



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

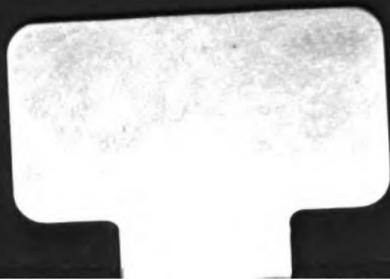
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

**Misunderstood  
texts of  
Scripture  
explained and  
elucidated**

**Asa Mahan**



600091475W







# MISUNDERSTOOD TEXTS

OF

## SCRIPTURE

EXPLAINED AND ELUCIDATED,

AND THE

*Doctrine of the Higher Life thereby Verified.*

---

BY REV. ASA MAHAN, D.D.

*Author of "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost," "Out of  
Darkness into Light," etc.*

---



London:

HAUGHTON & Co., 10, PATERNOSTER ROW.

---

London **HOLBORN STEAM PRESS**, Holborn Buildings, E.C.

# CONTENTS.

## PART I.

Exposition of Romans vii. 5—25 .....	9
The Doctrine of Holiness as held by the Primitive Church.....	49
Explanation of Galatians v. 16—23 .....	64
„    Philippians iii. 12—17 .....	72
„    James iii. 1, 2 .....	82
„    1 John i. 8.....	87
Another Exposition of the same Passage .....	95
Explanation of John xiii. 1—17 .....	101
„    Matthew vi. 12 .....	115
„    Psalm cxix. 96 .....	120
„    Ecclesiastes vii. 20 .....	130
„    Proverbs xx. 9 .....	134
„    1 Kings viii. 46 .....	185
„    Job ix. 20 .....	136
„    2 Peter iii. 18 .....	138
„    Hebrews xii. 6—10 .....	141
„    Romans viii. 22, 23 .....	144

## PART II.

The Two Foundations .....	147
---------------------------	-----

## PART III.

Tested by their Fruits, and Intrinsic Tendencies (Isaiah xliii. 21) .....	156
Conclusion .....	181



## PREFACE.

---

WHENEVER the privileges and immunities of believers in Jesus are set forth in accordance with those teachings represented by such terms as the Higher Life, the Rest of Faith, Perfect Love, and Full Consecration, a certain specific number of passages of Scripture are, by the opposers of those views, cited in disproof of the same. These passages are set forth with no argument to show what their meaning must be, but with the assumption that their meaning is too plain to be misapprehended, and as for ever settling the question at issue. About forty years since, I put into the hands of my Biblical Instructor, the

celebrated Moses Stuart, of Andover, Massachusetts, U.S., a work containing a carefully-written exposition of all those passages. I did so with the statement that I had expounded these and other passages in the light of the principles of Biblical interpretation which he had taught me, and with the earnest request that, if I had erred in the application of those principles, he would show me wherein I had done so. When I next met the aged and venerable Professor, he addressed me in these words: "I have read your book as you requested. I have done so with much interest and profit. I find the argument throughout sound and scriptural." The most careful subsequent observations of quite forty years' continuance have fully confirmed the writer in the absolute assurance of the correctness of those expositions, together with the assurance, equally absolute, that not one of these passages, when correctly interpreted, has the remotest bearing in opposition to the Higher Life

teachings, while most of them confirm such teachings. Those expositions, in a new, enlarged, and matured form, are set forth in the following pages. The design of the author in publishing this little work is, not only to take a great stumbling block out of the way of enquirers after a knowledge of their revealed privileges, as believers in Jesus, but to furnish a greatly needed Manual to which an appeal may be confidently had, when any of these passages are cited in disproof of the teachings under consideration.

*London, Nov. 22, 1876.*





# MISUNDERSTOOD

AND

# MISAPPLIED TEXTS..

---

## PART I.

### EXPOSITION OF ROMANS VII. 5—25.

**I**N the judgment of all who are acquainted with the facts of the case, the main issue, or at least one of the chief issues, between those who advocate, and those who deny, the doctrine of what is called The Higher Life, does and must turn upon the exposition which should be given of the single passage above referred to.

*Mistake corrected.*

At the outset of our enquiries into the real meaning of this passage, we deem it expedient to correct the following statement made some time since by Canon Ryle upon this subject. We do this because the impression very extensively prevails in the Churches, that this statement represents the real facts of the case. His statement is this: "Arminians, Socinians, and Pelagians, have always maintained that it does not describe the experience of an established believer.

Nevertheless, the greatest divines in every age since the Reformation have steadily and continuously maintained, that it is a literal, perfect, accurate photograph of the experience of every true saint of God." Now it must be borne in mind, that, as a matter of undisputed historic verity, up to the time of the later years of Augustine, in the latter part of the fourth century, the entire Primitive Church, Augustine himself included—that is, from the Apostles on through the entire martyr age—understood and expounded this passage as we do; that is, as in fact and form, describing a legal, in opposition to the faith, experience described in the eighth chapter. It must also be borne in mind, that since the time when Augustine adopted and introduced this totally new, and before unheard-of, exposition, the vast majority of the most learned commentators throughout Christendom have rejected the new exposition, and adopted and defended that of the Primitive Church. We have no fear that these statements will be contradicted. If they are, proof is at hand. If the reader will "inquire for the old paths and walk in the same," he will reject this new, and accept the primitive, exposition of this passage. This he will also do in conformity with the united view of the vast majority of the most learned and Christian expositors of all ages. It is a fact worthy of special consideration, that the main basis of the doctrine opposed to that of the Higher Life, is an exposition of a single passage, an exposition started in the

latter part of the fourth century, and which has ever run counter to the ocean current of Biblical exposition which has come down directly from the Apostle to the present time. The validity of the above statements will be fully verified in a subsequent part of our exposition of this passage. Nor is the validity of these statements questioned by any individuals who are well informed in regard to the facts of the case.

*The Primitive and Post-primitive Expositions of this passage.*

I shall assume as an admitted fact—a fact, also, to be hereafter fully verified—that from the Apostles down to the later years of the life of Augustine, in the later part of the fourth century, the Fathers of the entire Primitive Church—Augustine himself included—definitely and specifically expounded this passage as we do; and that since this period the majority of the learned Christian expositors have accepted and defended the exposition of that Church. As preparatory to a full consideration of the issue before us, let us for a moment contemplate the circumstances under which the Epistle to the Romans was written. In the Scriptures of Truth, Christ is revealed “as made of God” to all believers; and that exclusively, “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,” and all in common and with equal exclusiveness “through faith in the grace of God through Christ.” The one proposition, “The just shall live by faith,” presents the

sum and substance, and all the distinguishing peculiarities, of this Gospel. Everywhere this doctrine was openly confronted by dogmas of the most subversive character—those of Judaism on the one hand—and heathen formalism and false philosophy on the other. With the Jew the law was exclusively, “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,” and the just are to live, not by faith, but by “deeds of law.” The central object and aim of the apostle, in his Epistle to the Romans, was an absolute verification and vindication of the doctrines of salvation, in its entirety, by faith, in opposition to all the false dogmas to which it then stood opposed, particularly those of Judaism. In accomplishing his object, he, in the first six chapters, fully elucidates and verifies the doctrine of *justification* by faith, as the only ground of acceptance with God. All having “sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” the entire race—Jews and Gentiles in common—are for ever and hopelessly cut off from the possibility of being justified “by deeds of law.” Having answered all conceivable objections to the doctrine which he maintained—having shown that it is the privilege and duty of the believer to be “dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,” and that no one can continue in sin without excluding himself from Divine grace, and insuring to himself “the wages of sin which is death,”—the apostle then, in Chapters vii. and viii., sets forth specifically, in fact and form, the relations and moral

tendencies of the doctrine of sanctification by deeds of law, on the one hand, and of sanctification by faith, on the other. In the commencement of Chapter vii. he lays down the proposition that the believer has become "dead to the law," that "he might be married to another, Christ," and this as a means to this end, that "he might bring forth fruit unto God." The reason and necessity of this death to the law and union with Christ by faith are twofold ; that in the former relation—from no fault in the law, but wholly on account of the power of "the flesh," or of the sinful propensities—obedience to the law and will of God—that is, moral virtue in all its real forms—is utterly impossible to man ; and that in the second relation, union to Christ by faith, such obedience, with all forms of moral virtue, is not only possible, but becomes actual in the experience of all in whom the Spirit of God, in its fulness, dwells. The exclusive object of the apostle in Romans vii. 5—25, is to elucidate and verify the first of the above propositions ; to render it a divinely revealed and demonstrated truth, that moral virtue, or obedience to the law of righteousness, through any mental determinations and efforts put forth under the influence of motives drawn from the law, will be utterly fruitless and abortive. His equally exclusive object in the eighth chapter, on the other hand, is to elucidate and verify the second of the above propositions ; to render it a divinely revealed and demonstrated truth, that, united to Christ by faith, with "the spirit of grace strengthen-

ing us with might in the inner man," the "righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us," that "we shall not be in (under the power of the) flesh, but in (under the control of) the Spirit," and that "we shall then have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life," "and" that in all things we shall be, "not" carnal and sold under sin, "but" more than "conquerors through Him that hath loved us."

Such were these two passages, as understood and specifically interpreted by the entire Primitive Church from the apostle down to the later years of Augustine. As thus interpreted, both passages occupy places of fundamental importance in the epistle, and harmonise fully with the known plan and purpose of the same. As thus interpreted, Rom. vii. 5—25 stands as "the flaming sword of the cherubim turning in every direction," not to "keep the way of The Tree of Life," or of the Holy of Holies of faith, love, and full obedience to the law and will of God, but to guard the believer in Jesus against all approach and advance in the direction of legal righteousness, and all forms of its carnal servitudes, hopeless captivities under the law of sin and death, and worse than abortive efforts after obedience to the law of righteousness. This interpretation of these two chapters undeniably moved, as God's pillar of fire in the forefront of the Church, from the apostle down through the martyr age, and was the grand secret of her patient endurance, deeds of righteousness, triumphs and victories, and has been the light of believers in all

ages ; believers who have, in the fullest and highest forms, attained to "the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

According to the post-primitive exposition, the apostle, after requiring believers to reckon themselves "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," after assuring them that "because they are not under law but under grace," "sin shall not have dominion over them," and that they "have become dead to the law by the body of Christ" and "married to another," Jesus Christ, "that they might bring forth fruit unto God," turns round verses 14—25, and affirms that under grace, just as under the law, individuals, notwithstanding their faith in Christ, and the power of the Spirit working in them, remain "carnal, sold under sin," "approve and delight in the law of God after the inner man," but never find grace or power to "perform that which is good," and notwithstanding their faith and purposes of obedience, are always brought and held "in captivity to the law of sin in their members." This undeniably is "a literal, accurate, correct photograph" of this post-primitive exposition.

According to the primitive exposition of Chapters vii. and viii., the apostle pursues the identical method of argument in demonstrating the validity of the doctrine of sanctification by faith, that he had (Chapters i.—vi.) in verifying that of justification by faith. In the latter case, he first demonstrates the absolute impossibility of any member of the human family, Jew or Gentile, being

“justified by deeds of law,” and then verifies and elucidates the great doctrine of justification by faith. So in Chapters vii. and viii. the apostle first (Chap. vii. 5—25) demonstrates the absolute impossibility to man of attaining to real holiness or obedience to the law and will of God, through legal efforts under law, and then (Chap. viii.) lays open the highway of holiness through faith. This primitive exposition undeniably imparts a glorious unity to this whole epistle, and harmonises Romans vii. 5—25 with all the other revelations of the Word of God. What place this post-primitive exposition can have in this epistle, or in the Scriptures, or what its influence can be in Christian experience, but to “make void” both the law and the Gospel, we may safely challenge “the greatest divines in every age since the Reformation to show.” Let us now turn our attention directly to the question, Which of these two expositions, the primitive or post-primitive, is the true one? All agree that Paul speaks of himself in both these chapters, not as an individual, but as a representative man. According to the former exposition, he speaks of himself as representing the legalist under the law in Chap. vii. 5—25, and as a believer in Jesus in the following chapter. According to the latter exposition, he speaks of himself as representing believers after Chap. vii. 14.

*Very needful Explanation.*

By some expositors of Scripture, it is supposed that the apostle, in the passage before us, describes

the experience of an *unconverted* person, in distinction from that of the converted man, as portrayed in the next chapter of this epistle. This is not our view at all. If this were the true view, the passage under consideration would be of no use whatever to the believer in any circumstances, or in any state, into which he might, at any time, fall. The manifest object of the apostle is, to guard not merely unconverted persons, but believers especially, against a fatal error to which all, who "seek righteousness" in any form are exposed. Two methods, not only of justification, but of sanctification also, are distinctly set before us in this epistle—that by faith—and that "as it were by deeds of law." To the latter, the apostle thus refers (Rom. ix. 30—32): "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone." Before all the world the Jews stood forth as the advocates of the Legal, and the Apostles and their associates as the advocates of the Faith, method of Righteousness in all its forms. Each class held forth their own as the only, and exclusively, valid method. The Churches everywhere swarmed with Judaizing teachers who, under the guise of "apostles of Christ," sought to draw

B

off believers from the Faith, to the Legal, method of righteousness. Under the influence of such "false apostles," some "made shipwreck of the faith," others, "who had begun in the spirit," afterwards "sought to be made perfect in the flesh," and all were in danger of being "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The object of the apostle, as we understand him, is to guard all, both Jews and Gentiles, converted or unconverted—to guard all who "follow after righteousness," against "seeking it, not by faith, but as it were by deeds of law." This he aims at by demonstrating the fact that *all*, without exception, who thus seek, will fail of their object. In our day, there are Moralists who repudiate the method of Faith in all its forms, and seek to be "made perfect in the flesh." There are Formalists who, in reality, know nothing of "the righteousness which is of faith." There are sincere believers, also, who seek justification by faith, and sanctification "as it were by deeds of law." All such, in common, read their experience in this Seventh of Romans. "Wherefore? Because they seek it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." The object of the apostle, as we understand him, is to subvert utterly this Legal method in whatever form men, in accordance with that method, may seek sanctification, or "follow after the law of righteousness." With these explanations, let us turn to a direct consideration of the issue before us: the inquiry, Which of these two contradictory expositions, the Primitive or Post-primitive, is the true one?

*The absolute Unanimity of the Primitive Church  
in respect to this Primitive Exposition.*

We have said that, up to the later years of the life of Augustine, the entire Primitive Church—Augustine included—attached one fixed and exclusive meaning to this passage, namely, that the apostle here, in fact and form, describes a Legal, in opposition to a Faith, Experience described in the subsequent chapter, and in other parts of this epistle. Two questions here arise, viz., Is this statement true? and, What is its real bearing upon the issue before us? We will consider these two questions in the order presented.

*This Unity verified as a fact.*

If we should recur to the testimony of learned men who have most carefully studied the facts of the case, we should find an entire unanimity of judgment among them in respect to the perfect validity of the above statements. "It will be admitted," says Prof. Stuart, in his world-renowned commentary on this epistle, "by those who are conversant with the dispute about the meaning of the passage before us, and are well read in the history of Christian doctrine, that Augustine was the first who suggested the idea that it must be applied to Christian experience." No individual has studied the history of Christian doctrine more profoundly, if as profoundly, as Neander. In all

his most careful researches he found no trace whatever of this Post-primitive exposition prior to the period designated by Prof. Stuart. Everywhere, on the other hand, that great historian (Neander) found, in most distinct development, the presence of this Primitive exposition. Speaking of the passage under consideration, Prof. Tholock says, "The more ancient teachers of the Church had unanimously explained it of the man who has not yet become a Christian, nor is upheld in the struggle by the Spirit of Christ." So Origen, Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Theodoret. At an earlier period Augustine also followed this view. "Augustine," says Meyer, in his most learned commentary, "in his earlier days acknowledged in harmony with the Greek fathers since Irenæus that the language here is that of the unregenerate man." The statement of such authors as the above remains uncontradicted; nor has any individual been able to find in any of the writings of the Primitive Church prior to the period designated, a sentence, word, or syllable in contradiction to what we have designated as the Primitive exposition of this passage.

Let us now turn to these primitive writers themselves. The following is Augustine's primal exposition as given in his Homilies on this epistle. "Intelligiter," he says, "hunc ille homo describi, qui nondum sub gratia." That is, "It is understood, that that man is here described who was never under grace." We must bear in mind that Augustine gives the above, not merely as his own view of the

passage, but as the accepted exposition of the Church. "It is understood," that is, it is my own and the accepted exposition of the Church. It is a remarkable fact that Jerome, who afterwards accepted the new view of Augustine, had, in his earlier writings, also affirmed the validity of the primitive exposition, so universal was that exposition in the primitive Church.

We must bear in mind that it was in a heated controversy with Pelagius, that Augustine conceived and avowed this new and before unheard-of exposition. The latter rightly affirmed, and the former erroneously denied, the total depravity of the natural man. In his argument, Pelagius referred to the passage under consideration, saying that this was a palpable case, in which, by the universal assent of the Church, the state and character of the unregenerate man is described. He then asked, if approving the right, and hating the wrong, and "delighting in the law of God," did not imply that there was something good even in such a man? Augustine could not deny the fact, the case being so palpable, of the universal agreement of the Church in the deduction that it was the unregenerate man referred to in the passage; nor did he perceive how, admitting the correctness of the universally received exposition, he could meet the argument of his opponent. Under such perplexity Augustine denied the validity of his own and the universal, and adopted the new and before unheard-of, exposition, a most needless resort, and a most

calamitous one for the spiritual good of the Church. The fact that the sinner continues "carnal, sold under sin," notwithstanding his conscience approves the right, reprobates the wrong, and even "delights in the law of God," presents the strongest possible proof of the intensity and totality of the natural sinfulness of man. We are fully and undeniably justified, therefore, in claiming for what we have designated as the "Primitive" exposition of the passage, the universal assent of the Church prior to the later years of Augustine.

As we have not now space to cite passages from all the various primitive expositions, one or two must suffice. Speaking of the words, "I am carnal" (verse 14), Theodoret says, "He calls that man carnal who has not yet obtained spiritual aid." Another of these Fathers thus explains the words: "I find then a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." "I find," *i.e.*, I have considered and comprehended the force and nature of the law. I have discovered for certain it has no power to help me. How does this appear? "Because when I wish to do good, it helps nothing, but evil is equally present, making my will unexecuted." In precisely similar language do Chrysostom, Theophylact, Ambrose (a Syriac interpreter), and others, explain these words. With similar unanimity do all the primitive Fathers explain the whole passage under consideration, and explain it as referring not to the Christian under grace, but to individuals under law, and acted upon by legal motives only.

*The validity of the Primitive Exposition absolutely  
verified by the facts before us.*

Let us now turn our thoughts to a consideration of the bearing of the facts before us. We refer now especially to the strictly unanimous assent of the Primitive Church to what we have properly designated as the Primitive Exposition of this passage. The great central fact before us we hold to be demonstrably inexplicable, but upon one exclusive hypothesis, namely, the validity of this Primitive exposition. The Epistle to the Romans was written and sent to Rome several years prior to Paul's going there. Such, also, was the nature of its contents as to render it the subject of the deepest interest and enquiry on the part of all believers and their Jewish opponents in the city. During his residence there, his real views throughout the epistle, and especially in the portion of it under consideration, must have been so fully explained that they could not have been misunderstood. Then, through the messengers which constantly visited him from all the Churches, and went from him to said Churches, this passage could not but have been universally and very definitely understood. If it had been his object in this passage to "photograph the experience of every true saint of God," the fact could not but have been well known in all the Churches. If, on the other hand, it had been his object to photograph a Legal, in opposition to a Faith, Experience, this fact could not but have been equally well and universally understood.

The strictly universal assent of the Primitive Church during more than the first three centuries of the Christian Era, to this Primitive Exposition as the true apostolic one, admits of but one explanation—namely, that this exposition was originally received directly from the apostle himself, and has come down to us in its genuine apostolic form.

The circumstances also in which this epistle was written, together with the fundamental bearing of all its discussions upon the great issues then before all the Churches, render it certain, we add, that this one epistle must have been more generally known and read among them than any other written by Paul or other of the Apostles, and render it certain too, that his meaning in so essential a passage as this could not have been at all, and above all universally, misunderstood. No, Reader, the Churches, and primitive teachers, who thus received this epistle directly from its inspired author, did not misunderstand, and could not have misunderstood, him, and this Primitive Exposition must be valid. If in addition to all this, more modern authority is asked for, we have it in superabundance.

*The Primitive Exposition confirmed by the highest subsequent authority.*

The entire Greek, and a large portion of the Latin Church, as shown by the writers to whom we have referred, rejected the Post-primitive of Augustine, and vindicated that of the Primitive

exposition. Since the Reformation, while a majority of the English and American commentators, and a few on the continent of Europe, have accepted the post-primitive exposition, the primitive one has been accepted by a majority of Biblical scholars, and by nearly all of any note at the present time on the continent. "Most of the English Episcopal Churches also for many years," says Professor Stuart, "and not a few of the Scotch, Dutch, and English Presbyterian and Congregational divines, have adopted the same interpretation." Aside from the all-conclusive authority derived from the undivided testimony of the Church for more than three centuries after the epistle was written, the vastly predominating weight of Biblical Criticism—the Evangelical especially—has ever been in favour of the Primitive Exposition. Among the multitudinous modern interpreters of this class, we specify the following:—Erasmus, Raphael, Episcopius, Beausobre, Senifont, Limborch, Turretin, Le Clerc, Heuman, Bucer, Schomer, Franke, G. Arnold, Bengel, Reinhardt, Storr, Flatt, Knapp, Neander, Thöluck, Olshäusen, Meyer, Mant, D'Oyly, Hammond, Whitby, Doddridge, Godwin, Jer. Taylor, Clarke, Stuart, Conebeare and Howson. What a visibly slender and sandy foundation does the post-primitive exposition rest upon, opposed as it is by the united testimony of the entire Primitive Church for the first three or four centuries, and as we have said by the ocean current of Biblical Exposition of all ages since the passage was written! The case will be

found still worse for this exposition when we shall, as we now propose to do, come to a direct consideration of the passage itself.

