

THE
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THOUGHTS ON THE PARTIAL AND IMPARTIAL MINISTRATION OF DIVINE TRUTH.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

IN a former paper, I dropt a few hints on the practicability and propriety of believers obtaining satisfaction concerning their interest in the covenant of grace *without* them, by knowing and refering to the work of grace *within* them. Allow me to add, for the benefit of some of your readers, that if thus arguing, from the effect to the cause, be the only admissible way of ascertaining the safety of our state God-wards, it as well applies to all the doctrines of grace as to their spring and fountain; and no doctrine, in my humble opinion, should ever be brought forward independent of, or unconnected with, its proper legitimate fruits. This appears to have been an invariable rule with the sacred writers; for where do we find the doctrines of election, predestination, justification, &c. detached from the great objects they were designed to secure, and to which they are more or less subservient? Rom. viii. 28, 30, 33, 1, 13. xii. 1. &c. It is, I think, sufficiently obvious that the Lord had in view, in our election and predestination, the restoration of our souls to his lost image in holiness and love; and this, I apprehend, is the reason why the elect are so often denominated from, or alluded to, by the fruits and effects of their election and believing, rather than from the mere circumstance of their choice in Christ. Thus we read, "my sheep, hear my voice and follow me—called to be saints; elect unto obedience; as obedient children; a holy nation; gather my saints; to them that are sanctified by God the Father, who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect, that cry day and night unto him; that walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, humbleness of mind, &c. I have chosen and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth

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much fruit, he has chosen us that we should be holy, a chosen generation, a holy nation, predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son; he brought forth his chosen with gladness, that they might observe his statutes and keep his laws; give diligence to add to your faith temperance, charity, forbearance, &c. in order to make your election sure," &c. It is thus we are instructed, who are the partakers of God's election in Christ, by a reference to their peculiar disposition, characters and walk: and it is thus we are reminded, I think, of the great ends of the Lord's choice of us, and that as much emphasis is due to the declared objects and design of our election, as to the doctrine itself; because the degree of evidence of our interest in the one, must be always in proportion to our respect to, and exemplification of the other. Gal. v. 24. 1 John ii. 29. This mode of ministering divine truths certainly bids the fairest to preserve the order and harmony which subsists between them, wherein their principal strength and beauty consists; and if it be the only legitimate mode, the frequent practice of introducing them separate is hardly defensible, and is likely to be productive of bad consequences, as it really is. Matt. vi. 19. 1 Tim. iii. 6. vi. 3—5.

Indeed, were we to follow the example of the sacred writers in their distribution of divine truths, we should, perhaps, appropriate a much larger proportion to the practical than to the doctrinal part. A slight and cursory review of the New Testament, will, if I am not much mistaken, evince the validity of this remark; though it may receive little countenance and support from the discourses now in high request. I think, upon a moderate scale of calculation, the doctrinal part does not occupy more than one tenth. Your readers will correct me if I err, but it strikes me most forcibly that if their practical applications have claimed so much larger a share of the attention of the inspired writers, it cannot be improper for us to aim at something like the same distribution ourselves. This, I should conceive, would be showing that deference and regard to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit therein, which is quite becoming, and would be the likely way to avoid the common error of laying a great stress upon some scriptures to the overlooking of others, which appear to have an equal measure of value and importance in the practice of true religion, and of course, an equal claim to our attention and zeal. It might not be improperly

improperly added that if the Spirit of truth have thought good to subjoin to the doctrinal parts of divine writ so much of the preceptive; the faith which the same Spirit works in the heart, must and will distinguish itself by a relish for the one as well as the other: and that which discards and disregards any, or finds no use for a great deal, to wit, those in particular which contain caution, warning, exhortation, admonition, &c. is justly liable to suspicion. This consideration may at least plead an apology, if it were needful, for those who professing the former kind of faith, enforce these with as much frequency, earnestness, and zeal as those. But what excuse shall we find for those hearers who, with all their pretensions to knowledge and faith, can hardly give their attention to a faithful sermon from such scriptures as Rom. xii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. 2 Pet. i. 10. Rev. ii. 5. while they would be all alive and awake, with sensations of pleasure and gratification, if the preacher were only doing justice to the purport and scope of such an one as Rom. viii. 38, 39? Such hearers may be always gaping for comfort, but then they have strong objections to come by it in the way prescribed, (Psalm l. 23. Phil. iv. 6, 7. And by this means it comes to pass that they are so often disappointed, if the preacher deal faithfully; and that their comfort, when they get it, is seldom of longer duration than the sermon which produced it, by its happening to contain a good quantity of their favourite doctrine. Isaiah xxx. 10. As, however, the Spirit of holiness has stamped his impress on the whole of revealed truth, and asserted the necessity and suitableness of each to make "the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work;" we are authorized to add that indifference to some, from mere partiality to others, is formed to weaken the credulity of the whole; and to lessen, in the same proportion, the evidence of our own personal, saving interest in any. Jude iii. 20, 21.

A zeal of doctrines is unquestionably commendable; but every one may know this is not all that is included in the exhortation, "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;" not only because the term faith is there put for the whole of divine revelation, (the object of faith) but because the apostles manifested an equal concern for the practical influence of their doctrines as for the doctrines themselves; and there are few indeed that need to be told that the tree can only be known by its fruits; and fewer still

still that would set any value on such a tree but for the sake of its fruits. We have seen already that the distinctive marks of God's elect are the spirit of prayer and diligence in seeking him; bowels of mercy and humbleness of mind; imitation of Christ and obedience to his commands; walking after the spirit in meekness, heavenly mindedness, self-denial, love, &c. And how absurd would it be to speak and write warmly for the one and overlook the other, when, in the judgment of divine truth, it is impossible for them to exist separate; or for us to trace out the reality of the one but through the medium of the other. Rom. viii. 28. If such, however, may be considered the genuine, authentic proofs of our election, we may reasonably expect that something akin thereto will belong to our faith. And when we read "*strive* to enter in at the strait gate; *labour* for that bread which endureth; let us *labour* to enter into that rest; and let us *fear* lest a promise being left of entering into his rest, we should seem to come short; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; be diligent that you may be found of him in peace; watch and pray always, that you may be found worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man; and herein *do I exercise* myself to have always a conscience void of offence, &c. we unquestionably recognise in such scriptures the proper use, application, and exercise of our faith, knowledge, &c. and justice to the truth requires us to aver that, as without such a frame of heart, faith must be dead, so also, that a dislike to such parts of divine writ, cannot but render both our faith and election extremely doubtful; and they who pronounce the zealous urging and enforcing of them legality, ought to know their discernment in divine truth is no better. For how are true believers to be discriminated from false ones but by such effects of their faith, as either imply or express obedience and subjection to the divine command? And were Christ and Paul legal preachers because they inculcated the necessity of diligence, application, labour and constancy, in the concern of eternal life! Or because they required the proper exercises and energies of a true faith to distinguish it from its counterfeits; Heb. xi. 6. Whether these are clear views of things the reader will judge; but surely those are wrongly named, such which overlook a large proportion of sacred writ, and are not distinct and comprehensive enough to per-
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ceive as much importance and excellence in preceptive as in doctrinal truths; when it is said "the fear of the Lord is the beginning (or head or excellence) of wisdom, a good understanding have they (and only they) who do his commandments, and blessed is the man that delighteth greatly in his commandments."

A partial distribution of the divine word does, moreover, subject us, I conceive, to the charge of unfaithfulness, and will expose us, at some future period, to all the painful consequences which must result therefrom. For if he who knew not his master's will, shall nevertheless, be beaten with few stripes; he certainly will be pronounced worthy of many, who, while he professed to know it, withheld any part of it from those on whom he was bound to indicate the whole. How common is it, nevertheless, to hear a discourse, which consists of only one or two peculiar doctrines, commended for its excellency, and the preacher honoured with the hackneyed compliments of valiant for the truth, faithful to the truth, sound in the faith, &c. As if, for sooth, these contained every thing of any value to religion, or a favourite sentiment or two comprised the whole of a minister's charge, or a people's duty! Nor is it the least mischief to be dreaded that so curtailed and dismembered a ministrations of the word of life, is directly calculated to beget and cherish characters of the same description, who will naturally take the impress and form of the mould into which they have been cast, and grow up the misshapen figure of the ministry under which they have sat. Hence it happens that one set of professors, with a vitiated taste that verges to pharisaism, can relish nothing but mere practical truths; while another contends for, and glories only in high doctrines, with a relish as perverted, that approximates to speculative antinomianism; and the preacher that is determined to do the same justice to the whole truth as Paul, in order to approve himself to his divine master, can please and satisfy neither. 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3. Hearers of such a cast, one would suppose, must be as ill-suited with the scriptures as with this preaching. For if election and predestination will offend one party, any thing like the language of Paul to the Galatians, "let every man prove his own work and so shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another," will not please the other. See also Gal. vi. 7—10. 2 Cor. ix. 24. 27. 3 John iii. 22. 24. I should conceive, however, that a lover

of every part of his bible will steer clear of this inconvenience. For if he like the inspired writers as well when they are exhorting to "add to our faith, virtue, temperance, kindness, &c. because in the doing of these we shall find safety, or never fall," as when they are discoursing upon the riches of divine mercy in our election, justification, calling, perseverance, &c. he will have the best of reasons for his satisfaction; because our delight in, and ability to conform to the divine precept, is as much of sovereign, discriminating grace, and as real a part of our salvation, as our election and justification; and because indeed, our salvation would be as incomplete without the objects and ends of it, as without its cause and origin; even as the mystical body of Christ would be, if the remotest member from the head were wanting, though itself were perfect. Eph. i. 4. 1 Pet. i. 2. Phil. ii. 12. Luke xiii. 23, 24. Rev. xxii. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 16.

