His longsuffering and kindness should have produced a

* There is a tendency in the present day to overlook this truth. Surely the experience of John Kent, portrayed in his hymn given on page 23, is vital and essential. A repenting sinner turns to God in every character in which He is revealed,—His character as "the One Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," included. The thunders of Sinai drive sinners from their refuges of self-confidence, while the voice of love and mercy from Calvary, *draws* them to Jesus. The work of the Law in relation to Repentance, is an essential branch of scriptural testimony. An attenuated Law involves a mutilated Gospel, and attenuated testimony concerning the Law leads to meagre apprehensions concerning the freeness and glory of the Gospel. Little is said to sinners respecting the Law in the present day. This may account for the lack of definiteness and decision in so many doubtless genuine, modern conversions. None can understand the sweetness of the words, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?' who have no just conception of what they were once charged with as guilty law-breakers.

The grace of Repentance alone can enable us to view *wrong doing* as **SIN**—i.e., an offence against God. Psa. li. 4, where notice how keenly David felt that his crime was an evil in God's sight.

similar result in Gentile sinners.—*Gill's Commentary*. The words, however, are ordinarily cited to prove that penitent feelings and acts are induced in regenerated sinners by a revelation of the goodness of God in the plan of salvation.

“When regeneration takes place, a revelation is made to the the new-born mind. A two-fold view of God is then seen through a two-fold medium. First, as the Lawgiver is viewed through the medium of His Law, by which “is the knowledge of sin” (Rom. iii. 20.) Through this just and holy medium, the sinner sees a sin-hating Lawgiver, and he contrasts himself with His holiness therein displayed. As a result, he discovers that he has “come short of the glory of God.” Consternation fills his mind: but will he sink into despair? Will Justice sweep him into hell? No; for, Secondly, he is favoured to view God through another medium. He is brought to regard the same Being as the God of pity, love, and compassion, through the agonies and death of His crucified Son. Hope is kindled by the sight of this merciful God, as He appears through the medium of precious blood. This hope once kindled in the heart, pervades every faculty of the mind, which moves and is melted at the sight. Then streams of godly sorrow flow out before the throne. He loathes himself. He loathes sin on account of its nature and its loathsomeness to God—and in real contrition and a little faith in his heart, he drops down upon the atonement of the Saviour, and exclaims: ‘Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.’” *From John Hazelton*. Thus the grace of Repentance, previously imparted as a covenant gift, is drawn out in living acts of penitence and supplication by its Divine Author the Holy Spirit.

NOTE.—“Whence springs that sorrow which is inseparable from Repentance? Not from the simple apprehension of the fact that punishment must follow sin. Many criminals sorrow for their crimes, because followed by severe punishment. This is natural Repentance—but it is attended with no self-loathing and sorrow for sin as sin.

“Not such is the gracious sorrow of God people. Were there no eternal torment, they would be deeply penitent in the sight of God, and would mourn and weep in the sight of God. Repentance is the result of a true, deep, spiritual, and evangelical realization of the nature of sin; one is brought to feel (not simply to admit) that it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God.”—*John Hazelton*.

NOTE.—The will which governs all the other powers of the mind, is reached through those powers. Its determinations are swayed by the decisions of the judgment; the verdicts of the conscience; the conceptions of the imagination; the reminiscences of the memory; and the inclinations of the heart. The grace of God therefore reaches the will through all these powers. The gospel informs the understanding; arouses and enlightens the conscience; clarifies the imagination; awakens the dormant voice of memory; and gains the affections of the heart by a display of the unparalleled love of God. The will cannot be driven; but it can be reached and rectified. This the truth embodied in the Law and the Gospel, when brought into vital contact with a quickened and sensitive mind, is exactly calculated to effect.

NOTE.—“The propriety of the common phrase ‘driven to Christ,’

may be questioned, for as long as a man is under this *driving* power, he may want a refuge from the danger he fears; but he wants no Christ. Affrighted nature will long for a shelter; but will ever seek it in her own way. A sinner destitute of the drawings of love, turns to the Law and promises himself peace and safety, favour and eternal happiness, by his own improvements, performances, and good intentions. We never become dead to the law as a rule of justification, till conquered by the heart-melting charms of love Divine. When a man's face is toward hell, the greater the force that impels him, the faster he hastens to the point before him. True religion is the reign of love."
—*John Stevens.*

"There is a period known to God—
When all His sheep, redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold, and enter in.

"At peace with hell, with God at war—
In sin's dark maze they wander far;
Indulge their lusts, and still go on,
As far from God as sheep can run.

"Th' appointed time rolls on apace,—
Not to propose, but call by grace,
To change the heart, renew the will,
And turn the feet to Zion's hill."

Repentance and Faith inseparable though distinguishable.

We hold that Repentance and Faith, although they are distinct acts of the renewed mind (A), are inseparable in the experience of regenerated sinners, and that all who receive grace to turn from sin to God are empowered to believe in Christ Jesus to the experimental salvation of their souls (B).

(A) The grace of Repentance changes the *attitude* of the soul; the grace of Faith imparts ability to perform that life-long series of *actions* which characterise the true believer. Repentance is the turning of the soul to God (Psa. cxix. 59; Jer. xxxi. 9.) Faith is trust in Christ as the Saviour (Eph. i. 13.) (B) Mark i. 15.

NOTE.—Repentance and Faith, though alike in their author, differ in their objects. Repentance is *towards God*; Faith is *toward our Jesus Christ*. Acts xx. 21. "Repentance denotes the attitude of soul which follows the discovery of its contrariety to the righteous demands of the Divine law. It is towards God, for it recognises Him as the Party dishonoured by sin and entitled to acknowledgment and submission as the Great Lawgiver. Repentance therefore directs the soul to God—as *such*—and knowing Him to have been outraged, the penitent sinner turns in humiliation to Him. Faith approaches God

by Him through whom alone God, as incensed by sin, can be addressed by the sinner; the one appointed Medium of mercy. Hence Faith is said to be 'towards the Lord Jesus Christ.' It is easy to see why Repentance, in this aspect, is put before Faith; for the former must of necessity precede the latter."—*Rev. David Brown, D.D.*

NOTE.—In Acts xx. 21, "there is God first, and secondly, Christ, who stands between a sin-hating God, and a repentant sinner. I view God, and tremble. I look at God through the Mediator, and hope—notwithstanding I am a ruined sinner. Christ is God's way to the sinner, and the sinner's way to God—the meeting-place between the God who hates sin, and the sinner who has been brought to hate it too. So that Repentance is spoken of in relation to God, and Faith in relation to the Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ."—*John Hazelton.*

NOTE.—It has been questioned whether Repentance precedes Faith, or Faith Repentance. The answer is simple. The principles of Repentance and Faith are imparted simultaneously. In the experience of the child of God, Repentance precedes Faith. Repentance discovers and deplures sin. Faith makes application to the Sin-bearer. Repentance sheds the tear of contrite sorrow. Faith has recourse to Him who alone can remove the detested evil and wipe the tear away. Repentance prepares the soul for the reception of pardon. Faith appeals to Him, through whom the pardon comes. Repentance is the act of the awakened sinner fleeing in distress from the refuge of lies (Isa. xxviii. 15—17. Faith is the act of the sinner after farther illumination, crying:

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

NOTE.—Spiritual Repentance is inseparable from some knowledge of the facts which are discernible only by Faith; and the actings of Faith are inseparable from contrition and a turning from sin to God. Thus, then, to draw a sharp line between the two is impracticable, for they are conjoined in the experience of every babe in grace.

"Faith and Repentance are twin graces, and are never parted."

"Repentance is a gift bestowed,
To save a soul from death;
Gospel Repentance towards God,
Is always joined by Faith.

" 'Tis not the fear of hell alone,
For that may prove extreme;
Repenting saints the Saviour own,
And grieve for grieving Him."

Repentance in- We believe that Repentance
variably followed toward God is necessarily conjoined
by Reformation. with Reformation of life before
men: and we hold that none who practise what the Bible

condemns should be regarded and treated as the subjects of saving and sanctifying grace.

Acts xxvi. 20; Eph. ii. 2—10; Col. iii. 9, and other practical exhortations. (See page 62.)

NOTE.—A mistaken view has been taken of the character and conduct of Rahab, the Harlot, which by some have been employed to the subversion of the above truth. A heathen by birth and education, and surrounded by sinners of the grossest type, she was utterly ignorant of moral distinctions. Europeans in India, have often the utmost difficulty in making Orientals understand that lying and stealing, *as such*, are sinful. Their idea rather is, that they are commendable, if practised with sufficient skill. So in Rahab. She had but recently been born from above, and, while Faith was alive and active, Morality was dead and dormant. The inspired historian gives no comment on her untruths, certainly not commending them.* (See Josh. ii; Heb. xi. 31; James ii. 25.)

“ When I had wandered from the fold—
His grace the wand’rer sought;
When slave-like into bondage sold,
His blood the freedom bought.

“ Therefore, that life by Him redeemed,
Is His through all its days;
And as with blessings it hath teemed,
So may it teem with praise.”

Repentance essential to Salvation. We hold that Repentance is an absolutely necessary branch of experimental salvation (A); since without it a sinner would remain in a condition of heart entirely unfit for the disclosures of Divine pardon and favour *here*, and

* William Palmer contends, that Rahab’s faith was not *spiritual*, but *natural*, and had no relation to an open interest in Christ.—“WHAT WAS RAHAB?”

It should be noted that S. Paul and S. James, contemplate her conduct from different points. The one says, that “by *faith*” she “received the spies in peace.” The other, that after receiving them, she was “justified by *works*”—not by lying on their account—but by sending them out “another way.”

A parallel case is that of the Cretians, who as a people naturally, as one of their own poets had witnessed, were, “ferocious, idle, and gluttonous.” These evil propensities manifested themselves in the members of the church at Crete, of which Titus was the pastor: and he was not to question the vitality of their godliness—but to teach them *morality*, and rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the Faith. Titus i. 13, 14.

for the high and blessed employments of the world of glory *hereafter* (B.)

(A) Proved from the prominence given to it in the Bible. See texts to preceding sections.

NOTE.—We stand in pronounced antagonism to the modern system in which Repentance is ignored, and sinners are indiscriminately commanded to believe. See Acts xvi. 30, 31, where the jailor was evidently a penitent, and *therefore* enjoined to do so.*

NOTE.—“I have no idea that a sinner who is a stranger to Repentance and godly sorrow, can be said to be going to heaven. I set up no standard of experience in relation to it, as some do; but with Paul I feel bound to ‘testify to the Jews, and also to the Greeks,’ the necessity of Repentance toward God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(B) Isa. lvii. 15; lxi. 1, and lxvi. 2; Matt. v. 4.

NOTE.—The four uses of Repentance. 1. It dissolves all ruinous and destructive associations. “I was a wounded deer, and left the herd long since.”—*Cowper*. The wounded one, with an arrow in its side, leaves the herd, and seeks retirement while the herd moves on. So the wounded sinner, whose conscience is lacerated, seeks a secret place in which to pour out the feelings of his heart before God. The world moves on; but he is separated from the world for ever. 2. Repentance prepares the heart for *God's presence*. God dwells with the lacerated conscience—with the man who mourns that he is a guilty and ruined sinner. 3. Repentance prepares the heart for *God's balm*. The “balm of Gilead is never laid upon an unwounded heart—He never applies the plaster of eternal love to an unwounded spirit. He wounds to heal—wounds with one hand, while in the other He holds the balm. ‘He lays a wound upon a wound, and makes the wounded whole.’ Were no piercing necessity felt, no pleasure would be experienced when God's pardon is applied.”—*John Hazelton*. 4. Repentance prepares the heart for communion with Christ.

“A faithful friend of grief partakes,
But union can be none;
Between a heart like melted wax,
And hearts as hard as stone.”

* “Within the last 60 or 70 years, this new Gospel has sprung into existence of preaching indiscriminately to unawakened and unrepentant sinners, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ But to whom does the Holy Spirit say (this.) Not to all sinners indiscriminately. Here is a grand mistake of the teaching of the age. Great injury has been done to the cause of Christ, by thus wrongly dividing the word of truth—to say nothing of the unphilosophical character of such a cause.”—*Catherine Booth*, of the Salvation Army. Surely this is a remarkable testimony in favour of what has been regarded as a distinguishing doctrine of extreme Calvinists.

"Between a Head suffusing blood,
And members sound and whole;
Between an agonising God,
And an unwounded soul."

Communion is based on knowledge and similarity. Repentance assimilates the sinner to Him who hates sin with all the intensity of His nature. Between an unwounded sinner and the "man of sorrows," there can be no fellowship.

"Christ is the Friend of sinners,
Be this forgotten never;
A wounded soul, and not a whole,
Becomes a true believer.
To see sin's smart but lightly,
To own, with lip confession,
Is easier still, but oh to feel
Cuts deep beyond expression!

"The contrite heart and broken,
God will not give to ruin;
This sacrifice He'll not despise,
For 'tis the Spirit's doing.
Then hail, ye happy mourners,
Who pass through tribulation—
Sin's filth and guilt perceived and felt,
Make known God's great salvation."

Spiritual Repentance, not a natural duty. We believe that since the act of Spiritual Repentance is the **result** of an Evangelical **grace**, provided in the everlasting covenant and bestowed in sovereign favour upon the elect,—it should **not** be regarded as a **natural duty**, imposed on men as rational and accountable creatures by the Moral Law.

See page 20. "The claims of the Law cover all natural obligations," Addendum 6.

"Grace leaves us no condition to fulfil:
'Tis finished!' said the dying Saviour's breath;
My soul for refuge flees to Calvary's hill,
And lives upon my precious Surety's death."

The Heaven-born Grace of Faith.

Faith, a principle and an act. We believe that Faith should be regarded—Firstly as a **principle** or faculty imparted by the Holy Spirit to every Regenerated person (A); and Secondly as an **act** which arises from the

existence of this principle and which specially characterises the true children of God (B.)

A Eph. ii. 8; Phil. ii. 17; 2 Thess. i. 3; 2 Tim. i. 5; 2 Pet. i. 1.
B Mark iv. 40 and xi. 22; Rom. iv. 19 and x. 17; 2 Cor. i. 24; Eph. iii. 17; Col. i. 4 and ii. 5—7; 1 John v. 4; Heb. vi. 12.

NOTE.—In the *first* group of texts, Faith evidently means, not an act, but a faculty enabling us to act. In the *second*, the same word describes this act. In the latter case it may be exchanged for the word “belief” or “believing,” as in Rom. x. 17, and 2 Thess. ii. 13.

NOTE.—In Eph. ii. 8, 2 Pet. i. 1, it is distinctly affirmed that the principle called “precious Faith” is obtained or “received” (so J. N. Darby) by the elect as the gift of God.*

NOTE.—The term “principle” is here employed in the sense of a “mental faculty,” and must be distinguished from the same word when it designates a “settled rule of action” (as when we talk about “a man of principle”), or a “fundamental truth” (as it is employed on page 1.) Joseph Hart describes Faith as “A *principle*, active and young, which lives under pressure and load.” (See the Glossary and Index.)

NOTE.—The distinction between a faculty and its corresponding act is common in ordinary language. We speak of the faculty of vision, and the act of seeing, &c.

NOTE.—The Conscience has been called the Moral Sense, because it is the faculty by the exercise of which we perceive the moral quality of actions, and intuitively decide whether they are right or wrong. (See page 110.) Faith might similarly be called the Spiritual Sense, for by its exercise alone can spiritual objects be contemplated and considered.

NOTE.—Faith is often styled a grace because it is altogether pre-

* “Obtained.” 2 Pet. i. 1. The word in the original is λαγχανω (lagchano,) which means to obtain by lot, or by previous allotment. The meaning is, that the gift of Faith was allotted in the Covenant to the elect, and that they obtain it through the Righteousness—i.e., the life and death—of the God-man Mediator.

Heb. xii. 2. “Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.” This is not quoted above on account of the diversity of opinions respecting its meaning, some contending that it means that Christ is the Author of the grace of Faith; others that He was the great Originator of the facts on which Faith rests. “The grace of Faith is not here intended. Of *that* the Holy Spirit is the Author.”—G. W. Shepherd. “It means that Jesus is the Beginner and Perfecter—which I prefer to Author and Finisher—of the great scheme of Salvation, frequently called ‘the faith.’”—Israel Atkinson. These differ from the translators of our received version, who clearly thought that “our faith”—i.e., our believing acts, are intended. “I should unhesitatingly refer the term Faith here, both to the Object and Act of Faith.”—John Hazelton.

ternatural, or beyond what is possible to nature, and imparted to men through God's grace or free kindness and favour.

NOTE.—Faith—the spiritual sense—is illustrated in the Bible by the exercises of the natural senses. Sight, Heb. ii. 9; xi. 27, and xii. 2; hearing, Isa. lv. 3; smelling, Cant. i. 3; tasting, 1 Pet. ii. 3; feeling, Acts xvii. 27; holding, 1 Tim. vi. 12, &c.