*Forms of Thought and Expression not found in this passage verify the Primitive, and falsify the Post-primitive, Exposition..*

In reading the New Testament from beginning to end, we cannot find, outside that under consideration, a single passage in which Christian experience is spoken of, in which faith, God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit, is not specifically referred to. In this passage, we have, we are told, "a literal, accurate, correct photograph of the experience of every true saint of God." Yet, in the entire passage no reference whatever is made to faith, to God, to Christ, or the Holy Spirit. The only agencies hinted at are the conscience (law of the mind), the flesh (law in the members), and the human will, or the man himself. Nor do we find in this photograph any one of the revealed results of faith, or of "the fruits of the Spirit," or any one of the revealed elements of Christian experience. We have, on the other hand, the revealed opposites of all these, opposites represented by such terms as "carnal, sold under sin," victories of the flesh, and "the law of sin," broken resolutions, bondage, and "groaning wretchedness." If it was, in fact and form, the object of the apostle to photograph a Legal in opposition to a Faith, Experience, all is as it should be. In such an experience we have just what

we find here—a conflict between the conscience (“law of the mind”) and the flesh; the evil propensities (or “law in the members”), and the will (the creature himself) in servitude to the latter, “a doing what we would not,” and a “not doing what we would”; “a following after the law of righteousness, but not attaining to the law of righteousness”; the “willing being present, but how to perform that which is good not being found”; “a law that when we would do good, evil is present”; “the law in the members warring against the law of the mind, and bringing the soul into captivity to the law of sin which is the members,” the soul being bound under that law as “the body of this death,” and its bondage and wretchedness being rendered complete; and all because there is in the soul, no “faith to be healed,” no “God working within to will and to do,” no indwelling Christ “saving to the uttermost,” and no “Holy Ghost enduing with power from on high.” What must we think of an exposition of the Word of God, an exposition which presents Inspiration itself as photographing Christian experience in its universal and best form, and yet leaving out of the presentation faith, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, without whose presence real Christian experience in any form is impossible!

*Their distinct and opposite moral and spiritual  
Tendencies.*

The obvious and undeniable moral and spiritual tendency of this primitive, and we may truly say

apostolic, exposition of these two chapters, at once commends it to our regard as the only true one. What believers at that time needed above all things, was an absolute assurance of the utter hopelessness of all purposes, efforts, and confidences in respect to the attainment of obedience to the law of righteousness, but in one fixed direction, faith in Christ and the power of the Spirit on the one hand, and on the other, an assurance equally absolute that through Christ and the power of the Spirit, "all grace may abound towards us, so that we, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work." These two fundamental assurances in their highest possible forms, this primitive exposition does, in fact and form, present to every believer. Reading, in its light, Rom. vii. 5—25, he perceives at once the utter futility of all legal and formalistic methods of righteousness, and the utter hopelessness of all self-originated purposes of obedience. Thus he finds himself, as he needs to be, absolutely "shut up to the faith." As in the light of the same exposition he contemplates the divine revelations of the following chapter, the highway of holiness opens with perfect distinctness and absolute assurance of hope upon his vision. The believer at once sees, that through faith in Christ, and under the available power of the Spirit, he may "be made free from the law of sin and death," may have "the righteousness of the law fulfilled in himself," may be "free from all condemnation,"

and in every "conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil," may "be more than conqueror through Him that hath loved us." In short, this exposition presents every conceivable motive to a holy life of which we can form a conception, and that with no opposite tendency whatever.

On the other hand, when this post-apostolic and post-primitive exposition of Romans vii. 5—25 lifts its form before the mind, and that as a divinely-revealed "photograph of the experience of every believer," a deep eclipse passes at once over the revealed privileges and promises of grace, and all hope dies out of the believer's heart and mind of being anything more or better in this life than can be found in the state represented by such words as "carnal, sold under sin"; "captivity under the law of sin and death"; "doing what we would not, and not doing what we would"; "willing, but not finding how to perform that which is good," and suffering an inglorious defeat in every purpose of obedience, and in every effort to "perform that which is good." We must bear in mind that nothing whatever, in the direction of victory—that nothing but defeats and captivity under sin—is even hinted in this passage; and these represent the best estate of possible attainment, if this supposition does present God's revealed "photograph of the experience of every believer." We may safely challenge the world to show that we have in any respects misrepresented the case. Should you reply that we do find outside this passage better things

than are here revealed, you then admit that we have not in it by any means "a literal, accurate, and correct photograph of the experience of every believer." But this is not all. In this exposition we find, not only an almost necessary cause of backsliding, but an unanswerable excuse for all such sins. No individual can so far recede from obedience to the will of God, that he will not consciously find in his experience every element of the state represented in this passage, and will not confront you with the fact when you attempt to admonish him. This exposition, we boldly say, cannot accord with "the mind of the Spirit," for the undeniable reason that it is the visible pillow under the armhold of every member of the Church who is living in sin and "settled upon his lees."

*The Language employed by the apostle in Rom. vii. 5—25, absolutely verifies the Primitive, and falsifies the Post-primitive Exposition.*

Let us now consider the language employed by the apostle in this passage, and see if we cannot determine in its light which of these expositions is, and must be, the correct one. That in Verses 5—13 inclusive the apostle refers exclusively to the sinner under law, and acted upon by legal considerations, all admit. From Verse 14 and onward he, it is affirmed, speaks of himself, not in his former state as a legalist, but in his then state as a Christian. The main reason assigned for this conclusion is that he here employs the present instead of the

past tense. Every one well read in the Greek language must be aware that nothing is more common in this and other languages than a change from the past to the present tense when the subject of discussion is the same. In this case, however, such a change was demanded by the circumstances. In affirming the law to be spiritual, he was necessitated to say, "The law is," not was, nor will be, "spiritual." In speaking of himself, in the contrast as carnal, whether he referred to his past, or then existing state, he was required by the known laws of this language, to use the same tense as before. The change from the past to the present tense, therefore, is, in itself, no indication whatever that the apostle refers to his then, or to his past moral state.

The language employed, however, leaves no ground of doubt whatever in regard to his meaning. We refer to such terms as "carnal, sold under sin"; "captivity to the law of sin"; "a law that when we would do good evil is present"; "the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not that I do," and "to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Such language is fully and obviously in place, if the object of the apostle is to represent a legal, in opposition to a Christian experience, and is absolutely out of place, and can be justified by no usage, scriptural or classic, if his object is to portray the latter instead of the former form of experience. All that such language implies is strictly true of the moral state, and experience of the

legalist and the man of the world, and is everywhere and exclusively employed in the Scriptures to represent such state and experience, and that as distinguished from the moral and spiritual state and experience of the believer in Jesus. "Doing righteousness," and "sinning not," are the revealed characteristics and peculiarities of the Christian life and experience; not doing the right, but doing the wrong, and never finding "how to perform that which is good," are the equally revealed characteristics and peculiarities of the state portrayed in the passage before us. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit," is absolutely affirmed of every believer in Jesus. "Carnal," that is, "not in the spirit," but "in the flesh," is absolutely and unqualifiedly affirmed of all who are in the state portrayed in this passage. "Ye shall be free"; "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," and "more than conquerors," are the revealed characteristics of the true Christian. "Sold," in abject servitude, "under sin"; "captivity to the law of sin," and hopeless defeat in every conflict with "the law in the members," are set forth as the immutable characteristics of the state here portrayed. Such language as peculiarises this passage is adapted to one exclusive end—to portray a legal and worldly, in opposition to a Christian, life and experience, and it is a perversion of all Scriptural and classic usage to employ such language to represent the former in distinction from the latter. The words,

for example, "I am carnal, sold under sin," do, with perfect correctness, represent the legal and worldly state and experience. To apply such language to the Christian, is to affirm that he, in common with the legalist and worldly man, is totally depraved, and thus to confound all distinction between the latter and the former.

But this is not all. The substance of the language which the apostle here employs, and the exact form of not a few of his expressions, are real copies of the language employed by heathen authors to represent the condition of men as sinners. The phrase, for example, "The good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not that I do," is a literal and almost verbatim citation from Epictetus in regard to man as a sinner. "He who sins," says this author, "what he would he does not, but what he would not that he does." "What I hate," says the apostle, "that I do." "Many," says Epictetus again, "being indignant at their lusts, and desirous not to excite them, are, nevertheless, urged by their habits to indulgences peculiar to them." "To will is present with me," says the apostle; "but how to perform that which is good, I find not." "Not one of those things which you advised me have I forgotten," says Euripides; "but nature overpowers me when I have made my resolve." Again, he says, "I am aware these are crimes I am about to perpetrate, but lust is stronger than my purposes." Lactantius represents the heathen as saying, "I will

indeed not to sin, but am overcome ; I am possessed of a fragile (or sinful) nature, so I am borne onward I know not whither, and sin, not because I wish to do it, but because I am carried captive by my lusts." "I know the good," says Seneca, "and approve it, but do the wrong." All that Paul says about approving the right and hating the wrong, and "delighting in the law of God after the inner man," but yet being impelled by the flesh, not to do the right, but to do the wrong, and being, notwithstanding such approval and delight, "brought into captivity to the law of sin," are but copies of what is elsewhere affirmed of the Jew in his legal bondage, and of what well-known heathen authors affirm of men as sinners. All such language is wisely selected and in place, on the supposition that the object of the apostle is to describe a legal and worldly, instead of a Christian experience. In other words, all is in place if the primitive exposition of this passage is the true one. But what must we think of this post-primitive exposition, that which imputes to the apostle this absurdity—going to well-known heathen authors and borrowing their representations of man's state and experience as a sinner to represent Christian, in opposition to the legal and worldly, life and experience ?

*Fundamental Facts wholly inexplicable, but upon the Primitive Exposition.*

Permit us, in this connection, to call special attention to three fundamental facts, some of which

have been already presented at full length, but which we present together here, that their bearing may be distinctly seen. These facts, which are utterly incompatible with any but the primitive exposition, are the following:—

1. In this whole passage, with the exception of verse 25, in which the way of deliverance from the wretched state previously portrayed is indicated, there is no reference whatever to Christ, to the Holy Spirit, or to faith or its effects. In “a literal, perfect, accurate, correct photograph” of a legal experience, of course no such reference should be had, because none of them have place in such experience, and the fact before us clearly evinces the verity of the primitive exposition. A photograph of Christian experience, however, a photograph in which neither Christ, the Holy Spirit, nor faith nor its effects, its peace and victories especially, are designated or alluded to, would be like an affirmed Life of Christ, in which His name should never appear, nor His character, nor any acts of His life, should be so much as alluded to.

2. The leading terms employed in this passage are the identical ones employed in other parts of the New Testament, to designate a legal and worldly, and never to represent Christian, experience. We refer to such terms as these—“carnal, sold under sin”; “a law that when we would do good evil is present”; “captivity under the law of sin, which is in the members”; “how to perform that which is good I find not”; and “doing what we would not,

and not doing what we would," etc. Such terms are never employed in the Scriptures to represent the Christian, but always to designate the legal and worldly, life, character, and experience. Such terms are perfectly adapted to photograph the forms of the legal and worldly life, character, and experience, and their unqualified use in the passage before us absolutely evinces the correctness of the primitive exposition of the passage. The apostle, on the other hand, might as properly employ the term, "blackness of darkness," to photograph the light of heaven, as to employ such language as the above to photograph the life, character, and experience of believers in Jesus, believers who "walk by faith."

3. The third fact to which we refer is this : Much of the language found in this passage, and especially the *thoughts*, are exact copies, sometimes *verbatim*, as we have seen, of the photographs given forth by heathen authors, well known to Paul's readers at Rome, of the sinful life, character, and experience. Such expressions and forms of thought we refer to as are represented by such terms as the following:—"What I do I allow not"; "what I hate that I do"; "what I would that do I not, but what I would not that I do"; "the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do"; "I find a law that when I would do good evil is present with me"; "to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not"; and "I delight

in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity (rendering me a war-prisoner, a slave, the exact meaning of the original) to the law of sin which is in my members." There is not a single thought in any of the above forms of expression, a thought which is not copied from photographs scattered through the writings of heathen authors, writings with which Paul's readers at Rome were familiar—photographs of the state, life, and experience of men as sinners, while some of the apostle's words are, as we have shown, literal citations from such authors. These statements we have verified in former paragraphs, and have before us any additional number of verifications that may be desired. If the object of the apostle was, what the primitive exposition affirms it to have been, to photograph man's state in sin, his helpless servitude to evil principles, propensities, and habits, and the utter hopelessness of all self-originated purposes and endeavours to escape "the bondage of corruption," then all the above citations, words, and phrases were most wisely selected, Jews and Gentiles being thus silenced and confounded by their own admissions of the utter hopelessness of their condition in sin, and of the utter fruitlessness of all their legal, formal, and self-originated purposes and efforts for self-amendment. On the other hand, we may safely challenge all "the greatest divines in every age since the Reformation," and all the world

beside to adduce a greater or more palpable absurdity than is involved in the monstrous idea, that inspiration, through the Apostle Paul, has borrowed from heathen authors their most impressive photographs of the condition, hopeless servitude [under sin, and wretched experience of men as sinners, in order to present to the Church and the world "a literal, perfect, accurate, correct photograph of the experience of every true saint of God."

Let us now, for a moment, carefully weigh the three fundamental facts under consideration. If it was the real aim of the apostle in this passage, to give a literal, perfect, accurate, correct photograph, of the legal, formal, and worldly life, character, and experience, then, undeniably, all that we find in the passage is in place, and the picture is "perfect and complete, wanting nothing." There should be, in the portraiture, no Christ, no Spirit of grace, and no faith or its victories; but in the stead of these, what we here find—moral and spiritual servitude, purposes of obedience and amendment, purposes barren of everything but defeat, and the triumph of "the law of sin," and hopeless groanings under the weight of "the body of this death." All forms of expression by which this state is photographed should also, what is absolutely true here, be taken from the language of Scripture, and of heathen authors, in which the experience of the legal and worldly life are portrayed. None will question the validity of these statements. What must we think, on the other hand, of a so-called "literal, perfect,

accurate, correct photograph of the experience of every true saint of God"? a photograph in which the grace of Christ, the power of the Spirit, and faith and its victories have no place, a photograph all the essential features of which are exclusively portrayed by forms of thought and expression by which inspired writers and classic authors represent the carnal servitude, fruitless purposes, and fatal defeats of the legal, fleshly, worldly, and sinful life and experience? It has been said that no absurdity can be named which has not been the fundamental tenet with some leading sect in philosophy. We affirm, without fear of contradiction, that there cannot be conceived a wider departure from the real meaning of a text of Scripture, or from "the mind of the Spirit," who inspired the text, than is involved in this post-primitive exposition of Rom. vii. 5—25, the exposition which affirms that this passage presents "a literal, perfect, accurate, correct photograph of the experience of every true saint of God." In the name of every such saint who has ever really and truly known "the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith," we protest against such a subversive exposition.

*There are no Forms of Expression found in this passage incompatible at all with the Primitive Exposition.*

It is claimed on the part of the advocates of the post-primitive exposition, that there are in this chapter forms of expression which are never em-

ployed but in reference to believers. Hence, the inference that Paul must here describe Christian, instead of a legal or worldly, experience. None but Christians, it is said, for example, do "delight in the law of God after the inner man"; and here we have the strongest case that can be adduced in favour of this post-primitive exposition. We must bear in mind that the apostle does not affirm such delight in the absolute sense in which the righteous is affirmed to exercise such delight; but in a specific and restricted sense, and in reference to a certain department of our nature, the department represented by the words "*inner man*." These words obviously represent that department of our nature which approves the right and reprobates the wrong, and impels even worldly minds to do the one and avoid the other—in other words, our moral and spiritual nature to which the apostle refers in the words, "their consciences also bearing witness, their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another," "the natural conscience" to which, in every man, the truth, when manifested, "commends itself." Ancient classic authors were accustomed to speak of the natural conscience as a soul within the soul. Plato refers to it in the very words of Paul, "the inward man." Philo speaks of it as "the man in the man, the better in the worse." Marcus Antonius speaks of it as "a guide and leader, which God has given to each of us," and Aristotle as "a Divine ruler in

us," while Seneca speaks of it as "a Holy Spirit in us," and Epictetus as "God in us." Paul's readers at Rome could not but have understood him as referring, by the words under consideration, to the rational or moral nature, or the natural conscience, there and then generally referred to as "the inner man." To put any other construction upon these words is to forget that this epistle was written to Greeks and Romans who universally understood said words in this one sense. Understanding the apostle according to his obvious meaning, all evidence disappears at once, that the words, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," refer only to the Christian. Every man has a moral and spiritual, as well as an æsthetic, nature. To the former department of our nature, the conscience, moral law, duty, and moral virtue, are objects of emotive approbation and delight, and vice, and crime, and sin, of emotive hate and reprobation, just as to the æsthetic department, things beautiful, grand, and sublime are objects of emotive admiration and delight, and their opposites of natural disgust. Nor is there any more moral or Christian virtue in the former class of feelings than in the latter. Real moral and Christian virtue, as everywhere represented in the Scriptures and in classic writings, does not consist in merely approving and delighting "in the law of God," but in actual "*obedience to the law of righteousness,*" not in mere willing, or resolving to obey the law and will of God, but in

“finding how to *perform*,” and actually *performing*, that which is “good.” Jews who “heard, but would not obey the Word of God,” are represented (Isa. lviii. 2) as “delighting to know God’s ways,” and as “delighting to approach unto God,” while the prophet who disclosed to the same unbelieving, disobedient, and reprobate Jews “the law of God” is affirmed (Ez. iii. 33) to have been unto them “as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument,” and as being called upon and urged by these same men, to “make known to them the ordinances of righteousness,” such was their “delight in the law of God after the inward man.” In such passages as the following the wickedest of men are represented as thus “delighting in the law of God and in His truth” (Mark vi. 20, John v. 35, Matt. xiii. 20, &c.). Almost nothing is more common with classic writers than references to the approbation and delight with which the wickedest of men often contemplate the law of duty and moral virtue, which they refused to obey and practise, and of their sentiments of internal disapproval, hatred, and reprobation of the vices and sins which they did perpetrate. Greeks and Romans, to whom the epistle was sent, were absolutely certain not to understand the apostle as referring, in the words under consideration, or in any expressions found in this passage, to believers in Jesus. Nor do we know of an error more unscriptural or dangerous to the immortal interests of men than that which assures individuals

that they are Christians simply because they experience sentiments of internal approval and "delight in the law of God." Not he that merely experiences inward delight in truth and duty, but "He," says our Saviour, "that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous."

*The Primitive Exposition harmonizes with, and the Post-primitive contradicts all the other teaching of Scripture upon the same subject.*

Our last argument is this: The primitive exposition must be true, and the post-primitive false, or the revelations of God on this vital subject are palpably self-contradictory. Take in illustration, the declarations found in this and the next chapter, declarations lying in immediate proximity to one another. "I find then a law (a fixed and immutable order of sequence) that when (whenever) I would (aim or purpose) to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Now read the opposite statement in the next chapter: "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Again, "I am carnal, sold under sin"; "Ye are not in the flesh (carnal), but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God

dwell in you ”; and “ I keep my body (the flesh) under, and bring it into subjection.” Unless we can, at the same time, be “ under the law of sin,” and held in captivity there, and be “ free from that law,” unless we can, at the same time, be “ carnal, sold under sin,” and “ keep our body under,” and not be in the flesh (carnal), but in the Spirit, this post-primitive exposition must be false. The same holds true in respect to the photograph presented in this passage, and all the portraitures of Christian life and experience presented everywhere in the Scriptures. Victory is the fixed result of the action of “ the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus,” as everywhere presented therein. Inglorious defeat is the equally fixed law of the conflict portrayed in this passage. The Christian, as portrayed by the pen of inspiration, is “ the Lord’s freeman.” The individual here photographed is a bond-slave, a groaning captive chained to a “ body of death.” It is impossible, we repeat, that this post-primitive exposition can be true, unless the same thing can, at the same moment, be true and not true of the same individual. “ He that believeth in me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” This is Christ’s photograph of the real Christian life and experience under this dispensation. Is this the portraiture drawn in the passage before us? Does Rom. vii. 5—25, present a real representation of “ the riches, of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in us

the hope of glory"? You wrong your own soul, Reader, and do violence to all the teachings of the Spirit upon this subject, when you make your abode in this passage, and say to yourself, I have here a revealed photograph of "the life which, by the faith of the Son of God, I am to live in the flesh."

*Rom. vii. 25 Explained.*

The apostle concludes Rom. vii., with these words, in which he states, in brief, the results of his previous discussion: "So then, with the mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." Prof. Stuart thus expounds these words: "While my mind, that is, my reason and conscience, takes part with the law of God and approves its sanctions, my carnal part obtains the predominance, and brings me into a state of condemnation and ruin." To the same effect is the explanation of Tholuck, Meyer, and others. The original word here rendered *mind* was, at that time, as shown by Prof. Robinson in his Greek Lexicon of the N. T., frequently employed to represent the moral nature, or conscience, as distinguished from the sinful propensities represented by the term flesh, and so he, in common with the authors to whom we have referred, explains the word in the passage before us. Such an understanding of the word must be accepted from the fact that it is here employed by the apostle as synonymous in meaning with the words rendered "the inward man," which must, as we have shown, be understood as

representing the conscience, or moral nature. The original words, rendered, "I myself," demand special attention. According to Tholuck, Meyer, and many others, and that for the best reasons, the words, "I, myself," mean "the man in his own personality *alone and confined to itself.*" "*I in my own person* without any higher saving intervention." Such, as Tholuck states, is the meaning of such forms of expression in the Greek, Latin, and German. Thus, in the proverb, where a sovereign says, "I myself reign as king, and make my own clothes," the meaning is, "I myself do this, no one helping me." So Paul, in the words "I myself," means I, left and confined to myself, without any higher aid. What is man's condition, with no resources out of himself? He has a moral nature, a conscience, which prompts him to choose and do the right. Following such promptings, he "obeys the law of God." He has, at the same time, a carnal nature, which is far stronger than the moral, and by the overwhelming force of "the law in his members warring against the law of his mind," that is, his conscience, he is "brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in the members." Thus left to himself, without any higher intervention, he is hopelessly lost and ruined. Such is "the conclusion of the whole matter."

This whole subject was most impressively presented by a leading German scholar and theologian, in a conference on holiness, held in Basle, since that at Brighton, a conference of a whole

week's continuance, and attended by more than 5,000 eager listeners. Our informant was Prof. Paul Vernier, who was present during all the meetings. During the progress of the conference the venerable scholar and theologian referred to, rose and said :—Brethren, the whole secret is plain to me now. Compare the last verse of Rom. vii. with the first of the following chapter. The original words rendered, "I, myself," mean, according to fixed Greek usage, I, in myself, by myself, without any aid from any power out of and above myself. What is the condition of the creature thus left to himself, and depending upon no grace out of himself? He has a moral nature, a conscience which prompts him to "obey the law of God," and following such promptings, he does obey. He has, at the same time, a sinful nature represented by the term flesh. The promptings of this fleshy nature, being the strongest, wars against the promptings of the moral nature, and overcomes, so that man does "serve the law of sin." To get free from this servitude and captivity all human resolutions and efforts are vain. In himself as "I, myself," man is without hope. Where is the remedy? Read it in the first verse of the next chapter. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are," not in the self, acted upon only by legal motives and aided by no grace from without the self, but "*in* Christ Jesus." In this new and gracious relation we no more "walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit," and "the law of the Spirit of

life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death," while "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us." The great secret after which we are inquiring, then, is to get out of the self, the "I, myself," and "into Christ Jesus." Dead to the self, dead to all self efforts and endeavours, "dead to the law" as a motive power for holiness, no longer standing and acting as the "I, myself," but "married to Christ," that is, "in Him," and "united to him by faith," we shall, indeed, "bring forth fruit unto God," "have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life," "walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," and "in all things, be more than conquerors through Him that hath loved us."