In brief, as the doctrines in question can yield no consolation or support in their abstract form, and can indeed be of little use to us but in the degree in which they are attended with their declared concomitants and effects, (as 1 Thes. i. 3, 6;) it seems preposterous, or something worse, to contend for them but with a view to these. And if, as was before observed, it is most congruous and rational to advert to those divine tempers and dispositions to which the saints are begotten again, in proof of our election and predestination, it is difficult to conceive what motives can induce any to propagate them without a continual reference to them. Rom ix. 24. 1 Thes. ii. 11, 12. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. Rom. viii. 33. 1. 14. "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness," is a testimony, we know, that as really applies to all true believers as to their glorious head and exemplar; and where such a state of mind is wanting, we are confident the firmest professed belief of any or every doctrine amounts to little but hypocrisy and delusion. No reader will, however, so far misunderstand these remarks as to suppose them designed to invalidate the authority, or depreciate the value of any of the doctrines of grace; for the writer is well known to be firmly attached to the whole of them. But he is wishful to establish the worth of other kindred truths, as important in the christian life as they. And what better plea for the doctrines of grace can be offered

ferred than that of having them incorporated with our experience, in their benign influence, and so yielding the best of evidence to us of their truth and excellence, to wit, that of heart-felt proof? John iv. 14. Thus, while we justly maintain the doctrine of the divine veracity and immutability, in the promises of the covenant, &c. we naturally recur to our own cases for proof of it, in order that we may realize the comfort and support with which it is pregnant. Psalm xxi. 1, 2. And if God have promised, and so decreed, that "he will pour upon his elect the spirit of grace and supplication—that sin shall not have dominion over them—that he will hear their prayers—that he will put his fear into their heart, that they might not depart from him—that he will strengthen them in the Lord, and that they shall walk up and down in his name—that they shall be trees of righteousness of his planting, which shall flourish like the palm, and take root as the cedar; shall bring forth fruit in old age and be fat and flourishing, (as Psalm i. 3.) to show that the Lord is upright or faithful, and that there is no unrighteousness or unfaithfulness in him," &c.; we properly conclude that if our own, or the cases of other professors, do not exhibit something of the truth of these gracious assurances, we are without that evidence and proof of the Lord's unchanging veracity and fidelity in which we are most concerned; and that they who leave out these declared objects and ends of it, contend for the name without the thing, and amuse themselves and others with the shadow to the neglect of the substance. "He is faithful who has promised;" and the prayer, the concern and the life of his people must and will harmonize with the purport and substance of what he has promised, that they may be his honourable witnesses in the earth. (Isaiah xliii. 10. 2 Thes. i. 11, 12. 1 Cor. i. 8, 9.) and wisdom be justified of her children. May the Lord increase the measure of such experience, and the number of those who zealously maintain its importance, and assiduously endeavour to contribute to its eminence in the world and in the church. Amen.

NOTE.

I have preached twenty years to a practical antinomian, who is just removed into another world, without one hopeful symptom in his case. His attachment to the doctrines of grace were such, however, as seldom to hear them amplified without a degree of enthusiastic rapture; but, alas! their proper application, with a view to our sanctification and obedience

obedience to the will of Christ, had a contrary effect. This he heard with a disrelish little short of hatred; for his views, inclination and practice, were all at variance with it. He gloried in what he denominated the gospel, which was a few favourite doctrines, and never could any man be more lavish of praise and commendation on the preacher that delivered it, than himself. But his conduct was a reproach to any religious profession, except in the single instance of regular attendance on public ordinances: and there not always decorous and becoming, if the preacher were only honest enough to urge the observance of christian duties after the example and command of Paul. Tit. iii. 8. 2 Tim ii. 25. 1 Tim. iv. 6, 11. He had no society with christians in his life, nor did he covet their company and conversation at his death. He was, notwithstanding, visited by two or three, without his request, who could do no more than witness the same insensibility, hardness, and insatiation which had often grieved them, but were now distressing to a truly pious mind. He died, indeed, as he had lived, in a manner that forbids us to rank him with believers of the lowest class: And his case is here adduced to show how possible it is, without a new heart by the spirit of Christ, to love a Gospel which consists only of two or three particular doctrines, what an inferior part this forms of the Christian character, and what a poor evidence it yields of a justified state; where it is unaccompanied with that love of the truth which produces heavenly mindedness, whose fruit is a patient continuance in well-doing, and whose end is everlasting life.

H. K.

ON GENERAL INTERCESSION.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

HAVING been into the country for some time, I have not had time or opportunity of replying to the further Remarks of A. B. on General Intercession. I did not mean to have troubled you any further on the subject, had he not in many of my observations grossly mistaken my meaning, I therefore submit the following observations to the spiritual enlightened reader, who only is capable of distinguishing the truth, and I will endeavour to make them clear and plain as not to be misunderstood—all that I contend for is, that there is not a promise in the Gospel of spiritual blessings to those who were not included in the redemption work of Jesus, and who are not of the number of God's Elect, and consequently that we cannot pray for the salvation of any but the Elect of the Father's love who were given to Christ in Covenant to be in due time regenerated, sanctified, and sealed by the Spirit as the heirs of promise—On this ground

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I wish every thing I may say may be fairly tried and examined, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

A. B. says he believes that only the elect will be saved, but he does not, nor will, submit to the Gospel limitations and distinctions, nor to its promises, and therefore has denied that the promises of God are his rule for prayer. How far he has succeeded in establishing his reasoning on this head I must leave to the Spiritual discerners in Christ's Kingdom, but I cannot help saying, as I feel, that all prayer which is not founded upon, directed by, and consistent with the promises of God, is an abomination in his sight. A. B. at one time talks of praying for all mankind, and at another for Zion only, and expresses his belief in both particular and general intercession; but are not the promised blessings of the Gospel confined to God's Elect. Does not our prayer for the elect as a body collectively include and comprehend *all* whom God will have to be saved, and *all* for whom Christ died by virtue of, and in coincidence with the sovereign decree, purpose, and counsel of God irrevocably fixed, settled, and appointed from eternity? If so why should A. B. wish or desire to extend his prayers beyond the limitations of the Gospel, and not observe its distinctions and settlements, or can he bring order out of confusion; if God's purposes shall stand and be fulfilled, then consequently what we purpose and do contrary to that which is revealed to us for our rule and government must be wrong, sinful, and unscriptural? Did not Christ when he died for his people, distinctly and personally view, look upon, and select them as much as if they had been then in open existence before him, and having expressed them to be the gift of his Father, and the choice of his love in such a distinct and peculiar manner collectively considered (which distinction and peculiarity is for our rule, and ought to be attended to by us) how can A. B. fly in the face of God by calling upon him to bless and save not only those for whom Jesus died, but those whom he decreed should never be redeemed, atoned for, and saved? Can God approve a supplication for the salvation of the whole of mankind, when he has revealed it to be his will, that only the choice of his love should be saved? Does not our being conscious that God wills only his people to be saved, oppose the very idea that we can or ought to pray for the salvation of all men? To say that God has promised spiritual blessings to all mankind, only proves a want of interest in them—this in words A. B. will

not admit, though such an inference follows from some parts of his reasoning; but scripture language is, whatsoever springs not from faith in the promises is sin; and our belief in intercession will not admit us to belief in general intercession any more than our belief in particular redemption will not admit us at the same time to believe in general salvation—if particular intercession is right, then general intercession must be wrong—if Christ intercedes for only a part of mankind, how can it be said that he intercedes for, and that our prayers should include, all men. His intercession, his plea at the Father's right hand, is, that they whom God has given him may be with him, and yet some in bold blasphemy, and with daring presumption affirm that a supplication for the salvation of them who were not given to Christ, is a prayer dictated by his Spirit: let this be reconciled or made to be consistent if it can.—That only is prayer in the account of God and Scripture which is produced, effected, and influenced by the Spirit of God, and to say that the Holy Spirit teaches in direct opposition to its determination and will, is to charge him with folly and a gross want of consistency.