NOTE.—The above manifests the absurdity of preachers who *command* unregenerate sinners to believe, because it is *so easy to do so*. Faith to an unregenerate sinner is as impossible as would sight be to one who has no eye-balls.

“The principle of Faith from Jesus we receive,
And all the power it hath, the Lord the Saviour gave.
Through Him we come—we trust—we view,
The wonders that our God can do.”

Faith, a principle of apprehension and action. We believe that **Faith** (considered as a principle) is a faculty imparted by the Holy Ghost to Regenerated sinners, by which they are enabled to apprehend spiritual facts (A); to recognise and rejoice in spiritual relationships (B); and to approach and confide in God as the God of salvation. (C)

A 1 Cor. ii. 15; Heb. xi. 1, 6, 13; 1 John v. 20. B Psa. lxiii. 1; 1 Thess. i. 4; 2 Tim. i. 12, where mind not to insert “in” before “whom.” Paul knew whom he had trusted. C Psa. xxvii. 9, and lxxviii. 20.

See also the first note to article on page 168, and the proof texts under A on page 187.

“Faith! 'tis a grace divine, a gift both rich and free;
'Twas grace that made this blessing mine, from guilt to set me free.
Faith lives, in spite of hell, and when the soul's oppressed
With mis'ries more than tongue can tell, it leans on Jesus' breast.”

Faith, an inwrought persuasion, conjoined with heartfelt trust. We believe that **Faith** (considered as an act of the renewed mind), is a persuasion (inwrought by the Spirit through the truth) of the certainty and importance of spiritual and gracious facts (A); conjoined with trust in and obedience to God (B), as He is revealed in the person and work of Christ and described in the Gospel (C.)

A The Greek word *pistis*, of which our term Faith is the translation, is akin to the verb *pisteuo* (πιστευω) “I am persuaded, or have confidence in,” and denotes the assured belief that comes from persuasion, on the

ground of well-authenticated testimony, as opposed to surmise or conjecture. Hence, as far as it goes, the accuracy of Lewis Weyman's definition: "Faith as an act, is a believing upon an inwrought persuasion, derived from inward knowledge through our being led by the Spirit into all truth." (John vi. 69, and xvi. 13.) Addendum 11.

"God promised that He would "persuade Japhet, and he should dwell in the tents of Shem" (Gen. ix. 27), and this work of persuading seems to be His working Faith in the minds of men by the power of the Holy Ghost. Hence God is said to send the gospel to the souls of men with power in the Holy Ghost, and much assurance (1 Thess. i. 5.) And the operation of this divine power put forth is said to produce Faith: "God fulfils all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of Faith with power" (2 Thess. i. 11.) This persuasion Paul asserts to be the Faith of Abraham, who was fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able also to perform." (Rom. iv. 21.)—*William Huntington*. Hence Faith is said to stand (*i.e.*, to have both its existence and stability), "not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. ii. 5.) The persuasion of Faith is the result of the operation of the Spirit in the heart (Psa. lxxxvii. 7.)

B Psa. lxi. 4; Isa. xii. 2; Nah. i. 7; Rom. i. 5; Eph. i. 13; 1 Tim. iv. 10; Matt. xi. 28; John vi. 37, and vii. 37; Heb. xi. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7.

C 2 Cor. iv. 6, where note that the word rendered "face" is in Luke xx. 21, 2 Cor. i. 11, and xi. 10, and Gal. ii. 6 translated "person," which is also its meaning here.

NOTE.—The exercises of Faith are two-fold—passive and active. Its *passive* exercises are reception and reliance (Col. ii. 6, 1 Thess. i. 6, Heb. xi. 33 "*obtained promises*"—Isa. xxx. 7, 2 Tim. i. 12); its *active* exercises are all the gracious duties enjoined in the gospel, for Faith is the motive power of every act which is spiritually pleasing to God through Christ (Heb. xi. 6; Rom. v. 2; 2 Cor. i. 2, 4, and v. 7; Gal. ii. 20; Heb. xi. *whole chapter*.) The passive and active exercises of Faith are brought together in Heb. xi. 13. "They saw the promises afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them"—then, in the power of this persuasion, they voluntarily acted as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." So also in Col. ii. 6, "*As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord*"—passive reception, "*so walk in Him*"—gracious activity.

NOTE.—Faith considered as an act of the renewed mind, to be accurately considered must be viewed in many aspects. Many definitions of it have been given, but though all cover some portion of the ground, none are, perhaps, fully satisfactory. Some we subjoin.

Faith is "An inwrought, firm, abiding, reverential, and affectionate persuasion of the 'truth as it is in Jesus.'"—"A practical recognition of spiritual realities." "Taking God at His word and acting upon it." "Trusting God in His Covenant character." "Believing in God as He is revealed in Christ." "Trusting as a self-condemned sinner in the sacrifice of Christ." "Approaching God for mercy and pardon in the name of Jesus." "Taking the lost sinner's place before

the lost sinner's Saviour." "Entrusting one's soul to Christ for eternal safety." "The outstretching to God of the suppliant hand of the consciously-lost sinner." "The Godward motion of the Regenerated soul." "The flight of the lost sinner to Jesus as the only Refuge." "The 'amen' of the renewed mind to God's testimony." "A divine persuasion of divine realities." "The assent of the renewed mind to the condemnation of the *Law*, and the approach of the soul to God in the way described in the *Gospel*."

"Faith, which is a fruit of God's Spirit, is a Divine and unshaken persuasion of the reality of a Divine report, deeply impressed on the mind; and is the result of an eternal union which subsisted between Christ and His elect from everlasting; the bond of which union is God's everlasting love to Christ and His elect in Him."—*William Huntington*. "Faith is the reception of the truth of God, and reliance on the Christ of God." "*Faith and trust are convertible terms. Believing in Christ is entrusting one's soul with all its sin to Him, to be cleansed in His precious blood—and trusting oneself to Him, to be cared for, and kept, and blessed.*"

"Living trust in the living God:" "Committing one's eternal interest to Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. i. 12.)

Faith is:—

"A principle active and young, that lives under pressure and load:

That makes out of weakness more strong, and draws the soul upward to God."

"Faith is the Christian's maid of all work. She carries all to God, and fetches all from God,"—*John Stevens*.

"Faith is not what we FEEL or see, it is a simple TRUST
In what the GOD of Love has said of JESUS, as the 'just.'
What JESUS is, and that alone, is faith's delightful plea;
It never deals with SINFUL self, nor RIGHTEOUS self, IN ME.

"It tells me I am counted 'DEAD' by GOD, in His own word;
It tells me I am 'BORN AGAIN in CHRIST, my RISEN LORD.
If He is free, then I am free, from all unrighteousness;
If He is just, then I am just, He is MY righteousness."

Heb. xi. 1. "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" Obviously not intended as a comprehensive definition of Faith, but as a description of this grace when viewed from one standpoint only. It may be thus paraphrased: "*Now Faith is the assurance (or confident expectation) of (the) things (which are) hoped for (by the spiritually-minded—and arises from) the conviction (or perfect persuasion) of (the existence of those) things (though as yet they are) not seen.*" This does not describe the Faith of the trembling sinner in his early appeals for mercy, but rather the undaunted Faith of matured saints, empowered by this heaven-born principle to do, dare, and suffer for the God they love. See the whole Chapter.

"Faith is a precious grace, where'er it is bestowed ;
It boasts of a celestial birth, and is the gift of God.

"Jesus it owns a King, an all-atoning priest ;
It claims no merit of its own, but looks for all in Christ.

"To Him it leads the soul, when filled with deep distress,
Flies to the fountain of His blood, and trusts His righteousness."

Faith receives the Holy Scriptures. We believe that Faith is invariably connected with the **reception** of the **revealed truth** of God (A), and we recognise no religion as divine and spiritual which does not acknowledge the proper inspiration of the Holy Scriptures (page 5) and their supremacy and sufficiency as our sole guide in matters pertaining to salvation (B.)*

A Acts xvii. 11 ; 2 Thess. ii. 13 ; 1 Tim. iv. 6 ; 2 Tim. iii. 15. B Rom. xvi. 17 ; 1 Tim. vi. 3. (See pages 1 and 82.)

NOTE.—If you are not in sympathy with the truth of God, be sure that you are not right with the God of truth.

NOTE.—From this we may distinguish between **Faith** and **Superstition**. Faith is religious trust, directed and warranted by the Word of God. Superstition is religious trust which has no authority and warrant in the Bible. Hence, for a Papist to trust in the prayers of a so-called saint is Superstition. The Word of God affords no countenance to any such reliance. It is, therefore, useless, mischievous, and Christ-dishonouring, since it sets at naught the authority of His Word.

"True Faith believes the word divine,
And with swift wings she flies
To Jesus' Cross, and doth recline
On His rich sacrifice."

A Heaven-born Faith owns and honours Emmanuel. We believe that a Heaven-born Faith invariably owns the **complexity** of the person of the **Lord Jesus** and the necessity and perfection of His aton-

* "In defining the essence of Faith to be 'an assent unto truths credible upon the testimony of God,' (Pearson 'on the creed,') some theologians clearly err; for Faith is the action of the heart (Rom. x. 9, 10 ;) that is, it is emotional as well as practical. Instead therefore of saying that Faith in its essence is 'belief of the truth,' leading to application to God for salvation through Christ, we prefer to regard it as the reliance of the heart on the Christ to whom the Gospel testifies." *Rev. S. G. Green, D.D.* We, however, insist that true Faith receives the truth of God.

ing sacrifice (A); and we receive none as Christian brethren who do not believe in, honour, and love Him in every character and office in which He is presented in the Scriptures of Truth* (B.)

A Matt. xvi. 16, 17; John i. 12; vi. 45—69; Col. ii. 2; 1 John iii. 23. B John viii. 24, where note that all who do not in this life receive from their heart the doctrine that Jesus is the great I AM (the "he" should be omitted)—that He is essentially and eternally divine, must die in their sins, Gal. i. 8, 9; 1 John iv. 2, 3. Note, "by Spirit is here meant teacher. The apostle looks to the real root of all teaching."—*Rev. E. Bickersteth*. 1 Cor. xii. 3, where by "saying" understand not merely the utterance of the lips. The lips are not the "man." The heart-deep confession of Faith (Rom. x. 9) is intended, 1 Pet. ii. 7.

NOTE.—"A living Faith always enquires for the living Saviour."
—*John Stevens*.

NOTE.—"Faith is a coming to the Lord Jesus (John vii. 37, 38.) This involves leaving all one's former self, and proceedings, and doings, and all other things behind, leaving the spot formerly occupied, and coming to the Lord. It is a coming from sin, the world, self, and all creature excellency to the Lord. It is, again, 'coming' to Him only. Faith can and will not stop short of Christ. Ministers, priests, saints may be in the way, but Faith must come to Jesus, through all the crowds of priests, and saints and angels. It passes them all by, the Virgin Mary—all creatures—and does not stop till the Christ is reached. Then Faith embraces Him, commits her all to Him, and cleaves to him with full purpose of heart, for all the days of our pilgrimage here. Thus Faith lights the soul, through Christ, up to the portal of heaven; sees it over the threshold, and then sinks, disappears, to be seen no more."—Abridged from *John Hazelton*.

NOTE.—"If you are not right in the doctrine of Christ, you cannot be right in the Christ of the doctrine."—*James Wells*.

The relation of Faith to Christ is variously set forth in the New Testament. 1. Believing Christ. This is the initial or primary act of a heaven-born Faith, and indicates the reverent credence of the renewed mind in Him, as claiming to have power to save sinners (John xiv. 11; Acts v. 11). It is identical with Faith in the Gospel message, as proceeding from men who wrote in His name and with His authority. (Acts xviii. 8; Rom. x. 9.)

2. Believing in Christ. The Greek preposition is *en* (en) 'in.' This denotes the simplest and most rudimentary act of true Faith toward

* "Unto you that believe, He is precious." Faith which reposes in Christ, alone can discover His excellency. Faith, however, does not make Him precious. "This He is intrinsically,—irrespectively of our Faith. His preciousness is not the result of our believing. It flows from His complexity—and His complexity is the fruit of Sovereignty."
—*John Hazelton*.

Christ as a person; a simple trust in Him as competent to save. (Eph. i. 12.) 3. Believing upon or on Christ. The Greek preposition is *ἐπὶ* (*epi*) 'upon.' This also denotes an act of Faith in Christ, with but feeble spiritual intelligence; simple and childlike trust in Him as able to save. (Acts xvi. 31.) Both these usages are very rare. 4. Believing into Christ. The Greek preposition is *εἰς* (*eis*) 'into.' This denotes steadfast, continuous thorough, and all-embracing trust in Christ, in all the fulness of the revelation made in the Gospel concerning Him, and is the usual expression for the act of that Faith which is conjoined with salvation (John iii. 15, 16, 18; vii. 31; xi. 25, 26; xiv. 1; Gal. ii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 21; 1 John v. 10, &c.)

"He that believeth Christ the Lord,
Who for man shed His blood,
By giving credence to His word,
Exalts the truth of God :
So far He's right ; but let him know,
Further than this he yet must go.

He that believes in (*in* or *εἰς*) Jesus Christ,
Hath a much better Faith ;
His Prophet now becomes His Priest,
And saves him by His death.
By Christ he finds his sin's forgiven ;
He is a blood-bought heir of heaven.

"But he that into (*εἰς*) Christ believes—
What a rich Faith has he !
In Christ he moves, he acts, he lives,
From self and bondage free :
He has the Father and the Son,
For Christ and He are now but one."

Believing "in" or into (*εἰς*) "the name of Christ," 1 John iii. 23, is reposing unhesitating and abiding trust in His revealed character, His *one* name comprises three titles, each of which is a revelation, *Jesus* designates Him as a Saviour of sinners; *Christ* as appointed and anointed of God; *Lord* as the supreme Ruler over the creation of God. *Jesus* is His personal name,—*Christ* His official name,—*Lord* His given title. He is *Jesus* in relation to sinners; *Christ* in relation to God (Luke ii. 26); *Lord* in relation to all created beings. He is our *Christ* by the Spirit; our *Lord* by His acquired right; our *Jesus* by His merit. As *Jesus* He frees us; as *Christ*, He fills us; as *Lord*, He rules us and rules over all things for us. Believing in the name of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, is therefore trusting His character in the fulness of the revelation which these titles afford.

"What think you of Christ? is the test, to try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest, unless you think rightly of Him.
As *Jesus* appears in your view, as He is believed or not—
So Faith is found formal or true, to live or be dead is your lot.

"Some take Him a creature to be, a man or an angel at most ;
 Sure these have not feelings like me, nor know themselves guilty and
 So vile and so helpless am I—I dare not confide in His blood, [lost.
 Nor on His protection rely, unless I were sure He was God."

Jehovah, the object of true Faith. We hold that Jehovah, as He is revealed in the person of Emmanuel, is the final or ultimate object of the apprehension and trust of a heaven-born Faith.

Mark xi. 22 ; John xiv. 6—9 ; Acts xvi. 31—where note "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ;" and verse 34, "Believing in God," xxvii. 25 ; Titus iii. 8 ; Heb. iv. 13, where note, that by Faith we "have to do" with the heart-searching God ; Heb. vii. 25, where note, "*come unto God by Him ;*" 1 Pet. i. 21, where note, "*who by Him do believe in God ;*" 1 Pet. iii. 18, where note "*that He might bring us to God.*" John i. 7, where note "that all through Him might believe." Through Christ as the Mediator, God is approached and trusted in.

NOTE.—Abstract Deity is not the object of Faith. "I neither know, love, nor serve God out of Christ, nor can I preach Him apart from the Mediation of Emmanuel." "Speak of abstract or unmediated Deity if you please ; it shall be my business to read the name and thoughts of God—the majesty, glory, and grace of Jehovah, in the person of Christ the Mediator."—*John Hazelton.*

NOTE.—Jesus is the first object of Faith's inquiry and trust, and should be so presented in the gospel (Acts xvi. 31 and xx. 21.) "As it is the work of the Spirit to glorify Christ, and as all who are taught of the Father by Him are brought to Jesus by various means in providence, public instruction, reading the scriptures, self-examination and prayer. The soul is thus, *perhaps* gradually, led to "see the Son," and to believe in Him "as a free, full, all-sufficient and all-glorious Redeemer."—*William Palmer.*

Jesus, however, is not the only person in the Trinity with whom Faith has to do ; for Jehovah, in His Covenant character, is the ultimate object of Faith. "I know that the name of Jesus is the first name that is lisped by the penitent sinner ; but after weeks, months, or years, he is carried up higher, whilst standing under the shadow of Christ's name, to realise his interest in the parental character and love of the God of Heaven."—*John Hazelton.* "Jehovah, in all His endeared relations, New Testament promises, and exhaustless provisions, is trusted, loved, and adored in Christ."—*William Palmer.* Hence, by Christ we are brought to God, believe in God, and come to God. God is apprehensible, and approachable in Christ, and is revealed in such a way that He can be trusted and loved.