Such are the real reasonings and deductions of the great apostle of the Gentiles in the two chapters under consideration, and so, for centuries after this epistle was written, was he understood by all the Churches which he planted, and by all believers who read his writings. For centuries past, "blindness in part has happened" to the Church, through an "eclipse of faith," occasioned by this post-primitive exposition. The time is not distant, however, when the Church universal will read in these two chapters what God designed all should read—the absolute hopelessness of man for moral virtue when standing, unaided by Divine grace, as the "I, myself," and acted upon only by legal motives on the one hand, and on the other his perfect completeness, and "all-sufficiency for all

things," when "in Christ Jesus," and under the power of "the Spirit of grace," and when "the life which he lives in the flesh, he lives by the faith of the Son of God."

---

## THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS AS HELD BY THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

### *The Apostolic Age.*

WE believe that we have fully verified the fact, that, according to the undivided testimony of the primitive Church up to the time of the Pelagian controversy (A.D. 400—430), the apostle, in Rom. vii. 5—25, describes the state and experience, not of a Christian, but, in the language of Augustine, "of a man who has never been under grace." We will now proceed to prove, what may be a matter of great interest to our readers, that during the period above designated, the doctrine of holiness, as now held and taught by the advocates of Higher Life, is the specific doctrine generally, if not universally, held by that Church. The term perfection, more perfectly than any we know of, represents the primitive doctrine on this subject. We shall trace the doctrine as we find it among the apostolic and primitive Fathers during the four centuries under consideration. Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, Hermas, and Polycarp, were companions of the Apostles, and next to those of the latter, the writings of the former had place in the regard of the early

D

Churches. From the Epistle of Clement to the Church of Corinth we make the following citations :—

“And being full of good designs, ye did with great readiness of mind, and with a religious confidence, stretch forth your hands to God Almighty : beseeching Him to be merciful unto you, if in anything ye had unwillingly sinned against Him.”

In the judgment of Clement individuals, in that Church, did “live with a pure conscience,” that is, with conscious conformity to all the known will of God. Again, “Ye were sincere and without offence towards each other.” But Moses said, “Not so, Lord, forgive now this people their sin, or if Thou wilt not, blot me out of the book of the living.” O admirable charity ! O insuperable perfection !”

From the Epistle of Barnabas we cite the following passages :—

“I gave diligence to write in few words, that, together with your faith, your knowledge might be perfect.”

Again :—

“But how does He dwell in us ? The word of His faith, the calling of His promise, the wisdom of His righteous judgments, the commands of His doctrines. He Himself prophesies within us, He Himself dwelleth in us, and openeth to us who were in bondage of death the gate of our temple—that is, the mouth of wisdom—having given repentance

unto us : and by this means has brought us to be an incorruptible temple."

In his Epistle to the Church at Ephesus, Ignatius uses the following language :—

" Being followers of God, and stirring up yourselves by the blood of Christ, ye have *perfectly* accomplished the work that was connatural unto you."

Again :—

" They that are of the flesh cannot do the works of the Spirit, neither they that are of the Spirit the works of the flesh. As he that has faith cannot be an infidel, nor he that is an infidel have faith. But even those things that ye do according to the flesh are spiritual, forasmuch as ye do all things in Jesus Christ.

" Ye are, therefore, with all your companions in the same journey, full of God ; His spiritual temples, full of Christ, full of holiness ; adorned in all things with the commands of Christ: In whom, also I rejoice that I have been thought worthy by this present epistle to converse, and joy together with you ; that with respect to the other life, ye love nothing but God only.

" That so no herb of the devil may be found in you ; but ye may remain in all holiness and sobriety both of body and spirit in Christ Jesus."

Again :—

" Of all which nothing is hid from you, if ye have perfect faith and charity in Christ Jesus, which are the beginning and end of life."

“No man, professing a true faith, sinneth: neither does he who has charity hate any.”

In his epistle to another Church, he says :—

“For inasmuch as ye are perfect yourselves, ye ought to think those things that are perfect. For when you are desirous to do well, God is ready to enable you thereunto.”

In his epistle to the Church at Philippi, Polycarp thus writes :—

“Into which (the Epistle of Paul), if you look, you will be able to edify yourselves in the faith that has been delivered unto you, which is the mother of us all, being followed with hope, and led on by a general love both towards God and towards Christ, and towards our neighbour. For if any man has these things, he has fulfilled the law of righteousness, for he that has charity is far from all sin.”

The work entitled “The Shepherd of Hermas” is one of the very earliest and most highly-esteemed in the primitive Church of all the writings that appeared after the Apostles left the world. It was quoted as of the very highest authority, after the Scriptures, by such individuals as Irenæus, Athanasius, Origen, Eusebius, and Hierom. The work is in the form of a dialogue between a shepherd and angel visitant and instructor, the angel of the Covenant. The following lengthy extract from this work will well repay an attentive perusal, not only on account of the light which it throws upon our

present inquiries, but also upon the way of holiness by faith as taught in the Apostolic Church :—

“And when he had fulfilled these twelve commands, he said unto me, ‘Thou hast now these commands, walk in them, and exhort those that hear them that they repent, and that they keep their repentance pure all the remaining days of their life. And fulfil diligently this ministry which I commit to thee, and thou shalt receive great advantage by it; and shalt find favour with all such as shall believe thy words. For I am with thee, and will force them to believe.’ And I said unto him, ‘Sir, these commands are great and excellent, and able to cheer the heart of that man that shall be able to keep them. But, sir, I cannot tell whether they can be observed by any man.’ He answered, ‘Thou shalt easily keep these commands, and they shall not be hard; howbeit, *if thou shalt suffer it once to enter into thy heart that they cannot be kept by any one, thou shalt not fulfil them.* But now, I say unto thee, if thou shalt not observe these commands, but shall neglect them, thou shalt not be saved, nor thy children, nor thy house.’

“These things he spake very angrily unto me, inasmuch that he greatly affrighted me. For he changed his countenance so that a man could not bear his anger. And when he saw me altogether troubled and confounded, he began to speak more moderately and cheerfully, saying, ‘Oh, foolish, and without understanding, unconstant, not know-

ing the majesty of God, how great and wonderful He is who created the world for man, and hath made every creature subject to him, and given him all power that he should be able to fulfil all these commands. He is able,' said he, 'to fulfil all these commands, who has the Lord in his heart; but they who have the Lord only in their mouths, and their heart is hardened, and they are far from the Lord, to such persons these commands are hard and difficult. Put, therefore, ye that are empty and light in the faith, the Lord God in your hearts; and ye shall perceive how that nothing is more easy than these commands, nor more pleasant, nor more gentle and holy. And turn yourselves to the Lord your God, and forsake the devil and his pleasures, because they are evil, and bitter, and impure. And fear not the devil, because he has no power over you. For I am with you, the messenger of repentance, who have the dominion over him. The devil doth indeed affright men, but his terror is vain. Wherefore fear him not, and he will flee from you.' And I said unto him—'Sir, hear me speak a few words unto you.' He answered—'Say on.' 'A man indeed desires to keep the Commandments of God; and there is no one but what prays unto God, that he may be able to keep His Commandments. But the devil is hard, and by power rules over the servants of God.' And he said, 'He cannot rule over the servants of God who trust in Him with all their hearts. The devil may strive, but he cannot over-

come them. For if ye resist him, he will flee away with confusion from you. But they that are not full in the faith fear the devil as if he had some great power. For the devil tries the servants of God ; and if he finds them empty he destroys them. For as a man, when he fills up vessels with good wine, and among them puts a few vessels half full, and comes to try and taste of the vessels, doth not try those that are full, because he knows that they are good ; but tastes those that are half full, lest they should grow sour, for vessels half full soon grow sour, and lose the taste of wine ; so the devil comes to the servants of God to try them. They that are full of faith resist him stoutly, and he departs from them, because he finds no place where to enter into them ; then he goes to those that are not full of faith, and because he has place of entrance he goes into them, and does what he will with them, and they become his servants. But I, the messenger of repentance, say unto you, Fear not the devil. For I am sent unto you that I may be with you, as many as shall repent with your whole heart, and that I may confirm you in the faith. Believe, therefore, ye who by reason of your transgressions have forgot God, and your own salvation ; and, adding to your sins, have made your life very heavy, that if ye shall turn to the Lord with your whole hearts, and shall serve Him according to His will, He will heal you of your former sins, and ye shall have dominion over all the works of the devil. Be not then afraid in the

least of his threatenings, for they are without force, as the nerves of a dead man. But hearken unto me, and fear the Lord Almighty, who is able to save and destroy you ; and keep His commands, that ye may live unto God.' And I said unto him, 'Sir, I am now confirmed in all the commands of the Lord whilst that you are with me ; and I know that you will break all the power of the devil, and we also shall overcome him if we shall be able, through the help of the Lord, to keep these commands which you have delivered.' 'Thou shalt keep them,' said he, 'if thou shalt purify thy heart towards the Lord. And all they also shall keep them who shall cleanse their hearts from the vain desires of the present world, and shall live unto God.'"

In none of the writings of any of these apostolic Fathers do we find it hinted that believers are expected to sin, and do sin, "daily in thought, word, and deed." On the other hand, the entertaining of such a thought is repudiated and reprobated, as one of the most dangerous errors that can have place in the mind. The same method of sanctification, namely, "sanctification by faith," is most clearly and specifically set forth in their writings. Everywhere in these writings we meet with the great truth, that "we are complete in Him," and "can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth us." The teachings in the Oxford and Brighton Conferences, and in all Conferences on Scriptural Holiness, are but repetitions of the fundamental teachings of these apostolic Fathers.

*The Post-apostolic Age.*

In giving the views of the primitive Church in the post-apostolic age, in respect to the doctrine of sanctification by faith, we will first refer to the sentiments which obtained at the time of the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius. We must bear in mind that very little difference of opinion obtained between these individuals on this subject. This is fully evident from Augustine's own statements. "We should not," he says,—and we commend his admonition to the consideration of those who oppose the same doctrine now,—“We should not with inconsiderate heat oppose those who maintain that man may be without sin in this life. For if we deny the possibility we detract from the free will of man who voluntarily desires this, or from the power or mercy of God, which effects it by His aid.” “If I also allow,” he says again, “that some have been, or are, without sin, still I maintain that in no other way are they, or have they been able to be so, but by being justified by the Grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was crucified.” In respect to the mother of Jesus, “he always held it improper and contrary to the reverence due to Jesus to speak of the sin of Mary.” “We know not,” he says, “but grace was given her wholly to vanquish sin, who was worthy to conceive and bear Him who knew no sin.” “I know,” he says, speaking upon the same subject, “this is the opinion of some, whose opinion I dare

not censure, though I cannot defend it." In another place he refers to the celebrated teacher, Ambrose, as holding this doctrine.

In the year 415 a council was held at Diospolis (Lydda), a council constituted of fourteen bishops from in and around Palestine, a council called to determine the orthodoxy of Pelagius. This council was called by three opposers of this individual, viz. Heron, Lazarus, and Crosius, who called it with the hope of securing the condemnation of the accused. From the records of the council we make the following citations:—

“Charge VII., Pelagius has said a man may be without sin if he will.

“Pelagius: I have indeed said that a man may be without sin, and keep God’s commands if he will. For this ability God has given him. But I have never said that any one can be found, from infancy to old age, who has never sinned; but being converted from sin he can, by his own labour and God’s grace, be without sin; still he is not by this immutable for the future.

“Synod: As Pelagius has now correctly answered that man, by God’s aid and grace, may be without sin, let him also answer to other points.”

We must bear in mind that this was one of the most influential councils called in that age. Soon after this convocation, “Bishop John, of Jerusalem, reproached Crosius for teaching that man cannot be without sin even by God’s aid and grace.” In neither of the four councils subsequently held to

try the orthodoxy of Pelagius and his disciple Cœlestius, were either of them censured at all for holding this doctrine, while, in two of the most influential of them, their orthodoxy on these and kindred doctrines were specifically affirmed. These facts evince the prevailing sentiment of the Church in favour of the doctrine at that time.

Of all the Fathers after the apostolic age, and prior to the year 400, none were held in more universal esteem, and had a more widely extended influence, than Chrysostom and Athanasius. On this subject their judgments are most explicitly pronounced, and as far as history reveals facts, their views were uncontradicted. Athanasius expresses the absolute conviction that there had been "many in the Church who were free from all sin." He wrote the life of St. Anthony as an example of one who had been thus saved, and had unqualifiedly lived a Christian life, which was "without spot and blameless." Chrysostom, speaking of that memoir, says, that "it holds forth all that the commands of Christ demand." In his commentary on Gal. ii. 20, Chrysostom says, "By saying 'Christ liveth in me,' he means *nothing* is done by me, which Christ disapproves." We cite more at length his comment on 1 Cor. iv. 16, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me," and also (xi. 1), "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ." Astonishing! How great is our teacher's boldness of speech! How highly finished the image when he can exhort others hereunto, not

that in self-exaltation he doth so, but implying that virtue is an easy thing. As if he had said, Tell me not "I am not able to imitate thee," for the difference between me and you is not so great as between Christ and me, and yet I have imitated Him.

On the other hand, writing to the Ephesians, he interposes no mention of himself, but leads them all to the one point. "Be ye followers of God," are his words; but in this place, since his discourse was addressed to weak persons, he puts himself in the way. And besides, too, he signifies that it is possible even thus to follow Christ, "for he who copies the *perfect impression* of the seal, copies the original model."

To no candid mind can the meaning of the above extracts be a matter of doubt. Chrysostom undeniably believed that Paul, as living in Christ, and Christ living in him, "did nothing which Christ disapproves," and meant in the above passage to affirm the fact. Chrysostom meant also to affirm that all believers may be saved from all sin, because that the weakest could fully copy or follow Paul, who was in his life and character "*a perfect impression*" of the life and character of Christ.

Athanasius not only maintained that there were "many in the Church who were saved from all sin," but that there were others who had—a great error—attained to "angelic perfection." To understand the meaning of such words, we would state that one or two centuries after the Apostles the Chris-

tian virtues were divided into two classes—those absolutely required of all as duties, the non-performance of which was sin; and others not thus required, but most highly commended. The former class of principles were called “precepts,” the latter “counsels.” Those who, by grace, performed all *required* duties were free from all sin. Those who found grace thus to obey, and from love to Christ and His cause denied themselves of things lawful and right, such as marriage, not only were saved from all sin, but attained to angelic perfection, a form of perfection, in the language of Athanasius, “above law.” Speaking of this latter class of believers, Athanasius says: “The Son of God made man for us, and having abolished death, and having liberated our race from the servitude of corruption, hath, besides other gifts, granted to us to have on earth an image of the sanctity of angels.” “Nowhere, truly,” he adds, “except among us as Christians, is this holy and heavenly profession fully borne out and perfected.” To this fact he then appeals, as proof of the divinity of Christianity. Language precisely similar to the above, and almost the same words are employed by such writers as Chrysostom and Tertullian, to express the same doctrine. “Should any one among men,” says Chrysostom, for example, “become as virtuous as an angel, that man is in a far higher degree superior to thee (the man of the world) than an angel is.” “Because the angel has his home far above thee in

distance, and dwelleth in heaven ; whereas this man is living and conversing with thee, and giving an impulse to thy emulation." "And there is such a thing as an angel, too, even among men." We here find the welling-out of a great error, that which finally transformed itself into the Popish Dogma of Supererogation. We find, at the same time, undeniable proof of the general, if not universal, prevalence of the great doctrine, that "by God's aid and grace," believers may be "saved from all sin."

We adduce now the testimony of but one other of the primitive writers, Justin Martyr, who, in his early youth, was personally acquainted with Polycarp and other of the apostolic Fathers. In his apology to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, A.D. 162, he declares that he could "point out many men, as well as women, who, having followed the Christian institute from their earliest years, had remained to an advanced age, sixty or seventy years, *incorrupt*." Justin Martyr is here speaking of that form of power which peculiarises the Gospel, and distinguishes it from all other religions and forms of belief, the power of moral and spiritual renovation, the power to save from all sin.

Beginning, then, with the apostolic, and advancing down through the entire martyr age, we find this doctrine of Sanctification by Faith omnipresent in the Churches, and omnipresent in this one form—that "man by God's aid and grace, can be without sin." Not until after the year 400 does there

appear to have been any controversy in the Churches upon the subject. This doctrine, like the primitive exposition of Rom. vii., was everywhere the accepted doctrine, and was proclaimed as the crowning glory of "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God." Among the apostolic Fathers and their immediate successors, while we find this doctrine omnipresent, we find no trace whatever of that great error which afterwards arose, the error, not that "by God's aid and grace we can be saved from all sin," but that some have attained to a form of "perfection above law." This doctrine of Sanctification by Faith, of Salvation from all sin in this life, through Christ in us, the hope of glory, and the power of the eternal Spirit, has, as a stream of light, passed down from the Apostles through the ages, has been embraced and proclaimed by the holiest men and women the Church has ever known, and in our day has lifted its Divine form before the Churches throughout Christendom as "the rising of the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings." It devolves upon those to whom God has committed the responsibility of leading the Church, as, "she walks in the light," while they teach nothing which "limits the Holy One," to guard carefully against any errors which "corrupt the Word of God."

## EXPLANATION OF GAL. V. 16-23.

“*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

THE main use that, by a large portion of the Church, is made of this passage, one of the most important, when rightly understood, in the whole New Testament, is to sustain, by an application of Verse 17, a certain doctrine, the doctrine of the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers in this life. The conflict between the flesh and Spirit is of such a nature we are here taught, it is affirmed, that the believer cannot do the things that he would, that is, render the obedience which he purposes to render, or avoid “fulfilling the lust of the flesh,” as he desires and attempts to do. This exposition imputes to the apostle, and to the Spirit of Inspiration in him, the most palpable contradiction and absurdity conceivable. His avowed object in this verse is, to verify, and the right exposition of it

will verify, the proposition laid down in Verse 16, namely, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." "For," that is, this proposition is, and must be true, because of the nature of the antagonism between the flesh and the Spirit. What is the logic of the apostle according to the construction under consideration of Verse 17? It is this: The proposition, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh," must be true, because there is such a conflict going on within you between the flesh and Spirit as to render it impossible for you to "walk in the Spirit," on the one hand, or to avoid "fulfilling the lusts of the flesh," should you desire and determine to do it, on the other. A construction which imputes to the Spirit of God such logic as that cannot accord with "the mind of the Spirit." The error and absurdity of this exposition will become still more manifest as we proceed. As preparatory to a correct exposition of these two verses, with those that follow, let us first of all identify—

*The Parties at Issue in the Conflict here described.*

The exposition above referred to assumes that the parties designated in this passage, as in conflict against each other, are the flesh on the one hand, and our own spirits on the other. This, as the whole context evinces, and Meyer most abundantly proves, is a great mistake. We are never required in the Scriptures to walk in our own spirits, but to "abide in Christ," to "walk in the light" (of God),

E

and to "walk in the Spirit" (of God), to "walk after the Spirit." Throughout this epistle the flesh and the Spirit are set over against each other, and the term "the Spirit" invariably represents, as all commentators agree, the Spirit of God. The parties here represented, then, as in conflict, are, without a question, the flesh, or our sinful propensities, on the one hand, and the Spirit of God on the other. The case here presented is very different from that presented in Romans vii. 5-25, particularly in Verse 23—"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." In this case the conflict is between "the flesh," the sinful propensities, and the conscience, "the law of the mind," the former impelling to sin, and the latter to obedience, while "the flesh" is always victorious. In other words, in this case the warfare is between two opposite principles of our own nature—our sinful propensities, and the conscience, with the former, as we said, always in the ascendant. The case presented in the passage under consideration (Gal. v. 17), on the one hand, is a conflict between the flesh, or sinful propensities, and the Spirit of God, and the believer may obey the latter. The error of the construction of Verse 17, the construction which we have already refuted, now becomes more palpable than it was before. This construction represents "the flesh" as in conflict, not with the spirit of man, but with the Spirit of God, and as

so omnipotent, even against the latter, as to render it impossible for the Eternal Spirit Himself to enable the believer, when he desires and endeavours in the strength of God to do it, to avoid "fulfilling the lust of the flesh." Keeping distinctly in mind the great truth, that the parties revealed, in this passage, as in conflict the one against the other, are "the flesh" on the one hand, and "the Spirit of God" on the other, we now proceed to an exposition of the passage itself.

*Verse 16.*

To "walk in the Spirit" is the same thing as (Verse 18) to be "led by the Spirit." "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord," says the apostle, "so walk ye in Him." When we received Christ, we accepted of Him, as our "prophet, priest, and king," committing all your powers and interest to His guidance, control, and keeping. We walk in Christ when we do not "cast away our confidence," but continue to trust Him as we did at the beginning. The Spirit is given to us to "abide with us for ever," to "lead us into all truth," to "reveal the Son of God in us," to sanctify us "in soul, body, and spirit," to "keep us from falling," to endue us with "power for every good word and work," to show us "the glory of the Lord," so that "we shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory," and to perfect and perpetuate "our fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." We "walk in the

Spirit" when we constantly yield ourselves up to His guidance. The revealed result of our doing this is, that we "shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

*Verse 17.*

The original word "*gar*," here rendered "*for*," has, according to the united testimony of all standard authorities, this fixed meaning—to wit, it implies that what follows contains the *reason* for what has been previously said or implied. In the verse before us, then, we have the inspired *reason why* those who "walk in the Spirit shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." The reason is, that what the Spirit desires and impels us to do the flesh opposes; and what the flesh impels us to do the Spirit opposes, and the desires and efforts of each are opposed, repugnant, and contradictory to those of the other. The control of one must, consequently, exclude that of the other. As "they that are in the flesh (under its control) cannot please God," so they that "walk in" or are "led by" "the Spirit," cannot do what is contrary to the Spirit, that is, "fulfil the lust of the flesh." The meaning of the words, "so that ye cannot do the things that ye would," is obviously this: when under the control of the flesh ye cannot do what you would desire and will do if under the control of the Spirit; and, when under the control of the Spirit, ye cannot do what you would desire and will to do if under the control of the flesh. It follows, therefore, that

if ye will walk in the Spirit, ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. Thus explained, the whole argument of the apostle has perfect, logical consecutiveness, as well as great moral and spiritual significancy.

*Verse 18.*

In this verse the apostle opens to us the blessed freedom in which we are, when "led by the Spirit," or "walking in the Spirit"—both forms of expression, as we have seen, meaning the same thing. We "are not under the law," that is, as Meyer very truly expresses the meaning of these words, we are then kept from doing anything on account of which "the law has power to censure, to condemn, or to punish us." "Against such" as bring forth "the fruit of the Spirit," the apostle affirms (Verse 23) "there is no law," no law by which "the fruit" they bring forth can be condemned. The same great truth is expressed by the apostle (Rom. viii. 1-4), "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The specific reason assigned, all our past sins, as previously shown, being forgiven, is, that in our new relation to Christ, and new life and walk in the Spirit, we are kept from doing what would bring us into condemnation. In Christ and under the power of the Spirit, we are "made free from the law of sin and death," "sin in the flesh is condemned," that is, doomed to death, while "the righteousness of the law," the moral rectitude,

which the law demands, "is fulfilled in us." "In Christ," and "walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," that is, "walking in the Spirit," we are "kept," while this union continues, "by the power of God through faith," from doing what God, or his law, condemns. In other words still, when "in Christ," and "led by the Spirit," we "serve God unto all pleasing."