With respect to my denying that Prophets and Apostles are our examples A. B. seems to have willingly mistaken my meaning, for I do not doubt the infallibility of the Spirit's teaching when they penned their record and testimony of God, and the truth, but as it respects their conduct as men of which that record speaks, I say they were fallible and liable to err, and did often that which was wrong, and of which they, no doubt, afterwards repented—they were men of like passions with ourselves, alike dependent on sovereign aid, and needed a continual communication of grace to be preserved steadfast in the faith and unmoved. We find they had no stock of grace in themselves, hence St. Paul ascribed all to the grace of God that was with him, therefore I repeat what I said in my last reply, that we are not to follow the examples of the Prophets and Apostles any further than as they followed Christ, who only was perfect, and directs us to follow in his steps—there never was any other just man upon earth that did good and sinned not. Does not James declare, “if ye say that ye are without sin ye deceive yourselves, and the truth is not in you;” and because I have asserted that the Prophets and Apostles were not without sin A. B. has been pleased to say that I denied the inspiration of the scriptures, and retired to the back grounds

of Deism; but I would have him reply to the above declaration of James, and also to Jesus in his personal reproof to many parts of the Apostles' conduct, and with which every spiritual reader of his Bible must be acquainted, therefore I pass on to reply to that part of A. B's reasoning which relates to the prayer of Jesus in the garden. "O my Father; if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Here A. B. admits that Jesus, though the eternal God, was also perfect man, and will he not admit that this was the language of the manhood labouring under sensible desertion, and at that time without the manifestative presence of his Father, for we cannot for a moment suppose that God who is without variableness or the least shadow of a turning could have been capable of suffering, or in the least degree shrink from the performance of the work which he had purposed to accomplish. God was never unwilling or unable to the work, though the flesh was weak and helpless of itself, for the Godhead afterwards rallied the manhood, and the manhood by new energy and power derived from the Godhead, was made equal to sustain all the weight of misery, darkness, and death, which justice inflicted, and which for the redemption of an elect world was required, for the manhood could do nothing of itself; but as supported by the Godhead it suffered infinite punishment due to infinite justice for man's infinite offence, I therefore conclude that it was not the language of the Godhead, but of his distressed human soul of whom it is said that he was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. In the gospel there is the language of the Godhead, and there is that of the manhood distinct from the Godhead and the prayer of Jesus referred to, was solely that of his manhood; if we do not make a distinction between the Godhead, and the manhood of Christ, but confound them together, we shall have no clear understanding of the distinct operations of either, and this observation applies to every believer, for if left to ourselves, we should feel a proportionate degree of reluctance to bear any trouble, pain, and affliction.—We are told and we feel the truth of it, that no affliction is for the present joyous, but grievous, and every thing wrought in us as well as every thing wrought in Jesus must be ascribed to the wondrous almighty power, energy, and love of God, and I apprehend that no believer is doing wrong in praying for the removal of affliction with submission to the divine will,
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after the example of Jesus; but if Almighty power and strength give support in affliction, we are made equal and willing to bear under it. I cannot conceive that this prayer of Jesus can have to do with, or in any manner govern us in our prayer as it respects the salvation of man, and is our example only as it respects the removal of afflictions and deliverance from them: I have been the more explicit on this point, because A. B. seems to have made it the principal ground of his reasoning, and as an objection insurmountable.

It supposes a change in God for us one moment to believe that God who wills and ordains only his own people to be saved, can be the author of a prayer for the salvation of all men, or that his Spirit will, and can teach and direct to pray for those whom he never loved. I know it is not in the nature of that faith which is wrought in the heart by the Spirit to be any otherwise than guided by the promise; it leads us to the promises, it trusts in them, and God is glorified only when we believe and act upon his word, his promise and the immutability of his nature and perfections, for if we ask not agreeable to his will which will be graciously revealed to us through Christ by promise, we shall know not what, and they will be found to be the effects of our own kindling, the consequence of which will be, we shall lie down in sorrow.

Although our Saviour taught to pray for them which despitefully use and persecute us, he did not say, nor could mean, that we are to pray that they may be saved; if we do not make a distinction between a prayer for all mankind as men, and a prayer as it respects the salvation of those only who are the elect of God, we cannot properly understand the true meaning of our Lord. As to the former St. Paul exhorts to, but his sole reason for it is that by so doing we may live peaceable lives, enjoy our privileges without molestation, and for the maintenance of social order, but neither St. Paul nor Christ whom he followed, ever commanded, enjoyed, or directed to pray for the salvation of any but those who were included in the promise of God, and who were given in covenant to Christ from eternity—the spiritual nature of Christ's Kingdom will not admit us to pray for the salvation of the *vessels of mercy*, and the salvation of the *vessels of wrath*; but in effect we do this if we include all men in our supplications; and as this distinction runs
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through all the written word, it is not for our rule and government, and though persons are not mentioned, characters are distinguished, not only by Christ, but by all the Prophets and Apostles.

The faith of God's Elect stands in the power and immutability of God, there is therefore something more than bare possibilities or probabilities in the prayer of faith. To the elect it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to others it is not. What the Spirit saith it saith unto the churches; this is scripture language, and demands some attention, but fearing that I have already exceeded the limits of insertion, I conclude praying that we may increase in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and that as our knowledge increases, so our joys and pleasures may increase and abound to the praise and glory of the riches of his grace.

Sept. 12, 1803.

J. B.

ON THE JUSTIFIABLENESS OF WAR.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

WILL you permit a solitary individual, who has been trained up, and is now perfect in the use of arms, to ask of you, an answer to the following question; a question much agitated in his own mind, namely, Can *war* be justifiable in a *religious* view? Your reply as soon as convenient will be esteemed a peculiar obligation to one who is your best of wishers, and a zealous promoter of your useful publication,

THOMAS GREEN.

Bermondsy, September 19, 1803.

REPLY.

WAR has been justly called the curse of mankind, the mother of pestilence and famine, and the undistinguishing destroyer of the human species. It is divided into offensive and defensive. Sometimes an offensive war is to regain by the sword, what had been unjustly taken away from the rightful possessor: and sometimes, it is to gratify the ambition of a tyrannic Ruler, by subjecting to his arbitrary will a people whom God had created free, and giving their hard earned

earned possessions, to support him in luxury, idleness, sensuality and ambition. There are instances of such, both in ancient and modern times: history is filled with the wicked lives and miserable deaths of tyrants.

A *defensive war*, is the taking up arms to resist tyrannic power, and bravely suffering present hardships and encountering present dangers, to secure lasting liberty, property and life, to future generations, and is certainly "*justifiable in a religious view.*"

The foundation of war is laid in the wickedness of mankind. Were all men virtuous, just and good, there would be no contention, or cause of contention amongst them; but as the case is far otherwise, war is become *absolutely necessary*; as many other things are, which are only the product of the weakness, or iniquity of men. Even the invaluable blessings of a constitutional government, would be unnecessary incumbrances, were there no open violence or secret treachery to be guarded against. God has given to men wit to contrive, power to execute, and will in many instances, to direct his conduct: but such is the depravity of human nature, that some will abuse these great privileges, and exert these powers to the ruin of others. The oppressed will then have no way to screen themselves from injury, but by exerting the same powers in their defence; and it is their duty so to do.— If it were otherwise, a few miscreants would tyrannize over the rest of mankind, and make them abject slaves of oppression, and pensioners of their will. Thus it is, that a just *defensive war*, is not only necessary, but an indispensable duty, and consistent with religion, accommodated, as it must be, to our present imperfect state of existence.

EDITORS.

ON THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

(Continued from page 290)

IF we read with understanding, the truth plainly appears, that the promise of the baptism of the Holy Ghost is peculiarly adapted to believers, the followers of Christ, the disciples of Jesus, the spiritual seed; distinguished by the pronoun, YE. That is, such as are actually in Christ, by special calling, and regeneration. Not considered only, as chosen of the Father, in him; but united to him, by faith.— Nor can any soul receive this special promise of the Father, until

until he knows, believes in, and truly receives the Son of God.

The world, or persons in a state of sin and unbelief, cannot possibly receive this blessing: as our Lord testifies, when he made the promise to his disciples: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not; neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* Hence it is clear, this promise is made only to his disciples, who believed in his name. And as the fulness of the Spirit dwelt in him, therefore the disciples knew that Spirit, as he dwelt with them in Christ, though as yet he did not dwell in their hearts. But as the world did not know him in the Son, they could not receive him from the Father. Again, the Apostle testifies, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* It is true, that a natural man, by the powers of mere nature; without the special influence of the Spirit of God illuminating his understanding, quickening his soul, and drawing his affections to the Lord; cannot know or receive any blessing of the kingdom of God, in the life and power thereof. But the Gospel, as it is in word only, as the word of men, or the historical report, a natural man may understand, and receive, by the use of his rational faculties. And a natural man, through the blessing of the Spirit of God opening his heart (for this is the work of the Spirit of God, though not the baptism promised) may receive the word in the efficacious power; and so become a new creature in Christ: otherwise, no man could become a spiritual man. — But be it noted, that all the works of God are performed in due order. A lower manifestation of light, has always been an introduction to a higher display of glory. So the Gospel first comes in the Spirit of Faith, to enable us to believe in a crucified Christ, for justification; and then in the Spirit of adoption, to enable our souls to ascend with our ascended Lord, into the joy of our heavenly Father's bosom. Therefore, as the great promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, opens to his saints the highest manifestations of grace and glory, that are possible for them to enjoy, whilst in a mortal state; it can never be received until the soul is
first

first prepared, through the faith and knowledge of Jesus, as Mediator of peace and salvation.