We adore Him—1. As having chosen us in pure grace, and loved us in Christ with an everlasting love before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 3, 4.) 2. As given His Son to take our position under the Law and die for us. (John iii. 16.) 3. As having put His Son to grief for us (Isa. liii. 10.) 4. As raising Christ from the dead and giving Him glory (Rom. iv. 24.) 5. As eternally pacified by His rich,

atonement sacrifice (Ezek. xvi. 63; Heb. xiii. 20.) 6. As our Father, unceasingly benefiting us as His dear Children (Eph. v. i.)

NOTE.—“Coming to Christ by God and coming to God by Christ are distinct things. Coming to Christ is venturing one’s self and eternal state in Christ’s hands. Coming to God by Christ is a fruit of that adventure. Christ’s power to save lies not abstractedly in His being God, but in His being Mediator, and so on the commandment to save He hath received of the Father (John x. 18.) True, it is said that He will cast out none that come to Him; but if Faith stopped at Christ and did not go beyond Him to God, He would not be able to save them—I mean should not His righteousness carry them beyond Himself, ultimately to God.”—*Joseph Hussey*.

NOTE.—The nature of the being of God must ever remain a mystery; nor is it the design of the mediation of Jesus to explain it, or within the province of Faith to understand it. “I believe more than I know. My Faith goes immeasurably farther than my reason. God has, in Christ, rendered Himself *apprehensible* but not *comprehensible*.”—*John Hazelton*.

NOTE.—Preachers dwell much on the act of Faith, and cry, “Believe, believe.” Should they not dwell more on the Object of Faith, and show how it is that God can be approached in *warranted* confidence, and what He is to those that are favoured to believe in Him, which He is *not* to those who know not His name.

“O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way;
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod,
Lord, teach us how to pray.”

Faith cometh by hearing. We believe that while the principle of Faith owes its existence to the sovereign operation of the Holy Spirit within the soul (A); the acts of **Faith** are excited and directed by the **Gospel**, so that “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (B.)

A Eph. ii. 8; Col. ii. 12; 2 Pet. i. 1. B John xvii. 19 and xx. 31; Acts xvi. 14, 15, where note that “*faithful*,”* as in Eph. i. 1 means “a believer in” Acts xviii. 8; Eph. i. 13; Rom. x. 17, where note the reading of the Revised Version, “*Belief cometh of hearing*.”† By “hearing,” understand the intelligent reception of the gospel, whether from a preacher’s lips or a printed page. When the text was penned, much of the New Testament was unwritten. Hearing is, however, the channel by which very ordinarily God conveys the truth

* *Pistos* (πιστος) the word here rendered “faithful,” is translated “believing” in John xx. 27, and 1 Tim. vi. 2. Also “which believed” in Acts x. 45 and xvi. 1; “that believe” in 2 Cor. vi. 1; and “which believe” in 2 Tim. iv. 3.

† *Pistis* (πιστις) “faith” is rendered “belief” in 2 Thess. ii. 13.

to the mind. **Ritualism** which aims at producing spiritual impressions through the sight, by means of Ceremonies and Paraphernalia, is wholly unscriptural.

NOTE.—Hearing the gospel does not create the *principle* of Faith, though modern preachers seem to put this construction on Rom. x. 17. See the article on “Spiritual Life, discovered by the gospel,” page 131.

NOTE.—“The period which was to afford me a clear discovery of the mercy of God in Christ arrived. Seeing a Bible, I ventured to apply to it for instruction. It opened at Rom. iii. 25, ‘Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through Faith in His blood,’ &c. Immediately, I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I believed and received the peace of the gospel.”—*William Cowper*, the Poet, 1763.

“The more I strove against sin’s power,
I sinned, and stumbled still the more;
Till late I heard the Saviour say;
‘Come, hither soul, I am the way.’

“Lo, glad I come, and Thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to Thee as I am!
Nothing but sin have I to give,
Nothing but love shall I receive.”

Faith exists and acts through God the Spirit. We hold that as the **principle** of Faith owes its *existence* in the soul to the work of the Holy Ghost, so it is through **His** energising influence that the **acts of Faith** are performed by the child of God.

John xx. 27, 28, where Jesus’ power had to be exercised ere Thomas could believe;* Acts vi. 5, and xviii. 27; Phil. i. 29; Col. ii. 12, “Risen with Him through the Faith of the operation of God,” where note—not that our believing is the cause of our being risen with Christ, but that by Faith the believer sees himself buried and risen with Christ (facts which baptism symbolises.) Such Faith as to its existence and acts, is through the operation of God the Spirit in the heart; 2 Tim. ii. 13; 1 Cor. xii. 3. In Eph. i. 19, some read “Who believe according to His mighty power”—i.e., omitting the comma after “believe.” The mighty power of God the Spirit creates and sustains Faith. “He makes the believer, and gives him his crown.”—*Joseph Hart*. See also page 107.

* Do not read Thomas’s “I will not believe,” (John xx. 25.) I will not believe. It does not denote the dogged determination of a Christ-resisting Will—as it would of the verb *θελω* (thelo) were introduced—but rather the conscious infirmity of Faith, which *could* not repose its trust without the demonstration which was then absent. Read—“I shall not believe.” (Dr. Haweis’ Translation, which correctly renders the original.) I cannot, dare not, unless &c. See the note on page 170.

NOTE.—From this it follows that Christians of weak Faith should not be derided and upbraided for their inability to trust with greater confidence. “Since Faith is the gift of God, I have no rod for the feeble ones of God’s family. I will pray for them, preach to them, and hope the time may be near when they shall be able to say, ‘Christ died for me.’”—*John Hazelton*.

“The Saviour leads us on—protects from fatal harms.

And when we faint, and cannot walk, He bears us in His arms.

He guides and moves our steps, for though *we* seem to move,

His Spirit all the motion gives, by springs of fear and love.”

Degrees in Faith. We hold that while believing acts of the renewed mind **vary** in different Christians (**A**), and in the same Christian at different times (**B**); the holy principle from which these acts spring, is identical in all heaven-born sinners, since all receive “like precious Faith, through the righteousness of God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ” (**C**).

A Thus some are strong in Faith, Matt. viii. 10, and xv. 28; Acts vi. 5, and xi. 24; Rom. iv. 20; 2 Thess. i. 3; others are weak, Isa. xxxv. 3; 1 Thess. v. 14. **B** Jacob—Gen. xxviii. 20; xxxv. 14, 15; and xlii. 36; David—1 Sam. xxvii. 1, and xxx. 6; Elijah—1 Kings xviii. 37, and xix. 4; Jeremiah—chaps. xv. 16, and Lam. iii. 18; The Baptist—John i. 15, and Matt. xi. 3; S. Paul—2 Tim. iv. 18, and 2 Cor. ii. 13. **C** Eph. ii. 8; 2 Pet. i. 1.

NOTE.—The work of God in the soul is not like a piece of statuary, where one part is finished while the rest remains in block. It is a “creation.” Imperceptible as the beginning may be, there are found all the parts which, increased and developed, produce the maturity. All is advanced together. All is perfect as far as the operation proceeds. A Christian may be imperfect in his organs of vision; but who would draw him without eyes? Hence he has Faith—though immature and feeble—from the moment he enters into spiritual life.

NOTE.—Faith, like all living principles, is progressive.—2 Thess. i. 3.

NOTE.—Enquire more into the *sincerity* than into the *strength* of your Faith. It doth not say “He that believeth *much* shall be saved,” but “He that believeth.”

“Ye lambs of Christ’s fold, ye weaklings in Faith,
Who long to lay hold on life by His death,
Who fain would believe Him, and in your best room
Would gladly receive Him, but fear to presume:

“Your feeble desires, your wishes so weak,
’Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek;
His Spirit will cherish the life He first gave,
You never shall perish, if Jesus can save.”

Faith, the receptive grace. We believe that Faith is the faculty of spiritual reception, by which alone we can enjoy divine communications (A), and receive the new covenant gifts bestowed by God on the members of His living family. (B)

A Job xix. 28. The root of the matter is the principle of Faith, for (1) as the root is the receptive organ of the plant, so is Faith the receptive power of the renewed soul; and (2), as the root will make itself evident by growth, so will the principle of Faith in acts of living trust. Rom. i. 16 and 17; where understand, *the righteousness of God (i.e., His salvation, in which His righteousness is so conspicuous) is revealed, on the principle—or, in the way of Faith* (in opposition to all human merit) *to Faith*. Faith is the grace by which the revelation is received. Heb. iv. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 14; 2 Tim. iii. 15. **B** Psa. civ. 28, where note that *grace gives, and Faith gathers*; 1 Pet. i. 9; Heb. xi. 33, where “promises” may be the promises themselves or the blessings promised.

NOTE.—“Faith gives its object a being in its own seat. Faith brings into the mind which itself occupies, that in which it believes. If a person's Faith is in his head, his is only a notional Faith, and Christ is in his intellect only. If Faith is in the heart, and is inseparable from Christ, it gives the crucified One an existence in, or realises Him to the immortal mind, and gathers round its great Lord, the thoughts, the affections, the hope, the desires, and the feelings of the soul; and they all rest upon, enter into, and feed on the Christ of God. He dwells in the heart by Faith. We feed on Him by Faith.”
—*John Hazelton.*

NOTE.—The capacity of reception depends on the nature of the recipient—and the higher we rise in the scale of being the more enlarged is the power of reception. A dead stone can receive nothing; a living plant can receive moisture; an insect can receive food; a dog can receive an intelligent direction; a man can receive an intellectual proposition; but so long as he is in a state of nature he cannot receive spiritual things. A spiritual (i.e. a spiritualised man) has the highest receptive faculty, for He can receive what natural men cannot even discern (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

“Of all the gifts Thy hand bestows,
Thou Giver of all good,
Not heaven itself a richer knows,
Than my Redeemer's blood.

“Faith, too, the blood-receiving grace,
From the same hand we gain;
Else, sweetly as it suits our case,
That gift had been in vain.

"We praise Thee, and would praise Thee more
To Thee our all we owe;
The precious Saviour, and the power
That makes Him precious too."

Faith the sustaining and conquering grace. We believe that Faith is the grace whereby God's children are upheld and sustained (A); through which they retain their hold on God by means of His promises* (B); and, by which they will overcome all their adversaries, and, finally, prove more than conquerors through Him that loved them (C.)

A 1 Pet. i. 5; Luke xxii. 32; 2 Cor. i. 24. B Psa. xci. 2; 1 Sam. xxx. 6; Prov. xviii. 10; Cant. viii. 5; Isa. xii. 2; xxvii. 5; Hab. iii. 17, 18; 2 Tim. i. 12. C 1 John v. 4; 1 Pet. v. 9; Heb. vi. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 12.

"Faith has an overcoming power,
It triumphs in a dying hour;
Christ is our life, our joy, our hope,
Nor can we sink, with such a prop."

Faith and Salvation. We hold that believing with the heart in the Lord Jesus Christ is inseparably conjoined with an interest in His finished work, and that all who are divinely empowered, in simplicity and sincerity, to take the lost sinner's place before the lost sinner's Saviour receive "the end of their Faith, even the salvation of their souls."

Jer. xxxi. 8; Matt. xi. 28; John iii. 18, 36, where note, "hath" not "shall have." The action of Faith most surely indicates the existence of spiritual life in the soul. John vi. 37, 47; Acts xiii. 48, and xvi. 31; Rom. iii. 25; iv. 24; v. 1; and x. 4, 13; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Heb. x. 39, and 1 Pet. i. 9.

"Faith is a precious grace, and one of the most important gifts of God. So precious is it that it cannot be lost, and the soul in which it is seated shall be saved for ever. It is a mercy that the least measure of Faith is saving. Just as the dust of gold is precious, as well as a sovereign, so a little Faith in the heart is heavenly gold, and God will see that not a grain of it shall be finally lost. If you have

* The child of God may often be likened to a man who has fallen overboard from a ship. He tries to swim, but the fury of the storm is too much for him. Then the *life-belt* is thrown out, and he clutches it and is safe. The life-belt is the precious promise. Faith is the hand that grasps it, and the soul is buoyed up till the tempest is past.

a grain of this gold of heaven in your hearts you are rich.* Faith in the least measure is an infinitely precious boon.”—*John Hazelton*.

NOTE.—“Theologians treat the subject of Faith in their peculiar manner—distinguish between the principle and its operations—dwell on its nature and object, and so on, and it is right thus to reduce the teaching of the Bible to order and system, and discriminate between things that differ. But these theological truths are sometimes extremely perplexing to honest inquirers, and what a mercy to such it is, that whether they can follow the preacher or not, “He that believeth on Him is not condemned.”—*John Hazelton*.

“By Faith I see the unseen things,
Hid from all mortal eyes;
Proud reason stretching all its wings,
Beneath me fluttering lies.

“By Faith I mount the azure sky,
And from this lofty sphere,
The earth beneath me I espy,
Unworthy of my care.

“By Faith I have a conquering power,
To tread on all my foes;
To triumph in a dying hour,
And banish all my woes.

“By Faith I build my deathless trust,
On righteousness divine;
Nor shall I sink, though feeble dust,
Whatever storms combine.”

Justification by Faith. We hold that while the expiation of our sins by the death of Jesus is an accomplished fact (A), a knowledge thereof is imparted to such sinners only as have received grace to repent of sin (B); to acknowledge the justice of the condemnation of the Law (C); to renounce their own righteousness (D); and to approach God in reliance on the vicarious sufferings of His dear Son (E), in which sense we are said to be justified by Faith (F.)
A See pages 59 to 63. B Acts ii. 38; iii. 19. C Rom. vii. 9

* “Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in Faith,” James ii. 5. This does not mean that saints who have little money are often able to display strong and vigorous Faith; but that, poor in this world’s goods though they may be, they are rich if they possess the grace of Faith. Faith itself is a priceless treasure, while it betokens interest in the boundless wealth of our Covenant God. Read “Hath not God chosen (some of) the poor, as to this world (to be) rich in Faith.”

10. D Psa. xxxii. 1, 2, and Rom. iv. 6; Isa. lxiv. 6; Rom. iii. 5. E John vi. 47; Acts xvi. 31; Heb. x. 22. F Rom. iii. 22, 25, 26, and v. 1.

NOTE.—Faith creates nothing, but recognises and rejoices in antecedent and divine facts. These facts are revealed to Faith in accordance with arrangements which are unalterable. Spiritual life is first implanted, and the principle of Faith has henceforth an existence in the heart. By Faith sin is viewed in its true character, and abhorred and confessed; the condemnation of the law is admitted; creature inability to satisfy God's righteous claims, confessed; Christ is seen to be essential, and is contemplated as a competent and sufficient Saviour, and God is approached in His name. The sinner is now capacitated to receive the disclosure that the blood of Christ has accomplished his salvation.

The fact that Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, can cause a sinner no joy unless he knows that Christ died for him, and this he can know only by the witness of the Spirit through Faith.

NOTE.—The meaning popularly attached to the phrase Justification by Faith is erroneous. We are not justified by Faith *meritoriously*, as if Faith were an act which, though small in itself, is so pleasing to God as to induce Him to confer the blessing of Justification on account of it. We are not justified by Faith *instrumentally*, if by this it is understood that Faith gives validity to the work of Christ, and makes that personally ours which was not so before. Faith does not *apply* or *appropriate* the Atonement, nor is it an act which we must perform before we can be clothed in the robe of righteousness, and washed in the Redeemer's blood. These are the works of the Holy Spirit, before Faith begins to operate. (Isaiah xlv. 22, and lxi. 10.)

The expression "by Faith," however, indicates three facts in relation to Justification.

1. It stands in *opposition* to "*works*." We are justified as those who cordially renounce our own righteousness, and trust to the righteousness of Christ, Rom. iv. 5; Phil. iii. 9.

2. It denotes an *evidence* of divine facts. Faith in my heart is a proof that my sin was atoned for by Christ. Acts xiii. 39, where note, "*are*," not "*shall be justified*." Faith demonstrates the antecedent act of Justification. Rom. v. i.

3. Faith is the *medium* by which a knowledge of Justification is received into the heart. Our interest in Christ's death is a secret which can be told only to Faith. Justification before God is one thing, the declaration of it is another. Faith does not affect the former, but the latter is made to Faith, and is impossible without the existence of this heaven-born faculty, through which alone God communicates the knowledge of gracious facts to His people. Rom. iii. 22 and 25. (See page 53 and 63.)

Compare Articles on pages 59 to 63. Any view of the relation of Faith to Justification which contradicts what is there stated is opposed to truth.

"No more, my God, I boast no more,
Of all the duties I have done;
I quit the hopes I held before,
To trust the merits of Thy Son.