Creatures are under the law in different senses : for example, as a rule of moral action, in which sense all moral agents ever must be subject to, or under, the law—as a dispensation of law in distinction from a dispensation of grace, in which sense no believer is under the law—and as subject to the penalty of the law on account of sin, that is "under the curse of the law," a sense in which all believers are not under the law, but are redeemed from the curse by the atonement of Christ. They are not at all under the law in this last sense whose sins are forgiven, and who are kept from doing that which brings them again under the penalty of the law. This is the revealed state of all who "are in Christ Jesus," and "walk after the Spirit." Their past sins are all forgiven, and they are kept from doing that which subjects them again to the curse of the law—that is, they that are led by the Spirit are not under the law, are kept from doing what subjects them to the penalty of the law.

*Verses 19-23.*

In these verses the apostle sets before us, in vivid and most impressive contrast, "the works of

the flesh" on the one hand, and "the fruit of the Spirit" on the other—works many of which we shall do in fact and all in spirit "if we walk after the flesh," and "fruit" which we shall "bring forth unto God" if we "walk in" and are "led by the Spirit." "Living after the flesh we shall die"; "abiding in Christ," and "walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," we shall "have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life"—"fruit" against those who bear which "there is no law." Such, unquestionably, is the real meaning of the whole passage under consideration, a passage every word of which, when rightly understood, is "like apples of gold in pictures of silver," but which, when misunderstood and misapplied, as it too long has been, "throws disastrous twilight over the face of the Sun of righteousness." We here find ourselves in the unveiled presence of this dread alternative—to "resist the Holy Ghost," "live after the flesh," and "die," or "through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body," and "live." While we must serve the one or the other of them, "no man can serve these two masters."

## EXPLANATION OF PHIL. III. 12-17.

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I *do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”

WHEN individuals read the Bible with a certain doctrine before their minds, they are inclined to assume, as teaching their dogma, every passage in which a word appears which, in any of its many meanings, does, in some single one of them, represent that doctrine. If, as far as *words* are concerned, the same thing is, in the same passage, affirmed and denied of the same individual, that form of expression is seized upon which seems to favour the favourite doctrine, and is ever after employed as absolute proof of the same, and that to the utter disregard of the opposite declaration which stands out distinctly before us in the same passage. Those who thus read the Word of God read it with a veil before their minds, a veil which often hides from their view all that is vital in what they read.

In illustration of these statements, let us consider the use that is very extensively made of a single expression found in the passage before us, namely, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." An individual opens the Bible with this doctrine in his mind and heart, that of the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers in this life. As soon as he meets with the words above cited he stops right there, and from the mere words before him, and with no consideration of the circumstances and context, draws the wide, sweeping inference that Paul did not, as he elsewhere positively affirmed himself to have done, "serve God with a pure conscience," "a conscience void of offence both toward God and toward man," but with continued conscious violations of the word and will of God. Nor does the individual stop here. From the mere words, "not as though I were already perfect," the still further sweeping inference is drawn, that we are here divinely taught, and required to believe, that no believer in Jesus ever did, or ever will, from the beginning to the end of time, attain in this life to full salvation from conscious sin. Can we conceive of a more blind and presumptuous use of the words of Scripture?

If the mere words, "not as though I were already perfect," of themselves, prove that Paul was living in conscious sin, we have, in the New Testament, absolute proof that Christ "did know sin," and was conscious of the fact. "I do cures," says our Saviour, "to-day and to-morrow, and the third day

(after my death) I shall be perfected," perfect, the same identical word in the original as Paul, in the passage under consideration, applies to himself. In the above declaration of our Saviour we have absolute proof that, in the sense in which the word "perfected" is there used, Christ did not become perfect until after His death and resurrection. In Heb. ii. 10, and v. 9, we are positively taught that Christ "was made perfect" after His sufferings, and in consequence of the same. Certainly Biblical scholars and all intelligent readers of the Bible ought not thus carelessly to interpret the Sacred Word. Besides, in the passage under consideration, the word *perfect* is unquestionably applied to Paul in the *positive* and *negative* sense: "Not as though I were already perfect"—"Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect be thus minded." It is demonstrably evident, that in the judgment of Paul, and that of his readers, the term perfect has at least two meanings, and that, according to one meaning, he regarded himself as not being, and according to the other as being, perfect. Before any doctrine is deduced from either of the above declarations, should we not carefully inquire for, and determine the two senses of the word perfect, as here employed, and then see in which of them Paul affirms himself not to be, and in which to be, perfect? To such an inquiry we will now address ourselves, and that as a means of a clear exposition of the whole passage before us. We would here, for the sake of being distinctly understood, state that we do not

regard ourselves as authorised at all from the mere fact that an individual is affirmed to have been "perfect," to infer that he lived without ever sinning. The *degree* of the moral purity implied must be determined, not by the mere force of the word, but by the context and other attendant circumstances and qualifying terms.

*What is it that Paul refers to in the words, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect?"*

It is to us a matter of surprise that any intelligent reader of the Bible should misunderstand the apostle in this passage. He represents himself as "following after," and "reaching forth" for something which he had not then "attained," or "apprehended," a something the attainment of which was necessary to his being "perfect" in the sense in which the term is there employed. What this something was is specifically stated in Verses 11 and 14, namely, not present perfection in holiness but "the *resurrection* of the dead," "the *prize* of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The prize towards which the runner on the racecourse "reached forth" for and "pressed towards," was not present perfection as a runner, but "the prize," the crown, the status of honour and glory which awaited the victor at the end of the course. The term rendered resurrection, is, in the form here employed, found but in this single instance, in the

New Testament, and in this place unquestionably represents the higher resurrection, that of the *just*. No person has occasion to do anything to have a part in the general resurrection, as all must arise, the "just and the unjust." But to attain to a part in the higher resurrection—the resurrection of the just—depends upon conditions, to be fulfilled in this life. To fulfil these conditions, and thus secure this infinite and eternal good, was, as Paul himself affirms, what he was "following after," and "pressing towards." In reference to this great end of existence, as far as his personal aims were concerned, it was necessary that he should say to his readers, that he "had not already attained, either were already perfect." The condition of receiving the prize, as he well knew, and he supremely desired his readers to know, was, that we "finish our course," "hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast even to the end," that we "hold fast until Christ shall come," and "overcome, and keep His works unto the end." He was well aware, also, that believers, after they have advanced to certain distances in the Christian course, would be strongly tempted to assume that their eternity was secure, and thus to remit their diligence. How adapted to prevent such an error was his affirmation that he did not "count even himself to have apprehended," but was "following after," "pressing toward the prize," which could be secured but by "finishing the course" upon which he had entered.

*How his Grecian readers must have understood  
the apostle.*

We must bear in mind that Paul was writing to Greeks, who, as he was well aware, employed the term *perfect* in two distinct, and separate senses in reference to those who contended for the prize in the racecourse—senses which they never confounded the one with the other. In the first sense the term represented the *status* of those who were victors in the race, had received the crown, and, as a consequence, were raised to a position among the most honoured of the nation. Ever after, such individuals were called the *teleioi*, the perfect, or perfected ones, and the term in all such cases had one fixed and exclusive meaning, to wit, perfection in honour or glory. Now, had Paul, in the words, “either were already perfect,” employed the word perfect in the sense not of future perfection in glory, but of moral perfection, he would have utterly misled every one of the readers to whom his epistle was addressed, and we violate every principle of correct interpretation, when we understand the term in the latter, instead of in the former, sense.

In still another and equally definite sense, the Greeks were accustomed to apply the term “perfect” to the class under consideration; namely, not in respect to their *status* as victors, but with reference to their character and conduct as *runners*. Two individuals, for example, appeared at the

starting-place to contend for the prize. The eye of every Greek present would be instantly fixed upon the rivals to form a judgment of their character as runners. One comes forward with an appearance and manner indicative of the perfection of his previous training. Every weight and encumbrance are laid aside, and every article of dress is adjusted with fixed and exclusive reference to one end, the race in prospect. As he stands before "the cloud of witnesses" with whom he is encircled, he seems to be utterly unconscious of their presence. His face and eyes are turned in one fixed direction—the course and goal in prospect—while a position and attitude are assumed most favourable for the start. See that man the Greeks would exclaim; there is a perfect runner. The other individual appears with his dress and manner adjusted to attract attention and admiration. As he stands in the presence of the throng, his eye is fixed, not upon the course and goal in prospect, but is constantly turned to the scene around him. Contemptible fellow! the Greeks would exclaim. He will fail, of course. After the word start is given, the first individual is off in an instant, and, from the beginning to the end of the course, his eye and his thought are in one fixed direction, not upon what is behind, but upon the course in prospect, while every possible energy is pressed into requisition until the goal is reached, and the runner perfected. "The perfect runner, the perfect runner!" the multitude would exclaim, as

they witnessed the conduct and manner of the man on the course. The other individual, when the command is given to start, is not quite ready, and loses precious moments here. On the way his attention is drawn, first in one direction, and then in another; occasionally he looks behind him to determine how much of the course he had passed over. "Fool! fool!" the Greeks would exclaim, "He ought to fail." The individual who had gained the prize in the manner explained, would ever after be called perfect in two distinct and separate respects—as a victor perfected in glory—and as a runner for the prize. In these two distinct and separate senses all his Greek readers must have understood Paul in the words, "Not as though I were already perfect," and "Let us as many as be perfect be thus minded." Had he employed the first as representing his then moral and spiritual state, and not with reference to "the prize of the high calling," that is, perfection in glory which awaited him at the end of his course, he would, we repeat, have totally misled every one of his Greek readers, and involved himself in the most palpable contradiction. As rightly explained, the whole passage has perfect self-consistency, and the most impressive and important moral bearing. It clearly sets before us the personal aim which should command our supreme regard, the resurrection of the just, "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and the spirit and manner in which the end aimed at should be pursued—that

is, with the same singleness of purpose and object with which the perfect runner attained victory and perfection in glory in the ancient races.

*Paul's character, as a believer in Jesus, as revealed in this passage, and in the context.*

As we have said, the term perfect does not, of itself, when employed in a moral sense, determine the exact state of the individual to whom said term is applied. In the chapter from which the passage under consideration is taken, we have a complete and specific and inspired statement of the apostle's character and life as a Christian, as they were revealed in his own consciousness. In the preceding part of the chapter he gives in a simple, didactic form, in the absence of figures of speech, a statement of his conscious Christian character and life. His high standing in Jews' religion, with all else, were "loss," of no account to him. Nor had any worldly objects the remotest power over him to draw him back towards the worldly life. Let us carefully read the whole passage: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know

him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death: if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." We may safely challenge the world to designate a single defect in the character here portrayed, or a single element necessary to its completeness, that is wanted in the inspired portraiture. What has been supposed by many to be a confessed defect of character and experience, is a necessary element of their completeness and perfection. He who is seeking a supreme good, the attainment of which is conditioned upon his "fighting (out to the end) the good fight," *finishing* his course and keeping the faith," and is running a race for a prize not rendered secure until the goal is reached, must, at no prior moment, "count himself to have attained," or "to have apprehended." The immutable condition of the completeness of his character in such a race is, that the subject "forgets those things which are behind, reaches forth towards those things which are before, and presses toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The Christian character and conduct of Paul would have been essentially defective but for the presence of these very elements. Their presence, on the other hand, renders the portraiture "perfect and complete, wanting nothing." If we compare Paul's description of himself under the impressive figure of a runner for the prize of life eternal, we shall find that he

F

absolutely affirms of himself every characteristic, and that in its strongest form, the characteristic which constituted the very highest Grecian ideal of a perfect runner. Nothing, undeniably, is wanting to the full completeness of the portraiture here drawn. It is in view of such a presentation that Paul adds, "Let us, as many as be perfect, be thus minded"; and, "Be ye followers of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." If any one imputes *conscious* sin to Paul, that is imputed to him of which he absolutely reveals and affirms himself not to have been conscious. Brethren, the revealed portraiture is before you. Will you not read it over again, and then heed the command, "Be ye followers of me," and "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."



### JAMES III. 1, 2.

"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body."

THE first clause in the second verse, "For in many things we offend all," is affirmed, by some, to be an independent clause, and to teach the great fact, that all men, believers included, do offend in many respects. If this is the right exposition of this clause, then it cannot be true that the grace or blood of Christ ever does or ever will,

in this life, "Cleanse any believer from all unrighteousness." A careful examination of the clause will absolutely evince, that it is not an independent but conditional one, and that it sets before us but a single class of individuals as great offenders, and consequently subject to "the greater condemnation," viz., those who become "masters."

Before attempting a direct exposition of this whole passage, we will explain several words and phrases found in it. The original term here rendered "masters," often means not merely teachers, but slanderers, or critics of the manners and morals of others. The Greeks and Romans, as Calvin remarks, "were accustomed to call persons of the class last designated, masters, because they set themselves up as masters in morals," thus through "an unbridled tongue, setting on fire the course of nature," such a tongue "being itself set on fire of hell." This is evidently the sense in which the term under consideration is used in the passage before us. The Apostle, as Calvin also truly observes, employs the term "many masters," because many were tempted and inclined to "rush into this business." The meaning of the clause under consideration may be thus expressed: Do not, a multitude of you, my brethren—that is, any of you—become masters, and thus by the use of the unbridled tongue "bite and devour one another." The meaning of this prohibition is identical with that of our Saviour in the words, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

The original word rendered "condemnation" is the same as is rendered "damnation" (Matt. xxiii. 14), the words rendered greater in these passages having the same identical meaning. The words "Ye shall receive the greater damnation," and "Ye shall receive the greater condemnation" have undeniably the same meaning. In both cases alike most aggravated sins are referred to as the reason for the "damnation" on the one hand, and the "condemnation" on the other. The meaning of the entire verse is obviously this: My brethren, do not a multitude of you—that is, any of you—become masters, critics, "judging," and "biting, and devouring one another." This we should avoid, because we know—Christ having told us so—that, if we become such, we shall receive "the greater condemnation," "receiving judgment without mercy, because we show no mercy," being ourselves judged, because we have thus judged others. The apostle, as all agree, is not to be understood as affirming in the absolute and universal sense that we all, saints and sinners included, "shall receive the greater condemnation." The declaration is obviously a conditional one, and affirms that we shall receive this condemnation, provided we become masters.

The term "many things" in Verse 2 is but one word, *polla*, in the original. This word is often employed adverbially, and is rendered *much, greatly, earnestly*, as "I wept *much*," "He besought Him *much*," and "He *straitly* (earnestly) charged

charged them." In all such passages the word rendered "many things" is employed. The meaning of the phrase "in many things we offend all" is, as all will admit, this : we all offend much, or are aggravated offenders. The original word *gar*, here rendered "for," has one fixed meaning in the original Greek, and always implies that the clause with which it is connected contains the reason of what has before been affirmed or implied. The words "in many things we offend all," or are all of us aggravated offenders, present the reason why, in case we become "masters," we shall receive "the greater condemnation." The real and undeniable meaning of Verse 1, and the first clause of Verse 2, may be thus expressed :—My brethren, do not a multitude—that is, any of you—become masters, we knowing that in that case "we shall receive the 'greater condemnation,' for or because we all are then great offenders.

In the two verses under consideration we have two classes of characters set in vivid and impressive contrast over against each other—the individuals possessed of the unbridled tongue, on the one hand, and those who bridle the tongue and do not "offend in word," on the other. The former are all aggravated offenders and will "receive the greater condemnation." The latter are "perfect men, and able also to bridle the whole body." No exposition can be more obviously valid than this.

No exposition, on the other hand, can be more palpably erroneous, and opposed to all laws of

sound Biblical criticism, than is that which makes the clause, "for in many things we offend all," an independent one, and consequently inclusive of the writer himself and all other believers. We have the same identical reasons for assuming that the preceding clause is thus independent and universal in its meaning, and hence to conclude that all believers, the apostle included, will be condemned with the wicked, as we have to infer from that under consideration, that all believers are, and to the end of time will be, great offenders. The term "for," etc., connects indissolubly those two clauses and renders each in the same sense, conditional, that the other is. If the latter clause is to be understood as affirming that all believers are great offenders, the former, by all the laws of interpretation, must be understood as affirming, with the same absoluteness, that all will "receive the greater condemnation." The term, "for," we repeat, indissolubly connects these two clauses, and renders the latter explicative of the former. If one is accepted as an independent clause, the other must be. If, on the other hand, both are accepted, as they should be, as in the same sense, and for the same reason, conditional, then the meaning of the whole passage becomes plain, and of the most important import.

The reason why those who read the Bible but in the English translation fall into the mistake of regarding the words, "in many things we offend all," as an independent clause, and consequently,

as designating all believers to the end of time, is that the clause, by being placed in the second verse, is separated seemingly from its proper connections. Those who read the original, however, evince the greatest carelessness when they fall into such a palpable error.

---

1 JOHN I. 8.

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

THERE are very few passages in the whole circle of the Word of God, that demand a more careful study than the one before us. We have, undeniably, in this passage, a *revealed test* of Christian character. Every individual, who, in the sense in which the words, “we have no sin,” are here employed, does say, “I have no sin,” is not, and cannot be, a Christian.

To affirm of an individual, that he is self-deceived, and that the truth is not in him, is in the strongest language known in the Bible, to affirm his unregeneracy. That the apostle intends to specify here a self-deceived, unregenerate person is evident also from the manner in which he employs similar language in the fourth verse of the next chapter: “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him.” To be “a liar,” to “deceive ourselves,” which is the worst

form of lying, and not to have "the truth in us," must designate impenitency, or no language of Scripture can do it. Let us keep in mind, then, that it is not a believer who may have misapprehended his real spiritual state, "not knowing what manner of spirit he is of," but a person void of the truth, and who has added self-deception to a want of integrity, that is here spoken of.

We would remark further, that it is of *known*, or *conscious*, sin of which the apostle here speaks. When the apostle Paul, for example, says (Gal. vi. 3), "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," the obvious meaning is, that the individual practises deception upon himself—that is, in blind and wilful disregard of conscious facts, he assumes that he is not what, in his interior consciousness, he really knows himself to be, or that he is what he, in fact, is conscious of not being. In a similar manner does the apostle John, in the passage before us, affirm, that "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," that is, we deny the fact of sin, while we are really conscious of its presence. The class of individuals, therefore, to whom the apostle refers in this passage, are, without a question, such as are not and cannot be Christians at all, and who, in addition to this, are self-deceived hypocrites, individuals who "say we have no sin," when they are, in fact, conscious that they are sinners. We judge, that no candid reader will question the validity of our exposition thus far. The question which

here arises, and which requires a careful and prayerful answer, is this: What class of self-deceived unregenerates does the apostle refer to in this passage?

As preparatory to a true answer to this question, let us carefully consider the verse which next follows the one before us, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." There are, undeniably, two distinct and separate blessings promised to our faith, when we confess sins of which we are conscious, namely, "the forgiveness of our sins"—and entire purification from the power of sin, or "cleansing from all unrighteousness." To the same effect, we read (Verse 7), "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." To say, "we have no sin," in the sense of the words, as here employed, is to affirm that we have no sin to be cleansed from, to be forgiven, and no unrighteousness from which to be purified. We must bear in mind that those who say this are, as inspiration positively affirms, self-deceived unregenerates, and not believers who have erred in judgment in regard to "what manner of spirit they are of." What then is the real meaning of the apostle in the passage before us?

His meaning, we reply, can by no possibility be this, what the passage is extensively supposed to mean, namely—If any one should say, "I serve

God with a pure conscience"; "I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence, both toward God and toward man"; "I know nothing by (against) myself" or "my heart (conscience) does not condemn me," that such individual has "deceived himself, and the truth is not in him." This exposition would compel us to rank as among the self-deceived unregenerates, Paul and hosts of the holiest men and women of all ages. Language is without meaning, if Paul did not claim for himself "a pure conscience," "a conscience void of offence"; "a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience," or separated from the consciousness of present sin. The exposition before us convicts the apostle John also, of the most palpable contradiction and absurdity. Take two or three examples—"Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." Whosoever "abideth in Him," and says, "I have no sin," that is, am not conscious of present sin—in other words still, am not conscious of actually sinning at the present time—"deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him." "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things," that is, much more does He condemn us in such a case. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." "If we say that we have no sin," that is, are not conscious of present sin—in other words, if we say that "our heart condemns

us not"—“we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Once more, “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from unrighteousness still.” If we say, after we have confessed our sins that He has “cleansed us from all our unrighteousness,” “we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” What must we think of an exposition of a passage of the Word of God—an exposition which necessarily and undeniably imputes such contradictions to the Holy Spirit through His inspired apostle? We must bear in mind that it is to verify the doctrine of the present *conscious* sin of all believers, that the passage under consideration is adduced, as the use made of Rom. vii, and other kindred passages evinces. Permit us in all sincerity to ask those who press this passage into the service of that doctrine, whether they are ready to accept and adopt, and that openly and avowedly, the deduction to which that exposition undeniably leads, namely, that all those who profess to “serve God with a pure conscience”; “a conscience void of offence,” and affirm that “their heart does not condemn them,” have deceived themselves and the truth is not in them, that is, are self-deceived unregenerates? Must there not be a fundamental error in an exposition which leads inevitably to such a conclusion as that?

Let us now see if we cannot find a class of persons who did, at that very time, affirm openly, “We have no sin,” the class, consequently, to whom

the apostle must have referred. The Jew, at that time, every where openly confronted the offer of pardon and eternal life through "the blood" (or atonement) "of Christ," with the denial that he (the Jew) was a sinner, and needed such salvation. When told that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," his (the Jew's) reply was, "I have no sin" to be cleansed from, and do not need the pardoning grace offered through Christ. While the Jew made this denial, he was, in reality, as inwardly conscious of the fact of personal sinfulness, as any other individual. Yet, he boldly made the denial, and thereby, prevented multitudes from embracing the truth, and seduced weak believers from the faith. To refute and rebuke this fatal error, an error which Paul refutes in the first three chapters of Romans, is the object of the apostle John (1 John i. 7-10): "If we say," he says, "that we have no sin," Verse 8, or repeating the same thought in another form, Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned," "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," on the one hand, and "make God a liar," on the other. In saying, "I have no sin," or which means the same thing, in saying, "I have not sinned," the Jew stood revealed as the identical character to whom the apostle must have referred. In saying, "I have no sin," or "I have not sinned," the Jew belied the absolute testimony of his own interior consciousness, on the one hand, and thus betrayed a total want of real integrity, on the other—that is, he

had "deceived himself, and the truth was not in him." No man can exist without the consciousness of the fact that he has sinned. No man consequently can say, "I have no sin," or "I have not sinned," without revealing by the utterance itself, the fact that he has "deceived himself, and the truth is not in him," in other words, that he is self-deceived and unregenerate.

