THE

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TRUE AND FALSE KNOWLEDGE.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

IT is a good thing, that the heart be established with grace, that is, to be grounded, settled, and confirmed in an acquaintance of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and in a knowledge and enjoyment of the complete and perfect work of Christ, wrought in, revealed to, and sealed upon the heart by the Holy Spirit: for all knowledge, either of ourselves, or of salvation by Christ, which is not discovered and applied by the effectual operation of Almighty power, will not avail any thing, and the subject thereof is, and will be without a shelter from the storm, or a covert from the tempest; it is one thing *to know*, and it is another *to know and enjoy*. An unregenerate man may attain all knowledge by his own labour and study, but it is the privilege of the believer, that his knowledge of spiritual things, as well as his enjoyment of them, is secured in the covenant, and revealed and applied to him in due time, by the Holy Spirit; the former character having only the knowledge of religion, is swelled with pride and vain boasting, for knowledge puffeth up, but the gift of grace with knowledge, humbles the latter, and excludes boasting, save in the cross of Christ our Lord; and it is an infallible criterion, that pride and self-boasting will be the ruling, reigning, and predominating disposition, and workings of every mind which the Holy Spirit has not quickened, enlightened, and sanctified; and hereby are manifest the children of God, and those of the world. St. Paul knew, and therefore declared of spiritual things, that God had revealed them unto him by his Spirit, that having received the Spirit which is of God, he knew the things that were freely given to him, and that his faith did not

stand in the the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; and again, 4th chap. 1 Cor. "*I will know not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power, for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.*" And in the 2d chap. 2 Cor. "We are not, *as many which corrupt the word of God,* but as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ—we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." The Apostle in the 9th chap. expresses himself jealous over the Corinthian Church with godly jealousy, and that he had laboured to present them as a *chaste virgin to Christ;* not pure and perfect in their natures, but that they might know, believe, and rejoice, that they stood, *without blame or blemish, before him in love,* and says he, "though I be *rude in speech,* yet not *in knowledge;* let no man *think me a fool,* if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, *for the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* which is blessed for evermore, *knoweth that I lie not.*" I have selected the foregoing Scriptures to prove the difference between a true and false knowledge, between the works of a carnal unregenerate mind, and those which are produced by the immediate power of God; the language of the new man created in the soul by God, its confidence and strength towards him, and its utter abhorrence of all other props, or of another knowledge but that which is attended with power; and he is no man of God who is without a manifestation of a divine power equal to that which made the world, or who can rest satisfied of less; the gospel is all promise, and the life of the believer is maintained by the power of the promise. God must enlarge the heart before we can run the way of his commandments, and all praise to him that his commandments are life, consequently they cannot be grievous: when he speaks, both will and power are made to obey him cheerfully, for he giveth them, and delighteth to give them in the appointed time. He worketh all things after the council of his own will, the apostle calls it "*his determinate will,*" his counsel shall stand, and he will execute all his pleasure. God beholds with pleasure his own chosen and redeemed people, and though sometimes their performances* are rejected, their persons, nevertheless, ever were and

* I mean those performances that spring not from faith and love in the heart, and which are not produced by the immediate power of God the Spirit for without his special teaching and power, all our attempts to pray and worship God will be ineffectual and vain.

and shall be accepted of by him, in Christ their head. Here I would observe, is another privilege to the comfort of God's people, which others know not of, for both the persons and the works of the ungodly, never were or can be accepted of by him, who is a God of strict purity, justice, and truth, and who cannot save or accept more than were determined in counsel and covenant, Christ being that very counsel and covenant, and his elect people shut up, included, and sanctified in him from eternity, and are therefore denominated One; all to whom the secrets of the covenant have been revealed, will give it a sure, clear, and certain sound; the conditions of it have been fulfilled by Christ, and will be performed by his Spirit in the hearts of his elect, God was in Christ reconciling the whole elect world unto himself, even before they were born, and while they were dead in sin, for the decree and purpose of God in their favour, existing from eternity, all things concerning them and Christ, who was to suffer for them, was considered as being done and completed, the redemption and salvation of their souls being purposed to be done, was therefore secured to be done, and must be performed, consequently, *the election of grace hath obtained it;* they obtained all grace and glory from eternity, inasmuch, as God who cannot lie, promised before the foundation of the world, their names are for ever written on the heart of Christ, and recorded in heaven; there is a twofold sanctification of the church in Christ their head, a sanctification, or setting apart by God the Father, in him from eternity, whereby they were given to Christ, and constituted one with him; and a sanctification in due time by the Spirit, whereby they shall know and enjoy their personal eternal sanctification, it being the office of the Holy Spirit, who knoweth the mind of the Father and of Christ, to reveal what God has done and promised to, and in behalf of those for whom the fulness of Christ, and the promise of it was intended. God's covenant is a covenant of love, mercy, righteousness, truth and peace; "*I have loved thee with an everlasting love, with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, in righteousness (or in my righteous covenant) shalt thou be established, my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.*" Isaiah, chap. 54; In this chapter is clearly set forth, the

the wisdom, mercy, and love of God to his people in opposition to the pride, wisdom, will, and carnality of the human heart, and to the exclusion of all creature-goodness, and merit. It appears, that after the Holy Spirit has revealed and applied these precious everlasting promises to the mind, that he also teaches it never to forget that revelation and application of himself and his truth, or that a mind so wrought upon, can speak a language contrary to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, agreeably to Isaiah, chap. 59; "*This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth for ever.*" Now compare these declarations of the covenant purpose of God, and the nature of the Spirit's work in all the elect, with the thousands who are this day called and have denominated themselves *evangelical preachers.* Does their prophesying accord with the promised teaching and work of God the Spirit, in the hearts of his people, all their teaching and preaching is of works and conditions, duties and performances to be done by the creature, which proves to a demonstration, that they live upon nothing else, and are feeding upon husks, which only swine do eat; they are only in their element when doing and performing their own self righteous works, and hence we hear so much boasting from them of their power, free-will, and the merit of their works, and so little of the grace, mercy, and righteousness of Christ, and that mighty power and work of the Holy Spirit in the application thereof; such may will, and they may run, but shall never prosper. We have a full description of them as false prophets, thieves, and robbers, both in the New and Old Testament, but particularly in Jeremiah, chap. 23: "*Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord; behold, I will visit upon them the evil of their doings, and I will set up shepherds over my flock, which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord.*" And again: "*Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you, they make you vain, they speak a vision of their own hearts, and not out of the mouth of the Lord; I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied; they are prophets of the deceit of their own*

own hearts, and because they have said to my people, the burden of the Lord, therefore I will bring an everlasting reproach upon them, and a perpetual shame which shall not be forgotton." This is the real descriptive character of the greater part of our modern preachers, not only in the establishment who profess her faith and doctrines, but among all denominations in the religious world, and the generality of mankind follow and support them. We can scarcely enter a church or a chapel, but we hear thundered forth, the burden of the Lord, and heavy duties imposed upon the free-born children of God; all such teachers cannot enter into the life, power, purity, and blessedness of the truth of the gospel, they are called *dumb dogs*, and cannot speak forth the praises of Him who makes the dead to live, and the tongue of the dumb to sing; they can speak, but not feel; see, but not understand: such will be sure always to read and expound the Scriptures literally, carnally, and will talk as men, dead men, who rest the Scriptures to their own destruction. May the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to convince of sin, and of every false way, and to lead in the way of righteousness, open the eyes, and enlarge the hearts of his dear people, whom he has engaged in covenant to sanctify, and bring them into the promised liberty of the sons of God, to know their adoption of him, their security in him, and their everlasting blessedness and glorification with him.

J. B.

For the Gospel Magazine.

THE CHURCH, A GARDEN.

From the M.S.S. of Mr. Toplady.

VARIOUS are the reasons, for which the Church of God's regenerated people may be compared to a *garden*. They, who have been effectually called by grace, to a living faith in Christ, are *inclosed* and severed from the world of the unrenewed; *cultivated* by the Holy Spirit's influence; *planted* and adorned with the graces and virtues which descend from the Father of light; *watered* with the continual presence of Christ; *enlivened* with the beams of His richest favour; *walled in* by the ceaselese care

care of His Almighty Providence; invisibly *guarded* by the constant superintendency of angels; visibly *watched* and *attended* by the ministers of God's word; *weeded*, when occasion requires, by afflictive dispensations, and by the sanctifying power of grace; and made to abound in all the *fruits* of those things which are to the glory and praise of God.—To the mystic garden belong all, who are awakened to see their lost estate by nature; and who, renouncing every created dependance, seek for pardon, holiness, and salvation, only in the blood and obedience of Him that died for sinners. Such may indeed be numbered among the people of his love, who are saved, and called with an holy calling, according to his own purpose and grace, which was assigned them before the world began. One eminent privilege which true believers possess, consists in the enjoyment of God's spiritual presence below. He dwells in them by His Spirit; their souls are the seat of His gracious empire, the *gardens* in which he walks, and the *beds of spices*, on which he rests. Wherefore it is said of Christ, *my beloved is gone down into His garden, to the beds of spices; to feed in the gardens, and to gather lillies.*

CHRIST, A SERVANT AND MESSENGER.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

Mr. Editor,

THOUGH the subject proposed by *Ebenezer* be important, and may have its difficulties, yet *gratitude* constrains me to acknowledge his kindness, by attempting to answer his Queries on Isaiah xlii. 1, 19, 21: p. 344. Though I have found pleasure and satisfaction on his attention to my proposals, yet I cannot promise, that this paper shall find equal acceptance with him. However, I shall cheerfully do what I can, as the Lord may assist; and, if it should prove to edification, let the name of the Lord be magnified.

Verse 1: *Behold my servant whom I uphold, &c.* Here Jehovah the Father, invites us to contemplate an object, whom holy angels admire and adore, in whom redeemed sinners triumph, and in whom his soul delighteth. It is an instance of infinite condescension and grace in the coeternal Son of God, to assume our nature and become the

Father's

Father's *servant*, in order to save transgressors: but thus it seemed good in his sight. Being the Father's equal in the essential glories and blessedness of Deity, and consequently needing nothing of his creatures; his susception of *office* in the plan of salvation, must be an act of sovereign pleasure. This is the glorious person meant by *servant*, in the verse before us.