"Yes, and I must and will esteem,
All things but loss for Jesus' sake;
O may my soul be found in Him,
And of His righteousness partake!

"The best obedience of my hands,
Dares not appear before Thy throne;
But Faith can answer Thy demands,
By pleading what her Lord has done."

Natural credence We distinguish between natural and
and Spiritual rational credence in the being and
Faith. veracity of God, which is obligatory
on all men (A), and a divinely-imparted belief in Covenant
interest in God's salvation, which is incumbent on those
only to whom the saving love of Jehovah, in Christ, has
been revealed (B.)

A Rom. i. 19, 20; James ii. 19. B 1 John iii. 23; 1 Pet. ii. 7.

NOTE.—"The Faith which God's testimony demands is one thing, and the Faith which God gives is another. The former is an operation of the intellect; the latter, an operation of the Spirit of God."—*S. Cozens.*

NOTE.—The term Christian is popularly applied to any one who is not a Jew or a sceptic; who, in fact, admits the Bible to be divine. In its scriptural sense, however, a Christian is one who in his heart believes in Christ for salvation. A man may be converted from infidelity to Christianity and yet remain spiritually unchanged. He may critically understand the whole Bible, and yet continue dead in trespasses and sin. A Jew may embrace Christianity as a system, and yet have no vital union to Christ.

NOTE.—Infidelity in an unrenewed man is to be distinguished from unbelief in a child of God.

The infidelity of an unrenewed man is not "the direct opposite of spiritual belief, but of that belief which an unfallen man would yield in honour of his wise, holy, and benevolent Creator."—*John Stevens.* It is man's "nay" to God's "yea." It denies His being (Psa. xiv. 1); rebels against His rights (Ex. v. 2), and gives the lie to His accredited assertions (2 Pet. iii. 4.)

Unbelief in a child of God does none of these. It is rather inability to receive His testimony and trust His grace, than a perverse refusal to do so. Faith when weak, cannot, though she would, repose full trust in her Lord. The defiant and wicked scepticism of a sinner should, therefore, be rebuked. The weak Faith of a saint should be encouraged by plain directions to its glorious Object. Is is not, how-

ever, denied that unbelief in a child of God is sinful when he closes his heart to divine testimony, and turns from his heavenly Friend. Every true Christian mourns over his unbelieving heart.

NOTE.—Ignorance of the distinction between natural and spiritual Faith is the root of many errors in popular gospel preaching. Robert Sandeman, 1723—71, contended that spiritual Faith and that which takes place in the common concerns of life are identical, and that the difference lies in the things believed. In other words, that the Faith of God's children is "the bare belief of the bare truth," concerning the person and work of Christ. The teaching of the majority of preachers is precisely similar. With such seeds sown broad-cast, "What must the harvest be?"

"Faith owes its birth to sovereign grace,
And lives beneath the throne;
Where grace maintains her dwelling-place,
And reigns supreme alone."

**Human Account-
ability admitted**
—Human Re-
sponsibility
denied.

While we firmly hold the **accounta-
bility** of all men to God (A), we deny
the doctrine of **human responsi-
bility**—namely that men are answer-
able for the non-possession of Faith and its attendant blessings
(B.) Nor do we believe that the absence of heaven-born
and spiritual Faith is sin in unregenerate persons.

A See page 20. B This necessarily flows from what has been stated and proved in preceding sections. Addendum 5.

Accountability arises from the possession and enjoyment of what belongs to us as creatures. We are thus accountable to God for our natural endowments and worldly possessions. Accountability is determined by the Moral Law, which defines our duty to God.

"**Responsibility** differs from accountability in essential particulars. In it the will of the person is consulted. It cannot fall on a man without his consent, and its obligations are assumed with his free concurrence. Where there is no response, there is no responsibility; for to respond is essential to the creation of responsibility. Everyone bound under a responsibility is bound by his own free act."—*Israel Atkinson*. (Isaiah xlv. 5.)

The gospel knows *two* responsibilities—the responsibility of Christ, the Surety of His church, and the responsibility of the Christian who (rendered willing by sovereign grace), has voluntarily accepted the authority of Jesus, and his obligations to serve Him (Psa. l. 5.) It, however, knows nothing of the doctrine of Human Responsibility, or that men are answerable for not being saved sinners.

The absence of Faith is not sin. "Spiritual Faith was unknown to the Law under which man was placed by creation; consequently, the law which is still binding on fallen men, can have no more demand on its exercise than its radical existence. Therefore, as the

absence of spiritual Faith was no sin in Adam, so neither is it any sin in his fallen posterity."—*John Stevens.*

1 John v. 10. "*Hath made Him a liar,*" does not refer to unbelief in natural men, much less to the refusal of a sinner to become religious, as it is so often made to mean. The case supposed, is that of a child of God who by mistrusting His heavenly Father's testimony about Jesus, gives the lie to His words.

"Strong in the freedom of our will,
And in our Nature's powers,
We thought to climb the heavenly hill,
And seize the crown as ours.

"But now, most gracious God, Thy love
Has taught us better things;
Our *all* is *given* us from above,
From Thee salvation springs."

Faith a result, not a Condition of Salvation. We hold that since spiritual Faith is a result and evidence of Regeneration, (page 165), it is utterly erroneous to represent it as a natural duty, and to impose it as a condition upon lost sinners before they can participate in the salvation of God.

(See Addendum No. 3.)

NOTE.—It is currently taught that sinners must believe, to render the blood of Jesus efficacious to their souls—that Christ cannot save them whilst they keep from Him—and that Faith wins Christ's special love. Thus Our Own Hymn-book, by C. H. Spurgeon, No. 542—

"Doubts and fears can never save thee;
Life is never won by tears;
'Tis believing which the soul to Christ endears."

On the contrary, we hold that Christ saves—not *believing* sinners—but *sinners*; that He saves them, not *for* but *into* believing and coming; that Faith adds nothing to the Atonement, and that Christ's love is eternal and unchanging. Any condition interposed between Christ and the sinner obscures the glory of sovereign grace.*

* We are unjustly charged with proclaiming that Jesus Christ came into the world to save *sensible* sinners, and sneering jests are founded on the supposed fact. We might, with far greater propriety, lay charges against those who preach that Jesus can do nothing for sinners till they believe. The truth referred to is that the promises of the gospel refer only to *sensible* sinners—that is, sinners who are sensible of their condition as condemned under God's holy law. "Sinners must be the subjects of spiritual life, in order to know their need of Him who saves sinners."—*John Stevens.*

"God's rich gospel scorns conditions,
Breathes salvation free as air;
Only breathes triumphant mercy,
Baffling guilt and all despair.

Oh, the grandeur of the gospel!
How it sounds the cleansing blood!
Shows the bowels of a Saviour;
Shows the tender heart of God."

The Proclamation of Faith, as a natural duty, injurious. We hold that to proclaim spiritual Faith as a natural duty is to legalise the Gospel (A); inflate the pride of natural men (B); mislead inquiring sinners (C); and dishonour the Holy Spirit (D.)

A The gospel declares the ability of God to save sinners, as sinners—not as believing sinners—freely, through Christ (1 Tim. i. 15.) A creature duty interposed between Christ and the sinner introduces the element of works into the gospel, and so legalises it. B To represent that salvation is contingent on any act of the sinner's, is to accredit him with what he does not possess, and so to feed his pride. C To represent to an inquiring sinner that he must *do* something, and will be doubly damned for *not doing it*, is surely to mislead him (see page 23 and 86.) D If Faith is the gift of the Spirit, to conceal the fact is to rob Him of His glory. We can neither will nor work *spiritually* till He works within us, (Phil. ii. 13.)

"No aid He needs, nor duties asks,
Of us poor feeble worms:
What everlasting love decrees,
Almighty power performs."

Faith, the saint's duty and privilege. We hold that believing in God through Christ is at once a duty enjoined by the gospel on all God's living children (A), and a high and glorious privilege accorded to them as the favoured objects of His grace (B.)

A 1 John iii. 23 (which see explained on pages 83 and 193, and in Addendum 4); also 1 John v. 10. B Popular preachers exhort sinners to believe at once, assuring them that they may, can, and ought to do so. Conscious sinners, in whose hearts the Spirit has wrought true conviction for sin, however, know differently. This was the experience of Joseph Hart. "I saw that I was in a dangerous state. How did I long to feel the merits of Christ applied to my soul by the Holy Spirit. How often did I make my strongest efforts to call God, my God. But, alas! I could no more do this, than I could

raise the dead. I found now, by woeful experience, that Faith was not in my power. The question with me now was, not whether I *would* be a Christian or not, but whether I *might*; not whether I should repent and believe, but whether God would give me true Repentance and a living Faith." To be allowed to trust God in His Covenant character, through Christ, is, therefore, a high privilege, resulting from special love and gracious arrangements, and accorded only to the chosen of God.

"By Thy victorious hand struck down,
Here prostrate, Lord, I lie;
And faint to see my Maker frown,
Whom once I dared defy.

"With heart unshaken I have heard
Thy dreadful thunders roar;
When grace, in all its charms appeared,
I only sinned the more.

"With impious hands, from off Thy head
I sought to pluck the crown;
And insolently dared to tread
Thy royal honours down.

"Confounded, Lord, I wrap my face,
And hang my guilty head;
Ashamed of all my wicked ways,
The hateful life I led.

"I yield—by mighty love subdued,
Who can resist its charms?
And throw myself, by wrath pursued,
Into the Saviour's arms."

The unique pre-
eminence of
Faith.

We hold that the pre-eminence assigned to Faith in the Bible (A), is attributable solely to its peculiar relation to the Lord Jesus: and not to any quality which belongs to it either as an inherent grace, or an act of the renewed mind (B.)

A See texts in which the phrases "by," "in," and "through" Faith are prominent. 2 Pet. i. 1. Faith is the only grace eulogised as "precious."

B In much popular preaching, Faith is exalted to a position which it does not occupy in the salvation of God—and the act of believing is represented as if it were commensurate in merit with a perfect legal righteousness. (See Addendum No. 9, on Neonomianism.) "Sinner, God does not want you to try to be good: He wants you to

believe. Your imperfect works only anger Him; but your Faith will delight Him, and He will save you for trusting—only for trusting.”
—But note:—

1. Faith possesses no special merit entitling it to Divine favour. Faith in itself is of all the graces the meanest and lowest. In exercising the grace of love, we give as well as take; but in believing, we receive all and give nothing. Faith is the beggar's grace. It doth but hold out an empty hand for a free gift. Moreover, had Faith any excellency entitling it to Divine favour, salvation would be for Faith as a work, which would take us back to legalism.

2. Nor does Faith contain in itself the germ of all goodness. The idea that Faith is the mother grace which begets all the rest is incorrect. Faith itself is a Spirit-born principle, and is co-existent with Hope, Love, Fear, &c. God does not accept us for Faith, because He discerned in it a seed of all future spiritual fruit. This would also be salvation for works in a disguised form.

3. Faith is not arbitrarily selected from the other graces—as, for example, Hope, Love, and Godly Fear; as that with which God sovereignly chooses to connect the gift of His grace. This would be to impugn His wisdom and to under-rate the grace of Faith.

4. The reasons for the pre-eminence of Faith are evident; as, Faith is the only posture of soul that admits of a sinner's being a recipient of benefactions on the ground of grace or absolute favour. Faith admits every accusation of the Law; owns Jehovah's sovereign right to bestow or withhold undeserved benefits; receives the Gospel as a message of pure mercy; accords to Christ His right position as the only Saviour of sinners; possesses nothing; brings nothing; claims nothing; “Therefore it is of Faith that it might be by grace.” (Rom. iv. 16.)

Faith is the sole grace which has God only for its object. Spiritual Love extends both to God and His people; Hope, to God and to favourable circumstances which He may please to originate. Faith rests in God only.

Faith glorifies God, especially His veracity and faithfulness. Faith reposes her confidence in His character, and thus shows Him honour.

God has chosen it to its pre-eminent position, because it exalts Christ. It is the instinct of Faith to accord all glory to Christ. Its virtues are attributable to its Object, not to itself. “The great and wonderful work ascribed to Faith used to puzzle me—such as, ‘Thy Faith hath made thee whole’—‘hath saved thee.’ ‘Purifying their hearts by Faith.’ But how does Faith heal, save, and purify? By embracing the Healer and Saviour. How purify? By embracing the Lamb and His blood. Faith lives, stands, and walks in and by Christ. Faith does wondrous things, by having to do with its Object. Faith without the blood of Christ, would be as a sponge without water in washing flesh. Faith is the hand that holds the truth of God concerning the precious blood of Jesus, and thus the conscience is cleansed and the soul is purified.”—*John Hazelton*. Thus, then, as the efficacy of Faith is purely objective, there is propriety in

the prominence given to the Christ-exalting grace. It is safe for Christ to honour Faith, for Faith always honours Christ.*

NOTE.—Some of our ministers, (Israel Atkinson to wit), object *in toto* to the phrases "saving" or "justifying Faith." Others (like John Hazelton) as freely employ them. It should, however, be noticed that the latter adopt them solely in an *objective* sense. Faith only saves or justifies as it receives the saving and atoning Saviour. The virtue of Faith lies in the object it embraces, not in its own inherent efficacy.

John Stevens was wont to style the Faith with which Salvation is conjoined (in contradistinction from natural belief) a "heaven-born Faith." 1 John v. 4, where "whatever" refers not to the person of the believer as a regenerated character; but to the holy principles with which he has been invested.

' The sinner who truly believes, and trusts in His crucified God,
His pardon at once he receives, Redemption in full through His blood.

Though thousands and thousands of foes, against him in malice unite;

Their rage he through Christ can oppose,—led forth by the Spirit to fight."

ADDENDA TO CHAPTER 15.

I.—Duty-Faith.

THE question which divides us from so many of our fellow Christians, may be thus expressed.

* The above is no contradiction to the truth of the moral grandeur of Faith. "Conscience doth make cowards of us all."—*Shakespeare*. Nothing so degrades a man before God and his fellow-creatures as a sense of guilt—while Faith elevates the soul to conscious dignity before God and man. "Every sinner is a coward. He dares not trust Jesus Christ."—*Charles Hill*.

How sublime is the action of the renewed soul, when it commits its eternal all to an unseen Saviour! It rises then to a height which leaves all other mental actions immeasurably behind. "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

Who, think you, is the greatest hero on record! The thief on the cross. He believed in Christ under circumstances which brings out his act of trust into the boldest relief. Dying in torture, in the utmost extremity, with hell yawning before him; with his soul saturated with sin, he yet dared to crown the bowed head of his dying Lord, and to commit his eternal all to Him.

Faith, too, has nerved men to the sublimest deeds of valour. Patriotism has stirred great hearts to noble actions. Human love has nerved timid spirits to face untold dangers; but Faith has led men to do and dare the noblest deeds of all.

Is the act of believing in Christ to the salvation of the soul, a duty naturally incumbent on all men.

Our answer is an emphatic "No,"—while "Yes" would be the reply of the majority of godly persons. This is the gist of the Duty Faith controversy.

Let the reader understand it. It is not whether men as men are able spiritually to believe in Christ. Many to whom we are opposed deny this as emphatically as we do. We too admit with them that creature inability in no wise diminishes creature obligation—and we deplore that so many of our brethren have weakened our cause by seeking to defend it by arguments that were assailable.

Thus a writer says: "It is absurd to preach that it is man's duty to believe savingly in Christ. Can that be a duty which is out of the power of a natural man?"—*Earthen Vessel*, vol. xiii. 208. To this the answerable reply might be made that inability does not destroy obligation. A debtor's being without money does not cancel his obligation to meet his liabilities.

Again, in reviewing DUTY-FAITH, a Tract by W. Stokes, the late W. Palmer objecting to the course of argument pursued observes, that "The question to be tried is not whether Faith has a Divine origin, or whether man is able to create it for himself. Many Duty-Faith advocates admit both. The question lies deeper, and the issue is joined at another point."—*Voice of Truth*, 1864, page 185.

The question therefore concerns not what man can do, but what he ought to do—not ability or inability—but duty.

Yet again, the inquiry is limited to natural men. We admit that regenerated sinners are empowered and commanded to believe in Jesus, and that they ought so to do. (Page 205.)

Remarkable unfairness has been shown by our opponents in evading the point at issue.

Thus the Rev. George Rogers, late professor of Theology at the Pastor's College, charges us with holding (1) "that it is not the duty of man to believe the gospel, (2) that Faith is in no sense a duty to saint or sinner, and (3) that no man is responsible for its possession or exercise." * He then proceeds to refute these propositions by eight long and laboured arguments. *Sword and Trowel*, vol. 1, page 8. His charges, however, lack the foundation of fact, as the preceeding chapter proves.

To misrepresent a doctrine is not to refute it.

II.—Duty-Faith—How Proved.