The use of the *present* tense, "If we say we have no sin," evinces, it is said, that the apostle is speaking of present, and not of past, sin. Here we have the only show of evidence that can be adduced from this passage in favour of continued conscious sin in all believers. In reply, we remark : 1. Well-known Greek usage required, in this case, the use of this tense, although past sin was referred to. In reference to forgiveness, cleansing, &c., this one tense is exclusively employed. In representing, in such connections, the denial of the fact of sin, the same tense, whether present or past sin is referred to, should be employed.\* 2. It is perfectly common

---

\* We have in John xx. 29 a very striking example of what is called the Greek law of assimilation in the use of tenses. "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed ; blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." The real meaning evidently is : "Blessed shall they be who shall not see Me, and yet shall believe." Why is the past tense used to express this truth? Because that tense had been used in speaking of the faith of Thomas. So in the case under consideration. The present tense is used in all previous statements. That tense should be used in this case, though past sin is referred to. So in Romans vii. 14, after the apostle had said, "The

in the New Testament, in speaking of past sins and past events, to employ the present tense. When Paul says, for example, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I AM chief," he referred, as no one doubts, to the sins which he had perpetrated prior to his conversion. When he said again, "I HAVE whereof I may glory," he referred to acts performed many years then gone by. When Christ said, "Let him that is without sin among you first cast a stone at her," He obviously meant, Let him do this who is conscious of never having sinned. Nothing can be more obvious than is the fact that mere tense determines nothing whatever in regard to the question, whether present or past sin is referred to. 3. But, above all, the words, "I have no sin," and "I have not sinned," were the identical forms of expression which the Jew, and all who embraced his error, were accustomed to employ in denying their need of the grace of God through Christ. When pressed to confess his sins and seek pardon and cleansing through the blood of Christ, the impious reply was in these very words, "I have not sinned," or "I have no sin," and do not need the pardon and cleansing to which you refer. The apostle would not have represented the case of the Jew as it was, had he employed any

---

law is spiritual," he was required by the law of the language in which he was speaking, to say "I am carnal," though he referred to his past legal state and experience. Nothing can be more unauthorised than a determination of time by mere tense.

other forms of expression, in representing the denial under consideration. No shadow of reason exists, therefore, for pressing the passage under consideration into the service of the doctrine of the continued conscious sin of all believers; nor can any revealed truth be more evident than is the conclusion that the apostle had no thought or intent to verify that doctrine when he penned the passage under consideration.



#### ANOTHER EXPOSITION OF THE SAME PASSAGE.

AT the time when the above Exposition had been prepared for the 'Banner of Holiness,' the following very able and conclusive one from an anonymous writer was handed us, and the latter instead of the former was published. In reading both these expositions together, the reader will not fail to attain to a right understanding of this very important passage.

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."--1 John i. 8.

To whom do these words primarily apply?  
Under what circumstances were they written?  
What was their design?

These words are commonly detached from their connection and applied to all Christians without regard to the circumstances which called them

forth. The assertion "we have no sin" (here rebuked) is assumed to be identical in its nature with the expression by devoted Christians of the belief that God can and does in this life sanctify them wholly, and preserve them blameless by His faithfulness to his Word.

The real meaning and application of this eighth verse of the first chapter of the 1st Epistle of John must be found by close attention to its connection and to the general scope of the epistle. The apostle, throughout this epistle, defends the truth against the false teachers of his day, whom he designates anti-Christ, false prophets, seducers. He writes (Chap. ii. 4, 5), "He that saith I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Again (ninth and tenth verses), "He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now." "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light." Twenty-second verse—"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" "He is anti-Christ that denieth the Father and the Son."

That the Apostle, in all the warnings and declarations against false doctrine and evil practice in this epistle, had in view false teachers, we find by his own words—"Even now are there many Antichrists." "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." "Little children, let no man deceive you."

The apostle proceeds, Chapter iv. 2, 3, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." Chapter v. 10, "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son."

Thus it is evident, that one great object in this epistle is to warn believers against fatal error; particularly as to the rejection of Jesus as the Son of God, the Christ, the Saviour from sin, and to guard them from the sad consequences of such error.

Now there is no real ground to suppose that the warnings against error and its result found in the first chapter of this epistle, differ in their nature and design from those that follow throughout the epistle. The rebukes in this chapter, Verses 6, 8, 10, are given in almost the same words as the rebukes in the succeeding chapters. Observe, first chapter sixth verse, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, *we lie and do not the truth.*" Eighth verse, "If we say that we have no sin, *we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*" Tenth verse, "If we say that we have not sinned, *we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*"

These three verses point out evils then existing, and cannot be separated from each other; they are directed against the same persons, perverters of the truth. No Christian could so walk in darkness as

G

to lie and do not the truth ; no Christian could say we have not sinned ; no Christian could say in the sense intended by the apostle, we have no sin. The use of the personal pronoun we, for the purpose of warning, is not unusual. It is so used, Romans vi. 1, "What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." It is used in like manner by the apostle John.

It is observable in this epistle, that when the apostle warns believers against the insidious evil of false professions of holiness and fellowship with God, as in Chapter i., he uses the term "we;" but when he speaks of open sin and denial of Christ, he uses the more general terms he and whosoever. "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man deceive you" (Chapter iii. 6, 7). Doubtless among the many anti-Christ's of his time, there were those who added evil practice to false doctrine.

The seventh and ninth verses of this first chapter are counter statements against error. The false profession of fellowship with God in the sixth verse, is contrasted with the true experience of the seventh verse. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The self-sufficient denial of sin in the eighth and tenth verses is contrasted with the penitent confession of sin in the ninth verse: "If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to

forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We find similar counter statements against error and sin, throughout this epistle.

We see, then, that all the warnings in this epistle (the first chapter included), have the same application and design ; they point to seducers, and are designed to counteract their teachings and evil example. Warning, therefore, is given in the eighth verse of chapter one, not against the claim of *personal salvation from sin by believers*; but against the fatal error of affirming after the example of seducers, "we have no sin." Rejecting, as did these false teachers, Jesus as the Christ, no marvel that they should say, We have no sin—we need no Saviour.

Let us now carefully consider the statements of this epistle concerning salvation by Christ. No words can be more express and full as to holiness of heart and life, than those in this epistle, "Walking even as he walked, "purifying Himself even as He is pure," "abiding in Him," "sinning not," "righteous even as He is righteous."

With the strongest denunciations of error and sin are combined in this epistle, as is usual in the Scriptures, the most gracious expressions of mercy, privilege, and love, to the penitent and believing.

Thus, by the correct application of the eighth verse of the first chapter of this epistle, we are prepared for its teachings throughout ; but its misapplication sets this verse in direct opposition to

the highest truths of the Gospel as set forth in this epistle, and in other parts of God's Word.

So powerfully has this been felt, that it has been falsely inferred that the strong expressions of this epistle concerning holiness and friendship with God, belong, not to the Christian's life on earth, but point solely to an ideal state or character unattainable here. These strong expressions, it is said, result simply from the vision of this beautiful but ideal Christian character in the apostle's mind. We dare not so handle the word of God! Restore this eighth verse to its true purpose, and a due connection and consistency is preserved in every part of the epistle.

To detach the eighth verse from its most necessary connection, and to use it in its isolation for a totally opposite purpose to that for which it was designed, is most misleading and injurious. It was designed to rebuke the fatal error of rejecting the record of God concerning sin, and the need of salvation. It has been used to reprove devoted, humble Christians, for their belief in the power of Christ not only to cleanse, but to keep them clean.

Our familiar sins lose their true aspect by repetition; but they are evil and bitter still; nevertheless they have an apparent justification by the words, so often misapplied, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

The term ideal, applied to the high standard of holiness given in God's Word, places practically the standard of present holiness in the hands of

man. If God's standard is an ideal standard, then every Christian, earnest or otherwise, must judge for himself, how much sin and failure may possibly be reconcilable with the Christian's hope and Christian character.

---

JOHN XIII. 1-17.

"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.

"And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him;

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God;

"He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel and girded Himself.

"After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.

"Then cometh He to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?

"Jesus answered and said unto Him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

"Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me.

"Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

"Jesus saith unto Him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all.

“For He knew who should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.

“So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

“Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither He that is sent greater than He that sent Him.

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

“THE same night in which He was betrayed,” Jesus engaged in two transactions of ever memorable interest, the ceremony above described, and the instituting of the “Lord's Supper.” Each is of infinite importance in itself, and each, in its intent, is entirely distinct and separate from the other. The object of the latter was, and is, to render omnipresent in thought our relations to Christ. “This is My body which is given for you.” “This cup is the New Testament in My blood which is shed for you.” The equally specific object of the former, on the other hand, is to elucidate and impress the duty of believers one toward another. “If I then, your Master and Lord, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” It is of great importance

that, in reading this chapter, we should keep fully in view the distinct and separate meaning and intent of these two services, one of which is to be perpetually observed in the Church, while the other stands out as a finished service, a service the revealed spirit and meaning of which are to be received and copied by all believers in their relations, duties, and services, one toward another.

As preparatory to a full understanding and appreciation of these two services, we would remark that two truths, the truths under consideration, stand out with the greatest conceivable prominence in all the teachings of our Saviour—the relations and responsibilities of believers to Himself, and their relative duties one toward another. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life”; “Abide in Me, and I in you”; “Without Me ye can do nothing”; “If ye abide in Me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you”; and “I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.” Equally abundant and explicit were His instructions and admonitions in regard to the relations and duties of believers one toward another; “Whosoever shall be great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all”; “For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many”; “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of the least of these, my brethren, ye have

done it unto Me"; "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward"; "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one towards another;" and "I have been among you as one that serveth."

This last class of duties the disciples were slow to learn. They entered the service of Christ with the distinct apprehension that their faith in Him was to be implicit, and their subjection to His will absolute. They expected from Him, however, the establishment of a worldly kingdom, in which there would be "thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers," and in which some would be greater than others, and the occupancy of the chiefest places became to these disciples objects of jealous desire. Up to the evening prior to the crucifixion, "there was a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest." This spirit essentially unfitted them for the kingdom and service to which they were called—a kingdom in which ambition, pride, and covetousness of place and position, were to be unknown, in which *service* constitutes greatness, and he that makes himself the least of all and the servant of all is the greatest of all. A fundamental aim of our Saviour in all His teachings was to eradicate utterly the former, that old spirit, and inspire and perfect the latter, the new and Divine spirit, in the hearts and lives of all believers, His immediate disciples especially.

In regard to the character of these two services, we would observe that they differ in *form* from any ordinances known under the Old Dispensation. You will search in vain throughout the ancient ritual for any ordinance corresponding in form to the Lord's Supper. The same is true of the washing of the feet. "Diverse washings," as emblematical of external and internal purification are prescribed, but the washing of the feet constitutes none of them. The precept requiring the priest, before going into the holy place to bear the vessels of the Lord, to wash his hands and feet—the only instance we can find in which washing the feet is mentioned—presents no exception to these statements. Such a precept no more implies moral defilement than does the command, "Put thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground." The services being new both in intent and form, their design can be learned but from the words of our Saviour Himself. Of the Supper, we need not speak, its intent being well known. That of washing the feet is thus explained by our Saviour:—"So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that he should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is

not greater than his lord ; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." This affecting service, like that of the Supper, had a single purpose and object, its design being to elucidate and render plain to all minds the *form* and *direction* which mutual *love* should take among His disciples. Christ was in the world on a mission of love, a love which rendered Him a servant of servants to the least as well as the greatest of all His disciples. Every interest of theirs was as tenderly dear to Him "as the apple of His eye," and any service by which any real want of any disciple could be met was sacred in His regard. The object of our Saviour is to induce in all believers a mutual love the same in kind as actuated His entire life. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, As I have loved you." The object of the service under consideration, as our Saviour has explained it, was to set this commandment in distinct visibility before our minds.

And how adapted was this service to this great end. The washing of the feet was then a universal necessity. When done by others, it was a service assigned to the lowest order of servants known at that time. A readiness for such a service, a readiness inspired by love, implied a full readiness for any kind of service by which any existing necessity might be met. It implied the supreme control in the heart of the same spirit which rendered our Saviour a universal "ministering spirit"

to human necessity, inducing him to "bear our griefs and carry our sorrows." To reveal the spirit which dwelt in Him, and actuated His life, and to induce the same form of love, and readiness for service in all His disciples, one towards another, He assumed on that ever memorable occasion, the lowest of all forms of necessary service, the washing of His disciples' feet, adding the melting words, "I have given you an example" (an exemplification of the spirit of mutual love and service which must actuate your lives), "that ye should do as I have done unto you."

*Verse 10 Explained.*

We are now prepared clearly to understand the meaning of our Saviour in the following words in Verse 10: "He that is washed needeth not (hath no necessity) save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Before coming to the place, "the bodies of the disciples had been washed with pure water." On the way, however, of necessity, there feet had become covered with dust. As far as washing was concerned, there was present in the company but one necessity, the washing of their feet. To reveal the Spirit of which each one must be possessed relatively to all the others, wherever and whenever any real necessity should appear, Christ took the place of the lowest servant to meet the one common want of all present. When, in the performance of that service, He came to Peter, the latter, under the influence of the spirit of place,

position, and station, objected, and finally refused to receive such a service at the hand of his Master and Lord. When informed, however, that he must acquiesce, or "have no part in Christ," then, under the influence of the Ritualistic idea, that there was some special efficacy in the service itself, Peter exclaimed—"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." The reply of our Saviour was intended to make known the real meaning and intent of the service, and that meaning and intent may be thus expressed: Should I do as you say, Peter, that is, "wash your hands, and your head," I should do for you a useless office, and thus deprive the present service of all its meaning. My object is not to impress you with the duty of doing to one another what is not needful, but of doing, with an ever-ready mind, what is needful. As far as your hands and heads, and bodies are concerned, you were washed before you came here. Your feet excepted, "you have no need of washing, but are clean every whit." As far as these are concerned, however, you have need. To meet this one necessity I do the part of a servant, and I do so, not to meet a present necessity merely, but to give you an example that "ye should do as I have done to you." You are not called upon to do, one to another, what is not needed but to be ever ready, and prompt, and hearty, to bring to one another help whenever and wherever it may be needed. This undeniably is the true meaning and intent of our Saviour in the words under consideration.

*Meaning of Verse 8.*

When Peter objected to the humiliation of his Master and Lord in doing for the former the menial service under consideration, the Saviour replied, that although His disciple might not then understand the meaning of what was being done, he would fully comprehend it in time to come. On Peter's refusal to accept the washing at the hands of Christ, saying peremptorily, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," the Saviour replied in these words: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me." The immediate object of our Saviour in these words is obvious, to wit, to induce Peter to reverse his avowed determination that Christ should not wash his feet, and to induce in the disciple a cordial assent that the Master should do to him as He had done to the others. Two constructions have been put upon our Saviour's words. According to the first, the term "wash" is supposed to be used symbolically of moral and spiritual purification. The meaning of our Saviour would then be, "If I wash thee not," that is, do not cleanse or purify your soul from sin, "thou hast no part in me." While this construction implies a most essential truth, the truth implied contains no reason whatever for the change of purpose which our Saviour designed to produce. The fact of dependence upon Christ for moral and spiritual purification presents in itself no reason why Christ should perform for His disciples the servile office of feet-washing, or why they should consent that He

should do it. Besides, as already shown, feet-washing was not emblematical of real moral and spiritual purification, and presented no occasion for an allusion to that subject.

To understand our Saviour aright, we must bear in mind that we have here the second open rebuke which Christ had received from that disciple. On account of the first, the Saviour "rebuked Peter saying, Get thee behind Me, Satan." On this occasion, notwithstanding our Saviour's assurance that He was acting in perfect wisdom in what He was doing, and that although the reason for His conduct was not then known, it would be understood afterwards, an assurance which ought to have induced the most ready and cordial acquiescence on the part of every disciple, Peter, assuming the attitude of stern rebuke and refusal, said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Here was evinced a state of mind, a pride of position and place, and of self-assurance, utterly incompatible with real discipleship with Christ, a state which must be put away, or the disciple and his Master must part company. Of this fact the Saviour informs Peter in the words under consideration. The real meaning of these words may be thus expressed: "If I wash thee not," that is, if you continue to place your wisdom above mine and your will against mine, by refusing to accept this service from me, "thou hast no part," and it will be impossible for thee to have any part "in me." In other words, the spirit in me which prompts me to render this service, and

the spirit in you which prompts you to refuse to accept this service at my hands, are incompatible one with the other. On the other hand the spirit in you which prompts this refusal must not only be wholly put away, but you must come into such full and cordial sympathy with the spirit in me which prompts this service, as to induce in you a free consent that I shall wash your feet, or you cannot be my disciple. The rebuke and admonition were effective. All pride of place and position, and of self-will, and self-assurance, died out in the heart of Peter, and he cried out. "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

*Misapprehension of Verse 10.*

To the reflecting mind it is a sad thought that the leading impression which very many believers receive from the most instructive and sanctifying portions of the sacred Word is little else but the single apprehension that, in all the circumstances and relations of life, they will sin. They are required to "hate even the garments spotted with the flesh"; yet, in the study of the Scriptures, they are ever eagle-eyed to find, in all leading passages, something to fasten upon their minds the conviction that go where and do what they will, they will in some form "defile their garments"—a conviction which of itself, if nothing else would, renders it absolutely certain that they will do "this evil thing and bitter," which "God hates." The scene presented in the passage before us, for

example, embodies and exemplifies in the clearest and most explicit manner conceivable the spirit and principle of all Christ's teachings in regard to the relations and duties of believers one towards another. Yet the glory, beauty, and moral significance of the whole transaction are thrown into a deep eclipse by an inference drawn from the single expression—"He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Here we learn this great lesson, exclaim not a few readers of the sacred Word, that we can never in this life be free from sin. However far the cleansing process may have gone, some part—the feet at least—will need to be cleansed. And this is all that many believers see in the whole transaction. We never heard the passage referred to by this class of individuals but to sustain this one doctrine. Permit us to say here that no doctrine can be farther from any passage than this is from the transaction under consideration. There is not a word or thought in the passage that looks in the direction of that doctrine.

Nor does this idea of dust adhering to the feet have the remotest adaptation to symbolise the relations of sin to the soul. The idea is never employed in the Old Testament as a symbol at all, dust on the feet not implying ceremonial uncleanness. In the case before us, considered as a figure, it implies a distinction of sins—as great and small—those which do and those which in reality do not defile the soul. The Bible makes no such distinc-

tion. Every sin alike, whatever its form, is a seed of death in the vital centre of the soul, and must be removed by the blood of sprinkling, or death will ensue. Nothing can be of more subverting tendency than is this misuse of the passage under consideration.

*The clause, "Ye are clean."*

When the purpose of the service had been fully explained, and understood by the disciples, the Saviour said, "Ye are clean, but not all." His obvious meaning may be thus expressed: You, one excepted, have comprehended and appreciated this service, have put away the spirit of rivalry, self-sufficiency, and self-exaltation, and have become possessed of the "unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace," the spirit of mutual love and service, that I desire. If we trace the subsequent history of these then sorrowing disciples, we shall find the above statement strictly true. Never, from that time onward, did the spirit of division or rivalry have place among them. On the other hand, they were together and one in their sorrow at their Lord's sufferings and death, one in their gladness "when they saw the Lord," after His resurrection, one in the great joy with which they returned from Mount Olivet to Jerusalem, after His ascension, one in the accord with which they "waited the Promise of the Father," until the Pentecost, and one in their aims and endeavours when they went forth "under the Power of the Spirit" to fulfil their great commission. In all their writings, the two

H

great truths represented by the Supper, on the one hand, and this service, on the other, have the same prominence that they have in the instructions and example of our Saviour. In the Churches which they planted—the few excepted who “caused divisions and offences among them contrary to the doctrine which they had received”—“all were of the same heart and mind” in regard to Christ, on the one hand, and to “brotherly love” on the other. During the apostolic and martyr age, this is recorded to the glory of the Churches, that none were more assiduous in caring for the sick, the poor, and the afflicted, more ready to “wash the saints’ feet,” and to render any form of service, high or low, by which Christ could be glorified. His kingdom advanced, and the wants of believers met, than were the most delicate and royally-educated females. As the world looked on, even the heathen exclaimed, “See how these Christians love one another.” All admire and eulogise such things. “Happy are we if we do them.”

Will the teachers and friends of the doctrine of the “Higher Life” suffer from us a word of exhortation, before we close this article. If we have made ourselves understood, every reader has distinctly before his mind our apprehensions of the doctrine under consideration, and the supreme end towards which all our teachings tend, namely, “the perfecting of the saints” in this “excellent spirit”—the spirit of absolute supremacy of faith, love, and obedience towards Christ, and of devo-

tion to His glory and kingdom, on the one hand, and which, on the other, renders Him greatest in the sanctified family who renders himself "the least of all, and the servant of all," and induces in all a common readiness "in love to serve one another." This being our common aim, and our eye being single to it, will not, "our God supply all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus?" Will He not "make all grace abound toward us, that we, always having all-sufficiency for all things, may abound unto every good work?"



**MATTHEW VI. 12.**

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

THOSE who employ this passage to verify the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers in this life reason thus:—The fact that this petition is found in this prayer implies that all believers at all times have present sins to confess, and for which to seek forgiveness. The necessary inference is that in this life they will never be free from present, actual, conscious sin. The assumption that lies at the basis of this deduction is this, that this form of prayer is to be repeated in substance by all believers under all circumstances to the end of time, and that consequently each blessing designated as an object of prayer will ever lie before the mind in the future as such object, and

never as an accomplished fact. Take away this assumption, and no basis whatever remains for this inference. If this inference is correct, the following consequences must be accepted as absolutely valid:—1. The kingdom of God, while the world shall stand, will never come, the occurrence of that which has actually transpired undeniably not being an object of prayer. 2. Our Saviour requires the Church universal at all times and in all circumstances to pray specifically for what He requires all in common to believe will never occur, and that it is not the will of God that it should occur, namely, that “God’s will shall be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” In other words, Christ, in fact and form, requires us to pray for a specific blessing, and then hangs such weights upon our faith as to render it impossible for us to pray in faith for that blessing, it being impossible for us to “ask in faith, nothing wavering,” for that which we believe—that Christ has by a special revelation placed beyond the circle of hope. 3. The time will never come when every believer will not constantly be the subject of wrong-doing from others. If the petition “forgive us our debts” implies that we shall ever continue to sin, the words “as we forgive our debtors” imply that we and every other believer to the end of time will be continuously sinned against. 4. It is absolutely improper for us to pray for the forgiveness of past sins—sins of which we have repented, and which God has forgiven.