Of this, I am assured by the Spirit of Truth, in reading Matt. xii. 18, where the words are recited, and applied to the Saviour. And he is also the *messenger*, as well as the surety, of the better covenant. To him no *blindness* can belong, nor *ignorance* be found in him, for he searches the hearts, and tries the reins of the children of men; and his *ears* are always *open* to the prayer of faith, if it be but a sigh. He *sees* the sorrows of his saints, he *observes* the devices of their enemies, and delivers them from all in due season; for his work is *perfect*. He never breaks the bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax, but finally brings forth judgment unto victory. From hence it appears, that the *same servant* cannot be intended in

Ver. 19, 20: Of this character, though Jehovah says, *my servant* and my *messenger*, yet he describes him as *blind*, &c. This *servant* and *messenger*, I consider as meaning a character found among the *Jewish* teachers, both in the time of the prophets, and in our Lord's days; and also, extending to the *Christian* ministry, down to our period. The Lord can as easily tell us what shall be, as what is; seeing with him there is no hereafter nor past, but one eternal now. And I carry my idea thus far, because the context plainly shews us, that the Gentiles were to partake with the Jews, of all the blessings of grace and of glory; and consequently were to be favoured with the means and ordinances of public worship. Though it is now two thousand five hundred years from the date of the text, there have always been *such* servants and messengers as the prophet describes in the words before us. A few particulars shall suffice. In the prophets, we read thus: "His watchmen are *blind*; they are all *ignorant*. They are shepherds that *cannot understand*." Isai. lvi. 10, 11. "The priest said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law *knew me not*." Jer. ii. 8. Notwithstanding the station they occupied, they understood not the import of the promised seed; were ignorant of their state toward God as fallen

fallen creatures; and total strangers to the Messiah's glorious person, and gracious salvation. And, if we advert to the period of our Lord's ministry, we shall find the *Jewish* teachers represented as *blind*. And we are not lost to draw this inference from oblique intimations, or from some seemingly hasty step in their conduct; but is plainly and openly declared. They not only took away the key of knowledge, and would not enter into the kingdom themselves, but they shut it up, and would not suffer them that were entering to go in! Hence our Lord's address, *ye blind guides! ye fools and blind.* See Matt. xxiii. 13, &c. A chapter, perhaps the most awful and alarming to such a character, that ever was uttered! and yet, *every word true.* Their *eyes* and *ears* were *opened* to see his wonderful works, and to hear his admirable discourse, at different times and places; but being mentally *blind* and *deaf*, they did not *observe*, nor so *hear* as to understand and regard the design of either the one or the other. It is true, they did *once* hear and understand, when the Saviour foretold their desolation, in Matt. xxi. 43, 45, for they perceived that he spoke the parable of them; but even then they were so far from *observing*; that is, receiving, or profiting by it, that they sought to destroy him. Had they not been *blind* to the true import of the Scriptures, they would not have expected the Messiah to appear as a temporal prince to aggrandize their secular interests; but, being actuated altogether by this carnal principal, and finding themselves disappointed, in their blind zeal and malice of heart, they crucified the Lord of glory. 1 Cor. ii. 2. And even after the *Prince of life* was risen from the dead, and had demonstrated the truth and glory of his exalted character, by bestowing miraculous gifts on his primitive servants, still their *blindness* continued; as is more than evident, if I may so speak, by their inveterate malice to his name, expressed by their outrageous persecution of his followers. Part of the question in the text runs thus—"Who is so blind *as* the Lord's servants?" which reminds me of what the evangelist says, *the common people heard him gladly.* Mark xii. 37, which more than suggests, that the people were wiser than their teacher, and that they were not so *blind* and *deaf* as their rulers. Instances of which, though the riches of sovereign grace, are to be found now as well as then. It is inserted by the prophets, "who is blind as he

he that is *perfect?*" What, did these blind teachers esteem themselves *perfect?* The question implies as much, and their conduct warrants the expression. Their sanctimony was super-eminent. They could not associate with the vulgar. Of old time their language was, *stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou,* Isai. lxv. 5. Our Lord found them the same. They then trusted in themselves that they were *righteous* and *despised* others. They were not ashamed to say, even before infinite purity, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are—or even as this publican.* Luke xviii. 9. Those were the ninety and nine *just* persons, in the parable, who *need no repentance.* Luke xv. 7. And the term is applicable to their *wisdom* and *knowledge,* as their sanctity. We can easily know the opinion they held of their great, their very superior purity and knowledge, by the reverence they expected the people to pay them on this ground. They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. They were infallible guides, in their own view, and as such they wished to be considered. *Have any of the rulers or of the pharisees, believed on him?* They only are judges; and they only are to decide. But this people, *who knoweth not the law,* are cursed. John vii. 48, 49. This specimen may suffice. It might seem invidious to select particular characters of the present times to shew, that this family of *blind* and *perfect* servants is not yet extinct, and therefore I pass it, and wish the reader to judge for himself, while I notice the comparison in the text. "Who is blind *as* he that is *perfect?*" As he that is *perfectly free from sin* in his own opinion: for he is a *perfect* stranger to his own heart. Jer. xvii. 9; 1 John i. 8. Or, as he that is so *perfectly wise* in his own eyes, as to account his neighbour accursed *because* he thinks for himself in the concerns of eternal salvation: for such a *wise* man, with all his knowledge, is yet *perfectly ignorant* of the nature of personal religion, and of the obvious design of the gospel of Christ. Rom. xiv. 4, 5, 12. But the difficulty may be, *How* can such *perfectly blind* characters be denominated *the Lord's servants and messengers?* In reply it is answered—1st. The *Jewish* and *Christian* ministry are of divine appointment. Of the tribes of *Levi,* the Lord said by the mouth of Moses, when the man of God was pronouncing his final blessing, *they shall teach Jacob the judgments, and Israel the law,*

Deut. xxxiii. 10. And the last prophet observes, "the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and the people should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the *messenger* of the Lord of hosts." Mal. ii. 7. *Moses's seat* rested on the authority of God; and, as such, was to be treated with becoming respect. This is evident from our Lord's saying to his disciples, "the scribes and the pharisees sit in *Moses's seat:* all therefore, whatsoever they bid you, observe, that observe and do"– as far as they teach you according to the doctrine of Moses and the prophets, "but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." Though they read you the truth at times, they neither believe nor practice it; but reject the whole, in fact, to maintain their own traditions. comp. Matt. xxiii. 2, 3, with Mark vii. 6, &c. This shews us, however, by the way, that the people had the free use of the Scriptures, were to read and judge for themselves, and were not to follow their guides but as they regarded the word of God, which is never yea and nay, but always harmonious and in union with itself. The *Jewish* teaching, therefore, being a sacred institution, those who appeared in that office may be so far represented as the Lord's *servants* and *messengers;* whether they were *personally,* "scribes well instructed to the kingdom of God, or whether they were fools and blind." The *Christian* ministry likewise, is built on the same foundation, and derives its origin from the king in Zion. Hence the apostle, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, *for the work of the ministry.*" Eph. iv. 11, 12. Whoever therefore may be found in that station, even from the office itself, according to my view of Isaiah's words, may be denominated the Lord's *servant* and *messenger*, whether he may be, *in truth and fact,* a faithful watchman to give warning, or a dumb dog that cannot bark. comp. Ezek. iii. 17, with Isa. lvi. 10. But—2dly, The Lord speaks *of* men, at times, and even *to* them, as they speak of themselves, or under the character they assume, and in which they wish to be considered by others. This also illustrates our text. The *Jewish* teachers held themselves up to the people as their *guides.* The Saviour acceeds to the assumed character, but calls them *blind guides.* They *professed* themselves to be the Lord's *servants* and *messengers*; but, being such only

only in pretence, the Lord says, without denying their profession, "ye outwardly appear righteous unto man, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." When we wish others to consider us as the Lord's *servants*, and are only such by mere *office* and *profession*, it makes the charge of *hypocrisy*, brought by the Redeemer; and that of *blindness* in the text; tenfold more awful than if we had never assumed the character. This is the light in which I view the prophet's words; and which I think is confirmed by John ix. 41. "Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, *we see; therefore your sin remaineth.*" See my idea also in two other instances. We know that Judas was an enemy in his heart to the Saviour, and yet he approached him with, "*hail master: and kissed him.*" The reply was made, not according to the *true*, but *pretended* character. "*Friend!*" said the lovely Jesus; and such the conduct of the traitor implied! "*Friend! betrayest* thou the Son of Man with a *kiss!*" And in the parable of the wedding, when the king came in to see his guests, he observed a man without a wedding garment; to whom the address was, "*Friend!* how camest thou in hither?" He was no friend; but had appeared, by *profession*, to be a friend of the bridegroom, and his *real* character was not discovered till the king laid it open. The language of the

21st verse, can by no means be used of the *servant* in ver. 19, because he is described as *blind* and *disobedient*; and therefore I consider it as referring to the *servant* in ver. 1, seeing no third character, *as a servant*, is in the context. Jesus has *magnified the law and made it honourable*—has shewn to heaven, earth and hell, that it is holy in its nature, equitable in its claims, and just in its tremendous sanction; both by the obedience of his life, and in his suffering its penalty at his death. Hereby he has *finished the transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.* For *the sake of this righteousness*, it is that Jehovah *is well pleased*, both with the surety who performed it, and with his people who are covered with it. Though the "antecedent" be remote, yet, as there is no person named in the context to whom the words can apply besides, and as the doctrine I have advanced is elsewhere described as arising from the Messiah's work and relation to his church, I think

I think myself justified in the interpretation now given. When Mary addressed the gardener, as she supposed, and said, "Sir, if thou have borne *him* hence, tell me where thou hast laid *him*, and I will take *him* away." there was no "antecedent" at all but in the *mind* of the weeping disciple; for though Mary had mentioned her Lord to the angels, yet not to the supposed gardener: yet, finding him there, and her heart full of the subject, she took it for granted, that every one must know of whom she spake. The most remarkable change of person that ever I observed in the Bible, may be found in the 91st Psalm, without a real change of character. But by consulting Zach. xiii. 7, it will be seen that the spirit of prophecy introduces the Saviour as unexpectedly as in the case before us, and just after he had been speaking of a *false prophet*; which is very similar to a *blind servant*.

I am aware that my views of this passage are not coincident with the interpretation of every valuable writer; but I always beg leave to judge for myself. An expositor, whom I greatly respect, takes it thus. "*The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake;* not well pleased with the sin of his blind servants, but well pleased in the manifestation of his *own righteousness*, in rejecting them for rejecting the great salvation." But, though this be a truth, yet it does not appear to me to be *the* truth intended, and therefore I cannot adopt it. Nor have I given my sense of the text because some good men embrace it, but simply because I believe it is the mind of the Spirit. The canons, or rulers for interpreting Scripture, as given by *Brine* and *Vitringa*, I have found useful, and therefore I beg the liberty of recommending them to my unknown friend and brother, *Ebenezer*. They may be found in *Ryland's* Contemplations. v. 2; or, if that book be not at hand, *Vitringa* is in *Dr. Gill's* Preface to the Prophets. The perusal will not produce repentance where there is love to Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. From the whole subject I observe,

1st, The Spirit of Christ in the prophets taught the same as in the apostles, respecting the divinity of his person, his gracious character, his obedience and death, and the glory that follows. See Acts xxvi. 22, 3; 1 Peter i. 11.