"Is it (asks the late Dr. John Campbell in his *Theology for Bible*

* The author makes this reference to his beloved and honoured Tutor "with a stirring at his heart like pain." Words could not express our obligations to his ability, assiduity and kindness. We instance him as an incomparable theologian to emphasise our remark that the Duty-faith controversy has not received adequate attention from those who differ from us.

Classes and Christian Families) the duty of all who hear the gospel to believe it?

Yes : every sinner who hears it is commanded, exhorted and invited to believe in Christ for salvation. Mark i. 15, v. 36 ; Luke viii. 50 ; Acts xvi. 31 ; 1 John iii. 23.

Is Faith in Christ, even the Faith which is accompanied with salvation, constantly in Scripture held up as the duty of all to whom the gospel is preached?

Yes ; this is clear beyond all reasonable contradiction. John vi. 29, xii. 36.

What is your view of John vi. 29. "This is the work of God that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent?"

That the persons addressed were unregenerate sinners, that the Faith enjoined is saving, and that when Faith is called "the work of God, it does not mean His act, but theirs, which would be pleasing in His sight."

These proof texts will be examined in due course.

The reader will notice that Duty-Faith advocates assume one of two positions ; either (1) that it is the duty of *all men* to believe savingly, or (2) that it is the duty of *all that hear the gospel* to believe to the saving of their souls.

Both are disproved in what is to follow.

III.—Duty-Faith Disproved.

If spiritual Faith is a natural duty—namely, if it is obligatory on account of the relation in which men stand to God as creatures to their Creator—it is commanded by the Moral Law, (see page 20,) and it was incumbent on Adam as much as on any of his posterity. That it is not commanded by the Moral Law is admitted—or if denied involves absurdity. Faith is the trust of a sinner *as such* in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. If, then, spiritual Faith is a creature duty, it was incumbent on Adam in a state of innocency to trust as a sinner in the redemptive work of Christ. For which none contend.

It has again been urged that man is responsible for any command that God may give ; therefore Faith is his duty. This argument is what is in logic called an *enthymeme*. The conclusion is really drawn from two propositions, one of which is understood. Fully expressed it would stand thus :—

Man is responsible to obey any command which God may give.

He has commanded all men to believe in Christ and be saved.

Therefore Faith is his duty.

The suppressed proposition, (or minor premise) which we have italicised, assumes the whole question. We meet the argument by denying this point until it is proved.

The following from the pen of the late George Wright, concisely summarises all that need be said on the question.

If the Faith of God's elect be required by the Law, it must have been commanded by the Law originally, as an essential part

of the duty of man to his Creator.* It must, therefore, have been required before the Fall, when man had no need of the salvation with which that Faith is inseparably connected, and of which it is an essential part. Nor would it have been more unreasonable to require Faith of one who needed no salvation, and who could not possibly partake of it, than to require Faith of those who are not ordained to eternal life, and who consequently cannot be saved.

But some maintain, that although the Law did not originally command man in innocence to believe with the Faith of God's elect, it now commands men so to believe. But if this were true, the Law would have received an additional precept under the dispensation of grace; and the commandment, which was ever "exceeding broad," would have been extended and made broader. If this be grace, it appears difficult to reconcile it with the grace which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

If Faith be a duty, it is a work; but according to the reasoning of the Apostle, the works of the Law are contradistinguished from Faith. Yet, if Faith be a natural duty,—though we are saved by grace, it is through the works of the law. The Covenant of Works is blended with the Covenant of Grace, and "grace is no more grace."

KV.—Is Salvation Contingent on the consent or refusal of Sinners?

It is generally believed that the consent or refusal of men to the saving proposals of God, determines their destiny. Were this true, however, we must banish the attribute of Omnipotence from our conceptions of God. What is stated on pages 86 and 93 is false, if God cannot accomplish His purposes without the previous concurrence of sinners.

The principal texts urged in its favour are the following:—

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Josh. xxiv.
15. These words were addressed by Joshua to the Jewish nation. The service referred to was the worship of Jehovah instead of idol-

* Adam was not as originally constituted a spiritual man (1 Cor. xv. 45, 48)—that is "the principle of holiness which he possessed before the Fall was not radically and essentially the same as that which the elect receive at Regeneration."—*John Stevens*. He was constituted to view and worship God through the medium of Nature, and to find satisfaction in the scenes and associations with which Divine goodness originally surrounded him. This is proved by John Stevens, in his *HELP FOR THE TRUE DISCIPLES OF IMMANUEL*, Third edition, pp. 88—96.

William Huntington is, we believe, the only adherent of the doctrines of Free and Sovereign Grace who ever denied it. See his letter to Mr. Britton, Works, Bensley's edition, vol. xix. Huntington, however, did not hold that the spirituality of Adam (on which he insists) renders it the duty of all his posterity to believe. This he ably disproves in his letter to Ryland—Works, Bensley's edition, vol. xi.

The original constitution of Adam is no theological quibble. See page 19.

atrous deities. On no fair principle can the verse be applied to the ungodly; for there is no analogy between the children of Israel as they were then circumstanced, and men and women who are "dead in trespasses and sins." The latter are "condemned already" under the Law; the former were under God's favour as His nationally chosen people, and were able to respond to the exhortation.

Prov. viii. 17. "Those that seek me early shall find me" Commonly regarded as teaching that it is the duty of little children to give their hearts to Jesus, and that they do this far more easily in youth than in after years.

We are far from presumptuously limiting God, by denying that His saving work can be accomplished in a child's heart. "It is a mercy to be under the saving influence of religion when young—a special favour to be in Christ in one's youth. Christian parents feel inexpressible joy in seeing their children called in early life."—*John Hazelton*. There were saved children in the early church (Eph. vi. 1.)

We however deny that a child is in a more salvable condition than an adult. His conscience is generally very susceptible to moral influence. His emotions are easily wrought upon by moral appeals. His transgressions are not in magnitude and multitude what those of aged sinners are—but sin is essentially the same in *all* hearts, and none can be saved apart from regenerating grace and the blood of Jesus. The most guileless child is incapable of spiritual acts, and has a mind which is enmity against God, without His grace.

It requires, therefore, the putting forth of "the exceeding greatness of God's power" ere a child can savingly enter the Kingdom of God.

It is most uncertain whether the above text refers to children at all. It is rendered by W. Newman, D.D. "Those that seek me *earnestly* shall find me;" while it is generally admitted that making "making the Lord the *first* object of research," "seeking Him above all things else," is the sense intended. It is a fact, that wherever persons have grace to seek the Lord with all their heart they will assuredly find Him, whether they are old or young, "Moreover, it does not state that we are the *first* to love and find God, and *not He us*, which would contradict Isa. lxxv. 1; Rom. v. 6—8; 1 John iv. 10—19; but the object of the passage is to remove desponding doubts from the godly, and to assure them that God loves them, and presents Himself in the way, so as to be found by those that are led to seek Him (*cf.* Heb. xi. 6)." —*A. R. Faussett, A.M.*

"My son, give me thine heart," Prov. xxiii. 26. The favourite verse of popular gospel preachers, who implore men to give their hearts to God as the one condition of salvation. But:—

1. The words were addressed by a real human father to his son, and consist of a parental appeal for filial love and frankness. Well would it be, if the children of all worthy parents were to give them their hearts; have no secrets from them, and treat them with the confidence which their affection demands.

2. If spiritually applied, it may be referred to the Lord Jesus, who emphatically, when on earth gave His Heavenly Father His heart, and by whose devoted obedience our salvation was merited.

3. It cannot be regarded as a gospel appeal. Where is the propriety of exhorting men to give sinful and devil-possessed hearts to God?—But

4. It may be felicitously regarded as an exhortation to God's regenerated people. The request urged 'Give me thine heart,' would then appropriately be based on the relationship expressed "My son." God demands love and obedience from His living people. Having brought them from death to life and put them among His children, He enjoins the conduct that is appropriate to their condition. Thus regarded, the verse would teach that truly saved sinners should give their love, (Psa. xxxi. 23) their trust (Psa. lv. 22) their confidence (Psa. lxi. 8,) and the zeal of their renewed powers (Psa. ciii. 1) to their Heavenly Father (Rom. xii. 1.)

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Ecc. xii. 1. Continually employed as an exhortation to children to become pious in their youth. But no spiritual act is contemplated. God, in the capacity of our Creator—not as our Saviour—is presented as the object of remembrance. The context concerns morality. "Remove sorrow from thine heart,"—i.e., the lusts which end in sorrow; and "put away evil from thy flesh"—i.e., avoid sensuality. and "remember thy Creator," His government and laws "in the days of thy youth." No spiritual blessing is conjoined with this remembrance. Nothing is found in the least analogous to the doctrine of obtaining spiritual life and favour for believing. The verse teaches the advantage of early and constant recollection of our relation to God as our Creator, Preserver and Judge.

Isa. i. 18, 19. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Ordinarily regarded as an appeal to sinners in general, and as teaching that if they will respond to the Divine invitation they will be received and forgiven. But

God's ancient people are primarily addressed, on the ground of their (national) covenant relationship to Jehovah. God is represented as weary with their hypocrisy and evil; and they are exhorted to "wash and make themselves clean, and to put away the evil of their doings from before His eyes—to cease from evil, to learn to do well, &c., Then follows our exhortation: "Come now, and let us reason, &c." "If ye be good and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

Obviously then, the text appeals to any members of that guilty nation who might be penitentially conscious of his guilt, and wishful to obtain Divine pardon and favour.

No spiritual application is permissible except there is an analogy between the condition of the persons originally referred to in the passage, and the state of those to whom it is sought to apply it.

The above words can therefore be with propriety applied only to those who feel their guilt through the inwrought work of the Holy Ghost. Such are spiritually reasonable (Luke xv. 17,) and endowed with power to give heed to divine facts. Thus understood, "the 'now' is a note not merely of time but of state. The Lord addresses those who are not what they once were—careless, and unconcerned, but burdened

and anxious. To the self-despairing soul, God says, Come now, you are willing to hear of my mercy and of the riches of my grace. I see what your fears and doubts are. Fear not; it is I that have shown you your condition. Come now, my Will will not be too sovereign or my Mercy too free, or the Priesthood of my Son too perfect, or my Truth too sure for you now."—*James Wells*.

It should be noticed also that the verse does not propose conditions, but states certainties. "Come,—let us reason—your sins SHALL be white," &c.

The "come," moreover, is God's "come," not a preacher's—and affords no warrant for one sinner on his own responsibility to exhort another "to take steps to get true religion and be saved."

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Isa. xlv. 22; on which is founded the popular hymn:—

"There is life for a look at the Crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee."

It implies, says A. Barnes the "*ease of salvation*"—simply looking to God: and that He, "if men *will not* look to Him in order that they may be saved," will be "just" in "casting them off for ever."

Note, however, (1) that these words are uttered by the Lord, speaking as a "just God and a Saviour," and not by human lips. They are authoritative not expostulatory. They do not solicit and promise—but command and declare "*look*" and "*be saved*." They therefore do not warrant one sinner's promising spiritual life to other sinners FOR a look—but imply that God with all commanding might, directs favoured sinners to look unto Him.

But (2) who are addressed? Not all sinners, but "all the ends of the earth"—which if the passage is spiritualised at all, must be interpreted in harmony with its connection. It will then refer to persons at a great *conscious* distance from God—who though quickened, are in their fears and apprehensions far from Him. Such have spiritual life, and can consistently be commanded to perform a spiritual act.

Notice, moreover, that the injunction respects rather the *direction* of the look than the act itself "*Unto Me*." Not till this is done is salvation experimentally enjoyed.

"With long despair the spirit breaks,
Till we apply to Christ alone."

"Hear, and your soul shall live." Isa. lv. 3. Adduced to shew that a reception of Christ by Faith will procure spiritual life. This however, overlooks the fact that the whole passage is addressed to spiritually living persons: for if it is conceded that *any* of the terms describe spiritual acts, we must admit that they *all* do. None will deny that those who "labour" must be endowed with life to enable them to do so; and if living, they also have power to "hear" not with the outward ear alone, but with the inward ear of the heart. Awakened sinners in the early consciousness of their lost condition are therefore referred to, and such are assured that there is in the covenant of grace a full supply for all their wants, and that all that "hear" with the reverent attention of Faith, need be under no apprehension of sin's woeful desert—spiritual and eternal death.

The words "shall live," therefore refer to the experimental enjoyment of a life at present possessed, and not to future investment with a life not yet granted. For a parallel passage, see Psa. cxix. 144 and 175, where a spiritually *living* sinner prays, "Give me understanding, and I shall *live*." "Let my soul *live* and it shall praise Thee."

John v. 25. "They that hear shall live." Adduced to prove that if sinners who are "dead in trespasses and sins," will but hear the gospel with reverent and earnest belief as rational and immortal creatures, and will trust in Christ—spiritual life will be imparted to them for so doing: that is to say, that an act performed in the energy of Nature will entitle them to the blessings of eternal salvation.

That this interpretation is false, is, however, apparent. The hearing in the preceding verse is evidently a spiritual action; for "he that heareth My word hath, (not *shall have*) everlasting life," and "is passed from death unto life." Here, hearing is mentioned as manifesting a life previously possessed, and the statement of our verse must be an amplification and explanation of the preceding one. *That* stated that Faith manifests life; *this* states, whence this life proceeds. The Son of God speaks dead souls (by the Holy Ghost) into spiritual existence. In the energy of the life then received, they hear, not with the outward ear, or the rational attention of the mind even, but they give heed in their hearts. Such *heart-heed* demonstrates the possession of life in the largest sense of the word. They that so hear, shall live spiritually for ever, and be happy, when sinners are consigned to the doom of the death that can never die. That the word hear, has often this force, see John viii. 47, and x. 3, 27. The verse therefore, simply enforces a spiritual fact,—and by no means states that eternal life is bestowed for believing.

Ezek. xxxvi. 26. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ezek. xviii. 31. "Make you a new heart and a new spirit." Alleged to prove that the Bible teaches both Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility—since in the first verse God is said to give sinners a new heart, and in the second, they are commanded to make their own hearts new. But—

This interpretation supposes that the two portions refer to the same persons under the same characters, which is not the case.

Ezek. xviii. 31., is addressed to the Jews of *Ezekiel's day*, and they are enjoined to avert their national death by national repentance and reformation. This necessitates our interpreting the "making of a new heart" to mean—not a spiritual change, but a change in the *moral tone* of the nation. (See page 245.)

Ezek. xxxvi. 26, like chap. xi. 19, refers (1) to the Jews in a far *distant day*, when the nation will be brought to spiritual Repentance, and (2) to the election of grace, the Israel of God—on whom the Lord confers the spiritual blessings of a change of heart and spirit. Jer. xxxi. 31, 34, as interpreted in Heb. viii. 8, 12, affords a satisfactory precedent for this interpretation. Thus the baselessness of the Fullerite view is apparent.

Amos iv. 12. "Prepare to meet thy God." Quoted to prove that men can and ought to make their peace with God, and so prepare themselves for death and Judgment.

Amos, however, is here reproving national Israel for their idolatry and their indifference to former warnings and punishments. In spite of what had already befallen them, they had not returned unto their God, who was about to visit them with sorer forms of evil for their crimes. "God is about to inflict the last and worst judgment on thee, the extinction of thy nationality. Consider, then, what preparation thou canst make for meeting Him as thy foe, (Jer. xlv. 14; Luke xiv. 31, 32;) see what can be done towards mitigating the severity of the coming judgment by penitence."—*A. R. Faussett, A.M.*

Our view of the above by no means precludes our preaching the way in which God the Spirit prepares God's elect for death and heaven, and hailing with joy saved sinners as trophies of His grace and power. But the words afford no warrant for the belief that such preparation is a natural human duty.

Matt. xiii. 58. "And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." Mark vi. 5. "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them." Often quoted to prove either that the unbelief of sinners prevents Christ from saving them, or that the unbelief of christians hinders the Holy Ghost from saving sinners in their congregations. But—

1. The *persons* mentioned were Jews, who in the face of the plainest evidence, refused to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus. That was the unbelief referred to, the obstinacy and stupidity of which excited the wonder of the human mind of the Lord (Mark vi. 6.)

2. The 'could not' of Mark vi. 5, is explained by the 'did not' of Matt. xiii. 58. It does not mean that Christ's power was restricted—since it required as much Divine energy to work one miracle as many,—but that it was not becoming for such characters to be indulged with the sight of works of great moment.

3. There is no parallel between these men who "were offended," i.e., "caused to stumble" at Jesus, and a sinner who, not possessing the principle of Faith, cannot exercise it,—or between them and true believers, whose faint and feeble Faith does not rise to fuller and stronger acts of belief. We may blame weak Christians—but such do not stumble at Christ, deny Him His just honour as the Messiah, or seek to impede His sovereign operations of grace. He fulfils the good pleasure of His will, and nothing hinders the progress of His work.