Wheresoever this great promise is found, or wherever mention is made of persons, either waiting for it, or receiving it; they are still supposed to be believers already. *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.* Now it was to these very persons, being baptized upon profession of repentance for remission of sins, and belief in Emmanuel that was to come, that John declared the promise, saying, *I indeed have baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* And to them that did already believe, Jesus pronounced the promise, as a future blessing; saying, *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* And those to whom the Apostle Peter expresses the promise, are supposed to be already blessed with repentance and faith: as he said, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* When the Lord said, *Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you;* it was to those disciples, to whom he had been revealed by his Father which is in heaven—who had followed him in the regeneration—whose names were written in heaven—and whose understandings he had opened, that they might understand the Scriptures. And his command to them was, *Wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.* Here observe, they had been with Jesus: they had been taught, they had understood, they had believed the promise. Peter and John went down to Samaria, and prayed for the people, *That they might receive the Holy Ghost.* But before this, we are told, *They believed the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ—had received the word of God—they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* While Peter preached to the Gentiles, at the house of Cornelius, *the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.* But the shortness of the time is no argument, that they had not believed, prior to the reception of the blessing (neither do we know how long the time was) for they were all prepared of God, to hear whatsoever was commanded: and Peter had preached Jesus unto them, in demonstration of the spirit, and of power. And he speaks of them in the same predicament with other believers. *Forasmuch*
then

then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. At Ephesus, Paul found certain persons bearing the name of disciples (though they were not believers, only, by some impostor, they had been seduced, and baptized to, they knew not what) and he (either supposing them to be believers, or with design to make the discovery) asked them this question; *Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?* This question did fully imply, that believing must go before receiving the Holy Ghost. And upon the delusion being discovered, and Paul preaching Christ to them in truth; when they did believe, and were baptized after the due order, *the Holy Ghost came upon them.* And the same Apostle, afterwards writing to the church at Ephesus; first, reminds them how they trusted in Christ, through hearing the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation; and then, how they were blessed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.* Yea, the way in which God has appointed this promise to be received; that is, *through faith*; makes it impossible for any to receive it, until they are true believers. *That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

As this precious promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is peculiar to the saints; it is universal to all that believe on the Son of God, in the light of the New Testament. For the promises made in the Old Testament, do now shine so conspicuous in the New, that it is impossible for any soul to be held in the dark concerning them, who receives the record with all his heart. And it is impossible for any soul that believes, and sees the preciousness, the glory, and excellency of the promises; to be kept back from a sincere attention to, and waiting for them. And it is impossible that God should refuse to fulfil his own promise, to them that seek, and wait for it. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* The promises of the Father are indefinite to all the seed. *I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.—As for me, this is my covenant with thee, 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, nor out of the mouth of*

thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. It makes no difference to consider the promises as made to Christ, or to his church; for they are no more twain, and the seed is the same. And it is plain (if the words of the living God are worthy of any credit) that from the first preaching of the Gospel, after the Lord's ascension, to the end of the world; no soul that believes in him, ever could be cut short of the enjoyment of this glorious promise. The Lord said, by the prophet Joel; *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.* It is true, this could not intend all the world, because they cannot receive the Spirit of Truth. But who they are, is fully expressed; *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord.* And the servants of the Lord, in the New Testament Day, did either know the promise to be absolute to every believer; or else they often spake rashly, beyond their commission; when they used such positive assertions, without distinction, or reserve; *He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.—Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one spirit.*

But here I am aware of an objection, or a dreadful outcry of uncharitableness; if we suppose all that are real christians, to receive this doctrine; and to wait for the promise until they enjoy it; what are we to think of the numbers of religious professors who never receive the doctrine, know nothing of it, nor ever give themselves any serious concern about it? To which I reply, we are not to be guided, in matters of faith, by what we may observe, among crowds of professors; but by the infallible testimony of God.

But there arises another objection; that a real christian may be so situated, among carnal professors, or under a low, dark, confused ministry; so as he has not the opportunity of hearing these things opened, or coming to the knowledge of them. To this I reply, he must be a strange sort of a christian, who does not believe the glorious truths taught by Jesus Christ. Every believer in Jesus, is a child of light; and a follower of Christ, the true light; and shall not walk in darkness. They are guided by the word of truth; and not by the confused noise of carnal professors, and false teachers. *When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stran-*

stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.

But it is further necessary to understand, wherein doth the baptism of the Holy Ghost consist?

And this can only be understood by the intelligence which the Spirit hath given us in the word of truth. And this appears in the sign or figure whereby it hath pleased him to represent, or illustrate it; and what he hath been pleased expressly to declare concerning it.

It is called *baptism*, in allusion to the baptism of water. For wherever we find mention made of baptism, simply and alone, without any other word conjoined, to give it a different signification; the baptism of water is always intended. But when it is expressly applied to any other thing, it then has allusion to water baptism, as the type or shadow of that reality, or substance, immediately under consideration. The baptism of water hath no manner of substance, virtue, or usefulness in itself; only as a lively figure, to represent in similitude, the things pertained to the kingdom of God. Hence John said, *That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.* And hence, divers things are in the Gospel called by this name, in respect to the resemblance between them and water baptism. The design is to convey to us an idea of the abundant overflowings of the Spirit of Grace and Truth; that in this special communication, we may expect to be filled, enriched, immersed, and overflowed, with the fulness of all spiritual blessings; from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Son of his love, by the effectual operation of the living Spirit.

This blessing is expressly declared to us, in words of the strongest signification. — *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty. There the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. Water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. Your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb. Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. The mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters.* These, and abundance more, relate to the New Testament promise; the promise of the Father. But without figures or metaphors, our Lord positively

tively affirms, *He will guide you into all truth. Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. I shall shew you plainly of the Father.* Nothing can excel the glorious things spoken of this divine gift.

But that we may distinctly understand the true import of this New Testament promise; we may observe, that it relates to blessings which never had been enjoyed by any of the sons of Adam, since the foundation of the world; until the Lord ascended unto the throne of his glory. And relates purely to the opening of those glorious mysteries of the kingdom, *Which was kept secret since the world began.—Which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations. That in the age to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, &c.* Therefore, as whatever blessings could be enjoyed by the believers under the Old Testament, may now be enjoyed, through the same measure of the Spirit as was then given to them; but the promise of the Father under the New Testament, being so far abundant beyond any thing given to the ancients; it relates to the clear manifestation, beholding, and enjoyment, of that more abundant glory, which is now revealed, beyond any thing that ever was made known to the Saints under the Old Testament. *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit.*

Therefore, that we may view it in a clear light, it is necessary to consider it both negatively and positively, according to the intelligence given in the word of truth, which shall be our future consideration.

PROSTRATES.

QUERY ON ANGELS.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,
GRANT me the indulgence to submit the following for a solution. Why are the Angels compared to chariots, and are styled 20,000, see Psalm lxxviii. 17. An elucidation of the above passage will be thankfully acknowledged by,

Sir, yours, in the best bonds,
South Hall, Kent, Sept. 20, 1803.

W. P.

A

A WALK UPON THE PATH OF SINCERE OBE- DIENCE.

To the Editor of the Gospel Magazine.

SIR,

I Have already noticed that the ten classes of Southern Guides directed to no more than three roads, south, southeast and southwest; the first, *sincere obedience*, the second, *abstracted mercy*, and the third, *human merit*; these led to the land of *uncertain expectation*, a very swampy ground, and so barren, that all who resided in it, continued there only under a persuasion of its being necessary for their admission to a *better country*. Unto this country, they hoped to come after having performed a little work each had devised for himself, or subjecting themselves to a few inconveniences of their own inventing: if, say they, we are then accounted worthy, we shall surely enjoy the land, but we must live in uncertain expectation till this period arrives. How uncomfortable such an atmosphere must be, the very name imports, but the inhabitants are very easy in their way.

Thou who directed to the path of *human merit*, said, that a man's integrity of heart, and regularity of life, should be rewarded by the grant of *perfect felicity for ever*, provided he returned from past irregularities, and persevered upon this road unto the end, or rather unto the end of his days upon the aforesaid hills: *All that the King hath commanded said these guides, will we do and be obedient*, but on looking up the road, I saw them loading passengers intollerably heavy, and none of them would touch a burden with one of his fingers; this sight so sickened me, that I despaired of coming to any good upon the path, and of course refused to go thereon.

“These directed in the steep and thorny road to heaven,
“While they the primrose path of dalliance trod.”

Those who directed to the way of *abstracted mercy*, said that the King would forgive every rebel who went on asking him for the exercise of mercy to the end of his course, and during his continuance upon the hills, but when I enquired of them how his *laws* were to have their *preceptive* or *penal* rights, they returned me nothing, but a contemptuous look; this I scouted as no argument, and asked for one in reply, to
which

which they said imperiously, "A monarch may pardon whom he pleases, and ours has said, he will pardon all who ask his mercy." But he has not said, those who transgress shall die.

"Die then must they, or justice must," and truth

"A God all mercy is a God unjust" unfaithful too.

To this I could obtain no answer, and seeing all their followers in fetters, clanking them as they hobbled on, the sound and sight determined me to seek a better way.

The road of sincere obedience was a crowded one, and the guides unto or upon it said, That as I had been a rebel, and his Majesty was just to punish, so I must have surely suffered, had not his son endured that suffering for me, but he having been punished, absolution was obtained for the past, provided I was sorry for it, and that as for his sake, a measure of help was given me, so if I, by his assistance, sincerely endeavoured for the future, to keep the laws, my sincerity for his son's merits, would be rewarded exactly in the same manner, as though I had perfectly obeyed him, he having accommodated his law to my present circumstances and accepting of *sincerity for perfection*.

This was their language unto every Comer, and consequently final felicity depended wholly upon men. The King had done his part, and if the rebel would not do his, he had none but himself to blame. I might have asked, and if he does whom has he to commend but himself? and to eternity they could not have produced an object, but little did I then understand what is written in the records. "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." Or the import of that enquiry, what then, are we better than they? No in no wise.