2udly, How adorable the depths of divine conduct! see 2 Peter ii. 1. We have seen this prophecy verified; and

and how long to the end I know not; but, when the end comes, it will be awful. See Matt. vii. 22. 3.

3dly, However, blessed be his name, the Saviour is not without some faithful servants, who are neither afraid nor ashamed to proclaim his name, to exalt his righteousness and cross, to vindicate his cause, and whose earnest desire it is, that they may never make the trumpet give an uncertain sound. Of many professed teachers, the Saviour might still say, *ye neither know me nor my Father!* but the time is coming when Zion's watchmen shall see eye to eye, and the Lord will not let his holy name be polluted any more.

4thly, What a mercy to have the Bible, with a heart to read and understand! Not to be obliged to call any man, *master*; nor to follow any teacher further than he follows Christ! O for the Saviour's promise, (John xvi. 14) to be daily fulfilled in mine, and the reader's experience, Amen.

Whether those few hints may, or may not, meet the ideas of *Ebenezer*, he is hereby earnestly requested to remember, in *Mr. Romaine's* "best place," his unworthy, but affectionate friend.

Oct. 4, 1805. ENQUIRER.

For the Gospel Magazine.

VIEWS OF AN AGED MINISTER, JUST ON THE THRESHOLD OF HEAVEN,

THE gospel is a revelation of salvation, as opposed to the deeds of the law.

The gospel is a revelation of divine love, Father, Son, and Spirit.

The gospel is a revelation of divine purposes.

The gospel is a revelation of divine promises.

The gospel is a revelation of divine blessings.

The gospel is a revelation of divine operations in two branches; namely, the work of Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit.

The gospel is a revelation of divine precepts.

And these all harmonize.

July 27, 1805.

For

THE UNJUST STEWARD CONSIDERED.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

HAVING seen in your valuable Miscellany, for April last, a Query upon Luke xvi.. 9; I take the liberty of sending you my thoughts upon the subject. If you think their insertion will have any tendency to illustrate the passage, and relieve the perplexity of the Enquirer, my object will be answered. Notwithstanding, I am well aware it is a difficult matter to forsake the beaten track of expositors, and to introduce any thing that has the appearance of novelty, in opposition to the opinions of the pious, the learned, and the wise, I have presumed to hold forth a different sense than what is usually given to this portion of holy writ; being, in my humble opinion, the true one, though it might have been better expressed in abler hands than of, Sir, Your's respectfully,

R. H. B——n.

Luke xvi. 9: "*And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*"

With what peculiar propriety did the Son of God compose his discourses when he attacked the deep-rooted vices of his hearers! the idol of covetousness enthroned in the hearts of the pharisees, appears to be the grand object of this parable; and here, as in a picture, we behold, pourtrayed in the most lively colours, the abuse, the injustice, the carnal providence, the fatal consequence, and the severe reproof, of the inordinate love and unrighteous possession of worldly gain.

First.—The abuse: The blessings of Providence are wasted in the hands of a miser, in as glaring a light as the property of the rich in the hands of a faithless steward. 2d,—The injustice; The man that is greedy of gain and will be rich, "falls into temptations and a snare," and into "many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." What laws, whether human or divine, will he not violate to accomplish his object? He will not only, out of an hundred measures of oil, rob his Lord of fifty, or an hundred measures of wheat, of twenty, but like Ahab, veiled with hypocrisy, becomes a midnight assassin,

assissin, and wades through Naboth's blood to possess his vineyard. 3dly.—The carnal Providence: Since the "rich man's wealth is his strong city, and an high wall in his own conceit," there is no wonder that he earnestly endeavours to fortify himself against the time to come: what busy days and restless nights are employed in thoughtful schemes, careful plans, and resolute enterprizes? How does he anticipate the ripening of his purposes and the accomplishment of his designs, that he may say to his soul, "soul take thine ease, for thou hast much goods laid up for many years." Happy would it be if the children of light were as wise in the great concerns of religion, then would the Bible be more constantly read, the throne of grace more frequented, and the house and ordinances of God better attended; the saints would be shining lights in their day and generation. 4thly.—The fatal consequence: The covetous man is in an awful condition in this world, since he is unjust and faithless in the unrighteous mammon, it shall be all his portion, God will not commit to his trust true riches, "he is without Christ, an alien from the common wealth of Israel, a stranger to the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." But oh! what consequences await him in a dying hour, and at the judgment day—"give an account of thy stewardship, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, then whose shall these things be?" Here he weeps! turns pale before his injured Lord! torn from the darling of his heart, overwhelmed with sorrow, oppressed with wrath; he falls into the gulph of remediless woe; roaring as he sinks, lost! lost! ruined for ever!

5th and finally.—Our Lord, in this parable, gives a *severe* and *cutting reproof*; "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." *This*, in the writer's humble opinion, is *strong irony*, as if he had said, "go on in oppression, injustice, and fraud, acquire by these means a large estate—take from the weeping widow and helpless orphans, their scanty pittance to fill your coffers; make these acquirements your friends, and trust them, *if you dare;* make yourself happy in the enjoyment of them until a dying hour, and then see if they be able to introduce you into *everlasting* habitations." From this reproof, observe; 1st, covetousness is abomi-

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able in the eyes of the Lord; against it he is wroth, Isa. lvii. 15: solemnly warns his disciples, Luke xii. 15: and assures, by his apostle Paul, that those who live under its influence, cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 10; Eph. v. 5. Observe, 2dly; Covetousness is inconsistent with the character of the followers of Jesus. They are delivered from it in the day of conversion as in the case of Zaccheus, who was made by grace, both just and liberal, Luke xix. 8: it is a branch of idolatry, Col. iii. 5: but what have the saints to do with idols? Hos. xiv. 8: besides of all the sins the Lord's people have personally fallen into, it is not once recorded, that they have fallen into this, (that I know of) in the whole book of God.

R. H.

THE ACCUSATION COMPLAINED OF BY H. K. (No. 115, page 322, of the GOSPEL MAGAZINE,) NOT FALSE.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

EXCUSE the liberty I take. It is confessedly unpolite in me, to reply to a paper in your Magazine, addressed particularly to you, and upon which you have, with superior ability, so nobly animadverted; but, when I assure you, that I consider myself aimed at in the said pitiful paper, I flatter myself, that no further apology will be thought necessary for the seeming intrusion.

Your correspondent, H. K. in your Number for July last, p. 322, appears before the public with a complaint, "that different Calvinistic writers and preachers, have been *falsely* accused of Arminianism;" and, with a design to exculpate the parties accused, he has exhibited a summary of Arminianism, in which no small degree of cunning is apparent, that by comparing its peculiar principles with those of the system taught by the persons whose cause he pleads, your readers may be the better able to determine, whether the accusation has any foundation in truth. This gentleman, it seems, has weighed Calvinism and Arminianism, in the *anti-scriptural* scales, manufactured by the late Rev. Mr. Fletcher; and thinking the turn of the balance a little in his own favour, he rises in haste,

to

to clap upon the tongues and pens of those, who have had the assurance to accuse him of Arminianism, the *unequal* checks, invented by the above reverend artist. There is, doubtless, in this procedure, some design of policy. But why is he in such haste with his check? let him lay them aside and return to his scales, and try if he cannot weigh with a little more exactness, the second time; for, although he retails a commodity of inferior quality, he should be careful, not to trick the public out of a single grain of it, lest some people should think, that he deals in the bag of deceitful weights; and, that instead of acting with an uprightness becoming his high character, as a steward of the mysteries of God, he really practices theological fraud. Having told us, that "Arminianism allows that every man is born with a measure of grace, and of the Spirit of Christ—that it acknowledges every man to have a will to what is spiritually good—that it denies absolute, unconditional election before time, and admits no other choice of God than what is founded upon the foresight of obedience and good works—that it denies faith to be the special gift of God to any, and teaches that Christ died to put every man in a salvable state, by making a full satisfaction and atonement for the sins and salvation of the whole human race, and with a direct view to, and for the express purpose of, their salvation—and that it further maintains, that the talent of grace every man has, is sufficient for his salvation, with the proper improvements of it, by his own ability and diligence; without any especial influence of free and sovereign grace: for of such grace it denies the very being and necessity," he ought, like an honest man, to have added—*on this ground*, Arminianism, in perfect consistence with itself, offers Christ, pardon, life, and salvation, to all men, *to become theirs upon their believing and performing good works;* and invites, exhorts, entreats, and presses them, to accede to the terms of the gospel, to fall in with the design of Christ, and to gratify the divine wish, by accepting the overtures of mercy, and making salvation their own. This, *he knows*, belongs to Arminianism. Why then, in his exhibition of that system, does he secrete behind the curtain, this essential part of it, as if it did not belong to it? Who could have thought him capable of practising artifice so very mean, with a direct view to deceive the simple, and mislead the unwary?

Lord, what is man? But the reason of this part of his conduct, is, I think, too obvious to be mistaken. He, doubtless, foresaw, that, if in his account of the principles of Arminianism, he mentioned the doctrine of offers, overtures, &c. as one of the number, every babe would see, that, so far as he deals in offers, he may be *truly* accused of Arminianism; he, therefore thought it wise and prudent, to take no notice at all of it; as, from his not inserting it in his body of Arminian divinity, some would be induced to infer, that it is no part of the Arminian system, and consequently, that he is *falsely* accused. He should, however, have considered, that although "he that is first in his own cause seemeth just, yet his neighbour cometh and searcheth him." But may we not suppose that he has a salve at hand? viz. that, as his professed design was to enumerate those principles *only*, which are *peculiar* to Arminianism, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that he should mention the doctrine of offers as one of the peculiarities of that system; for, since various Calvinistic, as well as Arminian writers and preachers, are in the constant habit of offering, and making overtures of salvation to sinners in general, offers are evidently connected with Calvinism, and form a part of that system. How far this argument, should he avail himself of it, will answer his purpose, will appear in the sequel.