Mark v. 36. "Be not afraid: only believe." On which is founded the irrational hymn "Only believe, and you shall be saved." The passage however has reference to the forebodings which arose in the heart of Jairus when informed that his daughter was dead. The subject in question was not the salvation of his soul, but the Lord's ability to restore her when life had fled. And Jesus said "*Be not afraid: only believe;*" i.e., that I can do all you desire. This is confirmed by the parallel passage, Luke viii. 50. "*Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.*"

Luke xiii. 24. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Cited to prove that a duty—here styled "striving"—is incumbent on all men, and that apart from its discharge none can be saved. This, however, is not the meaning of the passage, as will appear if we consider:—

1. The PERSONS addressed. An individual had inquired of Jesus whether such as are to be saved are few in number? Instead of answering this question directly (He had already done so elsewhere, Matt. vii. 14,) the Lord made it the occasion of a discourse, not to the inquirer only, but to all within sound of His voice, whom he addressed *collectively*, as a religious gathering, on the ground of the interest in sacred themes which they then manifested. His subject was the possibility of being deluded upon the solemn matters which concern the soul and eternity. Thus our text is not a command to the unregenerate to do something, but a warning to religious professors to be diligent in seeing that they are right.

2. The INJUNCTION given. Strive with earnestness (literally agonise) to enter (into the kingdom of God) through the narrow gate (or door, the approved reading being the same word as in John x. i.;) for many, I say unto you will seek (without agonising earnestness, for a contrast is evidently intended between the full-hearted "striving" and the mere "seeking") to enter in (that is to obtain admission to the kingdom of God by some other entrance) and will not be able.

This is Dean Alford's interpretation. He observes, that we should supply the words, "the kingdom of God"—that the *emphasis* of the injunction lies in the phrase, *the strait door*,—and that the words do not mean that some will seek to enter *by this* and not be able—but that they will attempt to enter elsewhere,—"*to climb up some other way.*" John x. i.*

This disposes of the Arminian idea (often thrust on sinners to frighten them into becoming pious) that many men will come to Christ for salvation, and really seek Him in Faith, when it is too late.

Professedly religious persons should therefore be told that,—There is but one way of entrance into salvation (Acts iv. 12.)—All who pass this portal—*i.e.*, who come to Jesus in the energy of the Spirit-born life, and receive Jesus by Faith, do so with the deepest and most solemn feelings—Many attempt to obtain Salvation apart from Christ—not Unitarians only, but all are included to whom he is not absolutely essential and all sufficient—but such attempts prove failures.—We should strive with earnestness to know that our religion is of God.

* John x. i. A thief and robber—"thief" (κλεπτης) one who steals by *fraud*; "robber" (ληστης) one who steals by *violence*. Such are liars and imposters in *heart*, and act in the *energy* of the flesh to deprive the Lord of His honour as the only Saviour. To set aside Jesus as needless and superfluous is to rob Him of His declarative glory.

3. The ADMONITION, too long to transcribe here—but teaching that—Many will continue in a false profession until their death or the Second Advent.—Mere outward association with the Lord, in the days of His flesh, or with His followers now, will be no plea for His eternal approval.—Unless Christ knows us—by whatever means we have come by our religion—we shall be lost.—Persons who enter upon a profession of religion without receiving Christ are workers of iniquity, an unusual expression (Alford) designating them as sinners of a very deep dye, who will be doomed to punishment of the heaviest character. *Now* they may receive compliments for their piety and liberality. *Then* their damnation will be of unspeakable severity.

Thus the passage does not teach Duty-Faith.

John i. 12. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power (or the right or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." Often employed to prove that Faith precedes and is the cause of sinners, being adopted as dear children into the family of God. 'If they will believe, then they shall become the sons of God.' Faith, therefore, it is urged from these words, is the condition of relationship.

It will, however, be observed that the text does not state that filial relationship is bestowed on the condition of Faith; but that *power* to become the sons of God is given to those that believe in the name of Jesus Christ. The interpretation, therefore, hinges on the phrase "power to become." Does this refer to the *fact* or the *experience* of sonship?

It cannot, however, refer to the *fact* of Adoption, for many reasons. In Gal. iv. 6, the Spirit, (who is the Author of Faith) is expressly said to be sent forth into our hearts "because we are sons." Moreover, our sonship is, in 1 John iii. 1, ascribed to the love of God (which from its very nature must be sovereign, free, everlasting, immutable and uninfluenced by what goes on in the mind of a creature;) and the New Birth, in the verse following our text, is described as the act of God Himself. If, then, it is made to teach that Faith is the condition upon which sonship is bestowed, it will contradict other important Scriptures, and its very context. It cannot, therefore, relate to the fact of Adoption; but

On examination, it evidently refers to an *experimental acquaintance* with and enjoyment of the high relationship of divine sonship. For (1) the succeeding verse states of the persons mentioned that they were previously "born of God," and thereby admitted into vital relationship with Him. (2.) The word "power" or "privilege" necessarily indicates something different from the fact of being God's sons, and to what can it refer, but to the glad and confident consciousness of the fact.

The verse therefore means, that those that are born of God, receive Jesus Christ and believe in His name, and thus become acquainted with their relationship, and are empowered to take with boldness the place of sons. Thus grace puts a sinner "among the children" (Jer. iii. 19,) and Faith cries "my Father." By Christ "we have access by Faith into the grace (of Adoption) wherein we stand." Rom. v. 2.

Gal. iii. 26. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "A sinner," says Thomas Boston, is instated into the covenant of grace by *Faith*, or believing on Jesus Christ. Faith is the hand where with one taketh hold of the covenant, signs it for himself and closeth the bargain for his own salvation. Believing on Christ is the appointed means of entering sinners into the covenant of grace." Words could not be plainer. Faith (so we are here told) originates the peculiar relationship to God, which is the distinguishing privilege of those who are interested in the Covenant of Grace. In support of this the above text is often advanced. We reply,

Israel Atkinson contends that by Faith we are to understand, not the act of believing, but that divine arrangement in which favour is accorded to sinners on the principle of Faith as opposed to works: in other words that the term Faith is here, (as in verses 23, 24 and 25) used objectively. This suits the context, in which the apostle is contending that salvation is wholly through sovereign grace, irrespective of human merit.

It is, however, more generally held, that by our being God's children by Faith is meant, that by Faith we obtain an experimental acquaintance with the fact. "Not that Faith makes any the children of God, or puts them into such a relation; for that is the act and deed of God who has predestinated us to the adoption of children, and secured the blessing for us in the covenant of grace: Christ, by redemption, has made way for our reception and our enjoyment of it; and the Spirit, as a consequence of our ancient adoption bears witness to it. Faith, however, receives it, as it does all the blessings of grace made ready to its hand; and so we become evidently and manifestly the children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus."—*Dr. Gill*.

Thus Faith does not *make*, but *manifest* our relation to God as His children, and hence the rich promise of the gospel, *i.e.*, that we shall share the filial love of God—is "given to those that believe" (verse 22.)

"Though we are sons and heirs of God

Before our souls believe;

'Tis only Faith that can of this

An evidence receive.

"Thus, we are called His children, by

Believing in His Son;

And more than this, are justified,

By what His hands have done."

John iii. 14, 15, 16. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life," &c. Words often on the lips of preachers who hold that Faith in Christ must precede Regeneration, and that sinners *obtain* spiritual life by believing in Jesus. Jesus had told Nicodemus of the necessity of Regeneration. Now, "He directs him to the brazen serpent, teaching him that he must go there in order, as it were, to gather up the seeds of this needed new life."—*J. G. Bellett*.

It is, however, overlooked that the design of the serpent in the wilderness was not to impart life to the dead, but restoration to the dying. Those who benefited by it, looked in the last energy of their almost expiring life. The serpent-bitten Israelite does not therefore represent an unregenerate person dead in trespasses and sins, and *spiritually unconscious*; but a sinner, "poor and wretched, weak and wounded, sick and sore." In other words, the text applies to those who have received life from Christ, or been born again, but who are in their guilty and miserable apprehensions ready to perish. Such should be assured, that "Jesus ready stands to save them, full of pity joined with power." Whosoever looketh to Him—and all that have life in Christ will look to Christ—will find relief and rest in so so doing. The serpent of brass is, therefore, not a type of Jesus as a "quickening spirit," 1 Cor. xv. 45, giving "eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him;" but as the great and gracious Physician, imparting health of soul to all that are led to apply to Him, however desperate and deadly their conditions may be.

John vi. 27. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed." Ordinarily regarded as a declaration of the way in which salvation is to be obtained; earnest Faith being the condition on which it is bestowed. Hence, sinners are besought to make the required effort to possess themselves of the meat which endureth unto eternal life. Examine, however,

1. THE CONTEXT. Jesus on the previous day had miraculously fed five thousand persons in the wilderness. The impression made upon the people was profound. It was the popular expectation that the Messiah would repeat the miracles of Moses, who had given their fathers manna in the wilderness. A transient, impulsive conviction seized their minds that Jesus was none other than the prophet of whom Moses had spoken, (Deut. xviii. 15) and they would have taken Him by force and made Him a King (John vi. 14, 15). To defeat their intention, He bade His apostles take ship, and cross over to Bethsaida, on the other side of the lake. Having dismissed the multitudes, He ascended a neighbouring mountain. He there continued in prayer till near the fourth watch of the night, when He joined the apostles, quelled the storm that threatened their vessel, which He conveyed by an act of miraculous power to the other side of the lake. The fact of His presence on the western shore becoming known, many who had witnessed the marvellous multiplication of the loaves, took ship and followed Him to Capernaum. Their motive is stated. They sought Him not because they *saw* the miracles, (John vi. 26) not because they inferred who He was from His miracles—but because they had eaten of the food which He had furnished and had been filled. A low desire to obtain satisfaction for their natural hunger brought them to Jesus. They wondered how He had crossed over—since He had not embarked with His disciples—and questioned Him on the subject. He did not satisfy their curiosity; but met their state of heart by the discourse, commencing with the verse under examination. It therefore was not addressed to men as men, or even to Jews as Jews. It

applies only to these persons who had obtained a gratuitous meal on the previous night, and were now eagerly following Jesus with the hope that He would once more feed them.

2. The **TERMS** of the rebuke. *Labour not.* "Rather," says Dean Alford, "'Busy not yourselves about'—'Do not weary yourselves for.'" What the Lord censured, again says Dean Alford, "was not a 'working for' or a bringing about of, but a following Christ in order to obtain food which perisheth.

"*But for the food which endureth, or remains, unto eternal life.*" It has been surmised that the Lord "is here merely exhorting those whom He addressed, to endeavour to obtain correct views respecting Himself, His testimony and His claims as the promised Messiah, who was 'given' to them by being sent and sealed to minister and suffer amongst them."—*Gospel Herald*, vol. xix. 187. This is, however, in our judgment, an unfair toning down of the verse. The words "*eternal life*," necessitate our regarding the food as something relating to spiritual salvation; and it may be, as Dr. Gill informs us, either the soul-sustaining truths which Jesus taught, or Himself as the antitypical pascal Lamb. The verse thus means: "If you attach yourselves to Me at all, let it not be from motives so low as My ability to furnish you with perishable food; but because I can, as God's sealed and sent servant, give food for the never-dying soul."

If applied to men in the present day, the verse must be restricted to persons whose condition resembles that of those herein described,—namely, that unhappy class of people who become religious from interested motives, to obtain money or position, under the idea that godliness is "a way of temporal gain." Such should be warned that it is a high misdemeanor in God's sight, to make a religious profession from any lower motive than a felt need of Christ and a persuasion that He is our Saviour.

John vi. 29. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Note that this verse does not read "This is the command of God that ye believe," although such is the interpretation often given to it. It is not an exhortation. The Jews had asked what they should do in order to perform such works as would be pleasing to God. Jesus replies, that the truest way for them to work the work of God, would be to receive and obey Him whom He had sent. Primarily, Faith in Jesus as the Messiah—not believing to the salvation of the soul—is evidently intended.

Spiritual belief, however, is here contended for. If so, the verse will mean, that of all the acts of which the human mind is capable, Faith in Jesus is the most gratifying to God. The verse therefore does not touch the proposition which it is quoted to prove.

* The above is the admitted force of 1 Tim. vi. 5. "Supposing that godliness is a way of gain," *Rev. Translation*. "Holding gains to be the end of piety."—*J. N. Darby*. "Who suppose that godliness is gain."—*Dean Alford*, who further explains that these persons imagined that "religion was to be used as a means of worldly bettering themselves."

John vi. 53. **Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.**" Quoted by the Rev. John Stock in his *Handbook of Revealed Theology*, to prove that "until a man by Faith receives the sacrifice of Christ he has no life, not even its first elements in his soul." The question here discussed by our Lord, however, is not how spiritual life is *obtained*, but how it is *maintained*. Jesus proclaims Himself as the only food of heaven-born souls. All living creatures are so constituted that their life is nourished by some appropriate form of food—and they are described by what they eat. Some are *carnivorous* or flesh-eaters. Others *graminivorous*, and subsist on grass. A Christian lives on Christ by Faith. He that eateth (is an eater of) the flesh and blood of Christ has life eternal, verse 54. It will be seen that the word "until" in the sentence quoted above, perverts the passage. The Lord does not say that until a man believes he has no life, but that except he subsists on Christ's flesh and blood—i.e., except Christ is as really a vital and daily necessity to his soul as food is to his body—he is spiritually lifeless.

"John xii. 36. **While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.**" Must be studied in its connection. Jesus at Jerusalem had predicted, "what death He should die," and its results, verses 32, 33. His hearers, who were obstinately prejudiced in favour of their religion and determined to repudiate His teachings, rejoined by a question which was evidently intended to stagger the great Teacher. He does not answer their query, but rebukes the spirit which prompted it. "*Walk while ye have the light*"—while My ministry continues—"lest darkness come upon you," which it did by the judicial blindness which was sent upon them. "*While ye have the light, believe in the light,*" receive my testimony concerning Myself and My mission. Ye assume great things. Ye pretend to great intelligence and uncommon knowledge—in a word, ye in effect arrogate to yourselves the title of *children of light*—but know this, that it is only by acknowledging Me, and becoming my disciples that ye can justly earn the appellation.

Where note. (1) Not men as men, but Jews as Jews were addressed (2) A reception of Jesus as Israel's Messiah (not as one's personal Saviour) is contemplated and (3) The title "children of light," does not as in Eph. v. 8 intend spiritually illuminated persons, but Jews whose minds were informed by the teaching of Jesus.

John xx. 31. **'That ye might believe—and believing ye might have life through His name.'** Supposed to prove that *spiritual life is granted to sinners for believing in Christ*. The clue to its correct interpretation is, however, simple. S. John informs us that his object in writing his Gospel was, that the credence of Faith might be given to his testimony, and that confidence might be directed to and reposed in the Saviour, whose biography he had written—"that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." What he had advanced was sufficient ground for the belief of a heaven-born Faith.*

* The object of S. John's Gospel was, (as above) that men might believe in the person called Jesus as the Incarnate Word, and

The result of their thus believing is added. "That believing, ye might have life." Not 'if ye will believe, ye shall obtain life,' but "that, believing, ye might have life." The meaning of the words "living," or "having life," in Scripture has before been explained. Their force often is to have the consciousness of a life previously imparted. (Page 215). A man in a swoon has life, but is altogether unconscious of the fact, since his senses which are the only channels of intercommunication with the outer world, are in a state of inaction. Now Faith is the organ of spiritual perception and intelligence, and till it is in operation, a regenerated sinner must remain ignorant of the existence of spiritual life in his soul. Without Faith there can be no spiritual consciousness. But Faith can only act by means of the Gospel, and thus by believing we awake to the perception of our relation to spiritual realities, and know that we are alive to God. So S. John had presented to his spiritual readers the great Object of Faith, that they might believe, and by believing become conscious of the fact that they had life through His name.

That Faith is not the procuring cause of spiritual life, is evident from the expression, "through His name." His name, evidently means His person, and the power and authority that are associated with it. "Believers have their spiritual and eternal life through Christ; their life of Justification depends on Him; their life of Sanctification flows from Him; and their life of Glory will be maintained through their connection with Him. Their life centres in His person; comes to them from Him as its procuring cause; and is bestowed for His sake. Yea, it is in His hands to give, and is imparted by Him, (not to those who consent to receive it from Him, and apply to Him for it,) but to all whom His Father gave Him before the foundation of the world."—Abridged from *Dr. Gill*.

Acts xiii. 46. "Ye put (or thrust) it, (i.e., the word of God, not salvation) from you, and judge yourselves not worthy of eternal life." Quoted to prove that men can thrust salvation from them by unbelief, and so frustrate God's gracious purpose in offering it to them.