Their *declarations* were in conformity with my *own pre-conceptions*, and at the same time, I was charmed to see such an honourable set inviting me to a path on which I stood disposed by natural inclination to proceed, and on which going all manner of delights, presented itself unto my view. Ah! thou imposing deceiver! how capable art thou of cheating the race of man, by lying vanities, unto the neglect and rejection of their own mercies, passing thy counters upon them for sterling gold. Happy they, who are taught of him who never yet deceived any, and thrice blessed be his name, he hath said of his son, "All thy children shall be taught of him". For a wayfaring man, though a fool naturally, as to truth,
and

and comparatively in competition with superior natural geniuses, yet shall not essentially err, Psal. lxxiii. 24, 25, 26. Isaiah xxx. 20, 21. Prov. iv. 18. and iii. 17. of these things, I knew exactly as much as an *Hottentot* of *Polite Literature*, nothing of a departure from a *national creed*, of *misrepresentation*, of *old* being called *new*, or of *new*, standing in opposition to *old*, of a professing to believe, and contradicting that professor of the *pulpit*, opposite the *reading desk*, and *vicæ versa*, of substituting appearance for reality, of *false charges* brought against *honest men*, by those unto whom they might have returned true ones; of *shavers*, *Goliaths slain*.—*More work for Mr. John Farrago's double distilled*, and I cannot now recollect what events almost obsolete, but relative to subjects which can never cease to be controverted while the sun and moon endure, Gen. iii. 15. God forbid that the dispute should be less violent on the part of truth, instead of being buried in the graves of our fathers, may it rise into newness of life, and in the meekness of wisdom, tread opposing error down to hell; while those who imbibe the latter are beloved, may this love be shewn by zeal, against that which is consuming them. Who would not be earnest if he saw his brother's house burning about his ears, a professed friend playing an engine fed with oil upon it, and he fast asleep. Would a real friend be silent, surely not, he could not, Jude iii. 23. Gal. i. 8 and v. 1—4. and ii 11. 2 John vii. 9, 10. Jerem. iv. 19. and xxiii. 9. and xiii. 16, 17.

I shook hands with the southern leaders, and we agreed to walk in unity. I supposed their conceptions to be the very perfection of wisdom, *here his Majesty's excellencies* would all be *duly honoured*, and my *natural abilities*, my *very amiable deportment*, be *decently respected*. The King had shewn marvellous grace in giving his son to die as a substitute to purchase blessings for all, and in giving through him a sufficiency of power to all, provided they would use it, and yet there was room for rewarding human merit in the case of those who were obedient, and room too left for justice to have its honours in the case of obstinate offenders, so that duty and humanity might enjoy their glory in connection, and sit upon a throne harmoniously together, each having done his part, and the last the most essential unto us, therefore unto us supereminently, and unto thee in part, unto thee in an inferior measure be given all the glory.—

Delightful

Delightful music in the ears of *Angels! infernal*, though, that is to say of *Devils*. They delight to hear this sound, and hear it they do, for such they discern the constructive language of sincere obedience to be; it is their own device, the master piece of hellish craft, imposed upon the undiscerning.

I among the residue professed to admire his goodness, who had thus *accommodated matters* to my *imaginary circumstances*, and proceeded on. The penetration of my leaders was revered as being an agreement with my own, who but the wise could have invented such a plan? our natural bias was exalted, as capable at least of desiring to do good; and we were able by good help to merit in part; but alas! what this said measure of grace is, none have yet ever told us, either as to its quality or quantity; and I this day defy the most acute of our southern guides, to prove that it is any more than what the *vicar of Everton* has pronounced it to be, an *Ig'nis Fatuus*, will with the wisp, or vulgarly a *jack a lanthorn*, a vapour of the earth, leading its followers into a bog, the fenny swamps of *uncertain expectation*.

However I was charmed with the encomiums my new guides passed upon what they termed my pious walk, and lifted up into an extacy of delight at seeing thousands of the most respected amongst men, passing on before me, conversing together of the *great importance of religious life*, an *holy method of living and dying*, the *new whole duty of man*, a *new week's preparation*, a *new manual of devotion*, and a multitude of other similar fancies, new and old. The *past* was atoned for by a sorrow unfelt, or if felt, yet with the feelings of a Negro, under the lash of an American planter whose bonds he would have burst if he could. The *present* was accepted, though the very nature of duty had never been defined, and the future would, if I went on to the end, be certainly rewarded; all I imagined to be fair and by consequence began my southern peregrination, as thousands had done before me, and as thousands have done, thousands will do after me.

On going forward, I found the country was subject to heavy rains, which rendered the road exceeding slimy, and I soon fell flat upon it. I *sincerely fell, sincerely disobeyed*, shame reddened my face to scarlet: I would gladly have hid myself, but could not, my intention was reproved, my clothes were carefully scraped, and my company was shunned, until upon a confession of sorrow with a promise of more carefulness,

my

my leaders began to look with a sidelong approbation on me, "we were all frail, he that is without sin, let him cast a stone, he is sensible of his fault, we must forgive an offending brother." This was their language, and I began sincerely to proceed anew; every one must see that my grief having atoned for my fall, I now stood upon even ground as before: nothing had been lost but a little time by delay, and this must be made up by a quicker motion. Who will say that this is not fair reasoning? The road, however, being heavy, I felt myself *exceedingly fatigued*, and *longed earnestly* to be journeying with my *old companions in the West*, but dreaded the *Southern Laws*, which forbid this course of life upon pain of a *miserable death*. I toiled, therefore, till I fell again, but being unobserved I escaped reproof from my companions. After this I joined an oath to my former promise of not falling any more, but I fell a third time; I now added imprecations to my covenant, binding myself not to fall, upon pain of incurring the greatest possible vengeance from the king. Invention was racked to find out curses sufficiently dreadful; I trusting on this means for prevention of future falls, and yet alas! (ah, this is human nature, fallen human nature) I fell, and fell an hundred times, till wearied and faint, disheartened, and disconsolate, I sat me down, refusing to move another step.

Here sitting, the wind rose, bringing some very dark clouds upon their wings, a storm flashed and rattled and rushed around, I expected nothing but the dissolution of my frame, and knew not where to fly.

The rain abating, I continued to sit, not knowing what to do, until, oh! how beautiful were their feet! Who should appear but a company of *honest men*, the very same which had met me in the West. Seeing me alone in such a desert country and so weatherbeaten, they took compassion on me, and one especially as chief speaker, setting his eyes upon me, said, traveller you have taken a wrong course, *your last error is actually worse than the first*. You have given too much honour to the apparent wisdom of guides, and at the same time have leaned too much to your own understanding; if you would be wise become a fool, for the wisdom of this world is in these matters perfect folly. *Search the records. Ask wisdom of the King's Secretary, and thus try the spirits of professed guides.*

A voice as of a trumpet now sounded in my ears, *Let no*

man glory in men! Trust in the King at all times, and lean not to thine own understanding. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him; professing themselves to be wise they became fools. There is none that understandeth. If ye were blind (consciously so) ye should have no sin, (ye would then be soon led into a proper way,) but now ye say, we see, (we are naturally capable of discerning aright,) therefore your sin remaineth, (your conceptions are contrary to truth, and following these ye wander and rebel, yet more and more.)

My adviser now went on, I see, Sir, your temporizing spirit, you supposed that by taking this path you should escape sorrows, and go forward to final bliss in present comfort, but I must tell you it is those only who continue with the Prince in Tribulation, that he appoints a kingdom to in the end, and it is through much tribulation we must enter in. The coward faith there is a Lion in the way, and the sluggard will not plough because of the cold; these will surely in the end be miserable, but good soldiers endure hardness, and the husbandman waiteth with long patience for the fruits of the earth. Your path, Sir, lies directly east.—*Enter, therefore in at the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way, for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Pray what do you call this southern road? It is called sincere obedience, Sir. Sincere obedience? What do you mean by the term? I could not tell. He asked again, what does the term sincere obedience imply? I returned for answer. It is sincerely doing what his Majesty commands, or *sincerely doing what I can of these commands.* When Sir? At all times? I again was silent. Conscience told me I had not done this, however something must be said; I therefore answered no, Sir, this cannot be the sense. Oh! thought I, for some able genius to define the proper acceptance, to reason scientifically, argue resolutely with the said curious inquisitive, investigating, stubborn set of mortals for their manner, piercing, and authoritative utterly confounds me. He went on to interrogate. In what seasons are you allowed to relax? Come man do not be sheepish, but look us in the face and freely converse, our design is not to perplex, but *undeceive* you. I mean to ask when are you allowed to be *hypocritical*? Not sincerely doing your best, or *negligent*, not doing it at all? What rule do you walk by

by, so as to have a certainty of acceptance? To the last of these enquiries I replied, his Majesty's commands were our rule? How many of them? Every one, said I. What then, are you upon the same bottom as those on the road of *human merit*. No, Sir, we *sincerely aim at keeping them all*. What, as I said before, without hypocrisy or relaxation, so doing what you can, that nothing more could have been done had you been inclined to do it. Again I sat in silence, for I was ashamed to say it is sincerely doing what we please. Whilst seeing me confused he, like the Prophet to Baal's ministers ironically taunted. Come, Sir, surely this road of sincere obedience cannot be a wrong one; look at yonder rising ground before you; see what a retinue ascends, how vast their number! How great their labour! How fatigued they appear to be! What reward can be too great for such agonizing service as this given solely against the grain of inclination! Are not their leaders unto us far more than four hundred and fifty men to one? Is it possible that the most intelligent, the studious, the sincere, the serious among them cannot, rationally vindicate their cause? Oh! for the trumpet of an archangel, or rather for that tremendous voice of thunder which at last shall raise the dead to roll effectually over them. *Consider, O consider well your way!*

By the time I had gained a degree of courage sufficient to observe, Sir, when we grieve at our having done what we ought not, lament over our not having done what we ought, and turn from what is wrong unto that which is right, sincerely aiming again to our best, we have one whose merits make an atonement for our transgressions, and fill up our deficiencies, while at the same time they render our sorrow acceptable, obtain necessary help for the future, and recommend future obedience, atone for future violations of the precept.

Admirable ingenuity, returns the honest man.—Yet our enquiry is in vain, the rule of acceptable obedience is in the land of Utopia, or the World in the Moon far beyond the reach of those who dwell upon the earth. But suppose, man, the king calls you into his presence when you are neither sincerely aiming at obedience, nor grieving that ye have not done it? Then, Sir, we—we.—Nay, speak out then according to your own plan, you must die the death! I might here too, ask you what degree of proof is necessary in case of a departure, but I forbear; your difficulties are insurmountable already,

already. He now looked with evident compassion in his eye, and asked me, Sir, have you not ever been committing what you ought not? Ever leaving undone what you ought to have performed. How readeft thou? I looked in the records and read aloud. *Thou shalt love thy sovereign with all thine heart, thou shalt love thy fellow subject as thyself.— This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his only begotten son, and love one another. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, without me ye can do nothing.*

Hast thou been conformed to the law of love, I say not at all times, but at any time. Is it not natural for thee to say unto the king, depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways—then here, he hath pronounced such accursed. Again, hast thou believed on the obedience of his Son for admission to his favour, has not sincere obedience gained thy confidence; and in both views art thou not a vile transgressor? Consider your ways and turn again. Behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. To-day after so long a time. To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart. He that believeth shall be saved. He who believeth not shall perish.

Beware, therefore, of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing; but he would have said more, had not a multitude of dragon-looking murderers appeared upon the road, who in their flight for prey were upon the eve of seizing him and his fellows, as men too intelligent and honest for the office of guides, so that the good man had no more time than was sufficient to put a lamp in my hand, (it being nearly dark,) and to exhort me earnestly cry, mightily to be led into a right path, because of these thine enemies, e'er he and his associates were seized and carried off.

A.

A DEFENCE OF OUR REFORMERS, AND OF WHAT IS USUALLY CALLED THE ORTHODOX SYSTEM, WITH REMARKS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER, IN AN ESSAY ADDRESSED TO THE REV. DR. PRIESTLEY, BY THE REV. H. VENN, OF HUDDERSFIELD, IN YORKSHIRE.

(Continued from page 290)

HAVING detracted much from the character of the reformers, no marvel you treat very contemptuously, those who still adhere to their faith. Accordingly, you speak

ſpeak of us, as “ content, with the herd of mankind, to be juſt as wiſe as our parents and inſtructors were before us; acquieſcing in a ſyſtem, (obnoxious term!) handed down from our anceſtors.”

Now this ſame ſyſtem is either agreeable to the ſcripture, or contrary; if the latter, you ſhould have proved that the proteſtant religion, in its chief articles, is not one whit leſs a contradiction to truth, than popery. Such faithful dealing would have great merit amongſt your own ſort of chriſtians, and perhaps might have done much to divorce us from *old opinions*; againſt which, were it only becauſe they are *old*, you ſeem to breathe nothing but vengeance. But if this ſyſtem, handed down to us by our anceſtors, be agreeable to ſcripture; ſurely, Sir, it is not one jot the worſe, no more than *Magna Charta* for being *old*; no, nor for being the religion of “ the herd of mankind:” a religion, which, like the God of heaven, regards not the rich above the poor, nor the learned above the peaſant; but by one and the ſame truth, received with a contrite ſpirit, makes all happy, and ſaves all who poſſeſs it.

Againſt your projected plans of improvement (in the chriſtian religion, you would have it thought) that we who adhere to the ſyſtem of the reformers, “ have nothing, you ſay, to object, but what has been long ago urged againſt the ſimilar attempts of thoſe very perſons, on whoſe authority we ourſelves build our faith.”

The attempts of free enquirers are not ſimilar to thoſe of the reformers; becauſe their whole aim was to eſtabliſh the Bible in uncontrollable authority: that of free enquirers tend to render it ſuſpected, as a book unſpired; or contemptible, as one not neceſſary to be received, in order to ſalvation. Thoſe holy men, happy themſelves in the knowledge of Chriſt crucified, burnt with indignation to ſee his divine perſon and atonement blaſphemed by the tenets of popery, and fell a ſacrifice to maintain his glory. Free enquirers, jealous, as they would be thought, of honouring what they call the Supreme Being; attempt to eſtabliſh a religion in which there is no *atonement*, no *redeemer*, no *mediator*.* They, from real love to God, attempted to explode the *opus operatum* in every form; the proud pretences of decency and external righteouſneſs, by urging the neceſſity
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* See Dr. Prieſtley's Catechiſm.

of a new life, of which the author and giver is the Holy Ghost. Free enquirers attempt to explode this *only vital* religion, by branding it with the names of enthusiasm, fanaticism, and machinery. They had a *ne plus ultra* in their aim, *viz.* to restore the apostolic faith; you attempt improvements in the true spirit of a visionary. You have your *ne plus ultra* somewhere, but whether it be at all short of absolute deism, who can tell? In a word, unless endeavouring to *overthrow* scripture doctrine, and opposing the corruptions of the church of *Rome*, be similar attempts, there is not a word of truth in your assertion, that "we have no arguments against the attempts of free enquirers, but what might be pleaded against the reformers."

In the latter clause of this sentence, you do us, who adhere to the system of the reformers, the honour of supposing we build our faith on their authority. But why so? If through prayer and diligent study of the scripture, determined to receive its dictates with implicit faith, we see all the important tenets they held, written there as with a sun-beam; do not we build as much upon the Bible, as the reformers themselves? Was it affirmed (as possibly it may) that all Dr. *Priestly's* enlarged way of thinking, is only retailed from *Tolland*, *Tindal*, and some more recent enemies to creeds; that he only copies from these masters, who were for reducing all faith to a single article, as the surest way to sink revealed religion down to mere deism: was this affirmed, you would reply, no; by no means. Thinking for yourself, without any bias upon your judgment, as they did, you was led to adopt their sentiment, which for that reason, you call your own. In fact, Sir, however you may imagine that we who are *orthodox*, can believe without proof; we scorn to admit a single article in religion destitute of evidence, much more than many do, who breathe defiance against all established systems. But then here is the very important difference between us: Our irresistible proof lies in passages of holy writ, clear, express, repeated, and connected with each other; passages, which either must be understood in the very sense we maintain, or the natural impression of the terms must be quite destroyed: submitting to be determined by this evidence, our reason still has its just province, and the word of God its due glory.

But so far from this submission, you advise "that every
subject

subject of religion, should be treated as we would do those of philosophy."

Surely, not with as little reverence, or conscioufness of the disproportion our faculties bear to the sacred subject, as in matters which are the object of sense: surely, not with expectation that the capital doctrines in the religion of Jesus, are ever to be set aside by new discoveries, as one system of philosophy explodes another; since the whole council of God is laid open in all points of moment, and is unchangeable as himself.—Or, would you for every religious truth, require, as in mathematicks, evidence strictly demonstrative? but if to treat subjects of religion, as those in philosophy are treated in any of these ways, be evidently absurd, in what other way, I would ask, can it be done?

You call upon men "to think for themselves, and freely canvas, in open day-light, every opinion." But by what standard is any opinion to be tried? To what must we appeal, as decisive in our disputes? Will you allow the written word of God to be so? Certainly it must, or it can never answer the end of a revelation; the very end, of a revelation; the very end, which it declares itself sufficient to answer. If you allow this, the next step is absolutely indisputable; *viz.* that every one who wavers in his mind about divine truths, must *ask* for wisdom, must *pray* for the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth. This, with constant mediation on the scripture, is the *only* certain way of obtaining a knowledge of the meaning of the words of truth. But in neglect of this, to have recourse to disputes amongst men, not of a very devout turn; is to give up ourselves in the issue to scepticism, as destructive an enemy to the soul, as absolute infidelity, if they must be distinguished. For, if even a fool can ask many questions, which a wise man cannot answer; what difficulties may not a man of parts, full of pride, subtlety, and malice against the faith of Christ, start to bewilder and distract the mind? Yet, baneful as this method is, it has already been fully tried. For, by opinions you must here mean, what you are pleased to call the *reputed* doctrines of christianity. Now what new method of attack can be devised against these? As far as sophistry, aided by keen ridicule, and barefaced slander, can carry it; *Arians*, *Socinians*, and *Deists*, have all spoken, and written for themselves with all imaginable freedom;

from Toland down to Bolingbroke, and the writer of the *History of the Man after God's own Heart*.

The success, indeed, of such a canvass appears to have been somewhat different from what you teach us to expect: "For it will be easy, you observe, to see on which side the truth lies." You should have added, unless base passions blind men. But when *truth* prohibits all sinful indulgencies, and *falsehood* allows many; when *truth* demands absolute submission to God, and *falsehood* leaves us our own masters; when truth's faithful mirror represents, men vile and sinful to themselves, but falsehood just and honourable; when truth urges authority requiring to be received upon the bare word of the revealer, and falsehood encourages the impudent reply; *where mystery begins, there religion ends*; "Rejudge your maker, be the God of God:" In all these cases, it is very easy to see, on which side, if left to themselves, the million will think truth lies. Doubtless on the side favourable to their master passion, be it ever so detestable.

You speak as if you was in some concern for christianity; for thus you proceed.

"Its present state appears critical and very much requiring to be looked into by all its real friends and sincere advocates; since men of good sense and cultivated minds, of reading, reflection, and *the most irreproachable conduct* in life, conceive a prejudice against the whole scheme, and become avowed infidels, on account of the many things which are evidently absurd, you say, in the prevailing tenets of the far greater part of christians, and which things do not belong to their religion."

How unkind was it, not to mention expressly, every one of these things! How unbecoming the greatness of your zeal for pure christianity! There was, indeed, a necessity for your being quite explicit, on this interesting point: because, if all, you call supposed parts of christianity, and which in the eyes of many are evidently absurd, must be given up; we shall be at a loss to know what you will allow to stand in our Bibles. For in the eyes of *Arians*, men of good sense, reflection, &c. the proper divinity of Christ is evidently absurd. In the eyes of all *Sacnians*, men of good sense, &c. atonement by the blood of Christ is evidently absurd; the personality of the Holy Ghost, and his agency in producing the fruits of righteousness; original sin, justification by faith, and eternal punishment for sin. Now, if you

you give up every one of these doctrines, as not belonging to the religion of Jesus, I grant, great multitudes will cease any longer to be offended at it. Only this unlucky consequence must follow, all difference between christians and infidels will vanish; or at most, the difference must consist in this alone; infidels may vilify Jesus as an impostor, whilst these upstart "rational" christians, formed after your model, will regard him as a man employed by God to republish the law of nature; to be an example of virtue; to ascertain a resurrection, and perhaps to be the judge of the world. But if the religion of Jesus really contains no more than these things, I must go over with thousands, and tens of thousands, to the infidels, as the only men of reason. Because, on supposition that all the mysterious doctrines, relating to the fall and the redemption of man, the person and the work of Christ, are cashiered as insufferable absurdities; the Bible itself, we must say with them, is an heap of impious nonsense. For it speaks, we must affirm, of a man, who calls himself God; who is so called by the prophets and apostles; who, in that quality receives worship, without being so *really*. It speaks of an atonement for sin to the justice of God, in the plainest words, when there is *no such thing*. It speaks of the redemption of man, as a fact, in which the depths of all Jehovah's councils, the heights of all his grace, and the brightest manifestation of his glory, are to be seen; when man stood in need of no redemption, being naturally no more in captivity than the angels in heaven, nor any more under the curse of a broken law. It speaks of supernatural light and power, and a divine righteousness, as all absolutely needful to concur in the salvation of man; when his natural reason and moral powers, duly cultivated and properly exerted, are infallible guides to truth, and future happiness. It speaks of incomparable blessings, with which the church of Christ is blessed, through faith in his name, and of a mystical union between himself and his members. All these things, infidels will say, are taught constantly by prophets, apostles, and Jesus himself; nay, the peculiar tempers of christians are enforced by these very considerations, (all which must be confessed) when, according to their scheme who reject the orthodox doctrines, there are no realities in being, to answer to such expressions; nor, consequently, to justify the use of them.

THE GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

Now, if it be reasonable to reject the mysterious doctrines, as not belonging to the religion of Jesus, because not consonant with our preconceived ideas of truth and fitness; how much more reasonable to reject at once the whole Bible, as a book full of enthusiastic jargon? Can that book be from God, and designed for the poor amongst the people, who understand only the easiest figures of speech, which abounds with expressions unintelligible, till wiredrawn to speak a sense quite different from their import, if they have any meaning? Yet is this undeniably the case, in all the inspired writings, upon your principles; and more abundantly in the books of *Isaiab*, *John*, and *Paul*. And I challenge you to find out a book in any language, so despicably written, as is God's most holy word, if those doctrines which appear evidently absurd in the eyes of free enquirers, are not contained in it; are not its principal glory. With such inimitable skill is the scripture penned, that no sooner are these things denied, than the whole phraseology of the book becomes intricate and unnatural to the last degree. No sooner are these things denied, than the scripture not only ceases to bear the impress of inspiration, but even sinks below the writings of a man of sense. For what man of sense would not think it a reproach to his understanding, to be the author of a book, which no better explained his own meaning, than the will of God is explained in scripture, on the Socinian scheme? * With such adorable wisdom is scripture inlaid with these doctrines so obnoxious to the sons of pride, that without violently breaking it all to pieces, you cannot separate them, even from its practical precepts. So that your proposal for preventing the growth of infidelity, by giving up the offensive doctrines, is advising us, in fact, to give up one half of christianity, which must necessarily and very soon, be followed by a denial of the whole.

I must observe further, it is a little unfortunate, that you mention no other qualities in favour of your infidels, who stumble at apostolic christianity, than "good sense, reading, reflection, and a cultivated mind." For who need be told that these things, however excellent in their place, do by
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* The reader may see this assertion demonstrated in Mr. *Abbadie's* third volume of his *Traite de la verite de la Religion chretienne*. A book in the highest form for reputation in all the protestant countries abroad; a book, in which the horrid absurdities of all, who under pretence of being more rational in religion, reject the council of God, are exposed in a most masterly manner.

no means make men competent judges in matters of religion? History attests, that in all ages, men, who have been the admiration of the world for their parts, have been the chief of villains, and sensualized to the last degree. Constant experience proves, there is a very rare connection between the abilities of the head, and any valuable tempers of the heart. And the infallible record declares, wise men, after the flesh, are for the most part determined enemies to the truth of God. *Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

Read, in the first chapter of the *Romans*, of the *φασχορτες* *εινας σοφοι*, and you will see satan's throne was erected then, as to this day it generally is, in the heads of the leaders in science.

(To be Continued.)

For the Gospel Magazine.

AN ASPIRATION.

LOVE to GOD! thou sacred light, whose beams gladden the hearts of seraphs, and in whose brightness the cherubs bask! Thou diffusest thy rays through all the universe, and cheerest with thy vital warmth the souls of the pious in its most distant regions. Thou changeest the darkness into light, and the midnight into meridian splendour. Thou convertest the heath and the wilderness into green pastures; thou openest springs of water in the dry places, and fountains of comfort in the desert. Inspired by thee, the poor, naked, and houseless mendicant goes on in his thorny and rugged way, like the rich eunuch, rejoicing. He reads in thy clear beam his charter for heaven, and exults with joy over his unspeakable treasure. All nature is to his eye beauty, and to his ear music. The gloomy vale smiles before him. The bleak mountains and the barren hills break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands in sympathy with his joy. The thorn, to his cheerful and contented eye, appears a fir; the brier is a myrtle. The stony path is covered with flowers; and the rack itself is, to him, a couch of down to rest upon. I see the future angel now in the barren wilderness; I see him bending his knee to heaven with gratitude, because the lines
have

have fallen to him in places so pleasant. With increasing light and joy, I see him travelling on to the mount of God, as Elijah to Horeb, in the midst of guardian angels and attending spirits. He sits down at the scanty brook to eat his little morsel of bread and water, and blessed God for the milk and the honey-comb, with which he is satisfied.—“Thou hast not,” he says, “provided so rich a repast for others, nor granted them so exquisite and delicious a viand!” No, heir of glory! for thou hast ate of the hidden manna of those angels who sat down to their spiritual meal beside thee, and who gave thee a portion of their fare, as thou wouldst have given a share of thine to any other that wanted. Thou hast also drank with them of that stream which quenches the thirst of seraphs, makes glad the city of God, and waters the plains of Paradise. O how I envy thee thy happiness, though thou dost travel the pilgrimage of life, without shoes, or scrip, or changes of raiment!

Shed abroad this love to God in my heart, O Divine Spirit, and it sufficeth!

THEOLOGICAL REVIEW.

A Letter to the Editors of the Gospel Magazine, and Theological Review.
By Joseph Galloway, Esq.

MR. Galloway appears very angry with us, and dignifies us with a long string of rude appellations, because we could not enter into his conjectures upon the Prophecies in our review of his commentaries on the Revelations, in our Magazine for June and October, 1802. We there paid him every possible degree of praise for his piety and his ingenuity, we acknowledged that he appeared to us as a man of integrity, forcibly feeling what he was delivering, and we gave him the utmost credit for his honest endeavours, and even recommended his book well worthy of perusal. Where we could not follow the writer we frankly confessed we had nothing to substitute. We acknowledged our inability to investigate those awful and momentous subjects, and that we entered into the Apocalypse as into a garden, to pluck a flower, but it was with a cautious trembling hand. Like Archimedes, we had no standing place, or in other words, when we have looked up to certain eras from whence events were to be determined, we were at a loss for the precise dates. We also remarked, that a curiosity to look into future times was in itself, perfectly harmless, as such guesses could do no hurt, provided they were made without any violence to the sacred scriptures, or disturbance to the faith of a christian.

Why

Why Mr. Galloway should class us with the Atheists of France, because we asserted in the above review, that the Spirit of Atheism which exhibited itself in the French revolution, was the same before, but moved in a subteraneous manner, is to us as unaccountable as some of his prophetic conjectures. We are happy to find our sentiments are in perfect congeniality with the eminent and learned Dr. Rennell, the present Master of the Temple, in a sermon of his lately published, where the Doctor has the following remark,

“Be it well and constantly remembered, that it was not the decay and downfall of popery which produced the principles of the infidel philosophy and jacobinical anarchy, but that it was the absurdity and barbarity of papal superstition, which engendered that baleful and tremendous pestilence. The Abbe Barruel, in his late history of Jacobinism, has strongly and justly depicted the nature and consequences of the atheistical system of philosophy; but he has prudently declined pointing to its CAUSES. Those who have carefully read any authentic history of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and the long tissue of sharp and savage persecution of PROTESTANTS in FRANCE, continued down to a period not far removed from the commencement of the revolution—those who learn that this persecution was not only promoted in PRACTICE, but calmly and distinctly defended in PRINCIPLE, by the most distinguished of the gallican prelates in their writings, particularly by BOSSUET and the Bishop of Agen. Whoever is informed of all this, will not wonder that those to whom the blessed Gospel of Christ came only through the *medium* of popery, should lose all traces of humanity, and shut the gates of mercy to all mankind.”

We were proceeding on with our remarks, when casting our eyes upon the British Press, we saw the announcement of the death of this pious man. We shall desist from any farther animadversions, and trust this worthy character is arrived at that place, where doubts and suppositions are all done away. Where he sees no more through a glass darkly, but face to face. He has now left a dark abode for a light one, and will be able to trace more fully the oeconomy of God's providence, from the birth of time to its last period, and is now joining in that long of admiration with adoring saints and angels. “GREAT AND MARVELLOUS ARE THY WORKS, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.”!!!

The Warning Voice, Shewing that the Fall of Babylon, Denounced by the Holy Prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John the Evangelist is at Hand. And also that the Period of the Restoration of the Jews to their own land is fast approaching. By A Christian Believer.

WE must confess when we read the title page of the above tract, we began to think of being disgusted by a species of extravagance, and to be puzzled by obscurity, but we had scarcely entered upon the pamphlet when we found ourselves pleasingly disappointed. The composition bears throughout the mark of many sense, totally free from those wild eccentricities that we have had the drudgery to go through in works of a similar nature. The writer possesses an accurate knowledge, a clearness of arrangement, and a strength, as well as justness of observation, which do honour to his head and heart. He has handled his subject in a
 novel,

novel, curious, and interesting manner, as a friend to truth, which cannot fail of gratifying the expectation of the reader.

The following are the contents of the subject treated on.

SECT. I.

Of the period in which the prophecies appear to denounce the fall of Babylon the Great.

SECT. II.

That the humiliation and destruction of the papal and other anti-christian powers evidently agrees with the predictions of those events.

SECT. III.

And that the convulsions and decay of the Ottoman power, and the present perilous state it is placed in by the struggles of the Western Nations for Eastern Empire, must speedily end in its destruction, and in the Restoration of the Jews.

SECT. IV.

And the impression impelling these struggles of the European Nations, in its natural consequences, must lead to that event.

SECT. V.

That the instruments providence may so employ, in executing his righteous judgments, may be objectionable for their vices, and yet be moved to that purpose.

SECT. VI.

Which leads us to consider our own state and condition amidst these awful dispensations of providence, and whether we are not opposing its intents.

SECT. VII.

For there is a country, denounced by the prophets in the latter days, that, from its corruption and blindness, should fall from God, oppose his providence, and thereby bring on her lamentable evils.

SECT. VIII.

Of the description thereof by the Prophet Isaiah.

SECT. IX.

And as described by the Prophet Ezekiel.

SECT. X.

Of the comparison of the two before recited prophets, respecting the concordance of their types with each other.

SECT. XI.

Of the fall of Babylon the Great, stated in the Apocalypse of St. John the evangelist.

Conclusion.

Practical Discourses. By the Rev. Richard Warner, Curate of St. James's Parish, Bath.

Mr. Warner informs us that in order to avoid the imputation of an affected title to his Sermons, it is necessary for him to explain what he means by the term "Practical Discourses." They are, he says, *founded* upon the precepts of the New Testament, rather than the *pretended* doctrines thereof, which precepts, he denominates "*true Gospel preaching*;" and he further observes "If I do not *greatly* ERR, this is genuine evangelical preaching." "For the teacher who leads his hearers into the mazes of *mystery*, *bewildering* them with irresistible grace, imputed righteousness, positive predestination, particular redemption, the perseverance
of

of the saints, or such like incomprehensible JARGON, is unworthy of the office he has assumed, and a traitor to the cause he professes to support."

A person of the name of St. Andree, a wretched debauchee, who died in March, 1776, erected about a mile from Southampton, a whimsical baby-house, which he dignified with the title, *Belle Vue*, a receptacle every way inconvenient for the purposes of a family. Being once asked if this were not a very singular mansion, "singular," replied he, "I hope it is, or I would pull it down immediately. I would have you to know, Sir, that it is constructed upon the *true principles* of anatomy, the attempt to apply anatomical principles to the arrangement of passages, doors, and windows is two glaring an absurdity to need any animadversion, if we were not constant witnesses to far greater absurdities in those who set themselves up as christian guides, who are calling darkness light, and light darkness, bitter things sweet, and sweet things bitter; who are reversing the whole counsel of God; being ignorant of the gospel dispensation themselves, they call the forms of godliness, the power thereof. They preach up free-will, to the casting aside of free grace. Their doctrine gives no offence to the unregenerate part of mankind, it is suitable to their depraved dispositions. Prophecy they say smooth things, and deceit is immediately prophesied; as it were of old so it is now, Baal had his Prophets, and God had his.

Sad it is to reflect, that christian ministers may nominally pass for such, and partake all the outward ordinances of the gospel; and yet, for want of saving faith, be at bottom, no better than deniers of Christ after all, a consideration this, which should move to a solemn examination in those who profess to be ambassadors from heaven. We live in a nation where the religion of Christ has the sanction of legal establishment, and where the joyful sound of the gospel trumpet conveys to our hearing, peace, pardon, and felicity, and yet dreadful to say, the very men who are yet set up for a defence of the gospel, are the very characters who are doing all in their power to vilify and corrupt it.

The doctrines that Mr. Warner so violently opposes, our blessed Master was not ashamed to proclaim upon the house-top. That "*bewildering maze of mystery*, invisible grace, and positive predestination, &c." which so terrifies the Arminians and Pharisees of every age, he boldly asserted; inasmuch, at one time when he preached the doctrine of human imbecility, "that no one could come to him, except it were GIVEN unto them of his Father, and repeats it in the same discourse that no one could come to him except the Father drew them;" the indignation of some of his disciples was such, that they left him, and walked no more with him. When he preached once on the doctrine of election we are informed, that the *whole* of his auditory was filled with rage, that they rose up, thrust him out of the city, and endeavoured to deprive him of his life, by casting him headlong from a precipice. So true it is, that the human heart, unrenewed, spurns and resists the idea of God's sovereignty. Let us take from our Lord's heavenly lips an avowal of some of Mr. Warner's *bewildering mazes*. Many are called, but few chosen.—To you it is *given* to know the MYSTERIES of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is *not*—Rejoice because your names are written in heaven.—It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.—ALL that the Father has given to me shall come to me.

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Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. Not to multiply citations, we will only just notice, that when our Lord was considering the various receptions his preaching disciples had met with; and on contemplating the sublime MYSTERY of predestination; *Jesus rejoiced in spirit*. A joy which led to thanksgiving. "I thank thee, O Father.—Lord of heaven and earth:" Christ acknowledged God's absolute sovereignty. But what did Christ thank the Father for. For that which Mr. Warner, and Arminians, and almost every sect blaspheme the Father for: even for discriminating grace; for election and reprobation; for calling some to the knowledge of the truth, and leaving others in the darkness of nature. "THOU hast bid:" awful, positive, striking word! A thunder bolt to Arminianism, and to free will pride. "Wise and prudent:" the very men who we might be apt to think, should see soonest and deepest into the affairs of salvation. "Revealed: this is no doubt "incomprehensible JARGON:" to use Mr. Warner's phraseology, that grace must be "revealed," opened, manifested, and applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit, as well as heard by the hearing of the ear. "Babes:" persons who have no merit, no ability, no pretensions to such distinguishing mercy. "Even so Father:" here Christ says Amen to God's decree. And we will acknowledge to Mr. Warner, and to every inquisitive questioner, that were we to write 10,000 folio volumes, on the subject we could get no farther than this, "For so it seemeth good in thy sight," and no other reason can be rendered, and higher we cannot go.

The first step of a sinner who is turned from the error of his former ways, so as to walk in the paths of righteousness and truth, must be to him a "mystery." The Apostle Paul for instance who was a persecutor and a blasphemer, and who when in a state of unregeneracy, wished himself even accursed from Christ, Rom. ix. 3. and who hated the Gospel of Christ with a perfect hatred, yet we find this said awful and wicked character, struck by the force of "irresistible grace, which seized him in the name of the King of Kings, and gave him to feel that the gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation. When he hated Christ, Christ loved him, and constrained him at the appointed time to fall in love with him, and the gospel too. Divine grace took him prisoner, to set him at real liberty. It arrested him, not for the payment of spiritual debts, but in order to make him know that all his spiritual debts were paid and discharged by the obedience and sufferings of Christ. Was not this a mystery. We will pronounce it was, and to us an inscrutable one, *one*, that Mr. Warner can never account for, but upon the "incomprehensible jargon" of "positive predestination." Surely this divine ought to have known, that we are encircled, both in nature and in grace with mazes of mysteries, *great* and subordinate ones.

Sir Isaac Newton, who know more of the dependencies, connections, and relations of the great system of the universe than had been conceded to human penetration, was obliged to found all his reasonings on the hypothesis of gravitation, here he rested his conclusions. Respecting the dealings of God with his creatures either in providence or in grace, we bottom all our reasonings on the divine sovereignty, and leave such men as the Rev. Richard Warner, to sneer at those things, they cannot comprehend, by calling them "Bewildering Mazes of Mysteries, and incomprehensible jargon.