Having made these preliminary observations, I shall attempt a vindication of myself and others, from the charge of being *false* accusers, brought against us by this writer. We have accused him of Arminianism: of this he complains, as being unjust; but with what reason you, Sir, and the impartial and unprejudiced public must determine. If the man who embraces with cordiality, and publishes with indefatigable assiduity, and unblushing effrontery, sentiments entirely peculiar to the nature and constitution of the Arminian scheme, deserves to be accused of Arminianism; if the man, who is inflexibly tenacious of a practice, which cannot exist one moment, but on the supposition, that all the fundamentals of Arminianism are *true*, and those of Calvinism *false*, renounces all claim to the character of a Calvinist, and merits and establishes his title to that of an Arminian, who, that has read the productions of H. K's pen, can hesitate in saying, *he is the man?* For, although he does not verbally deny the

the eternal, absolute, and personal election of a part of the human race, to the certain knowledge, possession, and enjoyment of all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus; nor, that the rest who are totally rejected of the Lord, justly denied those blessings, and righteously left to die and perish in their sins—although he acknowledges the doctrine of particular redemption, to be divinely true, and professes to be'ieve, that redemption and election are of equal extent, and embrace the same identical persons—although he gives his assent to the unconditional tenor of the covenant of grace, and the absolute freeness of every spiritual and eternal good—although he avows a persuasion, that man is by nature totally void of supernatural principles, and entirely destitute of spiritual powers—although he confesses that the unregenerate are quite disinclined, and unable to receive spiritual blessing, that a disposition and power to receive them, are the pure productions of divine operation, and, that the Almighty sovereign has possitively, and immutably determined never to produce them in any but his own elect—yet, he, Arminian-like, calls upon the unregenerate to perform supernatural or spiritual acts, as if they really possessed supernatural and spiritual principles, and powers—or, as if, at his call, they were to rise spontaneously out of the priuciples and powers of nature—or, however, as if the whole business of disposing and enabling the heart to believe, repent, and receive spiritual blessings, were left entirely to human management, without any divine determination, as to who *shall*, and who shall *not* become a willing people; he also makes general offers of grace, of Christ and salvation, and proposes them to all who come within the sound of his voice, or the reach of his pen, *to become theirs upon their believing*—as if grace were designed for all—as if Christ had shed his blood for all, not to obtain certaiu salvation for any, but to put all into a salvable state, and make their salvation *possible*, leaving them to make it sure, by their believing—as if God had not, in his decree of election, written a definite number to infallible salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth, or had passed no such decree—and, as if his wise eternal counsel, relative to human salvation, were nothing but a kind of spiritual state lottery, in which salvation is suspended upon the good conduct of mortals,

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and sinners, by *adventuring in it faith and repentance*, were to secure to themselves the rich inheritance of grace and glory; and by these means, whatever he may pretend to the contrary, he virtually denies and renounces every principle peculiar to the Calvinistic system, and espouses every sentiment peculiar to the Arminian hypothesis. Nor will his *professing* to believe eternal, unconditional election, particular redemption, the absolute freeness of all spiritual blessings, and the restriction of those blessings, in their designation and application to the elect, avail him any thing, for, as some persons who profess to know God, are said, in their wicked works, to deny him; so, others who profess to espouse pure Calvinistic principles, may be, with equal propriety said, in their corrupt Arminian practices, to deny them? Such, Mr. Editor, are the different Calvinistic writers and preachers, who make universal offers of grace, &c. As far, therefore, as your correspondent maintains the notion of universal offers, so far we are bold to charge him with Arminianism; and although we may see no cause to boast, either of our ability or prowess, yet, we think ourselves able, and feel ourselves determined, to support the charge. We can make it appear, with evidence clear as the noon-day light, that the offers in question, are not only allied to the system of Arminianism, but, in their own nature, *peculiar* to it. They necessarily arise out of its roots, and are supported by the essential principles of its constitution: viz. universal grace—general redemption—conditional salvation—free will—and the natural ability of man to perform spiritual acts; for, if God loves all the sons of Adam with the same love; if he has not absolutely chosen any to salvation; if he has designed his grace alike for all; if Christ has alike redeemed all; if salvation is conditional; if faith and repentance are the conditions required; and, if every man has by nature a measure of grace, and of the Holy Spirit, and possesses freedom of will, and command of power, sufficient to dispose and enable him to believe and repent, without special and supernatural influence, all which Arminianism asserts, nothing can possibly be more natural, more rational, and more true, than this conclusion—that salvation, with all the blessings that attend it, should be proposed and offered to the acceptance of all, *to become theirs upon their believing and repenting*, and that they should

should be invited, entreated, and pressed, with all possible energy of language, to believe and repent, and *thereby* secure to themselves an interest in the offered favours. But, on the other hand, if God immutably loves part of the human race only, and inflexibly hates the rest; if he has absolutely chosen to life eternal, the objects of his love, and left the objects of his hatred to suffer all the horrors of the second death, as the just reward of their ungodliness; if he has not designed his grace alike for all men; if Christ has not alike redeemed all; if salvation is not in any sense conditional; if faith and repentance are not human conditions, but divine grants; if no man has by nature a measure of grace and of the Holy Spirit; if no man, while unregenerate, possesses freedom of will, and sufficiency of power, to dispose and enable him to believe and repent, nor even to think a good thought; and, if God works in his elect only, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, all which Calvinism constantly and invariably maintains, nothing can be more consonant to both reason and truth, than to conclude, that salvation and the blessings which attend it, should *not* be proposed and offered to every man, and that *no man* should be pressed, entreated, or invited to believe and repent, that salvation and its attendant blessings *may become his.* We cannot, therefore, help saying, that we must, at least for the present, view the practice for which H. K. pleads, as anti-Calvinistic, and a branch of the wide-spreading, baneful tree of Arminian heresy. But, let the reverend gentleman prove the above conclusions to be unnatural, irrational, or unjust, and shew, in the clearer light of superior evidence, that his favourite offers, which seem to be to him and others, as the apple of the eye, do not, *naturally* and *necessarily*, spring from the radical principles of Arminianism, but from those of Calvinism, as above stated, and we will promise no more to accuse him of Arminianism, for making *general* offers of *particular* blessings, *designed* of God for a *peculiar* people.

Should he say, by way of objection, that for us to require such proof is unreasonable and unfair, we might easily meet him, by observing, that as, on the one hand, we maintain that the offers which we oppose, are not in the least congenial with the first principles of Calvinism, and of course, do not in any sense belong to that system;

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and on the other, that they properly belong to Arminianism, being the genuine and necessary offspring of the fundamental principles of that scheme; and, as on this ground stands the accusation of which he complains, as being unjust, it is absolutely incumbent on him, to demonstrate to the world, that the reverse of what we maintain is truth, and that it is to the *former*, and not the *latter* system, offers truly belong. Nor can he, by any other means, prove that we *falsely* accuse him; for if his offers are not the natural, necessary, unavoidable consequences of the radical principles of Calvinism—to Calvinism they do not in *any sense* belong; but if they are the natural, necessary, unavoidable effects of the radical principles of Arminianism, then to Arminianism they do, in *every sense* belong: and H. K. and the different Calvinistic preachers and writers, whom he mentions, are *truly* accused of Arminianism.

It can hardly be supposed, that he will affirm general offers to be the natural and necessary result of the original principles of both Calvinism and Arminianism, and equally related to both; because, that would be tantamount to saying, that two distinct causes, diametrically opposite in their natures, *necessarily* produce *precisely* the same effects; that the brighest beam of the sun, and the blackest gloom of midnight, alike pour day upon our eyes, and discover to our view the objects around us—or, that heaven and hell, are equally calculated to fill the soul of man with infinite delight: for light and darkness, heaven and hell, are not in their natures more opposite than are the radical principles of Arminianism and Calvinism.

Now, Sir, till H. K. has, in answer to my former letters, shewn how his offers, and the interpretations of Scripture which he employs to support them, coincide with the perfections, the decrees, and the character of Jehovah, and also complied with the demand contained in this epistle, I shall let the subject rest; but still remain, Dear Sir, Your's, in the cause of truth,

A—y, Sept. 8, 1805. EBENEZER.

P. S. Dear Sir, you will perceive, by the date of the above, that it was written before I had a sight of your last number; and that I had not declined the controversy with H. K. as you supposed. The reason why nothing was communicated

communicated on my part, relating to the subject in debate between that gentleman and myself, was, I waited for his reply to my four letters—At last it has made its appearance. And pray, good Sir, to what does it amount? He has indeed filled several of your pages; but what has he done more? Nothing that I can perceive, but exhibit evident proofs that he is really conscious of the want of solid argument, sufficient, either to storm our fortress, or support his own tottering, baseless, bable. Say, Mr. Editor, —say judicious unprejudiced reader, for to you I appeal, whether he has not supplied the want of *sensible* argument, with mere *sensless* cavil; and substituted for *manly attack* the most *cowardly evasion*. Has he proved, or attempted to prove, that the words *preach* and *offer* are in their import synonymous, and that they are used by the Holy Ghost to convey precisely the same idea? Has he invalidated any of the arguments advanced in support of those interpretations of Scripture, which he, with so much precipitance, condemns? Or has he answered one of the questions which were offered to his consideration, as of no small importance in this controversy? No: he has scarcely noticed them. Our foundation, therefore, still remains unmoved; and our superstructure stands unshaken; nor have they any thing to fear, from the straws and feathers of mere objection, denial, affirmation and cavil, with which this assailent flourishes round them at a distance. Why does he not take the ground proposed—the perfections, the decrees and the character of God, as they all stand revealed in the holy records, and on that ground attack my principles, arguments, and interpretations of Scripture, and fairly overturn them, by shewing to the world, that they really militate against Jehovah's perfections and decrees, and are incompatible with his true character? Till he has either done this, or proved the ground itself to be false, were he to fill a thousand pages with objections and cavils,—all would amount to nothing.—For, in every debate, it is absolutely necessary, that some first principles should be thought of, upon which every argument should be founded, and from which every conclusion should be drawn, or else the belligerent parties must for ever dispute at random and uncertainty, without ever being able to bring the controversy to any thing like a satisfactory issue. Now upon what shall we fix our thoughts,

thoughts, in our theological disquisitions, as principles of argument, and tests of divine truth, if not upon the perfections, and decrees, and the character of God? This is the ground, Mr. Editor, which I have taken. To this ground I have invited my opponent to bring every argument, every conclusion, and every interpretation of Scripture, employed on either side of the question, and here to give them all a fair and impartial trial.—To this ground I still invite him. This is the position I have chosen, nor do I mean to quit it :—here I shall wait to receive him. He seems disposed for a running fight through bogs and bushes; but, thinking myself quite secure in my post, I feel no inclination to follow him, through all his wild, intricate, uncertain, mazes. He appears to lament the protraction of this controversy. Why then does he not bring it to a period? It rests entirely with himself. If he feels an aversion to a long war, why does he fight at a distance? Let him come, at once, to a close decisive encounter. Let him gallantly attack our strong holds, demolish our mighty bulwarks, and force us from our deep entrenchment:—the decrees, the perfections, and the character of God, or else let him lay down his arms, and candidly confess his imbecility.

The position,—that in all our theological enquiries and disputes, the perfections, the decrees and the character of God, as they are plainly and possitively declared in the volume of revelation, should be the *only* rule of all our reasonings, the *sole* ground of every argument, and the *exclusive* test of every interpretation of Scripture, and of all divine truth, in the name of that God before whom we must soon appear solemnly call upon him, either to admit, or deny, without any kind of equivocation. If he denies it, he must also disprove it: bare denial will not be satisfactory. If he admits it, then he must prove that my sentiments, reasonings, conclusions, and interpretations of Scripture, are hostile to the divine perfections, &c. and, therefore, to be rejected as false and dangerous; or else, he must confess them to be coincident with those perfections, &c. and, therefore, to be received as true and salutary; and acknowledge his own, their opposite, to be false and pernicious. This will close completely our long dispute. I shall, therefore, from this moment, consider myself as disengaged from this controversy; for if he

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barely denies the position, without disproving it, I shall give him up as unworthy of further notice; if he disproves it, my foundation is gone and I have nothing to stand upon; and, if he admits it, and proves fairly and clearly, to the satisfaction of you, Mr. Editor, and your judicious and unprejudiced readers, that my sentiments, arguments, and interpretations of Scripture, clash with the attributes, decrees, and character of the Almighty, I shall, in that moment, espouse his opinion, and join with him, hand and heart.

For the Gospel Magazine.

CHRISTIAN DIGNITY.

(Concluded from p. 451)

ALL True Greatness, consists in the *imitation* of *Jesus Christ*, and is a *free gift* proceeding from him. It is not in man, and cannot be in him; because he is fallen, sinful creature, without a capacity to judge of it, or even to see it, and much less to attain it. False greatness centers every object and every purpose is a narrow compass;

"See all is self, and but for self is born:"

But true greatness resolves itself (as Christ did) entirely in God. A man, great in his own eyes and great in the eyes of the world, draws all things to his own selfish will, and by them aims to appear exalted, while he is only meanness and nothing: But the heart, brought low and made lowly, lives *out of itself*, so far as it lives rightly, and, by closing in with God, becomes participant of all true greatness and splendor. The truly great soul draws nothing from so low a source as earth: It derives all its wisdom, worth, and glory, from heaven. It does not crawl like a worm, but soars like an angel.

The true CHRISTIAN is, in this view, the only truly *great character* upon earth: and the more he lives like his perfect pattern *Christ Jesus*, the more great and dignified he is. He becomes this great creature by the mercy of God; and he is kept so by the power of God. To set forth his spiritual dignity, he is said, in the Scripture, to be *born of God*, to be *an heir of God*, and *a joint-heir with Christ*, to be *a partaker of the divine nature*, and to be *one with*

God. Long genealogies only show a series of perishing poor worms, whose corruption their posterity must follow: But the Christian's spiritual descent is but one remove from the King of kings; and his birth-right is everlasting. He but tastes the love of his Almighty Father below; but he will be an eternal possesor of all that his nature is capable of enjoying, in his inheritance above. *Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard*, thought hath not conceived, what is, and hath been prepared in heaven for him, from all eternity. He is a *king* and a *priest* for evermore.—Come, ye poor worldlings, who boast of human grandure and earthly greatness; come, ye nobles of the earth, who are jealous of your short-lived puny precedence among worms; come. ye princes, and potentates, the kings, who glory in your momentary sway over the busy reptiles of the world, and who, notwithstanding, cannot command a moment of time, nor the attack of the lowest disease; come, and compare your tinseled splendor and perishing glare with this lustre of everlasting magnificence, and be humbled to the dust, where you and your glories shall quickly be entombed: Here is a character, which shall shine resplendent, when your's shall either be forgotten, or be remembered only to your shame.

But let us examine this great character more closely. It is certainly worth our contemplation, if its possession be the one thing needful and the greatest prize in the world. If we are, in any degree, sharers in it, we shall surely find as much pleasure in knowing our rank and privileges, which last for ever, as the poor worms of the earth can receive from arranging their's, which endure but for a day.

Contrary to all the maxims of this world, the Christian rises by humility. Christ sought not to do his own will; nor do they, that are Christ's. The believer is divinely taught to deny himself. I say *divinely;* for unless the Spirit of Jesus *teach* him the exalted lesson, and *keep* it fresh, when taught, upon his soul; all human conceptions of the matter will never operate upon the heart, nor enable it to give one example of this greatness, in the hour of trial, *Jesus* was *meek and lowly in heart*: And if they, who pretend to belong to him, are not in some measure so; their profession is rotten, their knowledge carnal, their religion vain. *If* ANY *man* [let him be what he may] *have*

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not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. We read of some, professing Christianity in the apostolic age, who professed a wisdom and a knowledge in divine things, which was *earthly, sensual, devilish.* And wherefore? because they had not *the meekness of wisdom.* A heathen could celebrate the *mitis sapientia Lælii*, "the meek wisdom of *Lælius*;" and so may a professor the incomparable meekness and humility of *Jesus*, without possessing a grain of it.—Nothing but the power of Christ can superinduce all the proud habits of a carnal heart, and make it not only *appear* humble, but actually *clothe* it *with humility.* We shall see professors, on every hand, who do not appear in the least more lowly in their manners and tempers, than those who make no profession at all: And thus far they are not hypocrites, though at the same time they can scarcely be Christians. But there are others, who, with the most demure air, and most mortified looks, and the most sanctimonious carriage, which human nature can wear; are as proud of all this outside, and are as little changed within, as any of their neighbours. "How is this known;"—Not by looking *at* the mask, but *under* it; not by giving credit to semblances, but by considering realities; not by regarding plausible words, but righteous acts and holy deeds. A decent appearance is certainly commendable; but, if it be *but* an appearance, it is so far from being truly decent, that it is so much the fouler and baser, as it pretends to be the fairer and better. To be proud then of humility, (or, to take away the paradox, the *appearance* of humility) is selfish, hateful and low. False humility is rank pride: And all pride is littleness of soul. It begins and ends, in the vile, narrow, circle of *self*, and is therefore pernicious and painful. To a Spiritual eye, Christ never appears in so bright a splendor of glory, as in his lowest humiliation; never so high, as when meanest among men; never so illustrious, as in his unparalleled meekness and patience. Nor does the believer in the sight of God, as when he is brought closest to this great example. One shall hear sordid professions daily concerning grace, and Christ, and heavenly things; truth shall be set off in magnificent speeches; and man shall vie with each other to say the finest things in her behalf. But, if it end here, all this is only given her fair words, and paying her off with empty compliments; I wish, it could be

be added, that men did not mean to compliment their own worth in so doing, and (as the proverb is) "speak one good word for her and two for themselves." Alas! our hearts can take a mean pride in these things, as well as in others; and we shall always find it a much cheaper thing to set off the truth with our lips, than to adorn it in our lives. When a man makes a florid harangue, and with a vast deal of pompous language and address, expatiates upon divine concerns; can it be an uncharitable question to ask, which he wishes most to exalt—the *speaker* or the *subject*? Let him descend from these altitudes, and let him be followed into private life; and then let us look round for all this magnificence.—Where are all the realities, which he has been celebrating? where that renunciation of self, that resignation of spirit, that meekness of conduct, that patience of temper, that forbearance of reproach, that charity of heart, that contentment of life, that goodwill to all men, that unkindness to none; of which so much has been said, and said so well, and with so much applause?—O that we could fill up a dreadful blank! or that our mantle of love was broad enough to cover it from the eyes of the world!—Alas! all this is only to be less than little, and is the very opposite to the true greatness, of which we are treating. We may say any thing and every thing in favour of this greatness, both as it appeared in Christ and as it is wrought by his grace; and yet ascend but very poorly to the solid enjoyment of it.

All this contrariety, which we may observe in others and feel in ourselves, to Christian greatness, proceeds from our carnal hearts, which are wedded by nature to the world, and are taken up with its puny objects, by rooted habit and general custom. The power of God only can break the charm, and give us to see, that all true eminence is not of the world, but above it and beyond it; that it does not consist in what men may think of us, but what God thinks; that he has nothing to do with the natural man, but with the spiritual life; that it is not founded upon the abilities of the creatures, nor upon their knowledge, zeal, or any other acquirement, which they can exert upon natural principles; but upon an abstraction from self, a devotedness to God, a placid and gracious surrender of every thing and of every object, both of time and eternity, into his hands, and so finding him all in all.—These

are

are words easily spoken, and perhaps soon conceived; but the reality is the most transcendent business in the world. Nothing can work it in the soul, but the Omnipotent power of God.

Christ *emptied himself* (Phil. ii. 7.) or, as our translation has it, *made himself of no reputation*; and his people must be emptied of themselves, through his grace, or they would not be his people. They become of no reputation in the carnal eye; and they are not anxious for it; because they live above the world's opinion in spiritual things, and can face the opinion of the world, with respect to their outward conduct and demeanor. Being filled with their master's love, they become great only in him, and desire no greatness but his. They *do not live*, i. e. they exist not of themselves nor for themselves, but *Christ liveth in them.* They are truly great in his greatness. His Spirit makes them so, and keeps them so. They pray to be high in God's esteem, and little in their own. They abhor to magnify themselves, or to covet or creep after the approbation of men. The kings and priests of God value his favour above all things, and are wise enough to see the poison, which often lurks in the breath and opinion of mortals. A soul which enjoys the approbation of God [Matth. xxv. 21.] and the congratulations of the angels in heaven [Luke xv. 10.] needs not to debase itself for the silly esteem of a few dying worms, who groan, and languish, and crawl upon this miserable earth. He may be very easy without either the commendation or the company of men, who holds communication with God. His ambition is put upon a right center, and cannot mark so narrow and so deformed a circumference. Having received the honor of God, he feels a noble indifference for earthly præ-eminences; knowing, that nothing in nature can add to his spiritual dignity. In the world, a king can receive but small lustre from taking up his freedom in a trading company, or by herding with beggars: And, in grace a Christian can receive no spiritual exaltation by stooping to the world's pursuits. His exaltation is unseen by man, as well as the source of it: And a spiritual dignity of this sort he considers, as the only object worth seeking.

As to true riches, pleasure, and the real enjoyment of solid good; how vastly does the advantage turn on the side

side of the Christian? 'Tis true; the riches pleasure, and enjoyments, which attend his illustrious character, have very little reference to this world; or they would be too beggarly, as well as too perishing, for his main pursuit. His riches are grace and glory; his object is God; and his pleasure consists in communion with him. I mean not to depreciate the bounties of Providence; but I speak against that misapplication of them, which is founded in making them the one great object and concern of life. Enjoyed aright, they are blessings; abused and perverted, they soon entail misery and woe. I would not speak like a monk, affecting to despise what I have not; But I would ask as a Christian, not seeking what I ought to despise. If God send honor and riches, without an heart to use them rightly; I can scarce see upon earth the infliction of so great a curse. Such an one has only greater means of destroying both body and soul. After all, a Christian can receive no solid or lasting satisfaction in *calling his lands after his own name*, in surveying the largest territory as his property, and in counting over thousands of gold and silver; for he considers himself only as God's steward, and knows, that, in a short period of time, his body must moulder to atoms in a very contracted space, and that all his treasures will be scattered over the earth, out of which they came. Dirt can only administer a dirty joy: and the highest things of time are parcelled out in moments, and by moments are taken away. Scarce any earthly gratification can be pointed out, but what is enjoyed in common with *the beasts that perish*. That cannot be *great*, which cannot abide: and those things must surely be *little* indeed, which give but little peace, last but a little while, depend upon little circumstances, are desired by little minds, and end in nothing at last. Men do not require the playthings of childhood: Nor ought the sons of eternity to be very anxious for the toys of time.

In a word: how opposite to all earthly greatness is the incorruptible greatness of a Christian! how contrary to the spirit and maxims of the world, is the life and spirit of the real believer in Jesus! how repugnant is the corrupted understanding of man in the immaculate wisdom of God!—The riches of a truly exalted spirit consist in emptying the heart of its own possessions, and filling it with

with the bounties of Christ. Can any thing be more retrograde from the mind of fallen man, than *this mind which was in Christ Jesus?* What can an unrenewed soul comprehend of the following paradox?—that, the true honor, is humility: real greatness, self-abasement; the highest ambition, a likeness to a crucified Master; solid wisdom, the discovery of a man's own foolishness, and of Christ's wisdom; the best strength, a sense of his own weakness and embracing the strength of a Saviour; the greatest happiness, a renunciation of worldly pleasures for communion with God; the fullest riches, a treasure in heaven; and (in short) the true every thing, to be nothing in self, and Christ to be all in all.—This paradox has puzzled the carnal mind from the beginning of the world, and will puzzle every unbeliever to the end of it. To get rid of the thought, we will try perhaps to laugh it away, and fancy, that by being very witty upon the most solemn subject, that can fall under the contemplation of man, he makes himself an atonement for renouncing the wisdom of it. But the reality will return even here; and if the mind is not turned too, it will one day be a dreadful reality indeed.

How justly then, may the pious spirit break forth in some such expressions of devotion as these? "O my heavenly Father and my only hope; thou, of thine unbounded mercy, wast pleased to deliver me from the bondage of corruption and the slavery of sin; and shall I, or can I, seek with pleasure any freedom but thine?—Thou hast shewn me the poverty of all earthly things, of my own heart, and of all the creatures; thou hast set before me the durable riches of thy unmeasurable grace; and shall I, or can I, pursue with carefulness any treasure but these? Thou hast made me to see an end of all human perfection and greatness, and explained to my poor heart the dignity of thy love, and the exalted rank to which that love hath raised me; and shall I, or can I, be so forgetful and base as to tread the dunghill of worldly ambition, and covet, O thou pure Fount of glory, any grandure but in thee?—Let thy strength be made perfect in my weakness, and deliver me from a conduct, so ungrateful to thy goodness, and so unworthy of the grace, which thou hast freely bestowed upon me. Low and vile in myself, I would cast my crown at thy feet, and implore thy strength to preserve

serve, what only thy goodness could confer. It was *thy* crown, and nothing but free and unbounded love could have made it *mine*. O my incarnate Saviour; fill me more and more with thy truth; and then shall I arise above the world, above sin, and (what is harder still) above myself. Thine I am: Thee only would I serve. Thou hast, in tender pity, suffered death for my happiness: O help me to live, above all things, for thy glory. I would shew that glory unto man; and I beseech thee to preserve me while I am shewing it, far, very far, from seeking my own. May I renounce *that*, and all wisdom, righteousness and strength, but thine. And when thou shalt be pleased to exalt me still higher, and to bring a poor worm, whom thy bounty has made immortal, into the full blaze of thine eternal majesty; O help me to depart in peace, and to give some reviving testimony of that sweet assurance of faith, with which thou hast blessed me. Command me to enter into Sion with songs of everlasting joy upon my head, and so to sit down in thy kingdom with all those, who (sinners once like me) inherit the promises! Even so: Amen."

Reader, let thy heart join with mine, in this best bright view; till our spirits shall mount to the spirits of just men made perfect, and remain at God's right-hand for ever.

'Tis Grace which lifts the feeble mind,
From meaner things, her God to please;
And prompts the soul in Him to find
Riches, and dignity, and ease.

Pleas'd with his Father's sov'reign will,
Who best can choose, and best decree;
His word he trusts Him to fulfil,
With patient eye, and waiting knee.

How blest his hours serenely glide,
Midst wreeks and horrors all around!
Nor shall death's rough or rushing tide
His placid hopes of heav'n confound.

He sails o'er time's tumultuous main,
Dependent on eternal care;
And cannot doubt the port to gain,
For God hath sworn to bring him there.

For

REMARKS ON THE PASSAGE OF THE ISRAELITES.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHATEVER might be the motive of *Philo*, in proposing some objections to prove that the passage of the Israelites over the Red Sea, was no miracle, it is impossible for me to divine, suffice it to say; I would, by your indulgence, offer a few remarks on this important fact, which I submit to your judgment and Philo's consideration; and remain Your's, to serve

Oxon, Oct. 5, 1805. ACADEMICUS.

The passage of *Alexander* the Great over the Sea of *Pamphylia* bears no manner of resemblance to that of the Israelites over the Red Sea. *Alexander* was to march from *Phaselis*, a sea port, to *Perga* an inland city of *Pamphylia*. The country near *Phaselis* upon the shore of the *Pamphylian* sea was mountainous and rocky; and he could not find a passage for his army without taking a great compass round the mountains, or attempting to go over the strand between the rocks and the sea. *Arrian* observes, 'that there was no passing here, unless when the wind blew from the North. A wind from this quarter was so directed, as to keep back the tide from flowing so far up the shore, as the Southern winds would drive it; and therefore *Alexander* perceiving just at this conjuncture, that there was a violent North wind, took hold of the opportunity, and sent part of his army over the mountains, and went himself with the rest of his forces along the shore. It is evident that there was no miracle in this case, unless we call the wind's blowing favourably for *Alexander's* purpose a miracle; and *Plutarch* observes, that *Alexander* himself thought there was nothing extraordinary in this passage. *Josephus* should not have compared it to that of the Israelites, since they are not alike in any one respect. The Israelites crossed over a sea, where no Historian says that any other persons found a passage. *Alexander* only marched upon the shore of the sea of *Pamphylia*, where the Historians, who most magnified the Providence that protected him, do allow that any one may go at any time, when the same wind blows, which favoured him. It does

not appear from any historian, that the Red Sea ebbs backward, as far as the place where the Israelites passed over, so as to leave a large tract of land dry in the recess of every tide, six or seven miles in length, and three or four miles over. No one but the Israelites travelled over dry land in this place; and therefore undoubtedly, there was no dry land in it, unless when God by an extraordinary miracle was pleased to make it so.

If the passage of the Israelites over the Red Sea was upon a recess of the tide, all the particulars, in the account *Moses* has given us of this event, are false. 1st. There needed no cloud and pillar of fire to direct the journey of the Israelites to the Red Sea; for they were, upon this supposition, conducted thither by the contrivance of *Moses*, who thought that by his skill in the flux and reflux of the sea, he could better escape from *Pharoah* there, than in any other place. 2dly. *Moses* represents, that the waters were divided and stood on heaps on both sides of the Israelites, and were *a wall to them on their right hand and on their left*: but this could not be true, if there was only a reflux of the tide. For if the tide was driven back by the strongest wind, the waters could stand on heaps only on the sea side; and the other side must have been intirely drained, the water being driven by the wind down the channel. 3dly. *Moses* tells us, that God caused a strong East wind to blow in order to divide the waters; and this indeed is a proper wind to have such an effect by God Almighty's direction: but if a reflux of the tide had been the only thing that happened then, an East wind would not have been proper for it. The Red Sea runs up from the ocean towards the North-West; and therefore a North, or North-West wind would have been the only proper direction to drive back the tide. An East wind blows cross that sea, and the effect of it must be to drive the waters partly up to the Land's end, and partly down to the ocean, so as to divide the waters as *Moses* relates, and not to cause a great ebb of tide; and the blowing of such a wind as this, with a force sufficient to cause so extraordinary an effect for opening a passage to the Israelites through the midst of a sea, must be looked upon as a miraculous interposition of God's power for their preservation.

As to what *Artapanus* suggests, that the *Egyptians* who lived at *Memphis*, related that *Moses* conducted the Israelites over

over the Red Sea by his skill in the tides, there is no regard due to this fiction, especially if we consider, that the wise and learned part of the Egyptians rejected it. For the same Author testifies, that the priests of *Heliopolis* related the matter quite otherwise. This account agrees with that of *Moses*: the *Heliopolitans* were always esteemed to be the wisest and most learned of all the Egyptians, according to *Herodotus* (*l.* 2. *c.* 3.): and if the authority of *Moses*, or the faithfulness of his narration could be questioned, this agreement of the *Heliopolitans* with him, would be of much greater weight with all reasonable enquirers to confirm his account, than what is suggested from the *Mephites* can be of to impair the credit of it. The *Heliopolitans* in their account of that event, took also notice of lightenings which have been mentioned by *Moses*; but perhaps it may be conjectured from Psal. lxxvii. 16. 20. that there were lightenings, which contributed to the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. And it is very probable that there were anciently many true relations of this fact, besides that of *Moses*, from which the inhabitants of *Heliopolis* might have their narration.

THE BLESSINGS OF PREDESTINATION.

The certain Glorification of all who are Justified, further confirmed by Scripture and Reason.

(Continued and Concluded from page 437, Vol. VIII.)

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

DEAR SIR,

YOU will recollect, that our last Essay on the Blessings of Predestination, went to prove the absolute certainty of the glorification of all those whom God justifies; at the close of which, it was however granted, that there are some Scriptures which seem to intimate the possibility of final apostacy in certain cases, but which can not be applied to the especially elect without contradicting, not only plain and direct testimonies of Scripture, but the laws of nature and sound philosophy—Thus it may be affirmed, that it becomes the perfection of Deity, that he should glorify the people whom he justifies, or those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. To imagine that

that God may be disappointed in his wishes or frustrated in his designs, argues imperfection of nature, and makes him too much like ourselves to consist with the dignity of his character, who is the eternal, immortal, uncorruptible and immutable Jehovah—He may have indeed, left some things in the order of his government to depend upon secondry causes, as in his conduct towards the Jews, under the Mosaic economy, but thence to infer, that all his other appointments, under the more spiritual dispensation of the gospel are of a conditional nature, is unwarrantable and tends to sully the brightness and purity of the Divine nature. Contrary to such a doctrine, we are told in the New Testament, that all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the "*called according to his purpose,*" Rom. viii. 29. in which passage, God is represented as a wise physician mixing a variety of ingredients to co-operate as a salutary draught for the present health and final happiness of the elect. Now as all things are under the control of God, he can make them subservient to his purpose, in promoting the glorification of those who are justified. The eternal purpose of God in favour of his chosen, is the moving power or invisible spring that works the grand machine of their salvation, and by which they are raised to glory. Many will allow the absolute certainty of the fulfilment of prophecies, and that the particular events were decreed of God, who will not admit, that final glorification, may be considered in the light of a prediction or prophecy, absolutely fulfilled in favour of the elect. But certainly it is not inconsistent with the character of God, to be as certain in the latter as in the former.

By investigating the nature of human purposes. and considering in what their excellency consists, we may be better able to judge of those suited to the character of God.

The purposes of every wise man, are the result of due deliberations, and what he conceives most fit to be done. He therefore choses necessarily to do what he hath thus purposed to be done.

To propose to do any thing has a reference to some future period either near at hand or more remote. If what we purpose to do be truly important in our estimation, our desire for its accomplishment will be in proportion. In this case all the power and influence that can be applied

plied, will be readily exercised for the accomplishment of what we so ardently desire to come to pass. Hence, lastly, if the power and influence applied, prove unsuccessful, the defect arises from ignorance as to our own strength and ability, or our influence over others, on whom we depended to co-operate with us, in affecting the end desired. But if neither of these fail us, our purposes will be accomplished, and men will commend our wisdom. And we humbly ask, if there be any real difference in the nature of the divine purposes, concerning the glorification of the elect, except in the last case? in which, certainly, God must be allowed to distinguish himself from the wisest of men, who are always liable to fail in their purposes—but God never so.

Thus we hear, the true God distinguish himself from all his creatures. To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal; and compare me, that we may be alike? If we make his purposes, respecting the salvation of his people, as uncertain as our own, it is in effect to compare him with ourselves, and make ourselves framers of idols. If God cannot go before us in the execution of his purposes, then he is a being dependent upon us, and we seem to answer the description which the prophet hath given us, of idol framers and worshippers, *They bear him upon the shoulder*, they carry him and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove, *i. e.* till we please, one shall cry unto him, yet shall he not *answer* nor save him out of his trouble. But under such delusive notions of God, we are thus addressed. "Remember this and shew yourselves men; bring it again to mind; or, ye transgressors, remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is *none else*, I am God, and there is *none like me*," declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, saying, "my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, Isa. xlvi. 5, 7, 8, 9." In comparison to the knowledge of God, in future events, and his ability to bring to pass whatsoever he hath purposed, the wisest and ablest of men, may with propriety, have the following language applied to them: Surely the princes of Zoan are *fools*, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharoah is become brutish Where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of Hosts hath purposed

purposed upon Egypt. Isa. xix. 11, 17. It is in the certainty of God's promises, arising from the absolute and independent nature of his purposes, and omnipotent power to accomplish them, that he is chiefly distinguished from the gods of the nations. I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain. They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. There are no professors of Christianity that say, that God has not ability to save, but they doubt whether he hath not, in a remote sense, suspended final glorification to the believer's will in persevering; but this would render it uncertain, and would be assigning to the creature, that which is peculiar to God only, that is, to make the most important events absolutely certain; "known unto God are all his works from the beginning, Acts xv. 18. I have declared the former things from the beginning, and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them, I did them suddenly, and they came to pass, because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even, from the beginning, declared it unto thee, before it came to pass I shewed it thee, lest thou shouldest say, mine idol hath done them; and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them." We see then the necessity there is, that Jehovah should maintain his dignity, and keep stubborn man in a humbled place, lest in the end he should say, *mine idol* SELF hath brought me to glory. This, we think, is further confirmed by the prophet, "for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I restrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined *thee*, but not with, or for silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of afflictions. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it; for how should any man be polluted? and I will not give my glory to another." Isai. xlviii. 3, 5, 9, 10, 11. God, in the economy of grace, salvation and glory, may be fitly compared to a wise master builder. Thus, an apostle, every house is builded by some man, but he that built *all things is God*, Heb. iii. 4. In another passage it is said, *all things* are of God. 2 Cor. v. 18. Ye are God's building, 1 Cor. iii. 9. Surely then in the execution of this building, there was a design of the whole previously made; and the Scriptures represent this plan to be made in the counsels of eternity. Hence, Peter might

might well say, known unto God are all his works, from the beginning, Acts xv. 18. We each of us know, what is deemed an excellence in earthly builders. They make the draught, they count the cost; they lay the foundation, they rear the superb structure, and complete what they begin, exactly correspondent with their design, except intervening circumstances prevent; and so far as disappointment takes place, we are covinced either of the incompetency of the architect, or the precarious nature of every thing incidental to human endeavours, even in the execution of well conserted plans. But when we reflect upon the character of the great builder of the whole fabric of the universe, and consider him as the source of infinite wisdom, goodness, and uncontrolable power; surely we cannot be satisfied with those opinions, that lead us to view the divine majesty, subject to like failings and disappointments in the plan of his grace. We may, consistently, figure to our mind, a human architect, however skilful, lamenting over the ruined remains of a noble and towering structure, raised with vast and skilful industry, but brought to the ground by some unforeseen defect in the foundation, or external tempest: But can we at the same time, entertain the smallest suspicion, that God himself may possibly mourn at last over the ruined condition of his church, built on a never-failing rock, and be disappointed in the number of glorified spirits, to fill all those mansions which he purposed before the foundation of the world? Can it be said of him, either that he began to build but was not able to finish, or, that after he had reared the fabric, that a fortuitous blast destroyed it?

There are many things which may conspire to counteract the designs, and destroy the plans of human builders, as the want of foresight to provide against future obstacles, a bad foundation, a want of materials to work upon, of property, and of influence over the wills of others, on whose assistance we partly depended for the accomplishment of our purposes. But the divine perfections of the heavenly architect, provides a remedy against all these contingencies, to which all human endeavours are subject. And it is meet it should be so, as those undertakings which are of the most importance, requires the greatest certainty in their execution. All admit, that certainty in such cases, is the highest excellency: but was there ever an undertaking

of

of so much consequence, as the building of grace? and, must we not, therefore, consider it an excellence in the character of God, to be absolutely certain in the final accomplishment, a work of infinite moment?

How gloomy the shade cast upon the character of God by a contrary system of doctrine, which considers the glorification of the saints in some degree, dependent on men's own perseverance, or co-working with God; so that what the Scriptures ascribe to the pure and unassisted grace of God working in us, is placed to the account of a mixture of grace and works; whence the conclusion, that God cannot save us, except *we will* or to express it more Arminian like, except we co-operate with his grace and use the means he hath appointed. The doctrine however, which we have advanced, when fairly examined, will be found not in the least to impair the bulwarks of morality and evangelical obedience. To those persons only who take but a very light view of the subject, or are desirous to cast the balance of evidence in favour of the merit of works, will it so appear; for we affirm in a certain sense, that God cannot save any man except he will, or independent of his own choice to be saved; and perseverance in Christian obedience.

That no man can be dragged unwillingly to heaven, or be fit for it without holiness, is we think, a position founded on sound philosophy, but how the former is attained and the latter produced, is clearly expressed by the inspired penman. "It is God that worketh in you, both to *will* and *to do*, of his good pleasure, Philip ii. 13. And under this view we have no objection to be exhorted to "work out our own salvation, with fear and tremblings," see ver. 12. for the *willing*, the *doing*, the *working out* the *fear and trembling*, in the passage are the fruits of the Spirit of God in believers. He influences their wills and excites their obedience, and thus secures their final preservation. In our being exhorted to work out our own salvation, it cannot be supposed, that the apostle had forgotten the infinite price of the blood of Jesus for our redemption, or that he meant to insinuate, that our working either with or without grace, can add any virtue to the one *offering* or *one obedience* of the Lord from heaven, the second Adam. It is called a working out our salvation because personal salvation can only be obtained at the end of our obedience,

obedience, but not for it. Every christian has a *race to run*, and a *victory to obtain*; but surely neither of those add any thing to the real procuring cause of our salvation, for Christ is our forerunner who won the prize, and he is the Captain of our salvation who hath fought the battle, and obtained the victory over satan, death and hell, yet these cannot be enjoyed by his people but by means of fighting and running, but our exertions of this nature are solely promoted by the grace of God in us, and thus, we are saved by grace in us—in a certain sense whilst the grace of God in the death of Jesus, is our only foundation of trust. In the same manner we may understand, that solemn declaration, *without holiness* no man shall see the Lord, *i. e.* with pleasure; but surely all real holinsss is the fruit of God's sanctifying spirit in us, and not the effect of our free will towards him. He makes use of our wills, however, as a secondary cause of our finally persevering in obedience, for no genuine Christian thinks of persevering but in obedience to the will of God, and through the influence of his grace working in him that which is well pleasing in his sight by Christ Jesus. We agree with Arminians, that the Lord cannot save any adult person possessed with reason, without supreme love to himself, exercised in such a soul, for it is contrary to the very nature of things to expect the enjoyment of God in heaven, without affections for and delight in him here; but it is equally clear from Scripture, that the spirit of God must first quicken the soul, otherwise dead in trespasses and sin, before it can love God, Hence it is said, if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his, Rom. viii. 9. Thus we see causes and effects inseparably connected together, and both uniting under God, to secure our perseverance and final glorification, though sometimes they are spoken of disjunctively, and the instrumental is put for the efficient cause. For instance, "is not my word as a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?" yet it is clear, that the word of God is only the instrument of conversion, or rather regeneration, and that the Holy Spirit, power, or arm of the Lord is the agent, or efficient cause of it. It is said, "in due time we shall reap, if we faint not;" as if our reaping the harvest of eternal glory, depended on our not fainting; but it should be observed, that our not fainting, originally depends on the continued

supplies of the Spirit of grace; for thus it is said, that we are "kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto salvation." 1 Pet. i. 5.

(To be concluded in our next Number.)

For the Gospel Magazine.

AN EXHORTATION TO A BELIEVER.

DEAR Mr. H. *Barton, May* 6, 1781.

IT is with the greatest pleasure, I embrace the present opportunity of writing to you. I hope you daily increase in that knowledge of Christ, which is life eternal. It is the great end of the gospel, and the grand design of God in it, to glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as the end of the law for righteousness. to every one that believeth. And indeed, it is the sole design of the doctrine of grace, to exhort all that are the Lord's; to describe their whole salvation from sin, Satan, death and hell; to the free love of God, and to the death of our sweet Jesus Christ, and him alone, and to none or nothing but him. For let me ask the following questions: Who was made sin for us, but Christ? Who bore our sins in his own body, but Christ? Who was ordained to take away sins, but Christ? Who finished transgressions and made an end of sin, but Christ? Who appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, but Christ? Who came into the world to save sinners, but Christ? Who washed us from our sins, and purged them away, but Christ? Who gave himself for our sins, but Christ? Who was made a curse for us, and delivered us from the curse of the law, but Christ? Who laid down his life for us, but Christ? Who bore our sins, and carried our sorrows, but Christ? Who was stricken and smitten, afflicted, and wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, but Christ? Who made peace for us by the blood of his cross, but Christ? By what means are our iniquities blotted out and forgiven, but by him? Who could deliver us from the wrath to come, but Christ? What blood could cleanse us from all sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Who could make us complete, and all fair, without spot, and perfect us for ever, but Christ? what Redeemer and Saviour have we, but Christ, who is all in all, in salvation's work.

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The holy Scripture attribute all our blessedness, and all our salvation to Him, the ever blessed Son of God, alone, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Let us, therefore, prize the Lord Jesus Christ, lay our whole stress upon him alone, fetch all our comfort from him, and live in the constant views of the everlasting efficacy of the sacrifice of his body and soul upon the cross, and in a sight of his all perfect righteousness, deriving all our life, happiness, peace, strength, comfort, joy, and all our blessedness from Christ alone, and not from any thing in ourselves. One whose name I cannot find, the title page being lost, says, every thing gives a believer comfort, had we but eyes to see it. God and Man, heaven and earth, sin, justice, hell and condemnation, give you all comfort.

If you look up to justice, that saith, you poor believing creature, go your way comforted, I am satisfied to the full.

If you look to hell and death, and condemnation, they say, be comforted you poor believing soul, we have no power over you; the Lord Jesus Christ hath conquered us. And if you look to your own sins, they tell you thus much, and say, be for ever comforted, for we have pleaded against you, but we have lost our cause. If you look up to heaven, then you may see glory and happiness, and blessedness, ready to entertain you and every believing soul, and they all call after you, and say, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you; therefore, go away cheerfully, and get you to heaven, and when you come there, be discomforted if you can. If Christ, and God, and heaven, and all call you, and say, come hither ye believing souls, come: O believer, then lift up your head with joy, and draw the waters of comfort and consolation from this truth: only remember this, when you find your sins *roaring* against you, and telling your Father that you have sinned, and justice cries, and hell threatens, then take the blood of Christ, and set before your eyes all that ever Christ hath suffered, and see justice fully satisfied, and hear the blood of Christ speaking, as well as the clamours of sin. It is our misery that we can hear the bawlings of sin, and Satan, and corruption, crying and saying, What you salvation! and yet have these and these corruptions? we hear these, and we hearken not to other. The blood of Christ hath pardoned, and will heal all. O hear

hear that voice, and you shall see and hear admirable things." This same worthy says, this is the doctrine that holds up the soul, and keeps it from sinking and fainting in the sight and sense of sin. This doctrine removes many objections, which otherwise would trouble and discourage us. This doctrine saith, there is nothing to pay, all is paid. It cost Christ dear, that it might cost us nothing. It is not of works, not according to our works. Our life is hid with Christ in God. The answer of a good conscience is, O God, thy Son hath died for me. Satisfaction is made, what more canst thou require of me? O the unsearchable riches of Christ! this is the doctrine that raiseth the soul when fallen, and enables it to rise and return to God. Not any thing can keep the soul from utter despair, and raise it when fallen, but Christ's satisfaction, and the unchangeableness of the love of God. Tell me, what peace or comfort could we have, were it not that Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? This is the doctrine that is full of sweetness and life: Behold a living fountain that can never be drawn dry. It ever flows full of sweetness, lo, there is strong consolation, full of spirit and life for the soul to drink *freely at*, at all times to refresh itself withal. Here is peace, security, consolation, joy, contentment; in that, not any thing can be laid to thy charge. Our sins shall be remembered no more. O what a fountain of consolation is here, what manner of love is this, what marrow and fatness is like unto this. If my soul is deserted, and faith fail, yet God is my God; I change oft, but he never; when I cannot apprehend him, I am apprehended of him.

Christ is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. He that understands not this doctrine, can enjoy no true, solid, settled comfort. In the right understanding of this doctrine, Christ is rightly understood, and our souls enjoy such marrow and fatness, as gladden our hearts, and keep our souls from fainting in a world of misery, and corruption. God may, for reasons best known to himself, suffer corruption to be too strong for thee, it may be to abase thee more in thine own eyes, to see thy weakness, and to see more of the Saviour's strength.

God may leave thy personal sanctification the more imperfect, that thou mayest the more study, and behold thy justification

justification in Christ Jesus; and lean the more upon him, and pay the more in thy justification by him.

We ought not to live upon, and fetch our comfort from subduing our sins, but from Christ, who is made unto us both righteousness and sanctification. When we are at the best, we may not live in ourselves, nor by sight, but by faith; and when we are at the worst, we ought to live upon Christ by faith; and comfort ourselves in him, and in him alone. Its the folly of many, when they want strength and comfort, they seek it their duties, and subduing of sin; and comfort themselves there, but Christ is not in all their thoughts.

The greatest peace any saint enjoys, is to be neither ground nor encouragement for their belief, nor ought any terrors any posses, to be a ground of discouragement in believing, for our happiness is not in any thing we feel, or apprehend in ourselves, but in the word and promise of God, and in that we are known of God, who loves us and comprehends us in his Son, and his not imputing our trespasses unto us. Consider the price that was paid for our sins, it is infinite in value, being the blood of him who was truly and properly God. Count all thy sins, still they are the act of a finite creature, Christ is God, therefore, his satisfaction is above them. His righteousness is greater than thy sins. Consider the covenant of grace, it is not made with us, nor can it be broken by us. It is not founded upon such a sandy foundation as thyself and duties are, and seeing the covenant stands sure for ever, it should satisfy us for ever, and cause us to cast away all out doubts and fears: may these quotations prove a blessing. O that the Holy Ghost may, my dear friend, more and more give you to understand the love of Christ, and his great mercy and perfect work, to the end you may ever crown him in your heart and conscience, and trust the whole of your salvation upon what he did and finished, in his life and death.

Draw aside the curtain and look within the veil, and take a view of what Jesus is there doing for you, and please yourself with this, that Jesus has all your concerns before him, and will withhold no good thing from you. Let this encourage you to cast all your care upon him, who careth for you,

It was a noble saying of *John Careless*, the martyr, in his letter to Mr. Philpot, " *I will now, with you, sing away*

care, for now my soul is turned to her old rest again, and has taken a sweet nap in Christ's lap. I have cast my case upon the Lord who careth for me; I will be careless, according to my name.

Socrates, a Heathen, could say, since God is so careful of you, what need you be careful of any thing.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ abundantly bless you with a supply of all grace. May grace and peace be multiplied unto you. I am your friend, in Christ Jesus.

S. E. P.

Poetry.

SELF RENUNCIATION.

Of sinners, I know I'm the chief;
The venom lies deep in my heart;
I'm filled with shame and with grief,
That I from the Lord should depart.
I see I deserve his sad frown,
And dire indignation to bear,
And wonder I am not cast down,
To weep in eternal despair.

Incarnate Jehovah to thee,
I come with my guilt and my shame;
To thee for salvation, I flee;
Salvation I read in thy name;
Thou wilt not, I'm certain, reject
The sinner who pants for thy rest;
Thy love will embrace and protect,
The culprit, that flies to thy breast.

Thyself for my sins, thou hast giv'n;
Thy blood has redeem'd me from hell;
Thy mercy has promis'd me heav'n;
There with thee for ever to dwell:
I hope I shall soon bid adieu
To this world of sin where I am,
And join in the song ever new —
Salvation to God and the Lamb.

A—y, Oct. 15, 1805. EBENEZER.

ON AN ABIDING SENSE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

DEAR Saviour may thy precious love,
Each day pervade my soul;
How sweetly then my days would move,
How blest my minutes roll.

How feelingly should I account,
And trace thy suff'ring o'er;
In weeping joy, survey the mount,
Where you my sorrows bore.

My heart thy more immediate throne,
Would oft be lost in praise;
And seeds of glory in it sown,
Would more conspicuous raise,

And promise soon an op'ning flow'r,
To bloom in realms of love;
And anxiously would wait the hour,
To be convey'd above.

MINOR.

IMMANUEL THE OBJECT OF ANGELIC ADORATION.

ON hills insufferably bright,
Where flaming armies move;
Stands our Immanuel deck'd in light,
Our Saviour cloth'd with love.

With raptures high, and fixt amaze,
Angels behold his face;
And saints o'erwhelmed with pleasure gaze,
And praise him for his grace.

He smiles, their praises higher rise,
And with their praise their joy;
Each with his fellow songster vies,
Till all their skill they try.

Thus ages endless they shall spend,
Nor think the season long;
And when this mortal life shall end,
I hope to join their song.

Then shall I view, in vision bright,
Whom now I dimly see:
And soar, amazed in strange delight,
Through vast eternity.

EBENEZER.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

IT would be esteemed a favour, if you will preserve this fugitive piece in your Magazine, it was an Epitaph designed for that great man of God, WILLIAM ROMAINE, which among many others, were presented to a committee of gentleman; I am Sir, Your's, &c.

London, Aug. 6, 1805. A FRIEND.

INSCRIPTION

Designed for the Monument of the late Rev. W. ROMAINE, A.M. Rector of St. ANDREW by the WARDROBE, *and* St. ANN BLACKFRIARS, *and* 46 *Years Lecturer of* St. DUNSTAN'S in the WEST, *London.*

In grateful Acknowledgement to Almighty GOD,
Who, in Mercy,
Remembering his Church in her low Estate,
Was pleased to revive his Work, particularly in this City,
By raising up, as a principal Instrument,
WILLIAM ROMAINE, A.M.
And enabling him to preach the almost exploded Doctrine
OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,
As contained in her
LITURGY, ARTICLES, AND HOMILIES,
And emboldening him to declare to all Ranks of Men,
That there is no other Name under Heaven, whereby we can be saved, except
JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified.
The Doctrines of the Trinity,
Free Justification by Faith,
The Divinity of Jesus Christ, the a..-sufficiency of his Atonement,
And the Efficacy of the LORD, the SPIRIT's *Grace,*
Were his constant Themes.
After having spent near Sixty Years in the Ministry,
Thirty of which were in this Church,
With a consistency of Character, and great Usefulness,
GOD,
Was pleased to take him to behold his Glory,
On the 26th JULY, 1795, Aged 81 Years.
Sensible of the Benefits they received under his Ministry, his Congregation have erected a Monument to his Memory.