But these words were addressed to the Jews at Antioch, in Pisidia, who were filled with envy at the sight of the multitudes who thronged to hear the apostle's preaching, and contradicted what he said, and blasphemed. On this, "Paul and Barnabas"—did what? Entreat them not to put salvation away from them? No. Without a single exhortation they said—"Seeing you put the word of God from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life"—What then? You will be doubly damned for not receiving our message? No. They simply acted in accordance with their commission (Luke xxiv. 47,) and "turned to the Gentiles."—*Charles Drawbridge*.

The phrase "judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life," is, however, difficult and demands further attention. A. Barnes'

so enter into the enjoyment of spiritual life through His name. The object of his First Epistle was that his brethren might be led into the full Assurance of Faith, and so into deeper fellowship with God and fulness of joy.

explanation is indeed instructive. "It does not mean that they expressed the opinion in words, that they were unworthy of eternal life, or that they so regarded themselves—for they thought just the reverse—but that by their conduct they declared this and condemned themselves."

The difficulty connected with the word "worthy," is however unremoved. Men are guilty sinners. None are worthy of any of God's favours. It could not, therefore, have been wrong in these men to judge that they were unworthy of eternal life. This were but to admit an undisputed truth. Nor does it mean that they "had rejected the gospel, and so shown that they were unfit to enter into life." It is playing with the words to extort this sense from them. It remains to ascertain the true interpretation of the term "worthy."

It here stands for the word *αἰσ* (*axios*) an adjective derived from the verb *αἰω* (*ago*) "I weigh." Its meaning is, "of like weight" or "value," "commensurate with," or "worth as much as," "becoming to" or "meet." Hence, "of weight" or "worth," "deserving of," "entitled to on the ground of merit." In this latter sense it occurs in Matt. x. 10; Luke vii. 4; John i. 27; 1 Tim. i. 15; Rev. iv. 11. In Matt. iii. 8; and 2 Thess. i. 3, it is rendered "meet," *i.e.*, in the former sense. In Matt. xxii. 8, it is found in the first sense, though with a slightly different shade of meaning. Those that were invited to the wedding feast, but had made light of it, and would not come (page 243) are said not to have been "worthy." Here the thought of merit cannot be implied, for the entertainment was as free as the invitation was spontaneous and gracious. The wrong-heartedness of the invited guests, their unwillingness to accept the royal hospitality, their independency, the disloyalty which they manifested—constituted their unworthiness. "Not worthy," then, there means "unsuited" to be guests at so free an entertainment. Now what this parable predicts in symbolic language, Acts xiii. 40—48, describes as actual history, and the occurrence of the term *αἰσ* (*axios*) in both is significant, and supplies the clue to the interpretation we are seeking. Not worthy here means "unsuited" or "not fit," as a man of wealth would be unfit for a dole of bread. Hence the sense is, "As ye thrust from you and reject the gospel of the risen Saviour, and in your pride and creature sufficiency judge that ye do not require the grace of Regeneration, and imagine that ye are not in a condition to need the gift of eternal life of which that gospel testifies, we turn from you," &c.*

Man may close his ears to the outward testimony of the gospel, and proudly dream that he requires not its promised mercy; but the words do not teach that sinners can, by unbelief impede the invincible Spirit when he pleases to impart spiritual life unto them.

*The above verse has been cited in support of the modern doctrine that an eternity of conscious existence awaits those persons only who are united to Christ, and that those who die unsaved will not live for ever, but be annihilated and cease to be. Such only as are here "worthy of eternal life" (it has been sought to show from these words) will live for ever. Correctly viewed, however, the text has not the remotest relation to this subject.

Acts xvi. 31. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Addressed by Paul and Silas, not to a promiscuous audience, but to a trembling and convinced sinner, in whose heart they perceived that the Spirit had wrought a saving change. They therefore pointed him, and any of his household who might be in a similar condition, and perhaps all were, to Jesus, and directed them to apply to Him for salvation.

Rom. iv. 23, 24; v. 1. "Now it was not written for [Abraham's] sake alone that [righteousness] was imputed unto him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead: who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Attention is claimed to the phrases "if we believe" and "being justified by faith," which are often quoted to prove that, by believing, sinners pass from a state of condemnation to one of justification—that on this condition the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them—and that then, and not till then, they stand free from guilt in God's sight. That this is the apparent teaching of the words on a superficial examination is not denied. Further, it is honest to admit that they present some difficulty to those who hold the views advocated in these pages.

To meet this difficulty, two very different explanations have been proposed.

The first suggests the transposing of the comma in Rom. v. 1, and making the verse read "Therefore being justified, by faith we have peace with God." Thus the words are supposed to teach nothing more than the indisputable fact that peace comes to justified sinners through believing.

To this, however, there is a weighty objection. An alteration so important should not be made without authority. This it lacks. The emendation would not be sanctioned by any competent scholar whose judgment was unbiassed. On this account the suggestion must be abandoned.

Again, Israel Atkinson denies that "Faith" here means believing, and contends that the term is employed *objectively* to describe the method of salvation revealed to and received by faith.

To this it may be objected, that Rom. v. 1 evidently relates to chap. iv. 24, which must rule its meaning. Thus: "For us, also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead—therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace." This necessitates our giving to the term "faith" in chap. v. 1 the force of "believing."

We, nevertheless, contend that the popular interpretation is incorrect, for the following reasons. The original reads thus:—

"Now, it was not written on account of him (Abraham) only, that [righteousness] was imputed (or reckoned) unto him; but also on account of us, to whom it is about to be (or shall most certainly be) imputed (or reckoned)

[namely] to us that believe on Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered on account of our offences, and was raised on account of our justification. Having, therefore, been justified out of (or in the way, or on the principle of) faith* we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It may be thus explained:—God was the object of Abraham's faith, as He is of ours, but God is always to be trusted according to the fullest revelation of Himself that He has deigned to make. Abraham trusted in Him as promising, and able to keep His promise. We trust in the same God, but as more fully revealed in connection with His crowning act of faithfulness and power—the raising of Jesus from the dead. Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned (or imputed) unto him for righteousness—i.e., unto him as a believer righteousness was imputed, for his justification: and righteousness is imputed also to us, who believe in God as raising Jesus from the dead. He that thus believes in God is designated as one to whom righteousness is imputed. This, we submit, is the apostle's meaning. There is no "if" in the original, nor is there the shadow of authority for its introduction.† The question, therefore, of the way in which sinners originally become interested in the righteousness of Christ is not here discussed.

The future "*shall be imputed*" demands attention. Is not righteousness now imputed to all that believe?

In reply, we observe, that in the original there are two ways of expressing what is yet to be. The common and less emphatic way is by the use of the ordinary future tense. The less ordinary but more forcible is by using an additional verb, *mello* (μellō) "to be about to." When this is the case (as in Matt. xvi. 27; xvii. 12, 22; Acts xxiv. 15; Rom. viii. 13, 18; Rev. i. 19,) the "*shall*" should be regarded as if, printed in italics, to indicate that it is emphatic. Such is the "*shall*" in this passage.

Two explanations of its peculiar force here are suggested.

That the future is employed as in chap. iii. 30 and v. 19, because it refers to the conduct of God throughout the whole of this dispensation. Wherever and whenever a spiritual believer is found, it will be a fact that righteousness is imputed to him. Again it is supposed—

* Rom. v. 1, Justified "*out of faith*," Rev. Version, alternative reading, which is a literal translation of the Greek preposition *ex*. "*On the principle of faith*," J. N. Darby; "*In the way of faith*," G. V. Wigram; "*Neither by nor through* at all represents the preposition *ek* (*ex*) here employed; but both were evidently employed to sustain the mistaken sense of the passage so commonly adopted."—*Israel Atkinson*.

† See various translations: "*Who believe on Him*," Rev. Version; "*To whom, believing on Him, &c., it will be reckoned*," J. N. Darby; "*To us, also, who have faith in Him, &c.,*" W. J. Conybeare, M.A.; "*Seeing we believe on Him*," &c., Dr. Gill, who adds, "which is descriptive of the faith of New Testament believers;" "*Namely, us who believe*," Dean Alford, who adds, "this specifies the us."

"That the reference is to the Day of Judgment (compare 1 John ii. 28, and iv. 17), and that the apostle's meaning is, that as God has already vindicated in His Word the righteousness of Abraham, so He will assuredly vindicate the characters of those who now by Faith are enabled to count human righteousness as dross and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus (Phil. iii. 7, 11.)"—*Arthur Pridham*.

The former opinion commends itself to the writer.

It is, therefore, clear (whatever view be adopted) that this passage does not teach that believing is a condition of salvation.

This leads us to a correct interpretation of Rom. v. 1, which is evidently but a reiteration of the statement we have just examined. "Having, therefore, been justified in the way or on the principle of faith."

This does not refer to our secret Justification in the sight of God, which, as we have shown (page 65), was merited by the obedience unto death of Jesus, who, as the context states, was "delivered on account of our sins (because He was charged with our sins) and was raised again on account of our Justification (because our Justification was an accomplished fact)."

It refers, however, to Justification as realised by us. "The implantation of the habit of Faith gives me a right to believe myself justified; and the drawing forth of Faith into exercise gives a knowledge of that right."—*John Ryland, D.D.* Thus a man is justified by Faith, who heartily renounces his own creature righteousness, and humbly presents the righteousness of Jesus as his only plea for his acceptance with God. He is not justified FOR Faith, nor does the phrase "by faith" accurately represent the original. But he is justified on the *principle* of faith as opposed to works; or, *in the way* of faith as a distinct method of approach to God in reliance on the merits of Jesus Christ. Out of his Faith his knowledge of his Justification arises, for "though an elect person is clear in the sight of God, he cannot know it, nor has he any right to believe himself justified before the implantation of this heaven-born grace."—*John Ryland, D.D.*

The passages under review, therefore, teach that those that believe

* Compare page 71. This passage does not mean that Christ was raised again to accomplish our Justification by pleading the merits of His death on our behalf, but that our Justification led to His Resurrection. Had not the elect church been justified by His death, He could not have been raised from the dead. "The original words are without ambiguity, and clearly represent our Lord's resurrection as an event which took place *in consequence* of our justification, and in the same manner as His death took place in consequence of our sins."—Bishop Horsley's "Sermon on Rom. iv. 25." See, also, "Thoughts on Scriptural Subjects," by B. W. Newton, page 133. Bunyan evidently took the same view of this text. See *Offor's* Edition, vol. i. page 305. "A full discharge was in and by Christ received of God of all our sins *before He rose from the dead*, as His resurrection truly declared; for 'He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' (Rom. iv. 25.)"

had righteousness imputed to them, and are justified ; and that Faith conveys an experimental enjoyment of this fact to the mind. They, however, do not represent that believing is a human duty to be performed ere sinners can be saved.

2 Cor. v. 20, and vi. 1, 2. "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech (you) by us ; we pray (you) in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God. We then, as workers together (with Him), beseech (you) also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain ; for He saith 'I have heard Thee in a time accepted and in the day of salvation have I succoured Thee.' Behold, now is the accepted time : behold now is the day of salvation."

Attention is directed to the sentences, "Be ye reconciled to God," and "Now is the day of salvation."

"Be ye reconciled to God." Generally regarded as an exhortation to unconverted persons to make their peace with God—i.e., to take such steps as shall lead Him to overlook their sins and receive them favourably for Christ's sake. This sentiment is embodied in the following lines, evidently founded on this passage. "Our Own Hymn-Book," by C. H. Spurgeon, No. 519 :—

"Sinners, you are now address'd,
In the name of Christ our Lord ;
He hath sent this message to you,
Pay attention to His word.

"Think what you have all been doing,
Think what rebels you have been ;
You have spent your lives in nothing
But in adding sin to sin.

"Yet your long-abused Saviour,
Sends to you a message mild ;
Loth to execute His vengeance,
Prays you to be reconciled.
Hear Him woo you—
Sinners now be reconciled."*

"Now is the day of salvation," ordinarily employed as the basis of an exhortation to sinners to avail themselves of the present day (of twenty-four hours) to become religious and close with the Saviour's offers of mercy.

"Sinner," says C. H. Spurgeon, "*now* is thy time to think about

* In the same volume may be found the fine verses given on pages 56 and 57 of this work, "Hail, Mighty Jesus!"—"Our Own Hymn-Book," Psalm 45, version iv. May it not be inquired whether the Mighty Jesus, at whose "commanding word" "the stoutest rebel must resign," is the same Saviour who stands loth to execute His vengeance, and woos rebels to be reconciled? If He is, one of the hymns embodies a strange libel on His character.

eternity, and prepare to meet thy God. Seek Him in the days of thy youth ; for the promise is, ' They that seek me early shall find me. I charge thee, since there is only a ' day of salvation,' before the sun goes down, and the black night of eternal ruin shall come upon thee, lay hold upon the hope that is set before thee."

Again Our Own Hymn Book, No. 516 :—

" To-day a pard'ning God
Will hear the suppliant pray ;
To-day a Saviour's cleansing blood
Will wash thy sins away.
" But grace so dearly bought,
If yet thou wilt despise,
Thy fearful doom, with vengeance fraught,
Will fill thee with surprise."

Again in No. 519, we read—

" In Christ's name you are entreated
To accept this act of grace,
This, the day of your acceptance,
Listen to the terms of peace.
" Having thus, then, heard the message,
All with heavenly mercy fraught ;
Go and tell the gracious Saviour
If you will be saved or not."

Our verses then are regarded as proving that salvation is contingent on the consent or refusal of sinners.

Consider, however, that S. Paul is addressing the Corinthian church. The texts, therefore, are not addressed to the unregenerate. Internal salvation comprises reconciliation to God, which is an essential branch of the Spirit's work. All saved sinners are reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rom. v. 10.) " You that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, *now* hath He reconciled." (Col. i. 21.)

We may, however, cease to be enemies of God without being fully resigned to His will, and delighting in His character and conduct. Many true saints fail to " do all things without murmurings and reasonings, or disputings." Phil. ii. 14. Hence the propriety of exhorting them to be cordially reconciled as dear children, to their Heavenly Father. In two senses—

1. *Doctrinally.* From the many Jewish allusions in these Epistles it is evident that no small proportion of the Corinthian saints were of the seed of Israel. S. Paul's desire may, therefore, have been to exhort them to abide by the truth of Justification by Christ, without the deeds of the Law. See Israel Atkinson, in *Gospel Herald* for 1873.

Thus a Christian who opposes the doctrines of sovereign grace on the ground of certain *intellectual* and *sentimental* objections, may well

in the present day be exhorted to be reconciled to God's way of salvation, because it is God's.

2. Experimentally. It is more generally held that the Apostle meant "Wherever you have thought that God has dealt hardly with you in Providence, be satisfied that all is for your good; be resigned to His will in all things, and view every thing that proceedeth from Him in Providence and Grace as consistent and just, and obey Him, accordingly."—*Charles Drazbridge.*

It has been urged that it is irrational to suppose that the Apostle would thus appeal to persons who *were* already reconciled to God. It is, however, common in Scripture for possessors of a certain grace to be exhorted to exert it to the utmost extent of their spiritual ability. Thus S. John writes to those "*that believe*" that they "*may believe.*" 1 John v. 13.

The special reason for the Corinthians' fully acquiescing in the will and ways of the God of their salvation is given in verse 21: "Be ye reconciled; for He hath made," &c. The great love of God that was manifested in the gift of His Son, and the transference of our sin to Him, is an argument for our depending on Him in all other things, and bowing to His will.

He then exhorts them not to receive God's grace in vain (explained on page 117*), and as a *motive* for their seeking to avoid doing so, he urges the consideration of chap. vi. verse 2, where notice—

1. THE PASSAGE QUOTED—Isa. xlix. 8. In this chapter Christ is introduced as claiming the attention of the Gentiles (verse 1) to the fact that Jehovah the Father had called Him from the womb of the Virgin Mary, His mother, and invested Him with authority and power (verse 2.) His ill success amongst His own people is then referred to—for He did not succeed in bringing (national) Jacob again to God, or in raising again the tribes of Jacob to national supremacy. Of this He complains, expressing the pitying love and sorrow of His human heart. The Lord, however, replies that though Israel be not gathered—*i.e.*, though the Jews did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah, and were not gathered, (Matt. xxiii. 37,) yet should Emmanuel be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and His God should be His strength (verse 5.) It is further predicted that in an acceptable time He would be heard, and helped in a day of salvation—the verbs in verse 8 being in the prophetical *past* tense, which bears a *future* signification. Thus 770 years before the advent of Jesus it was foretold that though He should be rejected by the Jews, the time of His acceptance would come—the day of His salvation would arrive—*i.e.*, the time when He would be accepted and received into Heaven, as the Representative, Priest, and Forerunner of His people, and that He should *then* successfully prosecute the work of salvation. Notice—

2. S. PAUL'S EXPLANATION of the passage cited, "Behold *now* IS the accepted time,"—*i.e.*, the time predicted by Isaiah, the time of Christ's acceptance in the upper temple. "Behold *now* IS the day of

* Compare 1 Cor. xv. 10. "His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all."

salvation," i.e., we are actually living in the period foretold by the prophet.