Such are the necessary consequences of the deduction which is drawn from the petition under consideration. When we shall have demonstrated any one of these consequences, and especially each of them, to be in itself untrue, we shall have absolutely invalidated this deduction. Now, every one of these consequences, as can very readily be shown, involves a vital error. We will examine all of these consequences, beginning with the last. Let us for a moment consider the following inspired prayers in regard to sins long before repented of and forgiven, prayers dictated and recorded by inspiration of the Spirit of God:—"O remember not against us former iniquities" (Psa. lxxix. 8). "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy, remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord" (Psa. xxv. 7). We deduce this vital truth from these passages that, while "the eternal judgment" is before us, it is right, proper, and a duty, as past sins come to remembrance, to confess them anew, and to put up our prayers that they may not be remembered at the present time, nor at that day. Nor does any one know that God does not see reasons why, when we receive injuries from others, we should not recall our own former sins, and pray that God will forgive our debts, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Nor does or can any one know but that it may be right, proper, and best for us—while liable to be sinned against by others, and while the hour is approaching when

“we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ,” even though we, like Paul, may now “know nothing against ourselves”—to pray daily, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ;” and this, we believe, is the real lesson which our Saviour intended to teach us through this petition. No deduction can be more presumptuous, unauthorised, and of more dangerous tendency than is this, to infer from this petition that all believers to the end of time will in this life be in the continuous practice of conscious sin.

In regard to the third consequence, we would observe that the period is distinctly revealed when believers will cease to be subject to injury from others, and when none can have occasion to say, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” The time is coming “when violence shall no more be heard in the land,” and “there shall be none to hurt or destroy in all God’s holy mountains.” There will, at that time, be no more occasion for saints on earth than for saints in heaven to pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” As the words, “as we forgive our debtors,” do not imply that each believer will be continuously sinned against by others, so the words, “Forgive us our debts,” do not and cannot imply that every such believer will, while life shall last, be continuously sinning against both God and man. We may safely challenge the world to designate a more unauthorised and presumptuous deduction from any passage than is the one under consideration.

In regard to the second consequence, we observe that the petition, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," presents ground infinitely more solid for the inference that God's will has been, and will be, thus done, than does that under consideration for the dogma which has been deduced from said petition. The former must accord with the will of God. The latter presents not a shadow of a foundation for the inference deduced from it.

In regard to the first consequence we would say, that "the kingdom of God will come." The petition, "Thy kingdom come," therefore, does not imply that it never, in the history of the race, will have come. So the petition, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," does not, and cannot imply that every believer will to the end of time, as far as this life is concerned, be continuously sinning both against God and man, or will as continuously be sinned against by his fellow men. No, Reader, as long as the sea shall say of wisdom, "it is not in me," and the deep shall respond, "it is not in me," so long will every wise interpreter of the word of God affirm that the petition under consideration is not the dwelling-place of the dogma which has been deduced from that petition.

## PSALM CXIX. 96.

"I have seen an end of all perfection, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad."

FEW passages are more frequently cited than this, and generally it is cited for one specific and exclusive purpose—to verify the doctrine of the continued conscious sinfulness in this life of all saints and believers in Jesus from the beginning to the end of time. This knowledge the sacred writer obtained, it is assumed, by looking into the commandment, and viewing its broadness, or the extent of its requirements. By looking into "the commandment" he saw that all *human* perfection would contain in it the element of conscious sin. Let us now look directly into the passage itself, and endeavour first to ascertain its real meaning, and then to determine its applications.

The Reader will observe that the words "but" and "is" are in this passage put in italics to indicate that there are no such words in the original. Leaving out these, the verse would read thus: "I have seen an end of all perfection; thy commandment exceeding broad"—that is, "Thy commandment," how "exceeding broad" it is! This does and must give the more exact import of the original.

The original word rendered "end" has, according to the highest authorities and Scripture usage, among others, two distinct and separate meanings—namely, the termination or boundaries of objects

—and filling out, completion, consummation, or fulfilment. In this second sense the word is employed (Hab. ii. 3, and Daniel viii. 17) to represent the filling out, completion, consummation or fulfilment of prophecy. The same idea the Saviour represents in the words, “One jot or tittle shall not pass from the law until all be fulfilled,” and “the Scripture must be fulfilled”—that is, whatever is affirmed in “the law” or “Scripture” shall and must be filled out, accomplished, consummated. Understanding the word “end” in the first sense (that of limitation), the meaning of the passage would be this: “I have seen the limit or boundary of all perfection; all comes within the broad circle of Thy commandment.” In other words still, perfection in no form can extend beyond the broadness or limitless application of Thy commandment. Understood in the second sense—that of filling out, completion, consummation, or fulfilment—the passage would mean this: “I have seen the filling out or consummation of all perfection.” This I perceive in “Thy commandment.” How “exceedingly broad” it is! Perfection can exist nowhere, in men or in angels, in any creature, in time or eternity—perfection which is not implied and included in “Thy commandment.” In that commandment, therefore, we perceive the completion or consummation of all perfection.

Let us now consider the original term here rendered *perfection*. This word, Tich-lah, is found nowhere in the Scriptures but in this single passage,

and is derived from a word now obsolete, a word whose meaning is unknown, or a mere matter of opinion. As regards the real meaning of the word here, authorities differ, some rendering it "perfection," and others, "hope, confidence." There is one other word, and only one, Tach-leeth, which was derived from the same root as Tich-lah. The word Tach-leeth is used five times in the Old Testament. We will refer to all these passages. "From the door of the house of Eliashib even to the *end* (extremity) of the House of Eliashib (Zech. iii. 21). Here the word means boundary or limit. "Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" (Job. xi. 7). Here the word represents completeness or perfection of creature *knowledge*, and not the character of God. It would be equally proper to ask, Canst thou find out the material creation to perfection? as to put the same question in respect to God.

"He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an *end*," that is, as Gesenius renders it, unto the end of light with darkness, *i.e.*, where the light terminates in darkness" (Job xxvi. 10). "He (God) searcheth out all *perfection*, the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death" (Job xxviii. 3). The obvious meaning here is: God searcheth even to all extremities, that is, to the deepest recesses of the earth. In other words, the term Tach-leeth, perfection, here represents the absolute knowledge which God has of His own works. "I hate them with a perfect

hatred" (Ps. cxxix. 22). In this passage the term perfect represents the *intensity* of the hatred, and not its moral character, as Satan hates holiness and holy beings with a "perfect hatred." It will be seen clearly that the only known word derived from the same root as, and consequently having a similar meaning to, Tich-lah, never represents the idea of personal holiness or moral perfection. The Septuagint renders the passage thus: "I have seen the boundaries of all completions, or completed things; Thy commandment, how exceeding broad!" The word which, in this version, represents the original word rendered perfection in the passage under consideration, is often used in the Septuagint, the Greek testament, and by Greek authors; but in no case does it represent the idea of personal holiness, or moral perfection. We find in the first verse of this Psalm the original word commonly employed in the Scriptures to represent moral perfection. "Blessed are the undefiled (perfect, according to the marginal reading and common usage) in the way." If the sacred writer intended to represent the same idea in Verse 96, why did he not employ the same word here? In that case his meaning could not have been misunderstood. Why did he, on the other hand, employ a word nowhere else found in the Bible, and one which, according to the usage of the only known word which was derived from the same root, never has any such meaning. If then, the word Tich-lah, in the passage under consideration,

means perfection, it represents the idea, not in any restricted form, as pertaining, for example, to the moral and spiritual attainments of men, but in its strictly universal meaning. The passage under consideration admits of but three constructions, one of which must be true. We give the first two in the words of Prof. Perowne.

1. "There is nothing upon earth to which there does not (as I have seen) cleave some defect." This does not accord with what the Psalmist says elsewhere of the perfection of the Divine works. It also implies a degree of knowledge impossible to creatures. No finite mind can have such an omniscience of the works of God as to perceive that they are all defective, or of the moral attainments of all the saints of God as to see them all mingled with sin. The sacred writer here speaks, not of what he has heard, but of what he has "seen."

2. "But perhaps the clause," adds Professor Perowne, "should rather be rendered: 'I have seen an end, a limit, to the whole range or compass of things;' a meaning which may be defended by the use of the similar word in Job xxvi. 10, and xxviii. 3: and which harmonises with the next clause: 'Thy commandment is exceeding broad'—has no limits, whilst all other things are bounded by narrow limits." This construction is perfectly consistent with the meaning, as far as can be ascertained, of every word found in the passage before us, and is wholly free from all the objections which lie against that first given. While finite

minds cannot comprehend the works of God, such minds can and do know that all created objects, and all attainments of created beings, have their limits on the one hand, while God's commandment has no limits on the other. This construction, therefore, can by no possibility be shown to be false.

3. The third, and what we regard as the true construction is this: "I have seen the consummation of all perfection; Thy command is exceeding broad." Nothing can exceed, in perfection, the law, or "commandment" of God, expressing, as it does, in its limitless applications, the responsibilities and duties of all moral agents, in all circumstances and relations of existence in time and to eternity, and determining with equal absoluteness the moral character and deserts of all their moral states and actions. This law is as eternal as "the eternal years of God," as immutable as its author, and as universal in its applications as the possibilities of moral conduct. This construction, like that just considered, accords with the known meaning and usage of all the words found in the passage under consideration, and best accords, as we judge, with the true and full idea of the perfection of the law, or "commandment," of God, and with what is elsewhere affirmed on the same subject. The deduction which follows from the fact that one of these two last constructions must be true, and neither can be proved false; the deduction, we say, is this, that no foundation at all exists in this

passage for the doctrine of the continued conscious sin of all believers in Jesus. No idea can be more foreign from this passage than is this doctrine. Let us, for a few moments, consider the manner in which this doctrine is deduced from this passage.

The following addition is commonly made to the first clause of this verse, namely, "I have seen an end of all (human) perfection," that is, I have, by looking into the law of God, and contemplating its broadness, or the extent and limits of the commandment, had a perception and knowledge of the fact that no human being, no worshipper of God, and no believer in Jesus, ever did, or ever will, from the beginning to the end of time, attain to a state of conscious freedom from actual and known sin.

In view of such an interpretation, we ask, in the first place, why the term *human* is put in here? There is nothing in the verse itself, or in the context, to authorise the insertion of any such word. The declaration "all perfection," is strictly and absolutely universal in its form, and no person has a right to restrict its meaning or application. We might as properly affirm that the Psalmist intended to say, I have seen an end of all Jewish, heathen, or angelic, as of human, perfection, and in one case we should be just as far from the central and exclusive idea in the writer's mind, as in either of the others. Nor, as we have seen, can the original word, here rendered perfection, be made to bear any such restricted meaning as this, to wit, to repre-

sent the moral and spiritual state and attainments of any one class of creatures. On the other hand, no evidence at all can be adduced that it does represent any such attainments at all.

Besides, the term "end," from its literal meaning, viz., termination, determines in itself nothing whatever of the actual or possible extent or limits of the moral and spiritual attainments of any being, or class of beings, where the term perfection is employed to represent such attainments. Literally rendered and expounded, that is, according to one of the meanings of the term end, the clause before us would mean this: I have seen the end, the limit, or boundary of all perfection, that is, such perfection can ever extend beyond the broad limits of God's commandment. "The law of the Lord is perfect," and must, by its exceeding broadness, include and require perfection in all its actual and possible forms. To see the end, that is, the extent and limits of human perfection, is one thing; to perceive that such perfection is marred with conscious sin, is quite another. An angel may say, "I have the end (the extent and limits) of all (angelic) perfection, perfection being limited in all finite beings. Thy commandment is exceeding broad." Such declaration, which would be strictly true, would by no means imply that such perfection is marred at all by conscious sin. No such inference as is attempted to be drawn from this passage can, without a palpable violation of all the laws of language, be forced from it.

The exposition under consideration, we remark, in the last place, carries upon its surface its own refutation. Said exposition affirms that the Psalmist saw, in the "extent and limits of God's commandment," the certain and inevitable continued conscious sin and shortcomings, not only of all saints under the Old, but all believers in Jesus under the New, Dispensation. In looking into the "commandment" of God, we can discern what creatures *ought* to be, and to do. "By the law," also, "is the knowledge of sin" where sin exists. The possibilities of faith, however, we are to determine, not by looking at the "commandment," whatever the broadness of its requirements may be, but at the extent and limits of the revealed *grace of God* for our sanctification. Nothing can be more absurd than the assumption that by looking into the "commandment" we can determine anything whatever in regard to the extent and limits of the grace of God, the fulness of Christ, and the power of the Eternal Spirit, for accomplishing in us "the will of God, even our sanctification." What Christ has specifically revealed Himself as *able* to do for us, what provisions He has revealed Himself as having made for our present holiness, what He has *promised* to do for us in the matter, provided "He be enquired of by us to do it for us," and what power the Father and Son have given to the Eternal Spirit to work mightily within us, *here*, and not by looking at the "commandment," do we determine the extent and limits of the possibilities

of faith. A wider and more palpable misapprehension of a text of Scripture is hardly conceivable than is involved in the exposition of Psalm cxix. 96, the exposition which we have now refuted.

We have, in the case before us, a palpable example of the manner in which a false doctrine may veil from the mind the most glorious revelations of God. Few passages in the whole compass of Holy Writ, and none, those excepted which open upon our vision "the image of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ," disclose to the mind a more glorious aspect of the wisdom and glory of God than does the passage before us. Think, Reader, of the exceeding broadness of the commandment, the boundless extent and adaptations of its applications, and the absolute perfection of all its revelations of right, duty, and moral desert. Like its Author, this law is infinite. There are two revelations of God upon which pure finite mind will expand through eternal ages—"the consummation of all perfection revealed in 'the commandment,'" on the one hand, and "the grace of God which bringeth salvation" on the other. How much of the glory and wisdom of God does the individual perceive in Psalm cxix. 96, the individual who approaches it under the influence of the doctrine to which we have referred? "Just this and nothing more," the validity of the doctrine of the conscious lifelong sinfulness of every believer in Jesus. To all the transcendent glory revealed in the passage, his vision is perfectly

veiled. When will the Eternal Spirit "open the eyes of the understanding" of His people, to read "the mind of the Spirit" in His own Word?



### ECCLESIASTES VII. 20.

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

BEFORE proceeding to a direct consideration of this passage, we would request special attention to certain general observations which have a specific application to this, and other passages of a similar character—passages found particularly in the Old Testament.

1. Whatever is affirmed of the attainments of Old Testament Saints, is not to be applied to Christians under the present dispensation, unless we have positive evidence that such application was specifically intended. We live under a "New Covenant, which is established upon better promises," than that under which those saints lived. What was impracticable to them may be quite possible to us.

2. When the Scriptures would express a fact which holds *generally*, but not *universally* true, they commonly employ universal terms to represent that fact. Take the following statement from the New Testament: "Then went out to him (John Baptist) Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan." We have positive evidence that these statements, in their strictly universal sense,

are not true, and they were never intended to be so understood. In looking at particular passages of this character, special regard to this principle must be had, or we shall be utterly misled in the interpretation of Scripture.

3. *Proverbial* utterances, as Bishop Whateley has shown, though the language employed is universal in form, are never to be understood in a strictly universal, but only in a general sense. Proverbs are always to be distinguished from principles, or laws, to which there are no exceptions. Two proverbs, as the Bishop shows, may be strictly contradictory as far as their terms are concerned, and yet both, as proverbs, may be true. As for example, consider the two following: "Answer a fool according to his folly," and "Answer not a fool according to his folly." Not as laws of thought and action, but as proverbs or general facts, both of these maxims are true. Take, as an illustration of each of the last two propositions, the following admonition of the prophet: "Take ye heed every one of his neighbour and trust not in any brother; for every brother will utterly supplant and every neighbour will walk in slanders." Who supposes that this admonition, though expressed in the strongest and most universal terms, was intended to be understood as holding true of every saint under the Old, and of every Christian under the New, Dispensation? As a general maxim, or proverb, or statement of facts, that proposition is true, and was never intended to be understood in any other sense.

4. Poetic language very commonly follows the same principle. What is true in a general sense, the poet expresses in universal terms. Take, as an example, the following utterance: "There is none that doeth good, no not one." This passage, if taken in its strict, literal sense, would imply that there was not at that time, at least, a single righteous man on earth. The writer does not mean that, among the wicked, there is none righteous; that would imply the senseless tautology, viz., that among the wicked, none but wicked persons are to be found. The manifest object of the writer is to affirm, not that there are no righteous persons among men, but the general and desperate depravity of the race, of the Jews in particular.

Let us now apply these obviously valid and generally accepted principles to the passage under consideration, and to others of kindred import. On this passage we remark: 1. That the declaration, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not," if accepted in the widest sense, cannot be properly applied, but to individuals under that dispensation, and can have no such application to believers in Jesus, under the New Covenant. The New is, as we have said, "established upon better promises" than the Old. What was not attainable under the former, may be among the common possibilities of faith under the latter Dispensation. 2. As a *proverbial* utterance it would be a violation of all the laws of correct

interpretation, to give to these words a strictly universal sense, just as much so, and for the same reason, it would be to give a similar interpretation to the words of the prophet, "every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk in slanders." Neither of these utterances any more than the other was ever intended to be understood in a universal sense. 3. But the utterance under consideration is given, not only as a proverbial one, but as a *prudential* maxim, and as such is given in such a form as to evince absolutely that it was not, and could not have been, intended that it should have been understood in a strictly universal sense. The word "for," at the commencement of this verse, connects it with the preceding one, and makes the letter expressive of a reason for what is affirmed or implied in the former. The preceding verse reads thus: "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men that are in the city." In this verse the necessity of continuous caution and vigilant and ever-wakeful circumspection is urged, as of supreme importance in our intercourse with mankind. The reason of this is then given in the verse before us, and that reason is this: men are not to be trusted. If we act upon the assumption that they are just and trustworthy, we shall make shipwreck of all our interests. As a prudential maxim this utterance is true, and worthy of our highest regard. When, on the other hand, we assume it as universally true, and as a theological dogma applicable not only to saints in ancient times but to believers

in Jesus in all ages, we charge inspiration with the greatest conceivable absurdity. The reasoning of the sacred writer on that hypothesis reads thus: "Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men that are in the city," for no saint under the Old, or believer in Jesus under the New, Dispensation ever was, or ever will be, free from all sin. He must have a great aptitude for the absurd who will impute to inspired wisdom such logic as that.



#### PROVERBS XX. 9.

"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"

THE remarks made above upon Eccles. vii. 20 have a direct and special bearing upon the passage before us. In looking over the world, as it lay out before him, and in contemplating his own life, and that of the mass of professed saints around him, one appalling fact impressed the writer's mind, and burdened his heart, to wit, the omnipresence of sin in the world, and even among those who professed to be pure and upright before God and man. Hence the sorrowful exclamation, Where, and upon whom, is not sin to be found? an exclamation as applicable now as it was then. Where is the basis here for the dogma, that no one saint ever was, and no one believer ever will be, free from conscious sin? The words employed imply

no such dogma as that, and no idea could have been more distant from the author's mind than any such dogma.

1 *KINGS VIII. 46.*

“If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not).”

THIS passage, as here rendered, implies and affirms a universally admitted truth, namely, that all men are sinners. To infer anything more than this is to affirm, not only what the words do not imply, but what involves a palpable absurdity. Solomon refers to a contingency which was likely to occur in the future history of his people, namely, sin in a form which would involve them in the judgments of God. How natural, under such an impression, is the thought of the universal sinfulness of the race, of the fact that all men are sinners. To suppose that under such circumstances his thoughts would not turn in this direction, but would run forward to the end of time, that none but saints and believers in Jesus would come before his mind, and but this one thought in regard to them, viz., that not one of them would, at any period of their lives, attain to freedom from conscious sin,—to suppose that this was the dogma that then came before his mind, is one of the most palpable absurdities that ever danced in the brain of a theologian. There is nothing in the circum-

stances to suggest such an idea, and nothing, we repeat, in the language employed that implies it.

The following note from the comprehensive Bible shows clearly that still another rendering should be given to the original of this passage :—  
 “The second clause of this verse, as it is here translated, renders this supposition, in the first clause, entirely nugatory, for if there be no man that sinneth not, it is useless to say, *if they sin*; but this contradiction is removed by rendering the original, ‘If they shall sin against Thee (for there is no man that *may* not sin),’ *i.e.*, there is no man impeccable, or infallible—none that is not liable to sin.” This rendering, which, as Dr. Clarke shows, is demanded by the conjugation in which the word translated sin is found, makes the whole passage self-consistent, and fraught with important meaning. This unquestionably gives us the true meaning of the author of this utterance. In no case, however, can this passage be legitimately made to sustain or favour the dogma of the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers.

---

#### JOB IX. 20.

“If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.”

HERE is a passage intended to have, and which undeniably has, no personal reference to any other individual but Job himself. Personal confessions

have no application but to the person confessing, and prove nothing, whatever, in regard to any other individual. If this personal confession of Job proves that no saint or believer in Jesus ever was, or ever will be, perfect in the sense of the word as here employed, then the personal confessions of David in the 51st Psalm, prove, undeniably, that every such saint has been, or will be, guilty of the sins which David there confesses. There is no escaping this conclusion.

Nor is Job here speaking of his own moral and spiritual state at the time when he uttered these words, or at the time when God affirmed that he was "a perfect man." Job, on the other hand, is speaking of his past life, and of entering into judgment with God in regard to the same. He had been a sinner and knew it. To deny the fact would prove his perverseness, and be adding sin to sin. This is the exact meaning of this confession. To attempt to make anything more of it, and above all, to reason from that confession—a confession exclusively personal, to the universal conscious sinfulness of all saints and believers to the end of time—is a most palpable and flagrant violation of all the laws of sound interpretation on the one hand, and of sound reasoning on the other.

## 2 PETER III. 18.

“ But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

THE correct reading of the original of the first sentence of this passage is this : But grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To grow in the grace of Christ implies continued advancement in whatever renders us the objects of his approval, love, and delight. To grow in the knowledge of Christ implies, not only advancement in intellectual apprehensions of His perfections, but a growth in our inward experience of the blessedness which results from communion and fellowship with Him, an increasing experience, and of a knowledge by experience of “ the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in us, the hope of glory.” Much is said in the New Testament of this experimental knowledge.

The above passage is everywhere cited by those who deny the doctrine of the Higher Life in disproof of that doctrine. Growth in grace, it is said, implies a kind and form of growth in which there is gradually less and less of sin and more and more of holiness. When individuals are urged to put away at once all sin, and accept of Christ as a complete Saviour from its power, their reply is : We do not believe such a doctrine as that. We believe, on the other hand, in growing in grace,

that is, in becoming gradually less and less sinful, and more and more holy. Hence the advocates of the Higher Life are accused of a disbelief in Christian growth, the quite common belief being that should we "cease from sin," we should cease altogether to "grow in grace." On this doctrine we remark:—

1. That if it is true that growth in grace implies, as is here affirmed, present sin, then undeniably Christ was a sinner and was conscious of the fact. In Luke ii. 52, it is affirmed absolutely that Christ did grow in grace. "And Jesus increased (grew) in wisdom and stature and in favour (grace) with God and man." The word here rendered *favour* is the identical word rendered *grace* in the passage under consideration. We have, then, "growth in grace," as a matter of fact, in the total absence of all sin, and the precept "grow in grace" does not of itself imply at all the presence of sin in any form.

2. If the command, "grow in grace," implies the presence of sin in the heart, and such growth implies a gradual giving-up of sin, then God has given us a positive command not to cease from all sin at once, but to do it *gradually*. We cast infinite dishonour upon God when we impute to Him any such precept as that.

3. If all Christians should "cease from sin," growth in grace would cease. Then since there is no sin in heaven, there will be no growth in that world of light and love. All virtue, all holiness, on the other hand,

will be at an eternal standstill there. Either this idea of growth in grace is utterly false, or this must be true of our eternal future, than which a more erroneous idea of heaven is hardly possible.

4. If the precept, "grow in grace," requires, and it does so according to the exposition under consideration—if it requires an advancement from certain degrees of sin to others less sinful, and from states of imperfect holiness to others less imperfect, then it is impossible for us to intend obedience to this precept, and at the same time intend full obedience to the will of God. It is a contradiction in terms to suppose that we can aim at the same moment at perfect and imperfect obedience to the will of God. An exposition that renders the divine precepts, as this probably does, thus contradictory, cannot be true.

5. Peter, before he wrote the above precept, we remark finally, set forth, under the immediate inspiration of the Spirit, the renunciation of all sin as the first condition of real growth in grace. "Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies, and envying, and all evil speaking" (in other words, all sin), "as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." Sin in the new-born soul is no more necessary to growth in holiness or grace, than is disease in the new-born babe requisite to its normal physical growth and development. Sin in the new-born soul is there as a moral and spiritual disease, and renders its moral and spiritual growth

unhealthy and unnatural, just as disease in the new-born babe renders its growth dwarfish, phthisical, or consumptive. When we have "put off the old man which is corrupt after the deceitful lusts," and "put on the new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness," then, and only then, are we prepared to "grow up in Christ in all things." When growth in grace in the Churches shall accord with God's revealed conditions and method, there will be "none sickly and none feeble" among their members. Wherever the old and unscriptural idea shall obtain, there will be none among them but "the sickly and the feeble."



## HEBREWS XII. 6-8.

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure (continue patient and acquiescent under) chastening (child discipline), God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement (child discipline), whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

CHASTISEMENT as above referred to, and as spoken of in the Bible, is of two kinds—reformatory punishment for sin—and disciplinary "trials of faith." The design of each is one and the same, and, therefore, not to be despised, nor fainted under, their common intent being "for our profit, that we may be partakers of His (God's) holiness." From the fact that all believers are subject to conscious chastening

of one or the other kind, it is inferred that no believers ever attain to a state of freedom from conscious sin—that is, that in no case under the trial does “patience have her perfect work, and the subject become perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” In regard to such an idea, we remark:—

1. The case of the earthly parent cited by the apostle proves the exact opposite to what this inference affirms. The earthly parent does induce obedience in the child, when the latter offends, and does so as occasion requires, by the rod. The rod, however, when properly applied, induces a state of obedience in which “scourging” is no more needed. Such was the experience of the sacred writer under divine chastisement. “Before I was afflicted,” he says, “I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word.” Chastisement, as “scourging” even, is no evidence at all of the perpetuity of conscious sin, unless the former is perpetual. Chastisement in no form is, in the case of believers, perpetual and uninterrupted, and therefore is, in itself, no proof whatever of the fact that they are always in disobedience.

2. It is a most servile and dishonourable view of the genuine Christian character and life, that we should regard ourselves as “bastards and not sons,” unless we are continually bleeding under the rod of rebuke and correction. To those who have such an experience as that, the language of our Father is: “Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will (or rather will ye) revolt more and more?”

The result of the rod in genuine Christian experience is thus represented by the Psalmist: "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned from his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child." The true parent, our Father above especially, does not scourge his child after chastisement has brought him into such a state as that. There is not in all that the Scriptures have said in respect to the discipline of the rod, on the one hand, and of affliction on the other, the shadow of a foundation for the dogma of the continued disobedience of all believers in Jesus.

3. The habit, we remark once more, of regarding all afflictive providences, scourgings for sin, and of always expecting to sin and be scourged therefor, the idea which induced the inference that such providences are of this character, tends to annihilate every sentiment of filial love, patience, and quietude in the heart. It is for this reason that so many Christians seem to lose almost all consciousness of God's parental love, and to regard Him as a heartless master, continuously holding over them, and driving them to their duties by, the rod and the lash. Nor will they ever come into such relations to Him, that the spontaneous outgoings of their hearts toward him will be, "My Father, my Father, Thou art the guide of my youth," as long as they continue to expect always to sin, and always to be beaten for the same.

## ROMANS VIII. 22, 23.

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

FROM such passages as the above, passages of the kind with which the Scriptures abound, the inference is drawn that we have here another proof of the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers in this life. If there were no sin, but believers were dead to it, and delivered from its power, all groaning, it is affirmed, would for ever cease. In regard to such an inference we remark:—

1. Groaning is no evidence at all of sin in any form. The opposite supposition implies sin in Christ and the Holy Spirit too, groaning being affirmed of each. “When Jesus, therefore, saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in Spirit and was troubled.” “Jesus then again groaning in himself, cometh to the sepulchre” (John x. 33—38). “The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. viii. 26).

2. Of the groanings attributed to believers, conscious sin is never specified as the cause: nor are such mental states ever presented as indicative of the presence of sin.

3. Of the groanings actually attributed to believers, two specific causes are assigned, namely,

—strong aspirations after future glory and blessedness—external afflictions, the main portions of which are “persecutions for righteousness’ sake.” “For in this (tabernacle, the body,) we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” “For we that are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened ; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life” (2 Cor. v. 2, 4). Groaning, and strongly desiring, or aspiring, after anything, are often employed in the same sense in the Scriptures.

The chief cause of these groanings, afflictions brought upon us as disciplinary providences excepted, are tribulations from the enemies of Christ, tribulations brought upon believers as persecutions for righteousness’ sake.” Believers are represented as being, in these things, “partakers of Christ’s sufferings.” Of these tribulations, Paul thus speaks to those believers who were then subject to such “fiery trials” : “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you ; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels.” Such is the language of all the New Testament writers in respect to the causes of the groanings under consideration.

4. Hence, the tribulations which induce these groanings are spoken of by these writers, not as reasons for repentance for conscious sin, but as

K

proofs of fidelity to Christ ; grounds of "assurance of hope," and sources of present joy and rejoicing. "My brethren," says James, speaking of these things, "count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations" (James xii.). "Beloved," says Peter, "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you : but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter iv. 12, 13). Such are the revelations of God on this subject. Groanings may be occasioned by judgments for sin, and when afflicted, we should also carefully and prayerfully inquire for the cause. He reasons most illogically, and unwisely, out of the Scriptures, however, who adduces the groanings therein attributed to believers, as proof of the continued conscious sinfulness of all men in this life. Nothing can be further from "the mind of the Spirit" than such deductions from such facts.



## PART II.

## THE 'TWO FOUNDATIONS.

*Doctrine of the continued conscious sinfulness of all Believers in this life. Its foundation.*

WE have now carefully considered all Scripture texts which are ever cited to prove the doctrine of the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers in this life, on the one hand, and in disproof of the opposite doctrine, that of full redemption from the condemnation and power of sin, on the other. If these passages are found to be void of validity for the proof and disproof for which they are adduced, then it must be admitted, that the doctrine, to verify which the said passages are adduced, has no foundation in the Word of God. In our examination of these passages, the following fundamental facts have been found to be true :—

1. For nearly, or quite, four centuries after the entire Scriptures were written, the entire Primitive Church had no suspicion that these passages have any bearing whatever against the doctrine of full salvation from condemnation and power of sin in this life, or in proof of the opposite doctrine. On the other hand, that Church, with wondrous unanimity, put the identical construction upon these passages, which the advocates of the doctrines of the Higher Life now do.

2. Since that period, the consent of the

ages has, throughout Christendom, vastly preponderated in favour of the primitive, and against the post-primitive, construction.

3. A careful and critical examination and exposition of these texts has most fully evinced the deduction that not one of them sustains the doctrine to verify which they have, in "these latter days," been adduced; while not a few of them, when rightly expounded, bear directly and strongly in favour of the doctrine of the Higher Life. Such are the actual facts of the case. Whatever may be true of the doctrine of the continued sinfulness of all believers while life continues, that doctrine is void of authority from the Word of God.

*Doctrine of Full Salvation from the Condemnation and Power of Sin. Its foundation.*

If the doctrine we teach should be found to rest upon no "more sure word of prophecy" than that whose only claim we have considered, we should never again—no, not for an hour—urge the former upon the regard of believers. What is the revealed basis on which this doctrine rests?

1.—*Christ's revealed power to save.*

The central rock, on which this doctrine rests, is Christ's revealed power to save from the condemnation and power of sin. "Christ," as we read (1 John iii. 5), "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." Sin itself, and not

condemnation for sin, is here directly referred to, this being the specific subject of discourse. "For their sakes," says our Saviour, "I sanctify (not in part dedicate) myself, that they also might be sanctified (not a part, dedicated) through (or for the promotion of) the truth." Here we are distinctly informed that "all the fulness" which, by appointment of the Father, dwells in Christ, all the merits and efficacy of His Atonement, all the infinitude of His grace and power, are specifically set apart, and consequently made available to our faith, for our personal sanctification and divine mission and work. "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me," said our Saviour, again—that is, all the resources of the Divine Infinity, are put into My hands, and made subject to My disposal. "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Here we are distinctly and specifically taught that Christ is ever with us to exert, as we shall avail ourselves of it by faith, all this power for our spiritual and eternal good, and for the success of His cause in our hands. Everywhere in the Bible the *power* of God is revealed as a sure ground of faith and hope. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." We lay this down as a self-evident principle, that *whatever form or degree of sanctification Christ, or the Father in Him, or the Spirit through Him, has specifically revealed Himself as able to induce in us, we are, by such revelation, authorised to expect from Him, and that in the form and degree specified.* We

here adduce three passages which reveal to us in specific form what each person of the Trinity is able to do for us in this matter, and which reveal the power of each as united with that of both the others to insure this one end. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 29). "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. ix. 8). "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to (by means of) the power (of the Spirit) that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. iii. 21). The meaning of these passages is too plain to be misunderstood, and all expositors agree in respect to their meaning. What we affirm is this: the revealed power of the Godhead thus to save us from all sin authorises us to expect salvation "to the uttermost," or, God's revealed power to save, to bless, and to "keep from falling," is, in no sense or form, a basis of hope or trust. Will the opposers of the doctrine of the Higher Life, if we have erred in our deduction here, show us wherein the error consists?

2.—*Revealed Provisions and Promises of Grace.*

Let us now turn our attention to the revealed Provisions and Promises of Grace for our present

sanctification. The principle which lies at the basis of our reasoning here is this: Whatever form or degree of present sanctification is *clearly specified* in these provisions and promises, is to all believers an object of assured hope and trust. Provisions not available to our faith are, undeniably, no provisions at all. The promises are revealed for the specifically declared purpose, "that by these," by embracing them by faith, "we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust." Of the passages pertaining to the provisions of grace we adduce but three: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 3, 4). The words, "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," show absolutely that the provisions here revealed are for believers in this life. Equally manifest is the fact, that the words, "righteousness of the law," represent righteousness, not in the sense of *justification*, but of *obedience* to what the law requires. Such obedience is the specific and exclusive subject of discourse in the connection in which the words are here employed. Besides, the words, "righteousness of the law," are never employed to represent the doctrine of "justification by faith," but always in the sense under consideration. Christ, then, has

made provision for our full present obedience to the law and will of God—provisions, by availing ourselves of which by faith, the “righteousness of the law,” the righteousness or obedience which the law requires, “may be fulfilled in us.” Consider one other passage: “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Pet. ii. 24). (See, also, Eph. v. 25-27; 1 John iii. 5, 6; Tit. ii. 14.) Of the promises which Christ, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, has absolutely pledged Himself to render real in our experience, “When He shall be enquired of by us to do it for us,” we cite only the two following: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them” (Ez. xxxvi. 25-27). “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thess. v. 23, 24). (See, also, Phil. iv. 19; Deut. xxx. 6; 1 Cor. x. 13.) No candid enquirer after truth can misapprehend the real meaning of such

promises, and as to their meaning, all commentators, as far as we know, agree. If, then, the revealed provisions and promises of grace are a sure foundation of faith and hope, the doctrine under consideration rests upon the rock of truth.

3.—*Christ's Intercessory Prayer for all Believers.*

We now recur to the specific blessings presented to our faith, in our Saviour's Intercessory Prayer for all believers. Let the reader carefully ponder this prayer, and distinctly notice the blessings therein specified—blessings, every one of which distinctly imply utter separation from all sin, a perfected union between us and Him, such as exists between Him and the Father, His abiding in us, as the Father abides in Him, and our being “made perfect in one.” Nor can there be a doubt that this prayer refers exclusively to believers in this life. Believers are to be brought into this state of perfection in Christ, as a means to an end, the salvation of the world. But to the prayer itself:—“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; that they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me : and the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one : I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast

loved them, as Thou has loved me." In respect to this prayer, we conclude—and not a shadow of doubt arises, or can rest upon our mind in regard to the absolute validity of that conclusion—that every blessing specified in that prayer, and in the form and degree therein specified, fully "accords with the Will of God"—that every blessing designated, the Eternal Father holds in readiness for our faith, and that whenever "He shall be inquired of to do it for us," that prayer will become a divine reality in our experience.

We here rest our cause, not referring to other grounds, equally immovable, on which the doctrine we maintain has its revealed basis. If the specifically revealed power of the Godhead—the equally specific provisions and promises of grace, and blessings undeniably specified in the intercessory prayer of our Saviour do not present an immovable basis for absolute "assurance of faith," "assurance of hope,—and assurance of understanding," then "the foundations are destroyed," and the Bible stands revealed as one of the most unmeaning and deceptive books that ever was written.

*Professed attainments, when credible.*

We have now before us a clearly revealed test, by which we may determine the *credibility* of any professed attainments in the divine life. When such attainments fall clearly within the circle of Christ's revealed power to save and to bless—when they

are as manifestly included within the circle of the revealed provisions and promises of grace, and are as distinctly and specifically implied or expressed in the intercessory prayer of our Saviour, then, nothing can be more credible in itself, than are such affirmed attainments, and the question of their actual possession, like that of regeneration or justification, becomes a question of fact, to be determined by its own proper evidence. This is the only reasonable and revealed test, by which the professions of the advocates of the Higher Life are to be tried.

*Evidence from experience.*

Tested by the actual experience of the vast majority of professing Christians, the Rest of Faith must be set down as among the impossibilities of Faith. The almost exclusive reason why such believers regard Rom. vii. as revealing the divinely-drawn portraiture of Christian experience in its highest forms, is the conscious fact, that what they there read does accord with their experience. Then, on the other hand, saints in all ages—who have regarded this chapter as portraying a legal, in opposition to a faith, experience, who rest their faith and hope upon Christ's revealed power to save and to bless—upon the revealed provisions and promises of grace, and upon Christ's intercessory prayer for all believers—do attain to forms of conscious experience and life in all respects the opposite to the portraiture drawn in that chapter.

What evidence do we find in the experience of the former class that, beyond what they experience, God has not "prepared some better things for us"? The unvarying experience of the latter class, on the other hand, absolutely verifies the fact, that their faith rests upon the clear revelations of the Word of God.

---

### PART III.

---

#### TESTED BY THEIR FRUITS, AND INTRINSIC TENDENCIES.

---

#### ISAIAH XLIII. 21.

**"The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake. He will magnify the Law, and make it honourable."**

HERE we have a revelation, full and distinct, of the light in which the Infinite and Eternal Father regards the redemptive work of Christ, and the reason for this regard. In this work Christ stands revealed to the world, and to the universe, as "the brightness (the most luminous and impressive form) of the Father's glory, and the express image (the

most full and distinct manifestation) of His substance." His work is, in every particular, an absolutely perfected and finished work, so finished and perfected that the eye of God cannot discover a single defect in it.

The central reason why God thus regards this redemptive work of Christ is given in the second clause of the text: "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." This conducts us to the theme of this discourse, the great idea of the law, as "magnified and made honourable" through the redemptive work of Christ. We must bear this in mind, that it was no part of this work to render the law more or less sacred in God's regard. God entertains an infinite and unchangeable respect for His own law, and nothing has ever occurred nor can occur, to increase or diminish that respect. The purpose of God is to induce a similar respect in the mind, not only of every believer in Jesus, but in that of every unfallen being in existence, so that all, in common, shall be as unchangeable in their hatred of sin and love of righteousness as is God Himself. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us," and perfected the redemptive work for the revealed purpose of "making an end of sin and bringing in everlasting righteousness." The final result of this work will be the introduction in all minds, and throughout all worlds, outside of the dark realm of the Second Death, of such a sentiment in regard to sin, and such a respect for the law of righteousness, that, to eternity, there will

never occur a single act of violation of the divine law. God, the Eternal Father, has, then, good reason to be well pleased with the redemptive work of Christ. Let us now turn our thoughts directly to the great doctrine of the text—"the law of God magnified and made honourable" through this redemptive work. In accomplishing this object, we will, first of all, direct attention to

*The Law itself.*

Of this Law, in the language of another, "nothing less than this can be said, that its home is the bosom of God, and its voice, the harmony of the universe." Its home is the bosom of God, because, that there, from eternity, this law has had its fixed dwelling-place, all God's activity, thoughts, purposes, and ways, being in absolute harmony with its spirit and principles. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and "God is love," love as representing and implying all possible forms and degrees of moral excellence. There is still another reason why the bosom of God is the home of this law. As presented to the universe, and imposed upon creatures, it is simply the representation of His thought and will, as He has entertained the same from eternity.

This law is the harmony of the universe, because that as far as, and wherever, full obedience to its requirements obtains, absolute harmony and union are assured between God and His creatures on the one hand, and between them, one towards another,

on the other. In bringing the holy, intelligent creation into absolute conformity to the spirit, principles, and precepts of this law, discord in any form, or degree, becomes absolutely impossible throughout the wide domain of the Kingdom of Light.

We may, perhaps, attain to some proper apprehension of this subject, by contemplating it in the light of a single passage of inspiration. "There is one lawgiver." One of the greatest thinkers America ever knew, the honourable Daniel Webster, once remarked that there was one passage of Scripture—a passage upon which he had for many years strongly desired to write a sermon. When he had reflected, however, upon the great truth therein embodied, he had found that truth too vast for his capacities, so that he had been deterred from attempting to accomplish the end desired. The passage he remarked is this, "There is one lawgiver." It is more than thirty years since we heard that statement. Since that time, that passage has been to us a central object of thought. Yet the truth it embodies has ever appeared too vast for our capacities. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Yet there are features and elements of this truth which we can understand. One is this : God is the only being in existence who has the prerogative of making or prescribing laws for His rational offspring. All moral legislation obligatory upon rational, moral natures comes from

God, and has authority but as expressive of His will. To obey any law which prohibits what God commands, or commands what He prohibits, is treason toward God.

There is, also, as revealed in this passage, not only one, and only one, lawgiver, but one and only one—law, one common law for all moral beings in all relations and conditions of existence. This law is the will of God when revealed as such, to His creatures, a law, first of all, written upon the universal conscience, and then written out in the Scriptures of truth. Conformity to this law is denominated holiness, righteousness, virtue, purity, and perfectness; and nonconformity: unholiness, unrighteousness, iniquity, and impurity.

*The Law when Magnified and made Honourable.*

The law is "magnified and made honourable" when, in its spirit, principles, and endlessly diversified applications, it becomes the central object and theme of thought, regard, and discourse—when such absolute respect for its requirements is felt as to insure prompt and implicit obedience to the same in all their forms—when such obedience insures to the subject the highest honour, esteem, and respect, and disobedience covers the perpetrator with the deepest shame, disesteem, and reprobation—and when, in short, there is an omnipresent interest in, and supreme "love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity." Whatever induces such results as these, "magnifies the law and makes it honourable," and this is what Christ has

accomplished through His redemptive work. This end He has accomplished, we remark.

*How Christ has magnified, and does magnify, the Law, and makes it honourable.*

1. By the *absolute obedience* which He rendered to the law, and the deep respect which He manifested for it, during the entire period of His incarnation, and humiliation on earth. When Christ emptied Himself of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was—"took upon Himself the form (condition) of a man, and was made in the likeness of men," subject to all their trials and temptations, and responsibilities too—the eyes, not only of God, but of the universe, were fixed upon Him, to see how the case would turn with Him. Will He stand, or will He fall, as Adam did? absorbed the thought of heaven and hell too. When it was perceived that in all respects, and in every condition of being and life, even in death, His obedience was perfect and absolute, that not one jot or tittle of what the law requires failed in Him: then, in the presence of such an example of respect for the law, and obedience to its precepts, the holiness of every being in heaven took on the form of eternal stability. To such a degree was "the law magnified and made honourable," that to eternity no creature there will disobey it. The same is true in this world, just as far as that example is known and appreciated. By what means could the Most High so effectually "magnify

L

His law, and make it honourable," as, in the person of Christ, to assume the condition of the creature in its worst and most trying possible forms, and there, as an example to the universe, render full and absolute obedience to His own law.

In all his teachings and associations, Christ manifested the same absolute respect for the will and law of God. "Whosoever did the will of God," whatever his condition in other respects, "was to him as a brother, and sister, and mother," and whosoever refused such obedience, all other conditions and relations notwithstanding, were the objects of His disesteem and reprobation. The love of righteousness (obedience) and hatred of iniquity (disobedience) were omnipresent, and all-impressive, manifestations of His entire teaching and life.

2. In His *special redemptive* work, that of atonement—every thing possible is done by our Saviour to "magnify the law, and make it honourable." Atonement, what is it? A substitute for the penalty of violated law, a substitute fully ensuring the end which the penalty was intended to insure. In the forgiveness of sin through this divine atonement, the law is not made void, but established. That is done which renders it, not only merciful, but *just*, in God, to "justify the believer in Jesus." What awe-inspiring impressiveness is imparted to the law by the forgiveness of sin, on such a ground as this.

3. In the *conditions of pardon* and acceptance with God, the same respect for the law is most

impressively conspicuous. Before God will listen at all to a request from the sinner for pardon, the latter must, in all sincerity, justify the law both in its precepts and penalties—confess the fact, inexcusableness, and infinite criminality of all his acts of disobedience—and having “broken off his sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by cleaving unto the Lord,” he must seek and accept forgiveness as a matter of exclusive grace and mercy through Christ. Thus again is “the law magnified and made honourable.”

4. Let us now turn our thoughts to the *revealed relations* of Christ to all believers. The revealed object of His mission and atoning grace is to “save His people from their sins”—to make provisions by which “the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them,” by which God’s laws might be “put into their hearts, and written in their minds,” and they caused to “walk in God’s statutes, and to keep His judgments and do them.” As the mediator of the New Covenant, He is revealed as “able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him”—to “make all grace abound towards them, so that they, having all sufficiency for all things, may abound unto every good work”—and as “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Then, as the same Mediator, He stands pledged by absolute promise, that when He is enquired of by us to do it for us, “He will sprinkle clean water upon us and render us clean, that He will cleanse us from all

our filthiness, and from all our idols ; that he will put His Spirit within us, and cause us to walk in God's statutes, and keep His judgments, and do them"—"that he will sanctify us wholly, and preserve our whole spirit and soul and body blameless unto His coming." Such are the revealed relations of Christ to us in the sphere of our sanctification, or "obedience to the will and law of God," relations in all of which the law is specifically "magnified and made honourable."

5. In the final Consummation, we remark, in the last place, the work under consideration will be rendered complete and eternal. All who have repented of sin—"washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"—and returned to full obedience to the law and will of God, will, in the presence of an assembled universe, be received into the Kingdom of Light ; while all, of every name, who have refused to return to obedience will be "covered with shame and everlasting contempt." Christ will then have so "magnified the law, and made it honourable," that as we have said, outside of the realm of the Second Death, sin will never again have place in the universe of God, Christ "having made an end of sin, and brought in EVERLASTING righteousness."

*When do believers in Jesus magnify the law and make it honourable, as Christ did ?*

"The glory which the Father gave to Christ, He has given to His followers." It is their glory and

privilege to "magnify the law, and make it honourable," in their sphere, and through their lives, example, and teachings, as He did in His. This high end they accomplish when, and only when, their respect for all God's commandments, and their obedience to "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," take form from Christ's example, when their esteem and love for those who do, and their disesteem for those who do not, "the will of our Father in heaven," and when their "love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity" are a copy of those of Christ.

In the primitive age of the Church, when men would affirm anything to be impossible to man, they were accustomed to say: "You can no more do that than you can induce a Christian to sin." When the visible obedience of believers extorted such confessions from the world, then it was that "the Gentiles came to the light of the Church, and kings to the brightness of her rising." So it ever will be. When believers in Jesus show visible "respect to all God's commandments," and prompt and implicit "obedience to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," then men fear and tremble at the thought of their own sins, and magnify and honour God's law, by "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." When believers visibly fall short of this, then "the name of God is blasphemed, and His law despised, through them."

In heaven an all-pervading public sentiment

exists, requiring of each and every individual implicit and perfect obedience to the law and will of God, and a universal expectation that such obedience will be rendered. By such a sentiment "the law is magnified and made honourable" there. When the same sentiment shall pervade the Church on earth in regard to all its members, then will "the law," in a similar manner, "be magnified and made honourable" here. When, also, in the heart and teachings of the Church, the grace of Christ shall be magnified as fully adequate and available to enable each believer to "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God," the law will thereby be magnified also. In making and revealing such grace, God reveals infinite respect for that law. Had He provided grace less adequate, or not fully available to our faith, He would have manifested indifference to His own law.

*When is a law rendered the object of disesteem and disregard?*

A very important inquiry here arises—namely, When is a law rendered the object of disesteem and disregard? This result arises, we answer, when subjects are in such relations to the law that they may violate its spirit, principles, and requirements with very little or no sense of the criminality of such conduct—when they may confess such disobedience without shame, or seeming remorse—when little esteem and honour attaches to the fact of obedience, and little disesteem and dishonour to

that of disobedience—when little obligation is felt or cherished to obey, on the one hand, and not to disobey on the other—and finally, when the love of righteousness, and hatred of iniquity, have ceased to be supreme in the mind. Whenever, and wherever, such results as these appear, but one cause can be assigned for the same—viz., a loss of sacred respect for the law itself. No principles, doctrines, or teachings, we remark, can be so pernicious and subversive in their tendency and influence, as those which intrinsically tend to relax the sacredness of the will and law of God upon the obedience, full and implicit, of His creatures. No one will question the strict validity of these statements. Our last and not least important inquiry is this. What principles, doctrines, and forms of teaching, do intrinsically tend to induce such pernicious and subversive results? To this inquiry we answer:

*Principles, doctrines, and teachings, which "make void the law," or tend to relax a sense of its sacredness.*

1. The first that we notice is this: *Familiarizing the minds of believers, converts especially, with the fact that they will sin—sin daily in heart, thought, word, and act.* All are aware of the almost irresistible influence which a full conviction that a specific event will inevitably occur exerts upon the mind. Death has, in many instances, been induced by the simple belief that it would occur. Familiarize your convert with the fact, and induce in him the

absolute conviction, that he inevitably will sin, and that in the forms above stated, and you have rendered two events equally inevitable—the fact that he will thus sin, and that he will soon become possessed of a conscience seared and deadened to a sense of the criminality of the sin which he does commit. No other results will or can follow. We lay this down as a principle that knows no exception, a principle verified by the entire mass of facts that lie all around us in all the Churches, that Christians manifest little remorse, and no shame, in respect to forms of sin which they expect and are expected to commit, while their remorse and shame are deep and intense in respect to those classes of sins which they are expected not to commit. “Forsaking their first love,” worldly mindedness and conformity, an evil temper, covetousness, and sins of a similar character, Christians generally expect, and are expected to commit; while the grosser sins of blasphemy, theft, lying, drunkenness, and licentiousness, they are expected to avoid. Search Christendom, and you will find the consciences of believers comparatively dead to the criminality of sins of the former class, and all alive to that of the latter. There are communities called Christian, where Christians are expected to perpetrate the latter as well as the former class of sins, and here you will find the conscience just as callous to the criminality of the one, as of the other class. There are countries where the absence of the virtue of chastity in woman, and a robber-life

in man, are considered as not incompatible with the possession of Christian character and an assured hope of eternal life, and where Christians are expected to commit these very sins. Here we find the same absence of shame and remorse, for these crimes, that we do in our Churches in respect to the sins to which we have referred. Talk to those adulteresses and robbers about the vices and crimes which they perpetrate, and they will listen to you with the most shameless and unblushing effrontery. Talk to these same individuals about eating meat on Friday, neglecting the confessional, the sacrament, making the prescribed crossings, or counting their beads, and you will find that here their consciences are most quick and wakeful. The reason is obvious. In the former case, you speak of sins which the subjects expect, and are expected, to commit. In the latter you refer to imagined duties which they expect, and are expected, not to omit. The principle is a universal one, and just as fixed in its operation as are any of the laws of nature. Teach the convert that he will sin, sin daily in heart, thought, word, and act, and these results will inevitably follow. In the first place, he will sin, and will go farther in sin than you expect. Then, since he does nothing but what he expects, and is expected, to do, the fact of sin will not startle or alarm him. As a consequence his conscience will slumber, and gradually become callous to the criminality of his sin, and if he does not sleep the

sleep of death "on the enchanted ground," he will "be saved so as by fire." By such teachings he is placed under the most perilous influences conceivable.

One of the main sources of the peril connected with these teachings lies in their *indefiniteness*. The subject, as he is assured and made to believe, will sin, sin daily in heart, thought, word, and deed. Of the *form* and *degree* of the sin, which, as he is assured, is inevitable (grosser vices and crimes excepted), he has no apprehensions whatever. When he aims at perfection, as he is taught that he must, he does so under the absolute assurance of failure, failure in what form, and to what extent, of this, the grosser sins excepted, he has no conception. Can believers be placed in circumstances more open and defenceless to the deadly assaults of "the world, the flesh, and the devil," than they are when under the full power of such beliefs and expectations as these? If we could only know the *form* and *extent* in which sin is inevitable, we should have before our minds a definite standard of practicable attainment, and should know what to aim at with rational hope. Oppressed with the absolute assurance of falling into sin, into what forms and to what extent we know not and cannot know, Satan can ask for no more open exposures for "his fiery darts," than he here finds the believer in.

Impress the convert, on the other hand, that what, and only what, is expected of him is a sacred "respect for all God's commandments"—

obedience, prompt and implicit, to "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;" that he is no more expected to sin in any one form than in any other; that a common criminality and peril to the soul's eternity, attends sin in all forms alike; and that when sin, in any form, has been committed, nothing but "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," can save the soul from death, and then, and only then, "will his righteousness go forth as brightness and his salvation as a lamp that shineth," and "God's law will be magnified and made honourable" through Him.

2. Suppose, now, that the convert, in common with other believers, is not only familiarised with the fact, and impressed with the conviction, that he will continuously sin, but that this conviction is confirmed by the assurance with which he is also familiarised, that the holiest individuals that have ever lived have thus sinned; such individuals, for example, as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, the Prophets, Apostles, Paul particularly, and all believers in all ages who are most venerated for the sanctity of their lives. Even these men, the convert is assured, did sin daily in heart, thought, word, and deed, and he must not entertain the proud and presumptuous idea of being more holy than they were. What will, what must, be the inevitable result of such teachings upon all who receive them as truths of God? But one result ever has followed, or can follow. The degree of the sin to be committed is unknown; sin in its

grosser forms, which no believer is expected to commit, excepted. Hence, while the convert avoids these, nothing will occur to disturb his fears, or alarm his conscience. However far he may depart from God, he will find in the sins of these holiest of men, sins with which you have familiarised his mind, just the opiate which will stupefy his conscience, and perfect his carnal security. While he may, as he no doubt will, admit the fact that he is not where and what he should be, he will do so without shame, or disquieting remorse. Admonish him for his shortcomings, and he will confess the fact ; but will find his apology in the example of those holy men and women, whose sins, instead of whose faith, you have really taught him to follow.

Apply this principle to specific forms of Christian duty in any of the particular relations of life, and what would the inevitable result be? Respect for parental authority and other kindred duties are, in fact and form, prescribed in the Bible as essential elements of religious duty. Suppose, now, that parents should educate their children in this wise : First of all such children are taught that they *ought* to "obey their parents in the Lord," and are induced to resolve and promise to do so. At the same time they are assured, and that as a revealed truth of God, a truth which they will disbelieve at the peril of their souls, that no child since the fall, the child Jesus excepted, "hath, by any grace received in this life," been able fully to obey such precepts, but "daily doth break them in thought,

word, and deed." You then confirm your child in his expectation of thus sinning, by assuring him that you and all other parents thus sinned when you were children, and that this is true of all the men and women whom he holds in the deepest esteem and veneration. You know very well that under such teaching all children would become shamelessly lawless and disobedient, and void of natural affection. Suppose that teachers in our schools should give out their rules, and none but wholesome ones, and should then induce their pupils to resolve upon, and most solemnly pledge, full obedience. We will then suppose that these pupils are furnished with a manual containing such an item as this: No pupil, since schools were organised, hath been able fully to obey such rules, but daily doth break them in heart, thought, word, and act. The pupils are then assured that all teachers, that all parents, and all the wisest and best men and women of all ages, did thus sin, when they were pupils; and that present pupils should not expect to be better than their predecessors. We all know what the result would be. The same lawless, remorseless, and shameless results would undeniably follow from similar teachings and beliefs in every conceivable sphere of human life. Can a sentiment, thus subversive in all other relations, be of hallowed influence in the family of God and school of Christ?

3. Suppose now, that the convert and all believers are further taught that God has abundantly, in His

own Word, revealed the fact—a fact which we must believe, or “make God a liar”—that all Christians do, and will, sin daily in heart, thought, word, and act, and that it is a perilous error to believe or expect the contrary. You go further, and furnish your pupils with numberless affirmed proof texts, confirming the belief and expectations under consideration; thus inducing in the mind the habit of searching the Bible, not to find “the grace which bringeth salvation,” but proofs of the fact of the absolute certainty that the subject will sin. The conviction of the inevitable certainty of actual sin is thus confirmed by affirmed specific revelations from God Himself. Surrounded as the convert is by numberless temptations and besetments from the world, the flesh, and Satan, an infinite weight is thus added to the pressure that lures him onward in the direction of sin.

4. A wide step, we will suppose, is now taken in advance of all this. The convert and other believers are impressed with the conviction that it is a revealed and fixed arrangement of divine purpose and grace, not only that no believer shall in this life be “sanctified wholly,” be “saved unto the uttermost,” or be “redeemed from all iniquity,” but that he shall be *gradually* recovered from the power of sin. You assure the convert that while “Christ can, by one word of His power, render us sinless, God is glorified, not in the instantaneous perfection of His redeemed, but by their gradual

deliverance from imperfection." "Gradual growth out of the evil into the good is the divine law (method) of holiness." "Man prefers the instantaneous to the gradual, but will he prevail against God?" The above are cited from the writings of a leading divine of this age. When your pupil has received such a doctrine as that, and received it as a revealed truth of God, will he, can he, regard the degree of sin, under the power of which, by divine choice and fixed purpose, he is left, the degree of sin, deliverance from which would be a reversal of "the divine law of holiness"?—will he, can he, regard this amount and degree of sin, as in reality, "an evil thing and bitter"? You may—and he may—call it such, but in the presence of such apprehensions, neither He nor you can regard it as such. Recognising yourself, on the other hand, as under "the divine law of holiness," as in the state in which alone "God is glorified," you cannot, if you respect the law under which God has, as you believe, immutably placed you, but be content to continue under the degree of sin where God leaves and continues you. It is thus that men "make void the law of God by their traditions."

5. The same baleful influence results from those forms of teaching in which sin itself is represented as an infinite evil, while "the sense of sin" is eulogized and magnified as of immortal benefit to the soul. "The sense of sin," says a distinguished theologian, "is like the atmosphere in which the

earthly bird wings its flight, for all its powers are adapted to a resisting medium." "The sense of sin," he says again, "is to the soul what the air is to the bird. In our present imperfect state it is essential to its growth." The immutable condition, as this author afterwards states, of the existence of "a sense of sin," is the continued conscious presence of sin in the heart. How can a spiritual atmosphere, without which spiritual life and growth are impossible, be regarded as an infinite good, and the sin without which the existence of the atmosphere is impossible, be in the mind's regard our infinite evil? "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" "Abiding in Christ," "faith in His name," and the power of the Spirit received by faith, are God's revealed atmosphere of spiritual growth and development. For all "the sense of sin" needed, "the time past of our lives," we are assured, "may suffice."

6. We will now refer to the *covenant obligations*, which every convert is required to assume on his entrance into the Church. In every Church the convert is required, under the solemnity of an oath, to pledge himself to God, and to His people, to abstain wholly from all sin, and to render implicit obedience to "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In all of the Churches in which the doctrine under consideration is received, the convert is required to assume such sacred obligations under the avowed expectation of daily violating them in heart, thought, word,

and deed. We have very high authority for affirming that "it is better not to vow than to vow and not pay." What must be the tendency of vowing to God and man with the avowed expectation of not paying? Years after the English government was established in India, the English judges there affirmed that they had never found a native of that country whose oath could be at all relied on in any case where the interest or desire of the witness impelled him to perjury. The reason, and only reason, was the universal expectation that all oaths would be of this character. The same expectation would undeniably impart the same character to oaths in all courts of justice on earth. Is this principle reversed in respect to covenant vows or oaths of still greater solemnity—vows taken by every convert on his entrance into full standing in the Church? We contemplate with horror such vows. If it was the fixed plan to induce general indifference to covenant vows, and to sin itself, what means, we ask, in all sincerity, could be adopted, better adapted to that end, than constraining the convert, in fact and form, to covenant with God and man, and to consider himself under perpetual covenant obligations to do what he avowedly expects not to do, and not to do what he deliberately expects to do? In entering into the married relation, each party solemnly pledges absolute fidelity to the other. What if, in all such transactions, those vows were assumed with

M

the avowed expectation of daily violating them in heart, thought, word, and deed, and with the avowed belief that, since the fall, no husband or wife has been able to keep such a covenant? Covenanting with God is represented in the Scriptures as a marriage. Can it be that making vows to God, with the avowed expectation of daily violating them, does not have the same fatal tendency that ordinary marriage vows assumed with similar expectations, would have?

6. In prayer, we remark again, grace is specifically asked for, that the subject may "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Yet, wherever the belief under consideration obtains, such prayers are offered with the avowed expectation of not receiving the blessing asked for. What is the immutable tendency of thus praying, but to render prayer, in all its forms, an unmeaning and heartless service?

As sin, according to this sentiment, is an omnipresent fact in experience, the confession of sin in every prayer is required by those who hold this sentiment. And what is the character of the confessions which we commonly hear? If there is anything which must be "a smoke in the nose" of the Almighty, it must be an unfeeling and heartless confession of sin. Yet this is the smoke which is constantly going up from the prayers offered everywhere, under the expectation of sinning daily in heart, thought, word, and deed. With what shameless indifference, as if sin was

regarded as the merest trifle, are the confessions repeated: "We have done many things that we ought not to have done, and left undone many things which we ought to have done." In such prayers individuals "become mockers, and render their bands strong," and just such prayers will be offered whenever and wherever the sentiment under consideration shall obtain.

7. The same result, we remark finally, follows from another form of teaching. When the duty and possibility of being "cleansed from all sin," through the grace of Christ, and the power of "the Eternal Spirit" are presented, we are gravely told that we think thus because we have *lowered the standard* of duty, and relaxed the claims of the law and will of God. "Had you," we are told, "such a standard of moral excellence before your mind as rises before ours, and were God's claims upon our love and obedience as sacred in your regard as they are in ours, you would not speak as you do." A certain lady was in the constant habit of eulogising her minister as one of the greatest theologians of the age. "Why," she exclaimed, on a particular occasion, "so deep and profound are his teachings, that I don't pretend to understand him." You profess, my friend, through your teachings, to "magnify the law and make it honourable" by representing its claims as so high and sacred, that you never think of keeping them. You will effectively secure this end when, and only when, those claims shall become so high and

sacred in your regard, that you will never think of anything else but keeping them—of anything else than prompt and full obedience to “every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” God never eulogises His law by raising it above the provisions of His grace, the power of His spirit, and the possibilities of faith. “This commandment,” He says, “which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” This, also, is just what Paul affirms to be true of “the word of faith,” as taught by himself and inspired associates. Placing God’s requirements above the provisions and promises of His grace, “the power of the Spirit,” and the possibilities of faith, does nothing else but impart a fatal opiate to the conscience, and enable individuals to sin without shame and almost without remorse.

---

### CONCLUSION.

Such, undeniably, are the necessary fruits and immutable tendencies of the doctrine of the continued conscious sinfulness of all believers in this life. In no sense or form does it tend to "magnify the law or make it honourable." It does, on the other hand, immutably tend to perpetuate sin in the heart and life, to strengthen the power of every evil principle within us, to sear the conscience to a sense of sin, to deaden the fervour of all religious duty, to render all-powerful "the law of sin which is in the members," on the one hand, and, on the other, to hang weights upon our faith in the availability of God's revealed power to save, in the efficacy of the revealed provisions and promises of grace, of Christ's Intercessory Prayer, and of the power of the Spirit. All who read their Bibles under the influence of this doctrine read it with a veil before their minds, a veil which hides from their hearts God's truth in its divinest forms. Soon, we believe, that veil will be taken away, and then will believers, "with open face, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

---

BOOKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED  
BY  
HAUGHTON & Co.

---

*Price 3s. 6d., Beautifully bound.*

HOMES OF OLD ENGLISH WRITERS.

BY THE REV. S. W. CHRISTOPHERS,

AUTHOR OF "HYMN WRITERS AND THEIR HYMNS."

"A most interesting book, containing a variety of incidents in the lives of our great authors, with choice specimens of their writings."

"It is a good while since we have enjoyed a book so much as this, and hope that the accomplished author will give us, ere long, the pleasure of accompanying him on a visit to the Homes of other old English Writers. In justice to the publishers, we must add that the work is elegantly got up."—*Christian Age.*

"It is most enjoyable."—*Christian World.*

"Thoughtful readers will find a rich treat in the 'Homes of Old English Writers.'"—*Our Own Fireside.*

"It could only have been written by a person of wide genial culture, with a keen appreciation of the beautiful everywhere, and with considerable literary art and skill; for wealth of thought and gracefulness of style adorn every page."

---

*Now ready, Crown 8vo. Bevelled Boards, Gold Lettered,  
Red Edges, 320 pages.*

IN VERY LARGE TYPE.

*Price 3s. 6d., Post Free.*

AN ILLUSTRATED EDITION OF  
PRECIOUS TRUTHS.

BY S. M. HAUGHTON.

"We wish that a copy of this 'PRECIOUS' book could be placed in the hands of every one who is able to read, as it contains the very marrow of the 'GLORIOUS GOSPEL.'"

---

HAUGHTON & CO., 10, PATERNOSTER ROW.

*Price 3s. 6d., Elegantly Bound, Gilt Edges, well Illustrated.*

# PICTURES OF HEROES,

AND

## LESSONS FROM THEIR LIVES,

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WATCHERS FOR THE DAWN," ETC.

"Here are lives of great men, which are full of instruction and encouragement to the young. They remind us that in life's struggles

'We may make our lives sublime.'

We strongly recommend this volume to the notice of parents and teachers as being a suitable gift-book for all seasons."—*Living Waters.*

"This is really a pleasing volume, take it in any way you please—as a source of instruction or as a source of interest."—*Inverness Advertiser.*

---

*Price 2s. 6d., Cloth Bound.*

THE

## Wesleyan Methodist Itinerary.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH HALL.

Being an Alphabetical Arrangement of all the Circuits in Great Britain.

And showing at a glance the Ministers who have Travelled in them from the commencement.

---

*Price 3s. Bound in Cloth. Illustrated.*

## PROVIDENCE ILLUSTRATED ;

OR,

## THE GUIDING HAND.

"This is a very interesting book, and contains many striking Incidents of Divine Interposition."

---

HAUGHTON & CO., 10, PATERNOSTER ROW.

*Just out, a Large Type Edition of*  
**FLOXE'S BOOK OF MARTYRS.**

352 pages, well Illustrated, printed on Toned Paper,  
gilt edges. *Price 2s. 6d.*

---

*Just Published, a New Edition of*  
**BUNYAN'S Pilgrim's Progress.**  
Printed on Toned Paper, Illustrated, Good Type, 400 pages.  
*Price 2s. 6d.*

---

*Just Published, a New Edition of*  
**BUNYAN'S HOLY WAR.**  
Printed on Toned Paper, in Good Type. *Price 2s. 6d.*

---

*Now Ready, price 1s. Limp Cloth, and 2s. Elegantly Bound,  
Cloth Boards, with Portrait,*

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF  
**“FOOLISH DICK”**  
(RICHARD HAMPTON),

The Cornish Pilgrim Preacher; with Introduction and  
Notes by REV. S. W. CHRISTOPHERS,  
AUTHOR OF “HOMES OF OLD ENGLISH WRITERS,” ETC.

“We hope this deeply interesting book will obtain a wide  
circulation.”—*Christian Age.*

“A man of one talent, he put it out to usury, and it multiplied under the mighty hand of God, so that during his long itinerant ministry, multitudes were led to the Saviour . . . Those who would be fishers of men will find their souls kindled by the weird narrative of this strange yet saintly man.”—*The Christian.*

“This singular book is quite a little curiosity in its way. The whole of the little volume combines instruction with interest in a very high degree, so that we can heartily commend it.”—*Spurgeon.*

---

HAUGHTON & CO., 10, PATERNOSTER ROW.





