

John Everard

Christ our Rock

Do you think in your own names, or in your own strengths to turn yourselves unto God? No alas, this is the way to destroy yourselves; for do you what you can, fast and pray, and weep and lament, and confess your sins, &c., these do but destroy you the more, if Christ be not the bottom that you stand upon, if He be not your Rock that you build upon; but coming in his Name, and confessing from your souls your own vileness, seeing really your own nothingness, and utterly disclaiming whatever flesh and blood can do; then, thou shalt find God gracious to thee, not only in accepting what thou dost on this ground, but also healing thy nature, {Lk.10:34,} and subduing thy lusts, then shalt thou find this good Samaritan pouring in oil to heal thee, and to bind up thy wounds; and then thy meanest duties in Him are better accepted than the most glorious and splendent to men; for then the case is altered with thee, because now thou bottomest all upon Him. John Everard {Some Gospel Treasures Opened, 1653}

God's Unchangeable Glory

If we think God changeable, then this is our ignorance, our childishness. When we think that by our prayers, or fastings, and reformings, that we can turn God or change his mind; that one minute he is angry, and the next minute he is pleased. Beloved, this be far from our God for He cannot change. You think weakly and childishly of him, that when you feel or fear a judgment, or desire any blessing, that you can meet him and stay his hand, or you can prevail to turn his mind, or constrain him; no, no, far be such thoughts from us. The change is not in your God, but you are changed; and the change is in yourselves, and in yourselves only. As when men are at Sea and cast anchor on a rock they draw and pull as though they would pull the rock unto them, but they in fact pull themselves to the rock. We think when we repent that he is pleased, and when we are obstinate that he is angry, as if he were so changeable, that he is angry today, and pleased tomorrow. There can be no such thing in God; and by such thoughts, we make God no God; we make the ever blessed and unchangeable God an Idol. Indeed, the creature is changed, and the act of God upon the creature may and doth change; as the Psalmist saith, "they all shall wax old as doth a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou changest not, thy years are the same." {Ps.102:26,27} We err, not knowing the Scriptures, if we think that we can change and alter God, or that we can direct him what is best to be done, as I fear too many of us do. Yea, I fear, even some that have been long professors, nay those that have been long teachers in the Church, and sit at the stern, and should guide the ship aright, yet ordinarily let it dash upon this rock, they themselves teach so, and others believe so; and so both the people with Aaron, have made themselves a golden Calf, and then have fallen down and worshipped it. No, no, my brethren, it is our happiness, our security, that God changes not! "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." {Mal.3:6} And so also God is said to come nearer to us, and to go further from us; but know that God cannot remove, for God is as near us always as he can be; yea, he is nearer us than anything we can call; he is nearer us then ourselves, for he knows all our thoughts a far off; that is, even before we think them ourselves. {Ps.139:4} - All providential bitters and sweets must pass away, all the fashion of the world; and whatsoever must pass away, let it pass away; {I Cor.7:31;} and that which perisheth or is to perish, let it perish; but still Christ remaineth, he changeth not, he is not

subject to change, but he remains always the same. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." {Heb.13:8} Therefore lay not hold on these transitory things, but lay hold on the Anchor of your souls, which is both sure and steadfast, and that entreth into that which is within the veil. {Heb.6:19} Highness and lowness pass away; greatness and littleness pass away, youth and age pass away, weight and lightness pass away, and all the beauty and glory of the creature; but still Christ who is the Salt and the Substance still remains. John Everard {Some Gospel Treasures Opened, 1653}

Christ – the Salt of the Earth

Thus you see in brief, what the fire is; "Our God is a consuming fire." {Heb.12:29} But now what is the salt? I know that it is divers ways taken and expounded; for some take it to be wisdom and discretion in speech; and for proof they cite that place of the Apostle, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt;" {Col.4:6;} and they give this reason. As salt keeps things from stinking, so doth wisdom so salt and season a man's words, {Prov.16:21,} that his words may not be unsavory. Others take it for holiness and sincerity in life and conversation; as our Saviour saith, "Ye are the salt of the earth," {Mt.5:13,} that is {say they} when by their living well, speaking the truth in their words, and expressing holiness in all their actions, this seasons their lives and maketh them savory before God and men. So also they interpret that of our Saviour, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted; it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men;" when men live not as they profess they are unsavory, and men tread such men's professions under their feet; and therefore say they that Christ admonishes them to strive for integrity of life, and soundness in doctrine, and constancy in suffering; for these things honor their profession, and seasons them with salt and makes them savory to God and to men. But to be short, and without any more circumstances, {that we may come to the matter intended,} the fire and the salt are both one, and that is Christ Himself as I have told you; for as He is the fire; so, He is also the salt; as the Apostle saith, "for both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one;" {Heb.2:11;} so Jesus Christ is the fire that salteth, and the salt wherewith it salteth, as is expressed in the verse before the Text. Indeed I confess, the Apostles also were called salt, "Ye are the Salt of the earth," {saith Christ himself,} not that they were the Salt themselves, or the salt indeed, but they were those which uttered the salt; they taught salt, {as I may say} and where rather {as we may call them} Salters; those which voiced and uttered the true salt, {which is Christ} to the world. The Instruments or Ministers which Christ used to convey to us the true Salt, and in no other regard were they called the salt of the earth. And again, Christ saith, {in the same sense,} "Ye are the light of the world;" {Mt.5:14;} and again John saith, and more properly, that Christ is the true Light, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" {Jn.1:9;} and Christ himself saith, "I am the light of the world." {Jn.8:12} He it was also that was typified in all the Oblations under the Law, and throughout the Old Testament; for he was the true Paschal Lamb, he was the true Sacrifice, he was that Fire that must always burn upon the Altar. {"The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out." - Lev.6:13} - Thus Christ is compared unto salt, because as salt preserves things from putrefaction and corruption, so doth he preserve our souls; for we would stink before God if his merits were not applied to us; as David saith, "My wounds stink and are corrupt;" {Ps.38:5;} and we are in ourselves, without him, as unclean as a swine that walloweth in the mire, and as dogs that return to their vomit. {II Pet.2:22} - Christ also was that salt commanded, for the salt was never wanting; and in the verse before our text, Christ himself cites that place, "Every sacrifice {saith he} shall be salted with salt," {Ez.43:24,} he being that salt which must never be wanting; he seasoning every oblation. {Lev.2:13} Christ is the Salt of the Everlasting Covenant "unto thee and thy seed forever." {Num.18:19} Christ was that Salt that Elisha threw into the waters and healed them; {"And he went forth unto the spring of the waters,

and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land; so the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake." – II Kings 2:21,22;} and those many waters are many people, as it is expressed in the Revelation. In sum, Christ is the Substance and the mind of the whole Scriptures. John Everard {Some Gospel Treasures Opened, 1653}

God & Evil

Beloved, conclude this, all power is his; and all praise is his; and if all be His, then what hath any creature to do to take to himself any at all? But this great sin of arrogance is that which runs through the whole world, great and small; and who sees it; and who checks himself for it; saying, what have I done? This is that which rules in the very devils themselves; nay, this is the evil in us. For men think they have a power, and so walk according to their own wills, and see not that they act by the power of God; for God is all power, all act, and no creature stirs or moves but by him; he is their act and their being, though not of evil; for though God be the Orderer of evil, yet he is not the Author thereof; but men would hence lay the fault on God, and excuse themselves; and very strange conclusions men have made through mistake, that because there is in God an active, positive, consulted, and deliberate reprobation of certain men before their sins were committed; yea, before the Creation; and because also it is said that we can do nothing without him; {"for in him we live, move, and have our being" – Acts 17:28;} therefore they conclude that the evil of action as well as the action itself belongs to Him, not understanding to distinguish between the Act and the Evil of the Act. No, no, you are deceived; you conclude thus, because you cannot comprehend his ways, and so you would bound, limit and circumscribe the Almighty by your narrow reason. But you must distinguish between the Act and the evil of the Act. All Act is God's, but he is free from the evil of any Act. All evil is thine, and all good is God's. Therefore Hosea, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; {thy perdition is of thyself} but in me is thine help." {Hos.13:9} John Everard {Some Gospel Treasures Opened, 1653}