The day referred to is, then, not a period of twenty-four hours, but the term is used metaphorically, in contradistinction to night. "When Adam fell, darkness covered the earth. God placed, if I may so speak, a star in the heavens, over this dark world—the first promise. Then, one by one, He caused others to shine; then thousands appeared. In Solomon's time, the moon shone brightly; but it was the night, not the day of salvation; and God took His saints home by the glimmering light of the stars of promise. At length Jesus came—the Sun of Righteousness arose, and the presence and sacrifice of the Saviour put an end to night, and brought in the Gospel day,—not a day of twenty-four hours; but the day that extends from the death of Christ to His second coming. "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." (1 John ii. 8.)—*John Hazelton*.

Thus the Corinthians were exhorted not to receive their grace to no purpose, so far as the world and their fellow Christians were concerned, inasmuch as they were going to their eternal home by daylight, and possessed an abiding interest in the *accepted* and glorified Redeemer.

The great and godly Archibald McLean objects to the above interpretation on the ground that "the pronoun 'you' is not in the Greek. 'The Apostle,' he therefore judges, "is not here urging the *believing Corinthians* to be reconciled to God, for he considered them as already reconciled; but he is setting before them the Apostolic message to the *world* at large, as appears from the foregoing verse; and therefore the supplement ought to be *men* or the *world*."

In reply, we admit that the two "*yous*" are not in the original, and concede that we may, and perhaps should, read "As though God were entreating by us, we beseech on behalf of Christ—Be ye reconciled to God."

John Stevens, however, clearly shows that the introduction of the word "*men*," in the place of "*you*," would interfere with the evident scope of the passage which consists of an address to the Corinthian Church.

Moreover, this interpretation would flatly contradict verse 18. There it is distinctly stated that Reconciliation is a Divine operation in which, God works alone. "But all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." This interpretation makes reconciliation a possible human duty. It is incredible that such contrary teaching should occur in the same paragraph.

Moreover, competent authorities retain the second "*you*." See the Revised Version. Alford says, "We beseech ('*you*,' but not uttered as an integral part of the present text.)

Eph. v. 14, "Wherefore He saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." A mischievous application of this text is common. The unregenerate are addressed as sleepers, and they are besought to awake, and come to Christ for light. The natural condition of sinners is not, however, that of *sleep* but *death*—a death from which no earnest

appeal can awake them, until the Spirit quicken them. To evade this fact is to lie to lost sinners in God's name. In addressing the unregenerate we should not say, "What meanest thou, O sleeper (Jonah i. 6); but "Ye must be born again."

The above text, perhaps a fragment of an ancient hymn, is addressed to Christians who are not awake to the responsibilities of their condition as saved sinners, and who are living carnal and worldly lives. A sleeper and a corpse are much alike, and many Christians fearfully resemble worldly men. The faint health of spiritual life, which distinguishes them is hard to perceive. Such are exhorted to awake, and arise up from among the (spiritually) dead, with whom they are so mixed up, and Christ will give them light.

Heb. ii. 3, "**How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?**" Commonly quoted to prove that men decide their destiny by accepting or rejecting salvation; and therefore employed as the basis of appeals to the unregenerate to avoid the consequences of sin, by at once receiving Christ. But—

The people addressed were Jews who had professed to be saved by Christ. They were exposed to continual temptation to relax the boldness of their Christian profession, and even to renounce the Saviour, and return to Judaism. The text is not, therefore, a warning to sinners as sinners, but an exhortation to converted Jews, and must not be employed as if it referred to the careless disregard of ordinary persons when salvation is presented to their notice in the preaching of the gospel.

The peril from which no escape is possible is popularly stated to be eternal punishment. This erroneous interpretation arises from the supposition that "neglecting" here is tantamount to "rejecting" or "abandoning," and that "neglecting so great salvation" is similar to "drawing back unto perdition." (Chap. x. 39).

The Apostle, however, is here not contemplating the results of apostatising from Christ (this he does elsewhere); but the sorrowful consequences of neglecting by sloth, carelessness and inattention, the salvation in which the persons referred to—"we," himself and others—were eternally interested. That true Christians are in danger of thus "neglecting" salvation none will deny, and the propriety of the exhortation in its connection is obvious. (See chap. iv. 14.)

The Apostle draws a parallel between the sins committed and the punishments endured by the Jews of old, and the sin and punishment he was contemplating.

"God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers in the prophets, hath at the end of these days (the end of the Jewish dispensation) spoken unto us in [the person of] His Son. Therefore it behoves us to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should slip or drift

* The word in the original means to neglect or disregard what one has. (See Matt. xxii. 5.) They *had* the invitation, but attached no value to it. (1 Tim. iv. 14.) He *had* the gift, and was not be negligent in using it.

away* (like a vessel carried away by the force of the current through the negligence of those who ought to manage it.) For if the word spoken by angels (very possibly human and not divine messengers are intended, *i.e.*, the prophets of chap. i. 1,) proved steadfast (*i.e.*, was confirmed by what followed,) and every transgression and disobedience received just retribution, how shall we escape if we (suffer ourselves to drift away and) are negligent of so great salvation?

Observe that "the analogy is between that rest in the land of Canaan, of which the stiff-necked and rebellious Jews were deprived as a punishment for their sins, and the gospel rest into which believers enter by Christ (Heb. iv. 3, 5, 11.) Every transgression and disobedience on their parts received (not *shall* receive) its fitting retribution in this world. Aaron and Moses were eminent instances, who, though saved in the Lord, were not suffered to enter into Canaan's rest on account of their dereliction of duty. Now if *they* suffered at the hands of a holy God, and lost so much through neglect of His claims, how shall *WE*—saved though we are—escape darkness, disappointment, vexation and chastisement, if, forgetful of our high calling we neglect *one* branch of salvation, slight *one* privilege, or omit *one* duty." Slightly altered from Charles Drawbridge.

1 John iii. 23. "This is His commandment, That we (*i.e.*, the sons of God, verse 1,) should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ." This forms the text of a celebrated Sermon, in defence of Duty-Faith, by C. H. Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, vol. ix., No. 531. Read, however, in its connection it enforces the duty—not of all men to believe spiritually—but of God's children, among whom the Apostle includes himself, to confide in the convenient character, fulness and grace of His beloved Son (see pages 83, 193, 203.)

V.—The absence of Spiritual Faith not the Ground of a Sinners' Condemnation.

It is commonly asserted that the non-possession of Faith will be the ground of the future condemnation of sinners. "If sinners are damned, it will be unbelief that damns them; if lost, it will be because they believed not on Christ."—*C. H. Spurgeon*. Such is current theology. How can such be reconciled with particular Redemption; and if irreconcilable, can it be true? Did the God of truth originate a contradictory gospel?

We have indeed already disproved it by shewing (1) That spiritual Faith not being required by the Moral Law, its absence cannot bring men under increased legal condemnation (page 20), and (2) That its absence is never referred to as the ground of human condemnation in any of the scriptural predictions of the occurrences of the Judgment Day (page 23.) The serious consequences which the doctrine in-

* Lest haply we should drift away from them.—Revised Version.

volve are also shown on page 56. The texts cited in its proof, however, remain to be considered.

Psa. ii. 12, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way."* Ordinarily regarded as an exhortation to sinners to yield to the gracious influence of the Spirit, and be reconciled to Christ, lest He be angry at their despising Him and rejecting His offers, and consign them to hell for their impenitence and unbelief.

An examination of the context shows that such an interpretation is incorrect. Christ is "'King of kings,' and it is here demanded that kings and judges who receive their thrones under His authority should acknowledge His supremacy." To kiss a monarch's hand is a world-wide token of homage, and well would it be for mankind if all in high places were actuated by the principles of Christ's book, and acted in the way which He commends. A reason is given for the wisdom commanded. "Be wise, therefore" (see Deut. xvi. 18-20) "lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way"—that is, be deposed, degraded, and end your now brilliant course in disgrace and sorrow. Zedekiah (2 Chron. xxxvi.); and Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv.); and Herod (Acts xii. 21, 22, 23); Louis XVI. of France, and the Napoleon family, are cases in point.

The Psalm had special applicability immediately after the Ascension and Enthronement of Jesus, and before the dispersion of the Jewish nation (Acts iv. 25, 26.) Even then their rulers might have owned His royal rights, of which such convincing proofs had been given by the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit. (Pages 97 and 119.) But they would not be wise. They were not instructed. His wrath was kindled, and they and their people perished from the way.

Thus by kissing the Son, serving and fearing the Lord, &c., spiritual actions are not intended. Natural and rational homage only is enjoined, and temporal and providential blessings are promised.

Thus, then, the passage is addressed to kings and magistrates, and there is no analogy between their *official* standing, and the condition of a man dead in trespasses and sins, or even a regenerated and awakened inquirer seeking information concerning salvation. We are never enjoined to call upon unregenerate sinners as kings and judges.

The doctrine that Christ is enraged with sinners for not coming to Him, and that their damnation will be augmented on this account is therefore unsupported by this passage. The words run, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry." The Law says, "God is angry with the wicked"—that "the wrath of God *abideth*" on them. They are "condemned *already*," and it is mischievous to evade the declarations of the Law when advancing the doctrines of the Gospel.

"Because I have called, and ye refused, I will laugh at your calamity," &c. (Prov. i. 24-26.) Supposed to refer to the sinner's refusal to accept the Saviour's offered grace. But this is an error. God is the moral governor of the world, and in the Book of

* Or "Do obeisance to the Son."—*B. W. Newton*. Compare Hos. xiii. 2.

Proverbs we have a divine code of earthly morality—"Laws from heaven for Life on Earth."—*Wm. Arnot*. We are there informed of the conduct of which He approves, and which therefore conduces to happiness, and ensures immunity from those forms of suffering which are the fruit of wrong doing. Our passage is designed to point out to thoughtless readers and wicked men the certain consequences of their folly, to counsel them to amend, and to warn them that if they do not do so they will be filled with remorse when it is too late to avert the results of their folly. Personal Wisdom, or the Lord Jesus, is the speaker. Those addressed are "simple ones," "scorners," and "fools" (Notice the descending degrees of moral degradation.) The exhortation is not to "believe" or "become religious," or any thing at all analogous to the evangelical construction which we dispute, but consists of "reproof" and "counsel," emphasised by a promise. The *reproof* is for the folly specified. The *counsel* is to "turn" or abandon it. The *promise* (v. 33) is a peaceful life and immunity from forebodings of evil. Regarded thus the verses are pertinent, important, and in harmony with the scope of the book.

Some regard the words as especially applicable to the Jewish nation, who scorned the rebukes of God-sent prophets, and who, in the day of their calamity appealed in vain for deliverance from those who took them into captivity. (Isa. lxx. 12; Jer. vii. 13, 14.)

"He that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

"This is not to be regarded as a fierce and angry threatening, but as the solemn declaration of an inevitable fact."—*Joseph Parker, D.D.* There is salvation for those only whom the Father chose, and the Son redeemed; and the possession and exercise of Faith evidence interest in these immutable facts. He that lives to the age of discretion, and dies unbelieving, manifests that he has no part in the saving scheme of God. He is, therefore, under the Law, for his breaches of which he will be judged and punished. The verse does not hint that he will be damned for unbelief.

"The word '**judged**' rather than '**damned**' would have better expressed the original. He that believeth not, must be judged by what He is in himself, and by what he has been in his works—that is a sinner."—*James Wells*.

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.) Quoted to prove that man's believing is the cause of God's mercy, and man's unbelief the cause of condemnation. The interpretation hinges on the word "because." This conjunction is employed in two senses—*causal* (when it denotes the relation of cause and effect), and *illative* (when it marks a conclusion logically flowing from an admitted fact.) Thus "the trees flourish *because* the ground is rich." Here it denotes a cause. "We assert that the ground is rich, *because* the trees flourish." Here it denotes not a cause (for the vigour of the trees does not cause the soil's richness), but a conclusion. We infer the goodness of the soil from the vigour of the trees.

In other words the character of the trees proves, demonstrates or evidences the quality of the soil. The "because" in our passage, must be regarded in the second sense. "It does not imply that the *ground* or *reason* of their condemnation was that they had not believed, or that they will be condemned *because* they do not accept the Saviour." So candidly admits A. Barnes, though he held Duty-Faith. "It, therefore, intends neither a *moving* nor a *procuring* cause, but denotes what is *evidential* of the unbeliever's state. Faith in Christ is the evidential sign of the soul's interest in salvation—unbelief, of the sinner's condition, who is without Christ, and under the condemnation of the Law."—*John Foreman*. "We are here taught, not the cause of men's *coming* into condemnation, but the evidence of their *remaining* under it."—*John Stevens*.

"If the conjunction *oti* 'because,' as it is here employed, causes a difficulty, let the reader compare this occurrence of the word in its relation to the verb 'believe' here, with that which is found in John xvii. 27. Nothing further can be needed to set any understanding at rest."—*Israel Atkinson*.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come unto the world, and men loved darkness more than light, because their deeds were evil." (John iii. 19.) This does not assert that unbelief will be the cause of the condemnation of sinners. Its meaning is that the *proof* of men's being in such a state as to deserve condemnation, is that they love darkness rather than light. "This love of darkness and the condemnation entailed upon it are not created, but proved and confirmed by the light that is come; the light being not the cause, but the test of character. This is true, whether of the child of light, who cometh to the light for a manifestation of his real state; or of the child of darkness, who evades the light because he loves darkness, and hates the detection of his evil deeds, by the light of truth.

This may be thus illustrated. A family man, taking a light, goes round the house to see how things are as a last thing at night. Into the room where his boys are in bed, all wakeful, he holds up the light and reads with pleasure in their eyes his own dear children. They too, with pleasure, behold their loving parent, and all is well. But hearing a noise he proceeds to another room, where some thieves are at work. They at first try to put out the light, but failing in the attempt, retreat by the window, to escape the light, loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Now the light in the man's hand makes neither children nor thieves, but shews up both in true character. From this illustration the Lord's meaning is plain."—*John Foreman*.

"And when He (the Holy Spirit) is come, He will reprove the world of sin . . . of sin because they believe not in Me." (John xvi. 8, 9.) It must be conceded that if unbelief is a sin, Faith is a duty. We, however, deny that Spiritual Faith is here intended. See page 119. "The Holy Spirit is here spoken of as re-proving the Jewish world of sin in their treatment of the Messiah. This conviction did not, however, include conversion."—*James Griffiths*.

James Wells, indeed, held the old and almost universal view that "the elect world" is here referred to "for which Christ died." He, however, supposed the belief intended to be that kind of Faith which is the duty of all men—and understood the text to mean that the Holy Spirit will take care that the people of God shall have that Faith in God's word which it is the duty of all men to render to God.

"We, are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." (2 Cor. ii. 15.)

These words are often quoted as teaching that the gospel is the occasion of deepening the condemnation of those that hear and reject it, and of sinking them into lower ruin. On examination, however, this interpretation proves untenable.

S. Paul alludes to the triumph of a Roman Conqueror, leading home his captives. As the procession moved along, sweet spices were burnt in honour of the victor, and the perfume thus diffused, while delightful to his own troops, would be intolerably painful to the captives. The one it would remind of victory, joy, reward, and rest. To the others, it would recall loss, degradation, and doom. Thus what was fragrant to the first, would, to the second, be associated with all that was painful.

So with the Gospel. Some that hear it are "dead in trespasses and sins," and its message to them is most sad. It tells them of a Saviour they neither know nor desire. It tells them of the necessity of a change which they have never experienced. It tells them of the power of atoning blood to cleanse from sin; but sin is no burden to them, nor do they wish for its removal. It tells them of a heaven which they have no capacity for enjoying. How, then, can it be like fragrant perfume to them? They may be stoical and unconcerned, or they may wince and tremble—but they cannot love the Gospel till they feel what it is to be lost.

Again. Some hear the Gospel with sacred pleasure. It describes their characters. It breathes hope to their distressed souls. It depicts a Saviour perfectly adapted to meet their requirements. It tells of precious blood which can remove their weightiest burdens. Its message is mercy to the guilty, and they stand self-condemned. Its consolations are addressed to the "poor and needy;" to those "that labour and are heavy laden:" to the hungry and thirsty, the weary and the lost; and such they feel themselves to be. It portrays a great change—a change from death unto life, which they hope they have known. It is therefore a welcome report to them. It is grateful as sweet perfume—"a savour of life unto (those that possess spiritual) life." (Compare Isa. lii. and lxi. 1, 8.)

But whether sinners are saved or remain in sin under the preaching of the Gospel, those that faithfully proclaim it are equally pleasing to God. The results accord with His design—nor does He frown on those who are made instrumental in winning but few souls. "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish."